

Descent

MAGAZINE OF THE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIAN GENEALOGISTS



JUNE / WINTER 2023

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Waiting for the rain to clear in St Mark's Square, Venice
Photo by Jonathan Ford on Unsplash

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples and we pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. The Society acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which Richmond Villa stands.

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President's Message

MELISSA HULBERT

As you read this, our AGM will have occurred on Saturday 20 May 2023, and it was great to see many members in attendance both in person and online. A full report of the AGM will be in our September/Spring edition of *Descent*.

In August we will be celebrating National Family History Month. I hope to see many of you at the events this year. Details will be available in the coming months at: <https://familyhistorymonth.org.au/> SAG held the next in its series of *In Search of ...* days in March with the theme of *My Irish Ancestors*. 172 attendees enjoyed a day of Irish records, and learning ways to improve their research using all forms of technology.

Our next *In Search of ...* will be on Southern European Ancestors on 10 June. I've been privy to a sneak peek of the draft program and while I sadly haven't found any Southern European Ancestors as yet, I am tempted by the great line-up of speakers and topics.

Our Let's Talk About ... series, SAG Book Club, regular Friday Hang Out, software and special interest groups have a packed schedule of interesting activities this year, with a diverse range of topics. If you haven't already, check out the upcoming meetings and topics, you're bound to find something of interest.

Have you revisited our Archives or MIDAS (Manuscript, Image & Digital Archive System) in recent months? Every week our teams of volunteers come into Richmond Villa in Sydney to scan, process, and index new items into our collection.

Our archives contain valuable historical information, some dating back to the seventeenth century, including compiled family histories as well as research from current and former Society members and friends. We have also been fortunate in recent months to be the recipients of approximately 5,000 UK birth, marriage, and death certificates through the generosity of Joy and Allan Murrin. However, we need your help to further progress the digitisation of more of our 70,000-record strong archives. While this is a mammoth task, digitising these records will allow for easy access and search ability, and will preserve these records for future generations.

For this reason, and as the current financial year closes, we are asking that you continue to support the digitisation of our archives and the associated operational costs.

The MIDAS Catalogue is a database of manuscript and image collections held at the Society of Australian Genealogists. It provides detailed information about the contents of these collections, and allows for searching and identification of relevant documents. It is a powerful tool for researchers and genealogists alike.

As a member of the Society of Australian Genealogists, you know first-hand the importance of preserving those historical records which have been handed down to us. Further supporting the operational costs of digitising our archives will ensure that this information is not only more accessible, but also support its protection from damage and loss.

The following three case studies outline some of our current activity.

Cemetery records

In 2021, the Society's Annual Appeal was directed toward the digitisation of New South Wales cemetery records in our collection. Approximately \$7,500 was raised toward the digitisation of this collection for which the Society is very grateful. SAG staff have begun work on this project, assessing each of the 450 volumes in

relation to their size, paper type, physical composition, copyright status, and overall condition. To date, we have received quotes for the digitisation of this material, so we're working to prioritise the order in which the volumes are submitted for digitisation.

The beloved B7/11s, as they are known to some, include indexes to and monumental transcriptions of, cemeteries all over the state of New South Wales. Some volumes in this collection are handwritten, and may just be the only surviving copy of the information. An invaluable resource for family historians! Stay tuned for some exciting developments this year.

Journal digitisation

SAG regularly receives journals from various historical/genealogical societies across Australia and internationally. This is a result of both the Society's journal exchange program, where the Society swaps *Descent* for the other Society's equivalent publication, or has a subscription to the organisation or journal. These journals are provided to us in either electronic or paper format. As a result of a planned deaccession of paper copies, together with the increasing availability of journals and magazines online, older issues of journals currently housed at Richmond Villa, those found to be valuable and fragile; will be processed for digitisation in accordance with current copyright legislation. This will enable more historic journals to be available for members via the electronic resources within the Library, alongside what is currently available in the Member Area of the website: www.sag.org.au/Member-Area.

Jess' Girls

Jess Hill was a member and volunteer of the Society of Genealogists from 1964 until her death in 1995. During her time at the Society, Miss Hill was a Library Assistant and Honorary Assistant Research Secretary, helping others locate ancestors, solve long-held mysteries, and uncover lost details about individuals across the ages. In 1970, she began to collect biographies of women convicts transported to Australia between 1788 and 1818. The Jess' Girls Project, undertaken by the Archival Manager, Alexandra Mountain, and Society volunteer, Andrew Redfern, hopes to further Miss Hill's research agenda and build a searchable database of convict women filled with biographical details pulled from multiple sources. The database will be collaborative and hopefully become a place where family historians and researchers alike can find and contribute information. In addition, this is a social history project that would provide context for the work that Miss Hill conducted — delving into how family history, convicts, and women were thought of in the 1970s. Alexandra and Andrew are currently working with three intrepid Macquarie University students to tackle this mammoth project — stay tuned for some exciting updates!

I hope you will consider making a donation to support our archives operations. Your contribution will help us continue to provide vital services to researchers and genealogists.

Related links: <http://midas.sag.org.au/> and www.sag.org.au/gift

Wishing you a safe and healthy winter full of family history discoveries.

Pisani, Carlo (1853–1942)

KEVIN WALSH

Carlo Pisani — musician, teacher and band/orchestra leader — was born on 3 September 1853 in the town of Viggiano, Province of Potenza, in the Basilicata (Lucania) region, Italy.¹ He was the fourth child born to farmers, Francesco Antonio Pisani and Eleonora Maria Labattaglia.

Such was the poverty faced by Viggianese farmers of the time that a great many became seasonal, travelling musicians, to provide supplementary income during downtime on their farms.² Family based troupes of Viggianese musicians, including children, frequented the major cities of Europe, and on these journeys, Carlo became a master of violin.

At four years of age, Carlo Pisani had witnessed the Great Neapolitan Earthquake of 16 December 1857, which included Viggiano in its path of destruction.³ Buildings of the time were of stone and timber with no reinforcement, hence the majority of the buildings in the towns and villages were destroyed. Carlo's mother, Eleonora Maria, died two days after from injuries received in the earthquake, and in early 1858, his father, Francesco remarried.

Following an early life of travelling in Europe, Carlo eventually followed his older brother and harp player, Guiseppe, to Australia in 1881⁴, performing as the Pisani Brothers in Melbourne and Hobart.⁵ By 1883, the brothers had returned to Viggiano where Carlo married Maria Teresa DiMilita on 12 October 1883. The following year, with a family group including older brother Guiseppe, Carlo returned to Australia; this time to Sydney, New South Wales, aboard the *Chimborazo*, on 12 March 1884.⁶

Carlo and Guiseppe worked as musicians on Sydney Harbour ferryboats and cruises, as well as operating a fruit shop in the suburb of Newtown, and later a corner shop at Chippendale until the end of 1904. Early in 1905, Carlo's family moved to Kempsey, and in 1911 to Grafton on the New South Wales north coast.

Throughout this north coast region, Carlo advertised as a teacher of violin, and sometimes was referred to in newspapers as Professor Pisani. As part of Pisani Brothers Orchestra, with sons Frank, Leonardo and Frederick, Carlo performed at most significant events in the area: for show societies, race days, river cruises, a plethora of balls, weddings, and free of charge for many fundraising events. The impact of Carlo's musical flair and talent on Grafton society, however, was probably greatest in his conducting of the orchestra for emerging silent cinema⁷, at both Star Pictures and Grafton Picture Palace from 1914 onward.

In the community, Carlo established an orchestra for the Bowraville Orchestral Society in 1911⁸, performed freely at

church fundraising events for the growth of the Catholic church in the region with the Pisani Brothers, as well as entertaining patients and staff at both Grafton Hospital and the Benevolent Asylum on a regular basis.⁹

At the outbreak of World War I, Carlo assisted with fundraising for the Belgian Relief Fund and, until son Frank enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in 1916, continued to be part of the social fabric of Grafton society. Frank's enlistment signalled the end of the Pisani Brothers Orchestra, and Carlo and his wife retired to Bondi, Sydney, where he taught and resided until his death in 1942 at 89 years of age.



Carlo Pisani at Bondi c. 1930,
Pisani Family Collection

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8. "The Bowra Orchestra", *Nambucca News* (Nambucca Heads, NSW), 21 July 1911, 4.
9. "Music at the Hospital", *Grafton Argus and Clarence River General Advertiser*, (Grafton, NSW), 22 January 1912, 2.

SAG runs a Certificate in Genealogical Research to assist members to hone their research skills and explore areas of study they may not be familiar with. The course also functions as a prerequisite to our Diploma in Family Historical Studies. One exercise is to write a biography of an ancestor in the style of an *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry. In each issue of *Descent*, we feature one such biography.



IN SEARCH OF ... SOUTHERN EUROPE

Photo by Louis Droeye on Unsplash

Welcome to our second issue of *Descent* for 2023, with the theme of Southern Europe. Family history is a crucial aspect of our identity, providing a meaningful understanding of our roots, traditions, and culture, and this is particularly true for those with Southern European heritage, where family ties and kinship play a large role in daily routines and behaviours.

This issue of *Descent* is dedicated to examining the diverse ways that Southern European families have documented and preserved their history, oftentimes across large geographic and generational distances.

The articles that follow explore the complex and dynamic interplay between individual experiences, collective memory, and macro historical events.

They delve into the myriad of contexts — cultural, political, and economic — that shape our family histories, and bring to light the ways in which our heritage is transmitted across generations. They also cover a large geographical scope, from Portugal to Italy and Sicily. Some of the themes of the articles include the role of religion and migration in shaping families, the impact of political upheaval and war on family dynamics, and how to conduct genealogical research on Southern European ancestors.

Overall, this issue offers a rich and diverse range of articles that delve deeply into Southern European families, and underscores the importance of family ties and kinship networks in the region's culture.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Call for *Descent* articles on the topic of **Child Welfare in Australia** for our September issue of *Descent* and to support our online conference scheduled for September 2023.

Deadline for notification to write on the topic of Child Welfare in Australia: 4 July 2023

Deadline for article: 18 July 2023

Please email: editor@sag.org.au

CONTRIBUTIONS TO *DESCENT*

The Society welcomes articles for publication in *Descent*. Preference is given to articles which demonstrate methods, sources and tactics which will help others with their research. Family is about sharing — so we encourage you to share your stories with your fellow family historians.

Length: 2–3 page articles (1,000–2,000 words) although longer articles will be considered; 1 page articles (700–900 words); short articles (100–400 words).

Copyright Clearance: Copyright clearance is your responsibility and you must ensure that written and illustrative material does not breach copyright and all sources are correctly acknowledged.

Full details regarding submission lengths, images, copyright and consent can be found on our website at <https://www.sag.org.au/Our-Magazine-Descent>

Please note SAG does not pay author fees.

HUGUENOT DESCENDANTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

by Dr Marcia Cameron, President, Huguenot Society of Australia

Many Australians have not heard of the Huguenots, nor know who they were, yet a considerable number of Huguenot descendants live in NSW.

Huguenots were French Protestants who fled France because of religious persecution, mostly in the years 1680–1690. They fled to many countries, including the Netherlands, Germany, England, Ireland, South Africa, as well as the American colonies and it is their descendants who made their way to Australia.

I have chosen to focus on two women and two men of Huguenot descent, each of whom made a significant contribution to life in NSW, the former being particularly philanthropic. There is also a list of Huguenot names at the end of the article which includes both convicts and soldiers, as well as many others who have contributed to the arts, business and public life.

Augustine Soubeiran

(1858–1933) was the daughter of notable French Huguenot educationalists whose Huguenot forebears had endured torture and death, condemnation to the galleys, and prison.

She was born in France, but in the mid-1870s, after the death of her parents, migrated to Sydney and worked as a governess. She became one of the first teachers at Fernbank, the school opened at Edgecliff by Louisa Jane Guerne. In 1891, joint principals Miss Guerne and Mlle Soubeiran moved the school to larger premises at Kambala at Bellevue Hill, where it soon became a well-respected school which offered the traditional accomplishments of European finishing schools as well as successfully preparing young ladies for university public examinations. Augustine also taught French at Ascham, a nearby girls' school. In 1913 Soubeiran and Guerne moved their school to Rose Bay and the following year they handed it over to Clara and Mary Jane Roseby.

With the outbreak of World War 1, Mlle Soubeiran initiated the French-Australian League of Help, one of the largest patriotic organisations in Australia. In 1917 she went to Paris to set up a depot to distribute clothes and funds. In 1919, having returned to Australia, she toured the war devastated areas of France to distribute funds and assist in reconstruction work. She was posthumously awarded the *Légion d'honneur* for her services to refugees.

A memorial plaque in the Soubeiran Room, unveiled in 2004, commemorates Augustine Soubeiran at Kambala.



Minard Crommelin

(1881–1972) was another able woman who made a memorable contribution to her community. Her Huguenot forebears came from Picardy and were wealthy cloth merchants. Her father came to Australia as a child, but despite their gentrified background, Minard's family was poor. For most of her adult life, until the age of about 56, she worked for the Post Office, and was relieving postmistress at over 150 towns.

The turning point came in 1937 when she inherited two legacies which enabled her to begin realising her dream of the conservation of our native flora and fauna. She was able to purchase seven acres at Pearl Beach, adjoining a wildlife sanctuary named Warrah, and she lived there after 1939.

In 1946, the Senate of the University of Sydney accepted the property as a gift to be a biological and natural field station for research and named it after her. She lobbied federal and state politicians with plans for a "national botanic garden, fauna park and arboretum" and for a national ecological conservation authority. Between 1960 and 1966, she established the Crommelin Ecological Conservation Fund and bequeathed it some £14,000 (about \$130,000 in today's currency).

She helped form local branches of the Australian Red Cross, the Country Women's Association of New South Wales, and the Business and Professional Women's Club of Sydney. She was appointed a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 1959. A determined, single-minded visionary, Minard Crommelin displayed some of the characteristics of her staunch Huguenot forebears.



Ed: Minard Crommelin was a very keen family historian, SAG Honorary Member and bequeathed the Crommelin Papers to the Society.

Henry Carter Perdriau (1817–1892) mariner and steamboat proprietor, from whom all members of the distinguished Perdriau family in Australia are descendants, was born in London, of a naval family, and came to Sydney at the age of 20.

He was the pioneer of steam-ferry transport on Sydney Harbour, which he built into a very successful business, trading as the Balmain Steam Ferry Co. Ltd, with ferries plying between Millers Point and Balmain. He opened up new routes, often in partnership with others, and at its peak the steam ferry fleet had nine vessels.

The business sold in 1882 to the Balmain Steam Ferry Company. Henry Carter and his son Harold retained an interest in other steam-powered ships, many fitted out at the Balmain Engineering Company. The largest of these was the *Alhambra* of 766 tons, purchased in 1884.

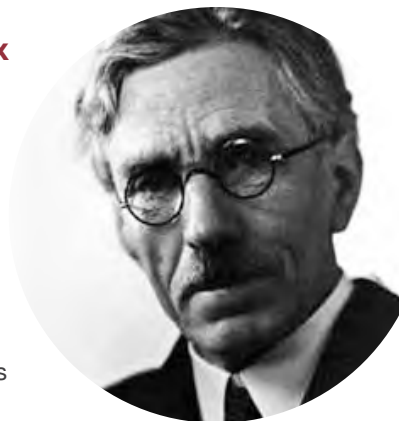
His sons and at least one grandson carried on as successful businessmen. Henry, one of his seven sons, set up the Perdriau Rubber Company in 1904, of which he was Chairman. It was one of the top 100 companies in Australia, based on its assets. He was a director of the company when it later merged with Dunlop to become the Dunlop Perdriau Rubber Company Ltd in 1929.

Henry's son Edgar continued the family involvement in the business as Managing Director of Perdriau Rubber Company, then as Assistant Managing Director of the merged company. Henry Carter was the second mayor of Balmain in 1868 and took office again in 1872 and 1875. His numerous activities in local affairs included membership of the Council of the "Pigeon Ground" School, the Mechanics Institute, the Balmain Rowing Club, and the Balmain Masonic Lodge of which he was Master in 1875. He was also an active member of the Balmain Presbyterian Church.

His fortunes took a dramatic downturn in his last years when the financial boom of the 80s and 90s ended with the great banking crisis of 1892–93. He is remembered as a talented, successful and energetic businessman.

Harold Cazneaux (1878–1953)

"the father of Australian photography" is probably the most famous of the four Huguenot descendants named in this article. He is one of many artistic and creative people whose forebears were attracted to Protestantism.



Born in Wellington, New Zealand, his mother was a water-colourist and miniature painter and his father a photographer. As a young man, an exhibition from London of new "pictorial movement" photographs aroused his passion for photography as an art. He moved to Sydney in 1904 and held the first one-man exhibition of photographs in Australia, with critics praising the diversity of his work. Over time, his photographs included portraits, landscapes and city views, characterised by "truly Australian sunshine effects".

In 1914 he won Kodak's "Happy Moments" contest and used the £100 prize money as a deposit for a house in Roseville. His frontispiece photograph for the first issue of Ure Smith's publication *Home* sparked a new trend in photography and "Caz" benefited a great deal from the publicity.

He went on to exhibit at the London Salon of Photography from 1911 to 1924. He produced portraits of well-known artists, musicians and actors, and wrote many books, including *Sydney Surfing* (1929) and *The Sydney Book* (1931). He was a critic for *The Australasian Photographic Review* and the *Gallery Gazette*, London, and wrote articles for the *Lone Hand* and *Sydney Mail*. He was sometime president of the Photographic Society of New South Wales and was elected an honorary fellow of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain in 1937.

He added an extra "x" to his name to emphasise his French ancestry. He made photography a medium of artistic expression and is remembered for the extraordinary diversity of his work "with its new awareness of the nature and qualities of Australian light".

Marcia H Cameron received her BA Dip.Ed. at the University of NSW, MA at The University of Sydney and her PhD at Macquarie University. She has taught English and history at Junee High School, Cardinal Wiseman College, London, and Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta.

She is the author of six published books: *SCEGGS a Centenary History*, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1995); *Living Stones: St Swithun's Pymble 1901–2001* (Wahroonga, NSW: Helicon Press, 2001); *An Enigmatic Life. Broughton Knox, father of contemporary Sydney Anglicanism*, (Brunswick East, Vic.: Acorn Press, 2006); *The School on the Hill. SCEGGS Gleniffer Brae 1955–1975*, (Sydney, NSW: Eliot Harper, 2010); *Phenomenal Sydney. Anglicans in a time of change 1945–2013*, (Wipf & Stock, 2016); *If God Calls. Dr Rachel Karrach of Tansen Hospital, Nepal*, (Eider Press, 2021).

She has held the position of President of The Huguenot Society of Australia since 2016.



HUGUENOT DESCENDANTS

Convicts with their dates of arrival

Abram BUZEAU (1790)
Joseph DELAFORCE (1807)
William DELAFORCE (1834)
James DUGARD (1800)
John DUPEN (1834)
Abraham DUPREE (1835)
Elizabeth DURANT (1811)
Abraham GODIN (1790)
Richard GOULEE (1834)
James GUIDON (1809)
Anthony JONQUAY (1828)
James JUCHAU (1830)
Suzannah LALLEMONT (1814)
John LECORE (1819)
Abraham James LEFROY (1819)
James LEFROY (1832)
Samuel LEPINE (1823)
Henrietta LETHULLIER (1832)
John LEVESQUE (1834)
James NAY (1834)
Harriet SAMPSON (1818)
Joseph SOUFFLAT (1798)

“Special” or middle-class convicts

George CHARTRES, solicitor
Maurice MARGAROT, political prisoner
Ferdinand MEURANT, Australia’s first jeweller

Other Huguenot descendants

Thomas BREILLAT, shipping, milling, banking, one of the founders of the Sydney Exchange and the Sydney Chamber of Commerce
Harold CAZNEAUX, photography
Charles DE BOOS, journalist
Sir Dudley de CHAIR, Governor of NSW (1923–1930)
Eccleston de FAUR, helped establish the Art Gallery of NSW
Lt Thomas de la CONDAMINE, soldier
Guillaume DELPRAT, early General Manager of BHP
Fred HOINVILLE, stunt pilot
Richard LE PLASTRIER, architect
Lt-Col James MORISSET, soldier
Henry Carter PERDRIAU, steam ferries on Sydney harbour
Richard VIAL, who saved Prince Alfred 1868 at Clontarf

Women

Phyllis BOISSIER, nurse
Marie BEUZEVILLE BYLES, first female solicitor in NSW
Minard CROMMELIN, native bush preservation
Freda du FAUR, mountaineer
Augustine SOUBEIRAN, education; French-Australian ‘League of Help’

Other Huguenot names*

*This is not an exhaustive list.

ARDOUIN	DUBEDAT	MANCHEE
ASSELIN	DUCHESNE	MANDENO
AUVACHE	FOULGER	PERRIN
BARNIER	GAUSSEN	PERROTTET
BEEHAG	GILLOTT	PITTAR
BESNARD	GUYOT	SAINT
BLONG	HEMERY	SAVORY
BOISSEVAIN	HUARD	SHOULDER
BOSANQUET	LA BARTE	SUFFREN
BUISSON	LANDON	TAURANAC
CAMROUX	LANGLOIS	TESSIER
CORDIER	LAVENUE	TEULON
DEBUS	LAYARD	TRAPAUD
DE MOLE	LUYA	VAUTIN
D’OLIER		

The Huguenot Society of Australia holds regular lectures and social events, in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. All enquiries are welcome.

The Society's conference, “Huguenot Heritage Past and Present” will be held on 21 October 2023 in Sydney.

For further information, see www.huguenotsaustralia.org.au, visit the Facebook page, or contact Robert Nash, Secretary, PO Box 184, Newtown NSW 2042.



The Huguenot
Society of
Australia

A MEDICAL TOURIST TURNED WINE GROWER

Connecting Madeira, Portugal &
New South Wales, Australia

by Andrew Redfern



The connection between the island of Madeira, Portugal, and New South Wales, Australia, may seem unlikely; but in the 1820s, Dr William Redfern made it a reality. Visiting Madeira for health reasons, he also acquired grapevines and enlisted the help of a Portuguese family to cultivate them in Australia.

Madeira and Medical Tourism

In January 1824, Sarah Redfern wrote to Lord Bathurst from London, requesting an additional land grant in New South Wales for her husband, Dr William Redfern, in order that he may continue to develop his livestock and cultivate vines from Madeira. At that time, Dr Redfern was in Madeira, benefiting from its healing climate, although his particular affliction is unspecified.

From the mid-19th to the 20th century, Madeira was famous for treating pulmonary diseases like tuberculosis, pneumonia, pleuritis, and bronchitis, due to its mild temperatures, abundant sunshine, and unique geography. Hailed by the national and international medical community as excellent for combating illnesses of the lungs, Madeira was very popular with many English aristocrats who can be considered among the first medical tourists seeking relief on this island.

Cultivating Madeira Vines in NSW

In her letter, Sarah Redfern also mentions her husband's efforts to bring Madeiran vines and vine dressers to Australia. The vine dressers, Emanuel and Ana Serrão, and their daughter Selena, were the first family to emigrate from Madeira to Australia. Sarah Redfern, along with her two children, departed England aboard the *Alfred* on 19 February 1824 for Madeira, where they were reunited with their husband and father. Both the Redfern and Serrão families departed the island on 2 April of that year and arrived in Sydney on 22 July 1824, with an assortment of cargo acquired from Madeira.

Dr Redfern received the additional land grant and introduced the white grape variety "Verdelho" from Madeira to his vineyard at Campbellfields, Campbelltown. Later, in 1824, the Serrão family welcomed a son named William Redfern Serrão in honour of their Australian sponsor. By 1852, the family had moved to Warrnambool, Victoria, and anglicised their surname to Serong. Some descendants still live in Australia today.

While the Campbelltown vineyard no longer exists, its homestead and wine cellar remain. Several Australian wineries continue to produce Verdelho wine, keeping the connection between Madeira and New South Wales alive.

Dr Redfern's visit to Madeira in 1824 created significant changes for him, and both the Redfern and Serrão families.

This trip established connections between Madeira and New South Wales that persist today. So, when selecting your next bottle of wine, perhaps the fascinating story of the Verdelho grape and its journey to Campbelltown, New South Wales will influence your decision. Cheers!

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Andrew has been tracing his family history since the mid 1980s, sparked by his mother's interest in genealogy. Fascinated with Colonial Australia, DNA and using creative ways to bring the stories of his forebears to life, Andrew loves uncovering the rogues and villains in his history. So far, he has managed to unearth an escaped convict, a travelling comedian, a murderer and several patients in mental asylums. Read about these and many more at his website: www.andrewredfern.com





In Search of... Southern Europe

WHEN NOT IN ROME (OR THE VATICAN CITY)

by Ruth Graham

Photo by Pixabay via pexels.com

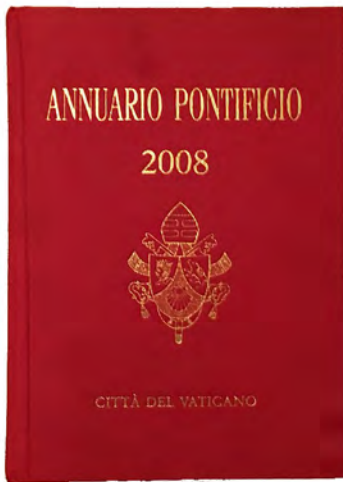


Image by MKoala, Wikimedia
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Annuario_Pontificio_2008_%28MK%29.jpg

My husband's family is Irish and of the Catholic faith, and I have spent more time in recent months attending family funerals and thus increasing my understanding of Catholic rites. Several members of his family have been priests or nuns and, thankfully, most are very interested in family history and happy to share their documents, knowledge, and queries!

As a consequence, I have been investigating those with Catholic vocations, which has led me to the archives of Vatican City, or the Vatican Apostolic Archive (the "Secret Archive" — www.archivioapostolicovaticano.va) as they hold significant records of Church officers. As most of their archives are not digitised and freely available on the popular platforms we enjoy, I will have to plan a trip to Italy at some point.

In the meantime, there are a few interesting options online. The *Annuario pontificio* is the annual directory of the Holy See, or the official office of the Pope of the Catholic Church in Vatican City. Some of the editions of this text are available to view via the Internet Archive (www.archive.org) as complete scanned books. For those who do not already utilise the Internet Archive, it is a wonderful resource — key in any topic to do with your brick walls, and you might be able to find an out-of-print folio or pamphlet that can support your research.

For those in the family who were practising in Australia, there is *The Official Directory of the Australian Catholic Church* available online (<http://www.catholicdirectory.com.au>) which lists current and former incumbents in the church, which is particularly useful for 20th century relatives.

There is also the Australian Catholic Historical Society (www.australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au) which provides considerable guidance on the historical events and records of the church.

You may need to brush up on your Italian (and Latin!) to be able to get the most from these records, but there may be family members with years of duties both at home and in missionary service to uncover.



Annuario pontificio: sourced from the Internet Archive

A JOURNEY INTO SICILIAN ANCESTRY

by Diana (Hookham) Palayan

After honing my genealogical skills researching my British ancestry, I found the confidence to embark on my husband's. He was born in Khartoum, Sudan to an Italian mother and an Armenian father, who were both born in Cairo, Egypt. His paternal grandparents were Armenians, from the part of Armenia which is now Eastern Turkey. His maternal grandparents were born in Sicily, Italy and migrated to Egypt as small children with their respective families. This article demonstrates how I researched the Sicilian ancestry, showing the need for a systematic approach and the benefit of visiting local repositories.

Where to begin? The obvious place to start was by obtaining as much oral history as I could from my husband's mother — Italia Assunta Palayan née Romeo — as she was still alive when I started this research in 2005. I was very fortunate that she had a memory like an elephant! A bonus was that she could speak, write and read Italian, which was a tremendous help in assisting me with deciphering and translating documents. A further benefit was her knowing the correct places to apply for civil records and constructing a letter in Italian in the correct format.

Further assistance in the Italian research process was obtained at the Genealogical Society of Victoria — specifically from Yvonne Izatt and the International Settlers Group. Here I learnt about the importance of knowing Italian history, where and how to obtain parish records, when civil records started and where they were kept.¹

My interview with Italia Palayan revealed she was born on 21 April 1927 to Michele Romeo and Maria (née Picardi) in Cairo. She knew her father was born in Syracuse, Siracusa, Sicily and her mother in Motta Sant'Anastasia, Catania, Sicily. With this information I started my journey into Italian ancestry research. I discovered there is no central registry for records of births, marriages, or deaths. These are all recorded locally in the place — comune (municipality) where the person was born. I noted larger towns/cities have more than one comune. It is also useful to know that when an event occurs away from the person's place of origin e.g. another village, town or even another country, as an Italian citizen, you can still register the event at your original comune in Italy.

Italia possessed her original birth registration and baptism certificate, confirming the information she had given to me. Her birth was registered at the Italian Consulate in Cairo, and this would have been forwarded to the comune of her parents. I wrote to the Comuni of Siracusa and Motta Sant'Anastasia to confirm this, and to obtain a marriage record and baptisms for her parents. After several months I finally received a reply confirming Italia's details, her parentage and her marriage in Egypt — all were registered in her father's comune in Siracusa.² They did not supply any other records. Now knowing that Siracusa was the origin of the Romeo family, I needed to find more information on her father Michele.

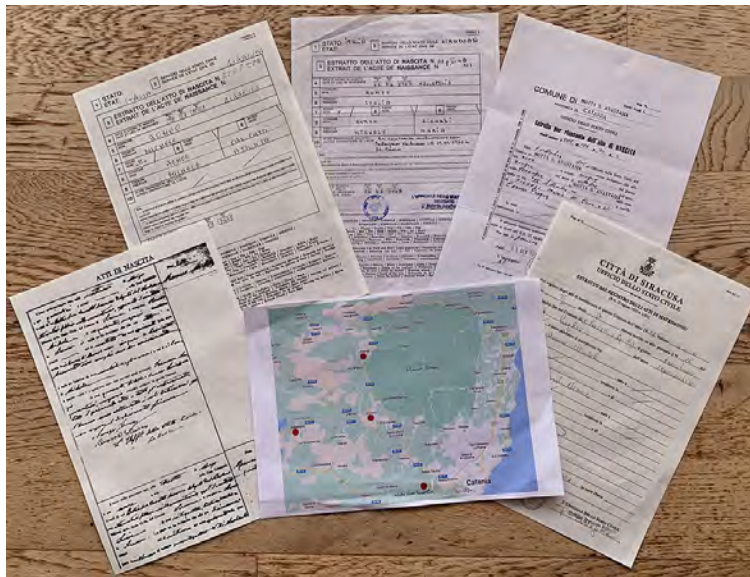
Italia told me her father, Michele was born about 1901 in Sicily, she thought in Siracusa and that he died in Rome, Italy on 7 September 1979. I wrote again to the comune in Siracusa and eventually I did receive an Estratto di Nascita (Extract of Birth) confirming his birth on 28 March 1901 and naming his parents as Michele Francesco Romeo and Assunta Canicatti.³ However, it did not mention where they came from.

There are two documents you can obtain regarding a birth — Estratto di Nascita (extract) or a full birth certificate, Atti di Nascita — from the Archivio Civile di Stato, the comune's repository for vital records. The latter is more time consuming for local staff to search for, copy and post the record, so often they will not do it, unless you are present in person to be identified and pay. Fortunately, it has now become increasingly easier to obtain these documents as they are being filmed, digitised, and presented on websites such as Ancestry.com and Familysearch.org. Siracusa is one of the places where records have been filmed, so I was able to search and find the Atti di Nascita for Michele.⁴ The certificate provides more detail, such as the time, date, and address of the birth, along with the father's age, occupation and the mother's name. Now armed with names of Michele's parents, I repeated the process, but to no avail as they were not recorded in the Comune of Siracusa. As I had no idea where they might have come from, I had come to a dead end.

I now focused my research on Italia's mother — Maria Picardi — whom Italia knew was born in the small village of Motta Sant'Anastasia, Catania, Sicily on 5 October 1905 and died on 6 October 1994 in Rome, Italy. Maria visited us in Australia in 1988 — how I wish I had begun the family history then, as I could have learnt so much more from her. Italia also remembered Maria's mother's name and that of her spouse. I was now searching for Maria Picardi with parents Cono Picardi and Pasqua Caruso. I wrote to Maria's municipality and was delighted when I received her extract of birth from the Comune of Motta Sant'Anastasia, as it confirmed what Italia had told me. The records of Motta Sant'Anastasia, for certain periods, have also been filmed and can be viewed on Familysearch.org. The films are not indexed, but after trawling through them I found the Atti di Nascita for Maria.⁵ I also looked at the Pubblicazioni di Matrimonio (equivalent of marriage banns) and I found further details of her parent's

intended marriage. I now knew Cono Picardi came from Aderno (now Adrano), but was living in Bronte. His intended spouse was Josepha Pasqua Caruso, who was born and also lived in Bronte. It also revealed that she was the daughter of Pasquale Caruso and Antonina Valenti. These villages are all situated around the base of Mount Etna in Catania, Sicily. I had now confirmed three generations.

The process had taken several years to get to this point. In the meantime, I had established a contact with a local history teacher — Grazia Messina — in the town of Giarre, Catania, via the internet. She was involved in a project of documenting the stories of people migrating from Sicily to Australia. In 2009 she came to Australia with some of her students and presented her findings to the Italian Assistance Association (CO.AS.IT) Culture and History section in Sydney. Grazia had collated my research and some of the stories from Italia's diaries onto a large poster for the Sydney exhibition, which is now in the Cultural Museum in Giarre.



Documents confirming Romeo and Picardi ancestors, and map

In June 2011 my husband and I had the opportunity to visit Grazia in Sicily. Together we visited Motta Sant'Anastasia and Bronte and made discoveries which would not have been possible researching from Australia.

In Motta Sant'Anastasia we were assisted by a young lady from the local museum. She was delighted to help us, even taking us to the comune office and demanding a full search of their records. Here we discovered the exact address where Maria Picardi had lived

and were able to visit the street and take photos of the house. In Bronte we visited the church and spoke with the priest, who, in the beginning, was not interested in helping us! If we did not have the Italian teacher with us, who pleaded our case, we would not have obtained access to the original parish registers, which he allowed me to photograph. Grazia was instrumental in taking us to the comune's offices. Unfortunately, they were closed as they were moving to a new building. Again, with her persistence and the help of the archivist, we gained free access to all the original books of the registrations of the births, marriages and deaths for Bronte (see image on page 53).

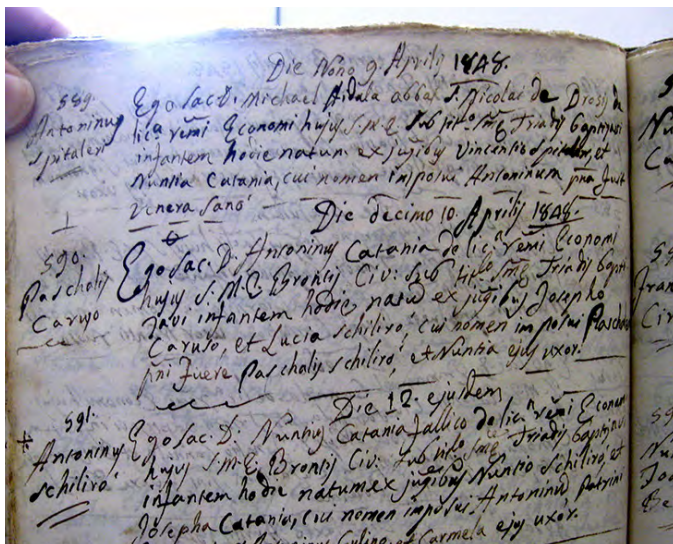
The next day, when we visited Adrano, she was unable to come with us, but we felt brave enough to tackle this on our own. The offices were about to close for the afternoon siesta, but my husband's limited Italian was able to explain how far we had come, and we just needed specific records! A kind gentleman agreed to let us stay after they closed the office. He personally went and found the records and made certified copies. The record I obtained was the birth certificate for Cono Picardi in 1879.⁶ This revealed the names of his parents, Vincenzo Picardi and Maria Patanè, and a further search produced their certificate of marriage in 1877.⁷ The Atti di Matrimonio revealed Vincenzo Picardi was 50 years of age, born in Regalbuto, but now resided in Adrano. Regalbuto is in the neighbouring province of Enna, Sicily. Vincenzo's father, also named Cono Picardi, was deceased, and his mother — Giuseppa Carchiolo — was living in Regalbuto. Vincenzo's wife, Maria Patanè, was only 20 years of age!

The village of Regalbuto was a 20-minute scenic drive from Adrano, and as it was early afternoon we decided to continue to this village, rather than return another day. I am so glad we did as this is where we discovered records that unravelled a family myth — Maria Picardi had always insisted she was descended from a baron. The family had scoffed at this as they had always been poor!

Regalbuto is a small town — the piazza only having four parking spots! We stopped at the little café to try to get some help with finding the comune. My husband tried to explain that his relative Vincenzo Picardi came from this place and that we wanted to find some documents about him. The girl appeared almost frightened and gave my husband the cold shoulder, so we decided to just have a drink before retracing our steps to



From left: Nonna Italia Palayan, Prof. Grazia Messina, Diana Palayan and Kate Palayan at the Sydney CO.AS.IT exhibition in 2009



Bronte Parish Register 1848

our hotel. A few minutes later there was a commotion inside the café and a policeman appeared and questioned us on why we wanted information about Vincenzo. We were ordered to wait, which we did, although somewhat alarmed, and in a few minutes another gentleman appeared — the Mayor of Regalbuto! He informed us that we would get the full escort of this policeman, but the comune was not open until tomorrow. He insisted we stay at a hotel not far from the village, where we were escorted by the police! A daunting experience as we had no luggage!

However, true to his word, our police escort arrived the next morning and we were taken to the comune and the document confirming Vincenzo Picardi's birth was produced!⁸ Following this we were marched to the Mayor's office where we had our photos taken and were presented with two books on the history of the village! We discovered at this meeting that our celebrity treatment was because the current Chief of Police was a Vincenzo Picardi, and it was almost certain my husband was related to him in some way! Sadly, as this Vincenzo was currently away on holiday, we did not get to meet him.

Retracing our steps to our car, we noticed a library and my husband thought we should see if they had any information on the Picardi family. A delightful librarian was only too willing to assist us. She got permission to leave work to show us the village and to introduce us to a local historian. In the beginning the gentleman was a little suspicious of our intentions, however when he understood what we were trying to do, he was only too happy to help. He produced an early map of the village which clearly showed a street and piazza named after the family. He pointed out a large old building (palazzo) which he told us was that of the Baron Picardi's family. We would never have made this connection ourselves, as the streets have all been renamed. He then took us to a church to show us a memorial to a gentleman named Heironymous Picardi, whom he stated was a relative, although I have yet to prove this. Later he sent me copies of documents showing the importance of the Picardi family and their title of baron!

Since returning to Australia, I have continued my research, with microfilms of the parish registers of Regalbuto, extending the Picardi line back to the early 1700s.

In conclusion, I can only emphasise the importance of talking to relatives, knowing and understanding Italian history, and when and where records were generated and kept. If at all possible, visit the villages. It may be family still live there. I am sure the people will be helpful, and like me you may discover unexpected treasures.

1. Lynn Nelson, *Discovering Your Italian Ancestors: How to Find and Record Your Unique Heritage* (Betterway Books, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, 1997) & George E. Ott, *Guide to the Regional Resources of Italy: Region of Sicily* (International Historical Resources, Heritage Creations, North Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, 2004).
2. Estratto dell'atto di Nascita, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Siracusa for Italia Assunta Romeo 1927 & Certificato di Matrimonio, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Siracusa for Italia Assunta Romeo 1951.
3. Estratto dell'atto di Nascita, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Siracusa for Michele Romeo 1901.
4. Atti di Nascita, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Siracusa for Michele Romeo 1901, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/588304>
5. Atti di Nascita, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Motta Sant'Anastasia for Maria Picardi 1905, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/588304>
6. Atti di Nascita, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Adrano for Cono Picardi 1879.
7. Atti di Matrimonio, L'Ufficiale dello Stato Civile, Archivio di Stato di Adrano for Vincenzo Picardi 1877.
8. Estratto per Riassunto dai Reigistri degli Atti di Nascita, Servizi Demografica, Comune di Regalbuto for Vincenzo Picardi 1827.



Diana Palayan nee Hookham was born in Hammersmith, London in 1949 and migrated to Australia in 1963, aged 14 years, with her parents and siblings. A retired medical practitioner, she is married with two adult children and three grandsons. Her interest in family history began when she was 14, which is when she drew her first family tree, but serious research had to wait until 1994.

She has done extensive research on her British roots and her husband's Italian and Armenian roots and has visited archives and parish churches in England, Malta, Italy, Armenia, Egypt, Turkey, New Zealand, and of course Australia!



IN SEARCH OF ... SOUTHERN EUROPE

SEARCHING FOR FAMILY IN PORTUGAL

by Allan Murphy

When I travelled around Portugal for a couple of weeks in 1982, I greatly enjoyed the wine, food and beautiful scenery and I met some great people too. I didn't know much about Portuguese history, apart from the early navigators, and was quite puzzled about all the signs commemorating 25 April. Was there a Portuguese connection to Anzac Day ...? My ignorance was eventually resolved when I learned that this was actually the anniversary date of the 1974 revolution.

Portugal remained an interesting blur in my memory until, some 36 years later, I found that my mother had Portuguese ancestry. I'd been researching my family history since the 1970s but my mother's ancestry had been an unsolvable mystery; she had been informally adopted in 1921 and there was no trace of her birth parents. I was very surprised indeed at the clear and definite results provided by DNA testing (but that's another story) and my Portuguese journey recommenced.

My 40 years of genealogical research experience was limited to Australia, England, Scotland, Ireland and France. Where would I start with Portugal? I could remember just one word of Portuguese: *obrigado* (thank you) which might help me be polite, but was unlikely to get me far with historical records!

Australian records clarified that my great-grandfather was Richard Pinto Frederick, a Portuguese sailor who had married in Newcastle NSW in 1902. As he died in 1909 and his wife remarried, little was known about him by the descendants with whom I was now in contact. I found that he had arrived in Newcastle NSW in 1901 as a crew member on the *Falls of Afton*, a British registered vessel which had sailed direct from Rio de Janeiro. His marriage certificate¹ confirmed that he had been born in Porto, Portugal, and gave his parents' names. Even better, his Australian Naturalisation papers gave his date of birth.²

I now had quite good information about Richard Pinto Frederick; he was born in Porto on 14 December 1879 to Antonio Joachim Frederick and Anna Conception, so surely it couldn't be too difficult to find him ...

An internet search for Portuguese genealogical records led me to FamilySearch, where I found guides and many thousands of microfilmed parish records. The guides to records and links to other research sites gave me a clear starting point, and the "Portuguese Genealogical Word List" would later prove invaluable.

While Portugal tried to impose a system of civil records for birth, death and marriage in 1832, this mainly applied to the non-Catholic minority. Registration was not compulsory until 1911. Earlier records were kept by the local parishes of the Roman Catholic Church. Portuguese records are not centralised and most older records are not indexed. Additionally, I discovered that Portuguese naming conventions are quite different from those we're used to for Anglo and Celtic ancestors. As a result, a birth/baptism index (when it exists at all) will generally provide only a guide to records in the child's first name, not the surname — and there can be hundreds of children named Maria, Anna, Antonio or Manoel.

Having tried several genealogical research sites, such as Ancestry.com, MyHeritage and Geneanet.fr, as well as extensive searches using Google etc., I went back to FamilySearch.org in a vain hope that the birth record may happen to have been indexed. None of the searches yielded any clues, so I decided to find someone who might be able to guide me.

I have been an active participant in several Rootsweb genealogy email lists and message boards, and I knew these could be very useful, both for research advice and for making contact with others with related interests. Social media groups largely replaced these email groups. As my internet searches led me to a Portuguese Genealogy group on Facebook, I decided to open an account and see if that group could help me.

The initial advice was to use tombo.pt, a site which gave links to most of the freely available archived records, including the Roman Catholic parish records. This covers all regions of Portugal, including Madeira and the Azores, island territories in the Atlantic Ocean. There is a version of the website in English, but it takes patience to learn to navigate it. Even though I had a name, place and date of birth, there were no useful indices and it became clear that I would need to search parish by parish.

Porto is the second-largest city in Portugal and has 15 parishes in the metropolitan area (and many more in the Porto region), so I started at "A", checking each parish baptism register, one record per page, from around the known birth date for several months. The record was found in the 14th parish — but all was not as expected.

I had assumed that there had been some anglicisation of Richard's name; perhaps originally *Ricardo Pinto Frederico*.

The baptism record I found in the parish of Sé (Cathedral)³ was for *Ricardo* and most details matched — except the father's name was Antonio Joaquim Fernandes. Nevertheless, this was definitely the right family and these baptism registers give a wealth of further information including:

- The parents' names, occupations, parish/region of birth and current residence
- The parish in which the parents had married
- The names of all grandparents

This led naturally to the marriage registers in the nearby parish of Vitória, but I was in for a further surprise. The marriage entry⁴ confirmed the details from Ricardo's baptism entry — but his father was recorded as Antonio Joaquim Peixoto!

Until quite recent times, surnames were not formally assigned at birth and people could choose which family name they used. Often records show no family names at all — and sometimes the names will change from one record to the next. Other “first” names could also be taken later in life; these were often religious names (Maria, de Jesus, Conceição) or family surnames. This situation requires some adjustment in thinking for genealogists used to Irish/UK or Western Europe research.

The lack of indices means that slow checking of each page of a parish's records is needed, and of course, sometimes several parishes in an area need to be searched. Yet the rewards can be great, as Portuguese records often provide extensive genealogical detail and lead to another generation and/or a different parish.

The 1865 marriage certificate for Ricardo's parents, for example, provided:

- Name, age, occupation, residence and place of birth for the bride and groom
- Names and place of birth for the parents of both the bride and groom

So the next step was to go to the parish records in their home villages.

The good news is that most of the parish records are available free online via tombo.pt, so the slow search can be conducted from your own home. Reading difficult handwriting in an unfamiliar language can be another big challenge, so you should seek help when it is needed.

Over the past few years I've built an extensive tree of my Portuguese ancestors. While my understanding of Portuguese history and customs has improved, I have a long way to go. The next big challenge will be trying to delve into archive records — legal papers, etc — to find out more about the lives these ancestors lived. With my poor Portuguese language skills, this will certainly be a challenge, although between the “Portuguese Genealogical Word List” and online translation tools I can now usually figure out what a document might be saying. When unable to proceed, it is important to ask for help. Especially if you've made a serious attempt, people are often very willing to help you understand the indecipherable.

One day I'll see Portugal again, but with different eyes, those of a descendant going “home”.

1. NSW Registry of Births, Death & Marriages, marriage certificate 7231/1902
2. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A1, 1904/7862
3. Baptism register, Sé, Porto, no. 5 of 1880.
4. Marriage register, Vitória, Porto, no. 61 of 1865.

Photo of Porto, Portugal by roya ann miller on Unsplash

Top Internet Sites for Portuguese Genealogy

Tombo: Comprehensive, free access to parish and civil records, which can be viewed online. Also links to archive offices and indices where available.

<https://tombo.pt/>

FamilySearch: Excellent guides to Portuguese research. Many of the Portuguese records are available and some have been indexed. Start with a name search.

<https://www.familysearch.org/>

FamilySearch Research Wiki: Background country information and details about available resources.

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Portugal>

The **Portuguese Genealogical Word List** is a key document.

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List

Facebook – Portuguese Genealogy group:

People experienced in Portuguese language and research are keen to help.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/portuguesegenealogy>

Google translate (or similar): Essential if you don't know the language.

<https://translate.google.com/>



Allan Murphy has been actively researching his ancestry and been a member of the Society of Australian Genealogists for 45 years. He was a financial services manager before his recent retirement and completed the Society of Australian Genealogists' Certificate in Genealogical Research in 2022. Additionally, he has co-authored *Liversedge & Patton, A Family History* which is held in the SAG Library, had *Stirke Family of Kinsale* published in *The Kinsale Record*, Vol. 25, 2017, gave a presentation lecture to the Kinsale Historical Society in 2017, presented “Swift, Sheridan & Mrs Whiteway” as an independent scholar at the Swift350 conference at Trinity College Dublin in 2017 and is expecting his biography of John Whiteway, Surgeon, to be published in *The Irish Genealogist* later this year.

MY ITALIAN ANCESTORS

by Antoinette Baroni

Photo by Irene Gurrieri on Unsplash

My Italian family history research journey spans the past 50 years, starting well before the internet, at a time when physical attendance at a repository was necessary to obtain information. Long hours were spent in libraries squinting at microfiche records; at local councils in Italy waiting for card index files recording the stato di famiglia (record of a family unit) to surface; and at home in Sydney, impatiently waiting for a positive reply to a snail mail letter to Italy requesting information of a parish priest or local archivist. Life pre-Ancestry, DNA, and pre-digitalised archive sites.

We know that all family history research, regardless of the country, starts with gathering all the known facts from present family members. Documents, photographs, certificates, and family stories stored in cupboards, forgotten in shoeboxes, or tucked away in the minds of close and extended family elders.

Family history brings together recorders of core family details with those who want to delve more deeply into the history of family than the bare bones of “hatches, matches and dispatches” (BDMs) reveal, rather like an archaeologist technically cataloguing found treasures for the historian to then piece together their rich history.

The real work starts at the next step, searching available archives. Whether Italian ancestors are at the periphery of your family history journey or at the very heart of it, BDMs are the place to start digging up your Italian past.

Start with a quick scrutiny of how to research Italian family history tutorials online, such as the content on Wikitree: www.wikitree.com/wiki/Category:Italy_Genealogy_Resources, then time travel from your desk and plunge into the excellent, fascinating Italian Government Archive – Antenati: <https://antenati.cultura.gov.it/?lang=en>.

Antenati means ancestors in Italian, and this site brings together extensive archival records combining BDMs from *comuni* (local councils) and military records, as well as some census and church archives.

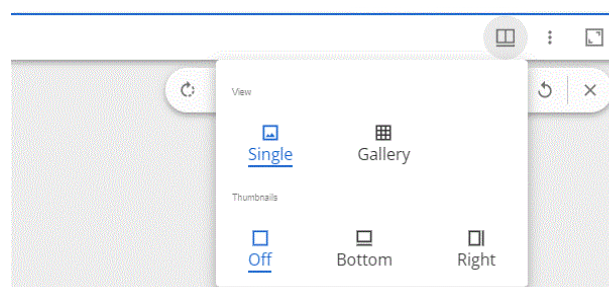
Antenati groups registers together under provinces, such as Tuscany. Read the instructions first before you search the archives, and while the collection is still incomplete, it is being constantly updated. If the place for your record search is not listed or not completed, it is best to write directly to the local council archives concerned, bearing in mind that there will be some communities where records have been lost due to conflicts, such as World War II, or to natural disasters.

Nonetheless, Antenati is the best resource for researchers of Italian family history, and generally cover records from 1806.

Arm yourself with as much information as possible on your ancestor/s. Check your known facts before venturing into the registers, and ensure that you are searching for the correct town, in the correct province and/or parish at a particular historical time. Family records or stories handed down may talk about a San Donato in Tuscany as the native town of your ancestor. However, as there are several towns called San Donato in Tuscany, you will

need to be precise if you want to avoid hours of wasted research time. Is it San Donato, Firenze (Florence) or San Donato in Poggio, which is in the Chianti area, or even one of several others? Some provinces have changed boundaries over time, and you may find that Lucca was once under the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, whereas later it is recorded as the standalone province of Lucca, Tuscany. Additionally, post-war treaties excised whole territories from Italy, such as parts of Provence, France.

Whilst site information on Antenati is available in English or Italian, the actual source documents are all handwritten in Italian. Interpreting these can be a little daunting, even for Italian speakers. These tips may help: having located the correct BDM register, use the “Gallery” icon located on the top right-hand side tool bar.



Go directly to the index, usually located at the end of a yearly register. As the indexes are alphabetical, a search of the index, always by surname, should give you a reference number for the full entry in the year register. Locate this using the reference number and download. For simply recording the vital details of an ancestor and their immediate family, this information should be sufficient.

Deep diving into the registers should produce a more complete picture for those whose Italian ancestors are at the heart of your research. A systematic search of the BDMs will put meat on the archival bones. For example, if your family has deep roots in a community, the family name should be prominent in the yearly and 10-yearly indexes. On the other hand, if they were incomers, the surnames will usually be limited to two or three families originating from one ancestor. By tracing the yearly registers back to this ancestor, their original hometown will be clearly stated on any of their relevant BDMs.

Marriage records in these archives also include the documentation required at the time, such as birth and baptismal

certificates for the bride and groom. Finding this genealogical gold can stretch the generational particulars of a family line over three generations from this one set of documents, including both sets of grandparents and parents of the bride and groom. Names of witnesses may also provide details of siblings if, for example, the witness is a brother or a cousin.

I wanted to confirm the name of my maternal third great-grandmother on the Denaro line, the mother of the Gregorio Denaro who migrated to Queensland in 1882. To achieve this, I needed to confirm her name on his marriage documents.

The only Australian document showing Gregorio's parents was his Queensland Death Certificate, which stated his father was Filippo Denaro and his mother was Rosa LaVerde. Both Gregorio and his wife, Sebastiana Scordo, were illiterate. It was their son who filed the death certificate, and it is possible that he made a mistake. Where the name LaVerde came from is still a mystery. When I started researching in the Italian archives, I found no other documentary evidence to support the existence of a Rosa LaVerde as either Filippo Denaro's wife or Gregorio's mother.

According to a myth garnered from family stories, and now circulating on various online family trees, Filippo Denaro and Rosa LaVerde lived in Naples and became sweethearts; however, the couple's parents did not approve. So, in about 1835, the couple took Filippo's fishing boat and sailed from Naples to Scaletta, just south of Messina, on Sicily's north-east coast. Filippo was 34 years old, and Rosa 33 years old. Supposedly they married there, settled, had three children, and remained in Scaletta for the rest of their lives.

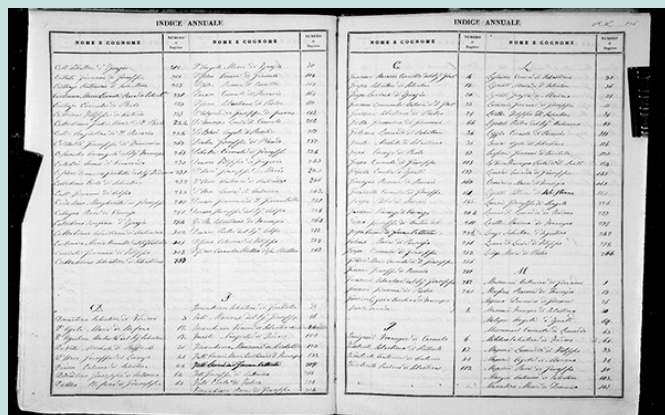
The family story is improbable on several levels, not least the purely practical — to travel approximately 450km (245 nautical miles) from Naples to Scaletta Zanclea in the province of Messina, in an open fishing boat, either rowing or under sail, would be a considerable feat for two persons even today, let alone in the mid-1800s. At a top sailing/rowing speed of 6km per hour it would take about 10 to 12 days, if the weather was favourable.

Researching all possible available archival registers in both Scaletta (Zanclea), Riposto and Giarre, did not provide any evidence to support this romantic myth. Both Filippo Denaro and his wife, Rosa Castorina (not LaVerde) were born in Riposto of parents who were domiciled in Riposto.

All Italian records of the couple, especially birth records for their children, including our direct ancestor Gregorio Denaro, evidence the mother's name as Castorina, Rosa, born and domiciled in Riposto, not Naples. A thorough search of the Scaletta archives did not produce details of any births, deaths, or marriages attributable to this couple. On the other hand, there is wide documentary evidence in the Riposto archives that Filippo and Rosa lived, worked, had children, attended their marriages, and died in Riposto.

It was this family story that led me to a search for the original marriage documents for Gregorio Denaro and Sebastiana Scordo. I needed to find conclusive evidence of his mother's name to correct the record. My search led me to correspond with the archivists in the Catania Provincial Archives. Whilst they were able to provide some family certificates not available online, they informed me that the marriage documents for that period (1867) were kept offsite in a private archival repository on the outskirts of Catania. I was welcome to view them should I visit Catania.

My opportunity came in 2018 when my husband and I visited Sicily on a research trip to fill in gaps in the history of my forebears in Messina and Riposto. We were given access to the offsite repository, a storage facility in the back blocks of the city of



Example of an Annual Index

The alphabetical column records the person under nome e cognome (surname) whilst the numerical column has the number of the entry in this register where you will locate the full entry. In this case, the yearly birth index for Riposto in 1877, under the letter D, I located Denaro Filippo di Gregorio at #243 in the register.

Translated, the full entry reads:

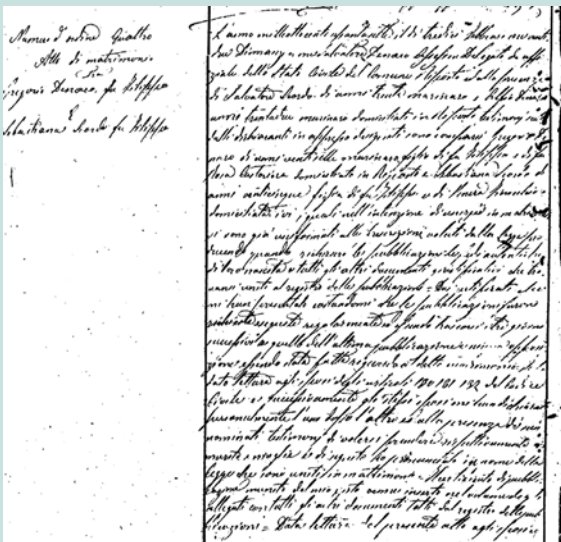
In the year 1877, on 24th September at 4.15pm at the council office before me Antonio Collida, Officer of Riposto Council appeared Gergorio Denaro, fishmonger, 36 years of age who declared that at 1am on 23rd September at the house in Via Carmine, by Sebastiana Scordo, 30 years old, his legal wife and with whom he lives, was born a male child which he presented to me and to whom he has given the name Filippo. This was done in the presence of two witnesses, Matteo Vincenzo, 24 years old, sailor and Venerando Foresta, 36 years old, fishmonger, both residents of Riposto. This was read to them given that all declared themselves to be illiterate.

Such a mine of information in this short entry. This is the birth entry of my great-uncle Filippo, who migrated to Brisbane with Gregorio and Sebastiana and his siblings.

Catania. The car trip to the site could be the subject of a separate story: imagine an urban industrial fringe wasteland, populated by suspicious seedy types, reminiscent of a scene from a gangster film. Furthermore, our local driver was very edgy, locked the doors and would not stop for anything, including traffic lights!

Haphazard is the word that springs to mind regarding the storage of these precious records. On arrival at the high security compound, and after our letter of introduction had been confirmed, we were shown to a small internal cubicle where several cardboard boxes were placed on a low table with two chairs either side and then left to ourselves. We located the Denaro-Scordo folder amongst many loose folders in the second box of marriage records for Riposto, 1867. The documents clearly state that Rosa Castorina was the wife of Filippo and the mother of Gregorio Denaro. The myth of Rosa LaVerde had finally been debunked.

Death records vary in the extent of details included. Apart from the name and parents of the deceased, the date, location of death, address, marital status, and partner's name, sometimes they will provide details of the cause of death. Death indexes for a particular year can throw up an indication of significant events in the history of the community: if the index is longer than usual, it could indicate an outbreak of disease or a time of civil unrest or war.



Marriage act for Gregorio Denaro and Sebastiana Scordo, seen at the Catania Archives in 2018

Translated, the full entry reads:

On 13 February, 1867 before me Salvatore Denaro authorized officer of the Comune di Riposto appeared Salvatore Scordo, sailor 30 years old and Alfio Denaro, sailor, 33 years old both residing in Riposto, and standing as witnesses for Gregorio Denaro, sailor, 27 years old, son of the late Filippo Denaro and Rosa Castorina both of Riposto and for Sebastiana Scordo, 25 years old, daughter of the late Filippo Scordo and of Venera Finocchiaro, both of Riposto, both having the intention of uniting in marriage. They are aware of the legal requirements and have supplied birth certificates and all other documents required including posted of banns etc. Therefore, in the presence of their witnesses they declare their wish to be husband and wife and I have proclaimed that they are now married before the law. (further legal jargon follows)

Note: Confusing combination of names and surnames, multiple instances of Denaro and Salvatore appear.

On researching my husband’s maternal line, in a small tight-knit hill town in Tuscany of no more than 3,000 souls, the death records evidenced that one of his forebears had lost two wives to childbirth, three stillborn children, and two children dead before their second birthdays. In the space of a few months in 1870, this man lost his first wife and child in childbirth, then his father and another child to disease. Nowadays, this seems improbable, but in a time before advances in science and medicine, this was the everyday lived experience. A wider search of the death registers for a two-year period showed a marked increase in deaths from disease. It was a heartbreaking discovery, and it brought the perils of life in this seemingly idyllic rural community starkly to life for us.

Whilst one could limit their search to the Antenati site, for documents predating 1800, or simply not available on that site, further research is called for. Italian Ecclesiastical records are available online, but are not complete, so it’s worthwhile checking directly on a site such as <https://familytreemagazine.com/heritage/italian/church-keys/> to see what’s available. In Italy, as elsewhere, there are many associations, local history publications and museums, as well as newspaper sources, that

can help your research. For example, if your ancestor was a partisan during World War II, go to the *Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia* (National Association of Italian Partisans) – ANPI: <https://www.anpi.it/>, present in all cities and many smaller towns. The site is also available in English.

One of my husband’s family ancestors was a shipbuilder and ship owner in Viareggio, Tuscany. Visits to the small but well-resourced Museo della Marineria, a maritime museum there and talking to the volunteers who manned it, fleshed out the history of these remarkable pioneering men and women. Further research into the shipbuilding history of this area led us to better understand the reason for the family migration a short way up the coast to LaSpezia. Many of these specialised museums have excellent websites, often available in English, and as most are staffed by volunteers who are passionate about their subject, they usually welcome enquiries.

It is important to remember that Italy was only unified as a country in 1865. Prior to that date, individual city states were the norm, each with its own archival record systems. There were the papal states, the kingdom of Naples which encompassed Sicily, the kingdom of Piedmont and Sardinia, the Republic of Venice, and many more. Layered on top of this confusing archival tapestry are the conflicts and natural disasters which wiped out many of the fragile paper archives, or rendered others unreadable. You will encounter gaps and brick walls — sometimes there are ways around them, such as the church or military archives, but sometimes you may simply have to admit defeat.

For those who do not have any Italian language skills, you may have to pay for the services of a translator if a helpful Italian-speaking family member or friend cannot be found. Should you need to write to an archival site in Italy, the examples of letters in Italian on Wikitree are quite adequate for most purposes. Be sure to stress that you are exclusively researching your family history, limit your enquiry to two or three pivotal ancestors, and enquire upfront about any fees involved.

Whilst time travel from your desk into the heart of the Italy of your ancestor has become infinitely more accessible in the 21st century, nothing can replace visiting family locations in Italy.

All my maternal forebears were Italian. Migration to Queensland started in the 1880s from Sicily with my great-great-grandparents Denaro/Scordo from Riposto, Catania and my maternal great-grandfather, Pasquale Castagnola from Messina. In the next generation, my maternal grandmother, Giuseppina Castagnola, married a businessman, Antonino Faiella from Sorrento near Naples. All five of the children from this marriage, three daughters and two sons, young adults during World War II, chose to marry non-Italians. The daughters’ husbands were variously English, Irish, American or Anglo-Australian, providing the women with the protection of a non-Italian name in a time when Italy was viewed as the enemy.

Having skipped a generation, both my sister and I married Italians. My husband’s roots are Tuscan on both sides, although he identifies as Genoese, having been born and brought up in Liguria. Family history research for us therefore covers a wide geographical area. From Messina and Riposto in Sicily to Sorrento near Naples for my forebears to various cities and towns in Tuscany and Liguria for my husband’s family. We have tried to cover them all on multiple visits to Italy over the past 20 years and while COVID put a full-stop to our annual visits to Italy, this year we will finally complete the research journey in La Spezia, fleshing out details of my father-in-law’s family.

Along the journey, there have been equal moments of delight and

of sadness. During our visit to Sicily in 2018, we hired a boat and skipper from the little town of Marzamemi to place a hero's laurel wreath on the sea to honour my father-in-law. His torpedo boat was sunk on 12 October 1940 by the British, during the battle of Capo Passero, one of the first naval battles of World War II. We motored out as close as possible to the co-ordinates recorded for the site and my husband laid the wreath on the water. It was a very touching and emotional moment for all. Even the boat's skipper and crew were in tears.

Full of sunshine, smiles and exuberant abundance, Sorrento is a delight to visit at any time. Initial enquiries at the local council archives revealed that the entire family of my maternal grandfather, Antonino Faiella, left Sorrento together and migrated to the nearby city of Naples around the time that my grandfather Antonino left Italy in the early 1900s. I had downloaded all available Antenati records, but wanted to dig deeper into the Faiella family past in Sorrento.

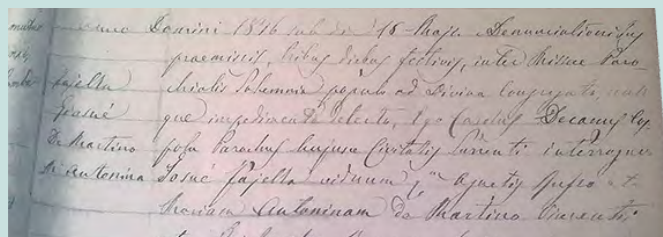
In the Antenati records for Sorrento, the family name Faiella is uncommon. However, a short boat ride away from Sorrento to the island of Capri, reveals that Faiella is a very common surname there. Anecdotally, this was reinforced when asking about the name in Sorrento. As the Antenati records for Sorrento are only partially uploaded, I had to widen my search. The Council Archivist suggested the diocesan archives. The *Duomo di Sorrento* (Sorrento Cathedral) is a short walk from the council offices and holds church records going back at least to the 1600s. I spent one wonderful afternoon there with a most enthusiastic young priest who urged me to allow him to continue searching my DiMartino and Faiella family lines way back past 1650!

It had taken him two hours of tracing my grandfather's family back to 1650 from 1809 where the archives of the Sorrento *comune* finished. In a medieval domed room with floor to ceiling bookshelves lining both walls, sliding the library ladder along to the appropriate bay, he would climb up and select one large dusty heavy register at a time. Descending, he would place the register reverently on the table for us to view. He repeated this task at least 20 times. By that stage, on a hot summer afternoon, I was exhausted and so reluctantly had to stop.

The entries were in Latin, the language of the church, written in careful copperplate calligraphy. To me, they were thrilling simply to see, touch and understand that here I was truly holding my past in my hands. As the song says *Turn'a Sorrento* I had in fact returned to Sorrento and from that day it lodged in my heart.

Two days of research in Sorrento confirmed that my Faiella family had been living in Sorrento for more than 150 years. Whilst church records for the Faiella family fade out before 1750, my DiMartino, Gargiulo and Coppola family lines extended back much further in the church records, which proves that they are deeply rooted in the story of Sorrento.

Research on the ground in Italy requires time and a more nuanced approach than one might use in an English-speaking environment. Be patient. Make time. It is a long way to travel back to your family's town if you do not allow enough time to follow all the research leads your visit may throw up. Write to the archivists in advance, at least two months prior to your travel dates, to let them know when you plan to visit. Make a note of all correspondence and arrive armed with all the information you have already gathered. Arrive with a personal touch such as a small gift to the archivist who helps you. Remember their name.



Marriage of my second great-grandfather Giosue Faiella to Maria Antonina De Martino 1876 at the Sorrento Church Archives

Prior to World War II, there was a somewhat rigid formula for naming children whereby family names such as Giosue and Maria Antonina are carried forward in each generation by each child of the family.

In my Faiella family line, up to my generation, we have always had a Giosue and an Antonina or Antonino. I am named after my grandfather, Antonino Faiella. This practice can prove a trap for family researchers, as it's possible to have multiple individuals with the same name in the one family line.

If your Italian language skills are limited or non-existent, it is worthwhile including the cost of a translator in your research budget. Check the opening times for the archives you plan to visit and make sure you give yourself at least three or four days in each town you need to research. An archive is only open to researchers on restricted days and times, so allow time in case you need a follow-up visit.

Often one research source leads to another and in a small community, there may be local historians who usually relish the opportunity to share their knowledge. You may wish to visit cemeteries and family addresses thrown up by the documents, visit the local museums and bookshops for local history information and publications, walk in your ancestor's footsteps, and be prepared for an emotional response to unexpected revelations.

Strap yourself in, enjoy the ride. I hope this brief overview assists you in your search.



Fluent in Italian, French and Mandarin, Antoinette has a Masters in International Relations and has been a company director since 1969, working extensively in Australia, the UK and Asia, principally China, until retiring in 2014. Since 1968 she has been married to an Italian, born in Genova, but with deep Tuscan roots. Journeying into the lives of his family forebears, a past peppered with poets and pragmatists, heroes, highflyers and humble rural villagers has enabled them to recreate and share with their descendants, a family tree celebrating a rich history stretching back to the 17th century.

Researching her mother's family has led down rabbit holes, over brick walls, debunking family myths and uncovering skeletons, all along the way finding joy, delight, despair, tears and immense pride in the courage and determination of her people.



EXHIBITION

**The People's House:
Sydney Opera House at 50**

**1 July to 12 November 2023
Museum of Sydney**

*MHNSW – StAC: NRS-21689-1-17-GPO3_21724 Government Printing Office 3 – 21724 –
Royal visit and opening of Sydney Opera House [20/10/1973]*

In 2023, the Sydney Opera House is celebrating 50 outstanding years in the cultural and social life of Sydney and the nation. Sydney's pre-eminent centre for the performing arts was conceived and built at an extraordinary time in Australia's development. The post-World War II years saw a vigorous questioning and redefining of the national identity. With it came a desire for Australia to take its place on the world's cultural stage.

Officially opened to significant fanfare on 20 October 1973, the Opera House — and its unmistakable silhouette — became an instant icon; a symbol that captured the imagination of the nation and the world and became synonymous with Australia. Under its spectacular roof, performers, artists, audiences and workers — from front-of-house to backstage — have entertained, informed, inspired and applauded. An astonishing variety of people and productions have graced the Opera House stages and steps, leaving millions of visitors with indelible memories. This exhibition celebrates five decades of performance, public celebrations and memorials, as the Opera House and its forecourt became Sydney's great civic space and “the people's house”

The exhibition will be on display at the **Museum of Sydney** between **1 July and 12 November 2023**.

Sydney Opera House Guide

Did you know that we hold Jorn Utzon's original drawings submitted in the competition for the design of the Sydney Opera House?

If you are curious about what the State Archives Collection holds on the Opera House, see our recently updated Guide. Here you will find information about posters and programs, plans and drawings and correspondence concerning the planning, construction and maintenance of the House.

You will find the Guide in our Subjects A-Z on our website under “Sydney Opera House”, <https://mhnsw.au/archive/subjects/>.



MHNSW – StAC: NRS-12707 | “Sydney National Opera House” (“Red Book”), 1958

WEBINARS

How to find our recorded webinars

Did you know that we record all of our webinars and load them to our website? You will usually find them in our Subjects A-Z, <https://mhnsw.au/archive/subjects/>, under the topic of the webinar. From here you can download and watch them as many times as you like.

One of our most popular recent webinars is that on the Colonial Secretary's Letters Received, 1826–1896, those papers indexed by the late Mrs Joan Reese. You will find this webinar and others on the Colonial Secretary's papers here:

<https://mhnsw.au/archive/subjects/colonial-secretary/>.

In April we presented a webinar on discovering the State Archives Collections on the MHNSW website. This has been uploaded to our Getting Started page, which you will find in our Subjects A-Z. The link to the webinar is:

<https://mhnsw.au/webinars/discovering-the-state-archives-collection/>.

How to register for upcoming webinars

Simply click on the What's On button on the top of our homepage, <https://mhnsw.au/>. You can filter events by Tag — select Webinar. From here you can check the dates and register for upcoming webinars.

On 23 June we will be revisiting one of our favourite series, Probate Packets. Register here:

<https://mhnsw.au/whats-on/events/webinar-probate-packets-revisited/>.



WEBINAR

Probate packets revisited

Friday 23 June 2023

10:30am – 11:30am

This webinar will focus on the sources for probate in the State Archives Collection and the techniques you can use to find them.

COLLECTION eNews

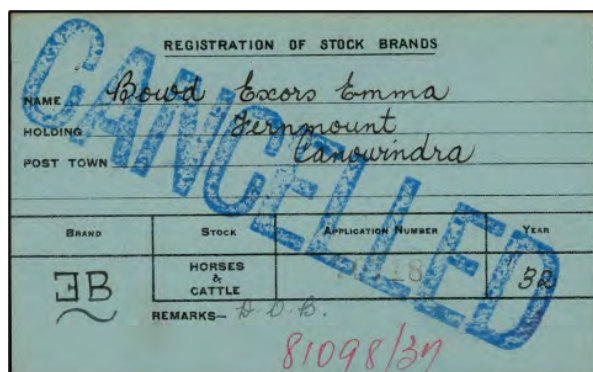
Do you receive our newsletter *Collection eNews*? The newsletter provides up-to-date information about new research tools and resources, services and seminars, exhibitions and other activities taking place at Museums of History NSW.

To subscribe to *Collection eNews* please email collections@mhnsw.au.

LARGE STOCK BRAND REGISTRATION CARDS

If you have farmers and graziers in your family, you might be interested in our large stock brand registration cards. Recently digitised, this series consists of over 32,000 cancelled stock brand registration cards. The cards cover New South Wales brands, and are arranged alphabetically, according to the name of the owner of the brand. Details are given of holding, location, brand application number, date of registration, and the actual brand. In some cases, date and details of transfer of brands are also given.

You can search for and view the cards in our catalogue. Search by the name of the registration holder, holding name or town name.



MHNSW – StAC: NRS-122-1-[13/8880]-[1816] Bowd, late Emma, Fernmount, Canowindra

OUR SAG COMMUNITY

Under the Society's Constitution, the Board may award the status of Fellow to a member who demonstrates outstanding scholarship and service to the Society. Originally, the number of living Fellows at any one time was limited to 25. This number was increased to 35 in 1995 and from 2013 the cap was removed entirely, although the 1974 provision that an individual must have been a member for at least 10 years to be eligible for the award remains.



Over the past 90 years a total of 97 members have been appointed Fellows, and a full list of these individuals can be found on our website: www.sag.org.au

To celebrate our 75th anniversary, a list of the then 85 Fellows was published in *Descent* 37-3 (September 2007, page 156). As part of our ongoing celebrations for our 90th anniversary, the following list records our current 97 Fellows. Included are the eight Fellows who were alive in 2007 but have since died (together with their date of death), along with the 12 Fellows elected between late 2007 and 2022.

Fellows 2007–2022

Name	Appointed	Death
Lionel Gilbert, OAM	April 1955	28 January 2015
Errol Lea-Scarlett	October 1963	30 December 2019
Peter Scott	October 1963	
Keith Johnson, AM	October 1975	
Malcolm Sainty, AM	October 1975	
Evan Best, OAM	December 1987	
Laurel Burge, OAM	September 1988	30 April 2014
Lillyan MacDonald	September 1988	10 March 2013
John Wilson	September 1988	
Heather Garnsey	August 1992	
John Spurway	August 1992	
Kenneth Knight, AM	August 1994	16 July 2021
Pauline Patterson	August 1994	8 March 2019
Richard Reid	August 1994	
Janet Worthington	August 1994	
Patricia Gordon	April 1996	18 May 2022
John McLaughlin#	June 1997	
Richard d'Apice, AM	December 1998	
Ralph Hawkins	December 1998	
Perry McIntyre, AM	December 1998	
Peter Morrow	December 1988	30 June 2018
Rex Toomey	December 1998	
Faye Young	December 1998	
Carol Baxter	February 2002	
Graham Lewis	November 2003	



Name	Appointed
Martyn Killion	December 2006
Terence Eakin	November 2007
Alan Day	May 2013
Vicki Eldridge	May 2013
Pauline Kettle	May 2013
Alison Wolf	May 2013
Megan Martin	December 2018
Michelle Nichols	December 2018
Sue Comrie-Thomson	December 2018
Carole Riley	December 2019
Philippa Garnsey	December 2020
Robert Nash	December 2021
Aileen Trinder	December 2021

We were saddened to learn of the death of John McLaughlin in March this year. His obituary will follow in the September issue of *Descent*.

Nominating a Fellow

A set of guidelines relating to the nomination and award of Fellow can be found on our website:

www.sag.org.au

If there is a SAG member you would like to nominate, please forward the name of the individual and details of his/her service to membership@sag.org.au with the subject line: Fellow Nomination, and provide your contact details in case we need to follow up with you.

New Fellows 2023

Congratulations to the following three members were awarded the status of Fellow at our 2023 AGM:

Kerry Farmer

Kerry Farmer has been a member of the Society since 1997 and her substantial contribution has been, and continues to be, in the area of education, namely course development and presentation. She has been the convenor of the Education Committee for almost 10 years, is a member of the Diploma and Certificate Course Committees, and is a supervisor and examiner for the Society's Diploma in Family Historical Studies.

Kerry's professional background is in programming and systems analysis and she has used this expertise to apply to her leadership in support of the Society's DNA Research Group. She was one of the co-founders of the DNA Sydney blog: <https://dnasydney.wordpress.com>, and has led courses and presentations to support the development of knowledge of DNA research methods in family history.

In addition to volunteering at the Society since 2005, Kerry has been a director of the Society since 2018 and was formerly a director of Australian Studies at the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, developing the Certificate in Genealogical Studies – Australian Records. Until this year she was on the AFFHO (Australian Federation of Family History Organisations) Board, and she is also the coordinator of the Sydney chapter of The Master Genealogist Users Group.

Kerry began writing articles on DNA for *Descent* from March 2015 and had a regular column through to June 2016.

She is the author of significant publications for the sector including *Arrivals in Australia from 1788* (2015) and, together with Rosemary Kopittke, *Which Genealogy Program?* (3rd edition 2012). She has written numerous guides published by Unlock the Past including:

- *Births, marriages and deaths in Australia* (2017)
- *DNA for Genealogists* – 4th edition (2017)
- *Convicts: from trial to freedom* (2018)
- *DNA: Chromosome Mapping* (2018)
- *GEDmatch: tools for DNA & genealogy research* 2nd edition (2019)

In addition to her many presentations for the Society, including at a number of "Lost in ..." weekends, Kerry has spoken at numerous genealogical conferences, including the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisation's congresses in 2012 (*Which Genealogy Program?*), 2015 (*DNA for Genealogists; Autosomal DNA and Migration Schemes to Australia*), 2018 (*DNA: A modern tool to solve historical puzzles*) and 2022. She was one of the key speakers for Unlock the Past conferences on its 4th and 13th cruises, and spoke at RootsTech London in 2019.

OUR SAG COMMUNITY

Janette Pelosi

Janette Pelosi has been a longstanding member of the Society and has contributed to a wide range of volunteering projects in support of the Society's collections, educational offerings and publications, in particular *Descent*. Janette is a trained historian, librarian and archivist, and has had a long career in the public sector supporting the public access of archival documentation relating to family history, with a speciality in records from colonial Australia and World War I.

Janette has been a director of the Society of Australian Genealogists since 2012 and vice-president since June 2021. Her roles within the Society have included: Convenor of the Diploma and Certificate Course Committees, Convenor of the Croker Prize for Biography Selection Committee, Convenor of the Collections Committee, Supervisor and Examiner for the Society's Diploma in Family Historical Studies, and Member of the Education Committee.

Janette has written and presented extensively throughout the family history sector, including authoring or co-authoring the following works, some of which have been cited by historians:

- Pelosi, J. *The Rockdale Volunteer Fire Brigade* (2008), for which she won Rockdale City Council's Ron Rathbone Local History Prize in 2008.
- Pelosi, J. "Recordkeeping in the Age of Governor Macquarie," *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, 12 (2010), 216–222.
- Lynch, G. and Pelosi, J. "Lost and Found – Reinstating Playwright Edward Geoghegan (1813–1869) and His Most Controversial Play, *The Hibernian Father* (1844)," *Language and Power in the Celtic World: Papers from the Seventh Australian Conference of Celtic Studies*. Celtic Studies Foundation, the University of Sydney: Sydney (2011).
- Pelosi, J. "Sentenced Beyond the Seas: Australia's early convict records," *Descent*, Vol. 42 Part 4 (2012), 155–163.
- Pelosi, J. "Submitted for approval of the Colonial Secretary' Popular Entertainment in the State Archives, 1828–1856", *A World of Popular Entertainments: an edited volume of critical essays*, edited by Gillian Arrighi and Victor Emeljanow, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, (2012), for which she received a Mander Jones award in 2012.
- Pelosi, J. "Who Was Thomas Kenna?", *Descent*, Vol. 47 Part 3 (2017), 116–122.
- Pelosi, J. *Gladesville mental hospital records and their uses for family history* (2018).
- Blay, N. and Pelosi, J. "Historical exploration of the work and workload of the WW1 nurse in an Australian auxiliary hospital", *Collegian*, Vol. 27, no. 6, (2020), 642–648.

Janette has contributed many book reviews to *Descent*, and was guest editor of the September 2016 edition. She has been an active member of the Botany Bay Family History Society and is a professional member of the Professional Historians Association (NSW and ACT), and the Australian Society of Archivists, and was convenor of the NSW Branch of the latter.

Veronica Williams

Veronica Williams has been a member of SAG since 2011 and in that time has given outstanding service in the field of genetic genealogy. Veronica's work has ensured that the Society is positioned to be at the forefront of genetic genealogy learning and development in Australia.

When direct to consumer DNA testing became available, Veronica saw the relevance for family historians and took her first DNA test in 2010. In the early years, most of her understanding of DNA was obtained by working with people overseas, but she recognised the need for the Society to develop a network of people who were interested in learning and developing their understanding of genetic genealogy.

In 2015, Veronica founded and was the convenor of the two DNA research groups offered by SAG — DNA Tools in Practice and the more advanced DNA Discussion Group. She continued in this role for the next six years. At the same time, she designed and ran numerous sessions on all aspects of DNA and WikiTree. Veronica excelled as leader of these groups and developed a strong network of DNA enthusiasts around her. Her efforts have ensured that rigorous DNA research is embedded into the group member's family history, and opportunities for the broader membership to embrace this new tool were offered.

Veronica's innovative approach provides a pathway for the DNA group members to develop their skills; introducing a mentoring program in 2018 to increase the confidence of the existing group members and increase the number who were confident to work with DNA and prepared to share their knowledge by presenting or assisting in sessions, and providing individual assistance.

Veronica continued as convenor of the DNA research groups until 2021, leading the way for DNA research in Australia, working with new concepts and tools at the same time they were being considered in the US. In 2022, she developed and ran a four-part program "Analysing your DNA results using chromosome analysis" as an adjunct to the "Analysing your AncestryDNA results" developed and run by Christine Woodlands.

To support the work she was doing for the Society, Veronica established and maintained a blog and Facebook groups, such as the "DNA Sydney" blog: <https://dnasydney.wordpress.com>. She also supported 2022's program with the blog: <https://genemonkey25.blogspot.com/p/about-this-site.html>.

Veronica has contributed articles to *Descent*: "DNA Research" Vol. 48 Part 1 (2018), 12 and "How the SAG library collection and DNA helped solved my family mystery" in Vol. 48 Part 3 (2018), 60–61. She was a speaker at the "Lost in DNA" weekend conference in November 2018 and was instrumental in initiating and co-ordinating the Society's participation in the Wikitree 7in7 Challenge in January 2023. This collaboration led to valuable information being learnt about the donors behind prominent collections in the Society's archives.

She is an Ambassador and Joint Project Leader for the Australia Project at Wikitree.com, of which she has been an active member since 2013. She was one of the representatives of Wikitree at the 2022 Family History Down Under conference, and has personally made over 90,000 contributions to the Wikitree collaborative tree.



Diploma graduates

Congratulations to our new Diplomates of the Society!

The following candidates successfully completed the Society's Diploma in Family Historical Studies across 2021–2022:

Rob Christie, Vic

Angus McMillan: A convenient scapegoat

Robert's thesis challenges the dominant narrative of Angus McMillan's legacy and his public profile through an exploration of his genealogical history and that of the inhabitants and settlers of early Gippsland, Victoria. The thesis highlights the challenges of documenting the lives of early colonial settlers when there are few official records and the documentation that does exist comes from personal diaries and papers that have used the facts selectively.

Judith Matheson, NSW

Catherine Mooney and her descendants in NSW, Australia, 1790s to 1920s

Judith's thesis focuses on telling Catherine Mooney's story and that of her descendants with context from the Third Fleet, philanthropy in colonial Sydney, and to those that financed the first Aboriginal cricket team to tour England in 1868. They are placed in context of the broader themes of colonial history, from the wretchedness of the early years to the prosperity of later generations and the cost of that success to the Traditional Owners.

Sharon Regan, NSW

Frontier Families – A history of three generations of the Delves family from Sussex to Taree

Sharon's thesis is a family history that traces three successive generations of an Australian family. Beginning with the immigration of an agricultural labourer, John Delves, from Sussex England to the colony in New South Wales in 1840, and concluding with the retirement of his grandson, Edward Delves, a steam engine driver, 120 years later in Sydney.

If you are considering completing the Diploma in future years, there is a prerequisite of first achieving our Certificate in Genealogical Research. Detailed information can be found at www.sag.org.au/studyonlinewithus



Deaths

The deaths of the following members and former members were notified to the Society between February and April 2023. We extend our sympathies to the family and friends of them all.

Andrew Wallace Gough

Mona Vale

19 January 2023

Dennis Francis Hoolahan

Glebe

20 January 2023

John McLaughlin

Paddington

22 January 2023

Gordon Sanson

Gladesville

23 December 2022

John Seagrove

Truro, United Kingdom

1 July 2022

Christopher David Williams

Atherton, Queensland

22 March 2023



Photo by Frank McKenna on Unsplash

EDUCATION@SAG

BY VANESSA CASSIN

As we move towards the halfway mark of 2023, it seems a good time to reflect on the busy program of events that the Society has already presented this year, including quite a few “firsts”.

We launched the year with a flurry of DNA-related courses, groups and webinars, including a new cohort undertaking our popular *Analysing your AncestryDNA* program — a two-part workshop focusing on MyHeritage — and running both the *First Look at AncestryDNA* and *Beginners' Introduction to DNA webinars*. We were also very excited to hold the first official meeting of our new *Genealogical DNA Analysis Tool (GDAT) Group*, following a successful trial with a small number of members last year.

January also saw the launch of the Society's new *Beginners' Research Methods* course, designed to help newer researchers hone their methodology and analysis skills. We have since commenced a second session of this course in early May.

Late January saw a new group of researchers start on the *Intermediate Research Methods* course. We are already hearing about the exciting breakthroughs some of the participants are making in the case studies that they nominated as their projects for the course. It is really lovely to see how supportive all the course participants are of each other, and the thrill the group feels when someone makes progress on a research problem.

February saw us welcome two new leads for *The Writing Group* and it has been wonderful to see the enthusiasm Elizabeth and Emily are bringing to their roles. We debuted our new *USA and Canada Research Interest Group*, and welcomed Melissa Hulbert, Thistle Anderson, Larry Czarnik, and Sue Hyde as the leads. There was a fabulous turnout for the first meeting and we are looking forward to hearing about the discoveries participants make going forward.

February saw two more firsts: SAG launched a free online book club that was enthusiastically received and we were lucky to have Nathan Dylan Goodwin accept our invitation to attend. As this issue goes to print, we will have had the second book club meeting with Stephen McGann as our guest author. We were also honoured to welcome Mary McKee from FindMyPast to provide a special free webinar on *Researching LGBT Ancestors* as part of SAG's contribution to the World Pride celebration in Sydney.

As the year gathered pace and the months started to fly by, more of our special interest groups began holding their first meetings of 2023. In March we were thrilled to announce that Veronica Williams was returning to the role of DNA Group

Lead together with Danielle Lautrec as her new co-lead. Sharon Watson has been a wonderful addition to the team, facilitating the DNA Research Discussion Group meetings with great skill. March also saw us welcome Kam Louie as the new lead of the revitalised Chinese Australian Special Interest Group. Together with Dr Kate Bagnall as special guest presenter, Kam led a really interesting first meeting. Much positive feedback was received and many members are looking forward to the next meeting.

April saw the Society hold its first successful full-day hybrid event from our Research Centre and Library at 379 Kent Street. Special thanks go to Michelle Patient, Andrew Redfern and Larry Czarnik for their assistance in making this event run smoothly. All three volunteers spent a number of hours testing and preparing the set-up in advance of the event. As with all new technology we needed to make some small tweaks to the equipment and set-up, however the day ran very smoothly overall and we hope to offer more hybrid events in the future.

May saw Society volunteer, Andrew Redfern, present a fascinating webinar on the emerging field of AI and family history. It was one of the highest selling events we have ever had and demonstrates the interest family historians have in learning about the latest products and innovations to support their research. In a quick turnaround from exploring the latest technology, the very next night we explored a more traditional area of research focusing on royal connections (albeit with a slight twist involving assassination attempts) in commemoration of the coronation of King Charles III.

With the first half of the year being full of camaraderie, new discoveries and learning opportunities the team here at the SAG can't wait to see what the second half of the year brings! Be sure to check our events page on our website: www.sag.org.au/events and regularly check the forums on the pages for your favourite special interest groups as we are adding new events every week.

DNA CORNER

BY CHRISTINE WOODLANDS

A Reflection

In less than a decade, adding DNA testing to our family history toolbox has seen many family mysteries answered, with more than a few surprises along the way! We previously relied on documentary evidence and family stories, but as we know only too well, this information can be inaccurate, incorrectly identified or missing. DNA doesn't lie, but we do need to invest time and effort to understand how to interpret it.

When we add DNA evidence to our toolbox, our family history is enriched and many of us find that we have both the family we know as well as our biological family to research. Incorporating DNA evidence with documentary evidence is the work of the genetic genealogist, and we can reasonably argue that we're only doing half the job of telling our family story if we don't include DNA evidence.

However, working with DNA evidence is not like working with documentary evidence, and we must develop a new skill set that's unfamiliar to many of us.

I started on this journey in late 2016 under the guidance of my mentor, Veronica Williams. It was a very rocky road for me in the early days, but I persevered. I tested at FamilyTreeDNA. Other than my close family, who tested at the same time, all my matches were low and living in North America. Taking an AncestryDNA test in late 2016 was the beginning of my great adventure. Suddenly, I had matches with two second and five third cousins in Australia, and I was gathering DNA evidence to help me solve family mysteries.

Since then, DNA testers have doubled, tripled, quadrupled, and the growth continues. The analysis tools are constantly improving as well, and oh, how my knowledge has increased!

The result is that, in my family and those I collaborate with, more brick walls are tumbling down. AncestryDNA is now the largest testing site with over 20 million testers. I recommend you test there first. You can read more about a testing strategy here:

<https://mossiesmusings.blogspot.com/2020/08/dna-testing-strategy-for-australians.html>

One positive for me during the COVID lockdowns was the amount of thinking time and "online" work with my DNA network. I started to think about my journey since 2016 and the Pareto principle. When I reviewed my DNA research, I was gathering 80% of my evidence at AncestryDNA in 20% of the time. Veronica and the other DNA enthusiasts in my network were finding the same.

Rough guide to DNA Research

Testing Company	AncestryDNA	MyHeritage, 23andMe, FTDNA (including Y and mtDNA), Living DNA
DNA evidence gathered	80%	20%
Effort required	20%	80%
Relationship	2nd to 3rd GGP	More distant
Time frame	Early to mid 1800s	More distant

Prepared by Christine Woodlands, April 2023

We know that AncestryDNA is **generally** useful for relationships up to the second to third great-grandparents, and back to the early to mid-1800s. Beyond that, we do much more complicated work at the chromosome level. We're also working with X-DNA, Y-DNA and mtDNA. This can't be done at AncestryDNA; however, you need a strong foundation in working at AncestryDNA before moving forward.

While working at AncestryDNA, I was using the same methodology over and over. I call it "the three-prong approach". In 2020, we offered an online webinar focussed on each "prong" with the view to building a multi-part program with presentations and discussion sessions. We launched the *Analysing your AncestryDNA results* program in Summer 2021 and due to the strong demand, we're offering the program for the fifth time in Winter 2023.

3-prong approach to analysing AncestryDNA tests

What	Where & How
1. Sort "4C or closer" into groups based on shared matches	AncestryDNA – Custom Groups
2. Research matches' pedigree looking for common ancestors	Ancestry – Private, unsearchable trees and/or hanging branches
3. Record matches with common ancestor	"What are the odds" (WATO) tool at DNA Painter – Descendant charts
Interpret results	
Iterative process ...	

Prepared by Christine Woodlands, April 2023

For enthusiasts skilled in working with AncestryDNA and keen to progress to the next level, Veronica Williams has developed the *Analysing your DNA results with chromosome analysis* program, which is also running in Winter 2023.

Register your interest for future programs through the events page at the Society's website or email admin@sag.org.au.

I would like to thank Veronica, Kathryn, Vicki, Barbara, Chris, Gail and Sue for taking me on this COVID journey, and of course, to all of those who have participated in our programs.

ARCHIVES REPORT



BY ALEXANDRA MOUNTAIN

"We are in mountains full of snow, which I can assure you it is terrifying to look up. The roads are full of snow [and] we can scarcely walk."

So wrote Charles Aiano on Sunday, 6 April 1817, as he described the perilous journey from Canterbury, England to Como, Italy he was undertaking on foot. As a 33-year-old man, Charles would walk over a thousand miles and take just over a hundred days to complete the round trip. He had never been to Italy, where his father had been born in 1745, and had instead been raised and educated in England.

Charles was a skilled barometer maker with a reputation for building refined, accurate, and durable barometers that also showcased impeccable craftsmanship. He learnt his trade from his cousin, also named Charles Aiano, later becoming partners in London. The two Charles' built a company together, building barometers, thermometers and telescopes for over 20 years, and it was for his cousin that Charles was trekking across Southern Europe to the beautiful lakeside town of Como in Italy.¹

In 1816, the elder Charles Aiano died suddenly, leaving no will, no wife and no children. His business partner was the obvious heir to his estate, but it was a difficult process for the younger Charles to collect the inheritance. Elder Charles was born in Italy and had moved to England shortly after his uncle (and the father of the younger Charles), Netao Christmas Aiano, emigrated. As such, the elder Charles had estates in both England and in Italy, and in order for younger Charles to inherit, he would have to travel to his father's and cousin's birthplace of Como.

Thus, on 20 March 1817, Charles, his brother John, and his friend Mr Corti, began their journey, recorded in Charles' diary — now preserved in our Archives. We have both the original diary (MIDAS 20/000021), and a thermal photocopy of the diary (MIDAS 4/008326). The original diary is delicate, with thin pages and browning ink, but the writing is still surprisingly legible and easy to decipher, however, we direct all archival inquiries towards the thermal photocopy to ensure the preservation of the original. The diary is a veritable treasure trove of information regarding travel during the early 19th century, and reveals a great deal about the social and political context Charles found himself enmeshed within on his journey.

Charles was an excellent diarist, diligently recording almost every day's adventures in his diary. He took particular note of the leagues travelled each day (a single league is equal to 4.83 kilometres), the food eaten at taverns and inns, and always recorded the type and taste of their daily and nightly wine. On April 1, the wine was good, and also, "very cheap," but on April 2, the two bottles of wine at breakfast were "I must say not very good". He complained of damp beds, and wrote with wonder at the beauty of the new and different sights he and his companions took in as they ventured south. The travel group, although fastidiously keeping to a route that was



only ever changed due to frequent passport checks, took time to simply breathe in the new landscapes and experiences. On 19 April, Charles wrote that they "took a walk around the country and see [sic] the grape vines all in bud." Although this was a trip undertaken for financial gains, Charles clearly saw this as an incredible opportunity to see the world and reconnect with his heritage.

Apart from his musings on food, wine and natural beauty, Charles recorded the ravages of war. When Charles was undertaking his trip, the Napoleonic War had been over for approximately two years, but the impact of the battles was still keenly felt across the countryside as Charles journeyed south. It is difficult to understand exactly where Charles was located at some stages in the diary, as the recorded locations appear to be based on phonetic pronunciations, and as such do not match with actual French names. In one small village, between Paris and Sens, Charles noted that two bridges had been blown up — and, as they walked further, he noticed more signs of fighting scarred deep into the landscape. Charles' writing is a poetic reminder that long after battles are waged and kings in high castles win or lose, the villages and their people live on with the spoils of war.

Charles' travel diary is an invaluable item in our Archive, and one that adds rich nuance and texture to our understandings of how people move in and around political and social upheaval. It indicates how significant the journey Charles was undertaking — emotionally, as he forged ahead to inherit his cousin's estate, but also physically, as he details the toll of walking hundreds of leagues across multiple countries. It offers an opportunity to critically examine the ways in which "ordinary" people can be reclaimed in history through family history research, and highlights the incredible value that diaries, like these, can offer not just historians, but descendants who wish to follow in their ancestors' footprints.

1. Much of the backstory to the Aiano family's journey is provided by Jean May's family history, *Aiano's Remembered* (England: Perfect Publishers Ltd, 2010). This book is available in the SAG Library at N6/AIA/1.

MIDAS LAUNCH: Pat Mills Sydney Morning Herald Collection



BY DANIELLE TEBB PhD

This collection of 752 *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) newspaper clippings from 1965 to 1982 was originally collected by the late Mrs Pat Mills, a longstanding member and Fellow of the Society of Australian Genealogists.

Mrs Patricia Mary Blaxland Mills joined the Society in February 1964, became a SAG Councillor the following year, and served as Honorary Research Secretary for 15 years. She was made a Fellow in 1971, and Honorary membership was conferred on her in December 1979 in recognition of her outstanding service to the Society over a period of 16 years. Her death in 2003 at the age of 91, resulted in a large donation of books and papers from her estate, and in recognition she was made a Benefactor in 2007.¹ It is likely that Mrs Mills collected these cuttings as part of her work as the Society's Honorary Research Secretary from 1965–1980. After her death the collection passed to the SAG, and members of the Sydney Dead Person's Society offered to digitise and index them on the Society's behalf. This group later established the Ryerson Index www.ryersonindex.org. While this collection has been available through the electronic resources in our library for some time at B9/84/CD.1, it has now been incorporated into the MIDAS catalogue where it can be found at 71/001082.

The index contains 780 name references covering some 752 newspaper clippings of obituaries and probate reports of well-known individuals in the community, covering religious, business, political, social and entertainment fields. The bulk of the material spans 1970 to 1980 and while some names are cross-referenced, accounting for the higher number of name references to clippings, other entries appear duplicated, indicating the article ran over multiple pages (the SMH reference number will generally carry an "a" or even "b" if this is the case), or the event was reported in subsequent issues. The newspaper cuttings in this collection are predominately not to be found on the Ryerson Index, one of our go-to places to check for contemporary deaths, although the actual death and funeral notices likely will be there. Note also that the date range is after the current cut-off date of 1954 for TROVE newspapers and, given the detail they contain, are well worth checking. Some of the probate reports, for instance, can be fascinating in relating the distribution of monies, such as in the estate of Mrs Una Rodd Ireland published on 10 May 1966 (SAG MIDAS 71/001082 smh660510).

The quality of the digitised articles varies, although all are legible and dated as seen in the sample above for 25 January 1965 for the death of Dr C. Hughes (SAG MIDAS 71/001082 smh650125). Copies of articles are available free to SAG members and for a nominal charge to non-members, but need to be ordered via MIDAS request.

Please ensure you include the name and SMH reference number if corresponding with us via email. In time, these newspaper cuttings will be available as direct downloads. You can search this index by logging on to MIDAS and going to the Advanced Search option, then scroll down to the Find Specific option and enter 71/001082.



Click the Search button and the alphabetical listing will appear – as it is only a relatively small index, it's a simple matter to run your eye down the list.

Stay tuned for more MIDAS collection launches in upcoming issues of *Descent*.

1. *Descent* June 2003 [Vol 33 Part 2], 66.

Donate today and make history accessible to all: www.sag.org.au/make-a-donation

The Society of Australian Genealogists needs your help to bring the past into the present. We are working to digitise our extensive collection of archival materials, making them accessible, not only to our members, but also to other genealogists and researchers, as well as the wider public.

By preserving these invaluable records, we can uncover the stories of our ancestors and deepen our understanding of our heritage. However, we cannot achieve this without your generous contribution. Your donations will enable us to digitise fragile documents, photographs, and maps, ensuring their longevity and greater accessibility for future generations.

Together, let's unlock the treasures of our past and preserve them for a brighter future.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LIBRARY

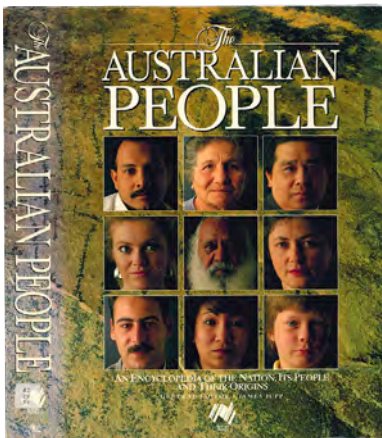
Family History Research in Southern Europe

BY PHILIPPA GARNSEY

The general definition of the countries which comprise Southern Europe are Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. However, a number of smaller countries are often included and these are from the Balkan States: Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia.

Immigrants from Southern Europe made their home in Australia during the 20th century for a variety of reasons: refugees arrived in Australia in the late 1940s and early 1950s following displacement in World War II; after World War II, and during the civil war that followed, over 160,000 Greeks came to Australia; and many people left Malta during the 1950s and 1960s due to poor socio-economic conditions in their country.

One comprehensive book on migration to Australia is: *The Australian People: an encyclopedia of the nation, its people and their origins*, Ed. James Tupp [A3/20/49].



This book includes information on people from all over the world who have immigrated, and provides detailed information on why and when specific ethnic groups came to Australia. The Italian section pre-1914 includes information on the social conditions in

Italy at the time which led to mass immigration. Information is also provided on where and why immigrants settled in specific areas. The Greek section is similar and discusses Greek settlement until 1940, and then the social conditions in Greece from 1940 to 1980 and where the Greeks settled on arrival. The chapters on Malta, Spain and Portugal follow a similar pattern.

For those searching for books on how to trace their ancestors from Southern European countries, there are a small number of books relating to the areas.

Italy

Finding your Italian ancestors: a beginner's guide by Suzanne Russo Adams [W2/1/51]

This book contains all the information you could possibly want to know on how to research your Italian ancestors. There are chapters on finding your place of origin, civil records, what records are available in Italian archives and what can be found online.

Italian genealogical records: how to use Italian civil, ecclesiastical and other records in family history research by Trafford R Cole [W2/1/37]

Part 1 is an introduction to Italy and Italian records; Part 2 covers the records available, while Part 3 looks at research procedures. A book well worth reading.

An interesting book on Italians in Australia:

The Italian Farming Soldiers: prisoners of war in Australia 1941–1947 by Alan Fitzgerald [A3/20/95]

During World War II any Italian men living in Australia, who were not citizens, were interned. In addition, numerous Italian prisoners of war (POW) were sent to Australia to POW camps. Many of these men were allocated to farmers to help in food production as there was a shortage of young men as they had joined the military forces.

During World War II my grandfather owned a dairy farm in southern NSW and he applied for men to help run the dairy while his sons served in the Australian army. Other prisoners/internees picked fruit and helped harvest crops such as wheat. Internees were paid a wage while POWs were not.

Greece

There are three volumes which you may find interesting:

Australians and Greeks Vol. I: the early years by Hugh Gilchrist [A3/20/64]

Australian and Greeks Vol. II: the middle years by Hugh Gilchrist [A3/20/64b]

Australian and Greeks Vol. III: the later years by Hugh Gilchrist [A3/20/64c]

Other books relating to Greek family history, which you may find of interest, include:

Greek genealogical research by Dr Lica Catsakis Bywater and Daniel M. Schlyter [W2/1/28]

Greek gazetteer, vols 1, 2 and 3 by Lica H. Catsakis [W8/40/4a, 4b, 4c]

Most immigrants from Greece belonged to the Greek Orthodox religion and special sections were set aside for their burials in the larger cemeteries. Headstones from some of these cemeteries have been transcribed and may be of interest.



Sandgate Cemetery, Newcastle, NSW [B7/11/86] contains transcripts of Greek Orthodox burials.

The history of Greeks of Canberra and Districts by Dr Anastosios Myrodis Tamis and Dr Demetrios A. Tsolakis [B4.600/22/1]. This book records the progression of the Greeks in Canberra and surrounding districts and the contribution they made to Australian society. Districts include a number of areas in southern NSW.

Malta

After World War II job opportunities were lacking in Malta and people were obliged to leave their country. In 1948 the Maltese were offered assisted migrant passage to Australia which resulted in large numbers of immigrants. Malta had been a Crown colony of the United Kingdom from 1814 to 1964, so many of their customs, laws and education have British overtones.

There are several books in the library that may be of interest to people with Maltese ancestors. These include:

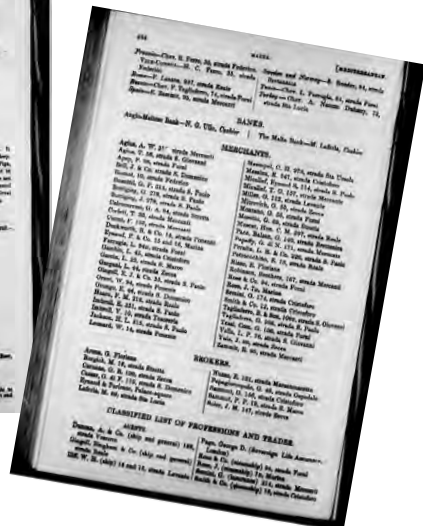
The Maltese in Australia by Barry York [A3/20/38]

Empire and race: the Maltese in Australia 1881–1949 by Barry York [A3/20/58]

The genealogy and heraldry of the noble families of Malta by Charles A Gauci [W5/10/1]

This book details the diverse European origins of the noble families of Malta and of their coats of arms. It is packed with detailed genealogical and heraldic information, and is an essential reference for people interested in Maltese history and culture.

Street's Indian and Colonial Mercantile Director of Malta 1870 [MLT-DIR: 1870] (microfiche). This microfiche includes the names of many of the major merchants in Malta in 1870.



Baltic States

Tracing your Baltic, Scandinavian, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern ancestry online by Anne Hart [W2/10/22]

This book includes details on tracing family in Croatia and Macedonia.

Portugal

We have two books which may be of interest:

The Arbouin Family: France, England, Honduras, Colombia and Australia 1685–1915 by B. R. J. Timmins [A6/ARB/Pam.1]. This book traces the spread, settlement and descendants of a number of members of a Huguenot family which fled France from 1685 onwards. Countries covered include: England, Portugal, Jamaica, Honduras, Colombia, and Queensland, Australia.

Proud and prejudiced: The story of the Burghers of Sri Lanka by Rodney Ferdinands [A3/20/122]. The Burghers of Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, were descended from Portuguese, Dutch and British traders and settlers. From the end of World War II until the early 1970s over 10,000 Burghers migrated to Australia. This book tells the story of the Burghers before the mass immigration, their exodus to new countries after the war, and their experiences of assimilation in Australia.

Spain

Books which may be of interest in tracing your Spanish ancestors include:

Tracing your Hispanic Heritage by George R Ryskamp [W2/1/25].

Hispanic surnames and family history by Lyman D. Platt [W2/30/13]. This book includes information on Hispanic surnames, research sources, some Spanish names, and a bibliography of family histories in USA and Latin America.

The Spanish in Australia by Al Grasby [A3/20/20]. Al was an Australian politician of Spanish and Irish descent. He is best known for his role in the promotion of multiculturalism.

The Irish Brigades 1685–2066: a gazetteer of Irish Military Service, past and present by David Murphy [S3/70/10]. This book includes chapters on various Irish regiments including Irish regiments in French Service, 1685–1871, in Spanish Service, 1709–1939 and in Italian Service, 1702–1862.

There are more books in the Society's library relating to researching your family in Southern Europe that you may find of interest.

LIBRARY NEWS



BY KARLIE FRELINGOS

This is a selection of books, pamphlets and other format items accessioned from March to May 2023.

The information provided is the title of the record, library classification number, format and donor's name.

All items are at 2/379 Kent Street unless otherwise noted. Consult the Library Catalogue on the Society's website www.sag.org.au for full details of the items on this list.

Australia

A history of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before separation (1996) A. G. L. Shaw C4.207/21/1 (book) Donated by David Pengilly

Centenary magazine of Holy Cross College Ryde (1991) The Brothers of St Patrick B4.112/31/1 (book)

Convict road gangs: 1826–1836 (2003) Ian Webb A3/23/Pam.7 (pamphlet)

Family, faith and fortune in Victorian Sydney: the Edina Estate (2022) Michael Waterhouse B4.024/20/1 (book) Donated by author

Finding the family redcoat: tracing your British military ancestors in Australia (2013) Neil C. Smith A2/70/Pam.1 (pamphlet) Donated by Lynne Foley

Glimpses and gleanings: Marsland, Allsop, Ring, Hall and Skey settlers of the Upper Hunter, New South Wales (2022) Denise I Percival A6/PER/Pam.3 (pamphlet) Donated by author

Irish workhouse orphan emigration to Australia 1848–1850 (2021) Dr Perry McIntyre & Dr Richard Reid A3/20/Pam.24 (pamphlet) Donated by Lynne Foley

Leaving home: stories of my emigrant ancestors (2021) Jeff Kildea A6/KIL/4 (book)

Mowbray House school and the Bavin family: my recollections, 1947–1949 (2019) Graeme D. Rushworth A6/BAV/Pam.1 (pamphlet) Donated by author

Murphy's lore: unravelling the myths around James Murphy, his brother, the Holt-Sutherland company and early Como (2023) Kim Hatherly A6/MUR/Pam.14 (pamphlet) Donated by author

Neville and Winnie: the story of my parents Neville Murray and Winifred McGuinness (2022) Joan Murray Dawes A6/MUR/13 (book) Donated by author

Off to England on the Largs Bay (Shaw Savill Line) April 1954: Jan and Joan's excellent adventure (2021) Joan Murray Dawes A6/DAW/7 (book) Donated by author

Opening the Geraghty book (1994) Bride C Baldwin A6/GER/3 (book)

Richard Godson and the foundation of the Australian Masonic Lodge of Fidelity No. 267 of the Irish Constitution in Sydney, 1842 (2018) Wayne Bruce McPhee & Benjamin Luke Wharton A6/GOD/Pam.2 (pamphlet) Donated by author

Ryde Band 1884: the history of a most desirable institution (2022) Helen Brayshaw B4.112/11/2 (book) Donated by Mike Botton

The Barnett family: from Hampshire to the Macleay River and beyond (2021) Charles Barnett A6/BAR/41 (book) Donated by author

The Dawes family of Good Hope, Yass, New South Wales: a family history (2018) Joan Murray Dawes A6/DAW/6 (book) Donated by author

The Lugsdin family in Australia: 1852–2010 (2023) Graham Lugsdin A6/LUG/1 (book) Donated by author

The wartime experiences of Neil Grant Menzies no. 400390 (2022) Chris Luks A6/MEN/6 (book) Donated by author

Thomas, William & Margaret Langford convicts: the beginning of our Langford family in Sydney (2022) Lorraine Luks A6/LAN/24 (book) Donated by author

Young pioneers: the lives of Peter John Rhall & Mary Ann Canfield, their story and their descendants (2022) Travyn Rhall A6/RHA/2 (book) Donated by author

United Kingdom

Cemeteries and graveyards: a guide for local and family historians in England and Wales (2022) Celia Heritage M2/10/163 (book)

Eric James and the founding of the University of York (2017) Allen Warren N4.43/42/1 (book)

Flesh and blood: a history of my family in seven maladies (2017) Stephen McGann M6/McG/1 (book)

George Howard, Lord Howard of Henderskelfe: a life in Yorkshire and beyond (2020) Christopher Ridgway N6/HOW/Pam.1 (pamphlet)

Great Cumbrians (1988) H. E. Winter N4.8/1/Pam.1 (pamphlet) Donated by Alan Day

A history of Keswick and district (1991) H. E. Winter N4.8/1/Pam.2 (pamphlet) Donated by Alan Day

In the Bewick vein: the story of a Northumberland lead mine (1999) Susan Harley N4.28/12/Pam.1 (pamphlet) Donated by Alan Day

Josiah Collier of Yeadon (1595–1677) West Riding Grindletonian and Disciple of Roger Brerely (2017) Oliver Pickering N6/COL/Pam.1 (pamphlet)

West Riding Grindletonian and Disciple of Roger Brerely (2017) Oliver Pickering N6/COL/Pam.1 (pamphlet)

Mappa mundi: the Hereford world map (1996) P.D.A. Harvey N4.16/3/1 (book) Donated by Alan Day

Respectability and popular movements in Early Victorian York (2017) Charles Walter Masters N4.43/0/Pam.1 (pamphlet)

The Buckinghamshire village book: the places, the people and their stories (2020) the Buckinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes N4.3/1/8 (book) Donated by Alan Day

The pit children (1978) Eric Forster M3/30/Pam.2 (pamphlet) Donated by Selina Jackson

The Rivers Chelmer and Blackwater (1990) Stan Jarvis N4.13/3/1 (book) Donated by Alan Day

The time draws nigh, it is just at hand: the road to insurrection in the industrial West Riding, 1819–1820 (2020) John Baxter & Joseph Stanley N4.43/10/Pam.2 (pamphlet)

UK timeline for family historians (2012) Angela Smith & Neil Bertram M2/1/62 (book) Donated by Kendall Webber

Canada

The Turner letters: letters from home: from Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire to St Andrews, New Brunswick, 1830–1845 (2022) David Newman T6/TUR/1 (book)

International

Simple Latin for family historians (1988) Eve McLaughlin L2/1/Pam.18 (pamphlet) Donated by Graham Wilson

BOOK REVIEWS



Wellwood Remembered

by Andrew Graeme Kerr

Review by Christine Sanderson

Wellwood Remembered is described by Andrew Graeme Kerr as a collection of memorabilia with personal recollections that he has gathered as the fifth and last generation of Kerrs to have lived with the history of *Wellwood*, worked in its fields and enjoyed its bounteous past.

But this is by no means a straightforward tale of the life of a pioneering family on a substantial property near the City of Orange, New South Wales. In fact, it has all the elements of a family saga with its conflicts and tragedies and wonderful moments while living on a beloved property which was their family home for generations.

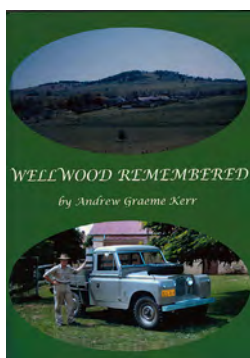
The history of the property and those who lived and worked there from the first to the last generation is documented through a number of extraordinarily well-preserved photographs, documents and letters. Along with personal reminiscences, the result is a memorable family history with an intriguing story and a journey for the reader worth taking.

It is partly an autobiography written in the first person which shows how the author feels about his home and the circumstances in which *Wellwood* was lost to the family. There were hints of difficult times ahead from the dedication to a mother whose strength of character and fortitude came to the fore when faced with an untenable situation, which is explained in detail throughout the book. These difficult times however, did not outweigh the many happy memories that were accrued in the life of the family.

The quality of the glossy publication is outstanding and a joy to hold and peruse. The photography is exceptional from the first oil paintings, through images of the property in all its glory taken from many different vantage points. Some of the landscapes are breathtakingly beautiful, especially when the land is in flood or covered in frost. Just as worthy are the images of the cattle and the family pets.

It is fitting that the final images in the book are of Andrew Graeme Kerr and his family, blended with his comments about the emotional journey which he has undertaken as he put himself back 60 years as if it were yesterday as he relived the past. There is no doubt that his wish that his descendants will gain historical insights from the story, pride in their forebears and future wisdom will be honoured.

Andrew Graeme Kerr, *Wellwood Remembered*. Published by Andrew Graeme Kerr, Nantwich, Cheshire, United Kingdom, 2021. 239 pages; SAG ref: A6/KER/8



Family, Faith and Fortune in Victorian Sydney: The Edina Estate

by Michael Waterhouse

Review by Lilian Magill

A beautifully illustrated book by Michael Waterhouse, the great-great-grandson of Ebenezer and Jane (Jeanie) Vickery, tells the story of one family's connection to Waverley and the house they lived in.

Given the name, *Edina*, a poetic reference to Edinburgh, the house was built in the early 1800s and surprisingly still stands today. It was a loved family home that was gifted to the Methodist Church in 1922 for a War Memorial Hospital.

Michael traces the history of the house and Jeanie's influence on its decoration, with paintings of scenes depicting her Scottish heritage, quality furnishings from England, and beautiful gardens.

The book contains over 100 photos showing *Edina* in many forms, from the children playing in the extensive grounds, cows being milked in their dairy and some interior photos, giving a glimpse into the family's lifestyle. There is a floorplan of the ground floor, showing the wide verandahs that were also on the second floor, as well as a library and drawing room. While there is no floor plan for the second storey, a 1906 valuation stated that there were seven bedrooms and one for the servants, containing four beds.

Edina also has a tower that afforded extensive views to Botany Bay and the Blue Mountains.

A detailed plan of the *Edina* estate, bordered by Vickery, Church, Cowper and Birrell Streets, gives us an understanding of how the family lived, with paddocks for their cows, a vegetable garden, chicken coop and stables.

Ebenezer had trees planted around the boundaries, thus giving the family privacy from people passing along the street.

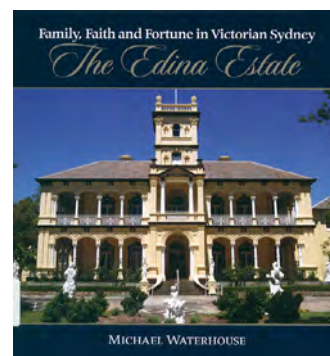
It is also a social history of the time when there was little in the way of public transport, even if the road was navigable. There was no running water or sewer, no gas or electricity or telephone. As these things became available, Michael details when they came to the area and when they were added to *Edina*. He details the introduction of trams, first drawn by horse, through to electric trams.

It is hard to imagine that Waverley in the 1800s was largely unsettled and with none of the things we take for granted today.

In the Epilogue Michael includes "What Ever Happened To ...?". This provides details of the children and adults who appear in the book, along with an excellent family tree showing several generations of the Vickery Family.

I found the book to be an easy read, well researched and beautifully presented.

Michael Waterhouse, *Family, Faith and Fortune in Victorian Sydney: The Edina Estate*. Published by Halstead Press, 2022. 176 pages; SAG ref: B4.024/20/1



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HUGUENOT CONFERENCE, SYDNEY, 2023

Huguenot Heritage: Past and Present

21 October 2023
Venue: Club York
10.00 am – 5.30 pm

The conference marks the 20th anniversary of the Huguenot Society of Australia as a registered society. Our keynote speaker is Dr Tessa Murdoch, author of *Europe Divided. Huguenot Refugee Art and Culture* and former Research Curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; also a board member of the Huguenot Museum, Rochester. She lectures and writes widely on the history of the decorative arts.

Our outstanding speakers are Dr Robin Gwynn, author of *Huguenot Heritage* and *The Huguenots in Later Stuart Britain*; Dr Randall Carter Working, author of *Visual Theory of the Huguenots: Towards an Architectural Iconology of Early Modern French Protestantism*; Melissa Hulbert, President of the Society of Australian Genealogists; and Robert Nash, the Secretary of the HSA; and our Vice-President and Patron, the Ven. Dr Geoff Huard.

Cost: \$165.00

Early bird rate of \$150.00
available until 22 September 2023

Morning and afternoon tea and lunch included.

Not included in the cost will be dinner at Cellini's in the nearby Queen Victoria Building at 6.00pm

Registration options:

- Either EFT to Huguenot Society of Australia BSB 659 000 A/C 300 022 491 (**Please** include your family name in the reference field.)
- Or cheque, payable to Huguenot Society of Australia, posted to David Milling, Unit 105, 1-9 Woniora Avenue, Wahroonga NSW 2076

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