

THE ENDEAVOUR



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BOTANY BAY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Discovering Your Heritage

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Meetings

Held on the first Wednesday of the month (except January) commencing at 7.30pm. March, June, September and December meetings held at 'Tradies', The Kingsway, Gympie. The remainder of the year, meetings held online via Zoom.

Library and Research Centre Messages and Bookings Only: 02 9523 8948

Port Hacking Community Centre 184 Gannons Road (south) Caringbah NSW 2229
Open: Mon, Wed & Fri: 10am-3pm; Sat: 10am-2pm. For bus route 978 & timetable, see: <https://www.transdevnsw.com.au/services/timetables/south-southwest/>

Annual Membership Fees

From 1 Jul 2021: single – \$40; family – \$55; distance – \$22. Joining fee for all categories – \$10; membership renewals due 1 July each year.

Research

Volunteers from BBFHS will research family history relevant to the Sutherland Shire for non-members: minimum fee of \$20 (first hour) and \$20 per hour thereafter.

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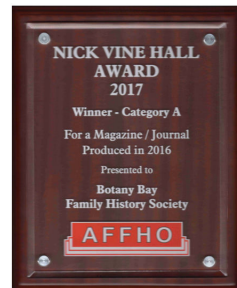
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CALENDAR



Members are advised to check latest details on our Events Calendar at www.botanybayfhs.org.au or see your BBFHS eNEWS.

- May 26** Writers Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm Research Centre
May 28 DNA Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm Zoom
Jun 1 **Meeting – 7.30 pm at Tradies. Speaker – Janet Pelosi**
Using NSW Legislative Website for Family History
Jun 4 Scottish Interest Group – 2-4pm Research Centre
Jun 13 Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday (Centre closed, Monday)
Jun 15 **Member’s Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom**
Topic: Occupations
Jun 16 **Tour: Salvation Army Museum**
Jun 23 **Education: More Effective Use of Family Search and Ryerson**
Jun 25 Irish Interest Group: 2-4pm Zoom
Jul 5 Legacy Interest Group: 2-4pm Research Centre
Jul 6 **Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom. Speaker – Fiona Brooker**
A Step Through Timelines
Jul 9 English Interest Group: 2-4pm Zoom
Jul 20 **Member’s Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom**
Topic: Fashion for Dating Photographs
Jul 21 **Education: Getting Organised**
Jul 21 **Tour: Anzac Hyde Park Memorial Tour**
Jul 28 Writers Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm Research Centre
Aug 3 **Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom. Speaker – Lesley Potter**
Connections and Interconnections in Sydney Society in the 1830s
Aug 6 Scottish Interest Group: 2-4pm Research Centre
Aug 9 Family Tree Maker Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm Zoom
Aug 16 **Tour: NSW State Archives**
Aug 17 **Member’s Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom**
Topic: Sources – New and Well-Used
Aug 20 Australian Interest Group: 2-4pm Zoom
Aug 25 **Education: Continuing to be Organised**
Aug 27 Irish Interest Group: 2-4pm Zoom
Sep 6 Legacy Interest Group: 2-4pm Research Centre
Sep 7 **Annual General Meeting – 7.30 pm at Tradies. Speaker – Megan Neilson.**
A Tale of Two Translators - A Personal Glimpse of Chinese-Australian History
Sep 15 **Tour: Chau Chak Wing Museum**

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

As we continue to progress with technology, an online booking and payment system became available through the BBFHS website in April, and it is gratifying to have received positive feedback from members on the ease of using the online payment system. So not only do BBFHS members have the option to register and pay for Interest Group meetings, tours, and education classes online, you also have the ability to renew your membership online. And, any payment to BBFHS can still be made via direct debit, cheque, credit card or cash, if preferred.

Another great feature of the online payment system is the option for anyone living more than 120 km from our Research Centre to take up a Distance Membership and it is hoped that this category of membership will grow over the coming years.

Continuing with our advances in technology, in April, the Scottish Interest Group returned to the Research Centre, and we trialled the meeting as a hybrid event allowing members to attend in person while other members attended online from home via Zoom. Although I was very pleased with the outcome, when it came time for round-the-table discussion, the ladies attending via Zoom struggled to hear discussion made further away from the laptop being used. A USB-connected table microphone has now been purchased and it is hoped that the sound issue will no longer be an issue.

For those of you who enjoy reading the UK *Family Tree* magazine that BBFHS subscribe to, our subscription has recently changed from hard copy to digital and the June edition is now available for you to read – at your leisure – through a link (with instructions) in the Members Area of our website.

I am thrilled to announce that **Leonie Bell** has taken on the role of Tours Co-ordinator and has offered a great range of tours for the remainder of the year. Other than the State Archives tour in August, the monthly tours will run on the third Thursday of the month. Check our website, eNEWS and Facebook for updates.

Finally, I would like to personally thank the many volunteers who made the return of our annual Heritage Fair (following Covid-19 restrictions) such a huge success on 14 May. Without you, the event could never go ahead, and it was wonderful to see the volunteers thoroughly enjoying the friendship and community spirit that our Fair is built on. It was also a financial success with more than \$550 raised through the raffle, over \$150 raised from the gold coin donation for second-hand books, and we welcomed 12 new members.

Jennie Fairs



**NSW & ACT Association of
Family History Societies Inc.**



**Annual Conference
16, 17, 18 September 2022**



Hosted by: Newcastle Family History Society Inc. www.nfhs.org.au
Maitland & Beyond Family History Society Inc. www.mdgs.org.au

On-line Conference

All presentations via Zoom and YouTube

www.ridingthewavesofhistory.com.au

IVAN NOEL DOUGHERTY (1907-1998)

by Colleen **Passfield** (Member)

Major-General Sir Ivan Noel **Dougherty**, CBE, DSO & Bar, ED was a teacher, Inspector of Schools and Army officer during World War II

Ivan Noel Dougherty was born on 6 April, 1907, at Leadville, NSW, a small town between Dunedoo and Coolah, NSW, the son of Isabella Dougherty and a father he never knew. He was educated at Mudgee High School and Sydney Teachers' College. While at Teachers' College, he joined the Sydney University Regiment (SUR) and, on 27 July 1927, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant and promoted to Captain in 1931.



Brigadier Ivan Dougherty, 2 Dec 1944.

In 1928 he was appointed to Marrickville Junior Technical School (now Marrickville Public School) and completed, part time, a Bachelor of Economics degree at Sydney University. He was transferred to Tingha Public School in 1931 and moved to the unattached list of the SUR. His next appointment was to Armidale West Public School which allowed him to resume his part-time military career, joining the 33rd Infantry Battalion. He was promoted Major in 1938 and assumed command of the battalion in 1938. He was promoted Lieutenant-colonel in 1939.

In 1935, he met Emily Phyllis (known as Phyllis) **Lofts**, born 28 March 1911 at Lismore, a teacher at Coonamble High School. They were married in 1936 at St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Sydney. At that time, married women were not permitted to work as teachers but, during WWII, the regulations were relaxed and Phyllis resumed teaching at Goulburn High School. The couple would have five children: Margaret and Graeme born before the war and, later, Maureen, David and Noela.

At the outbreak of war, Dougherty joined the second AIF on 13 October, 1939, and embarked from Sydney on 10 January 1940, on the *SS Otranto* to arrive in Palestine. He was appointed to command the NSW 2/4th Infantry Battalion of the 6th Division. In the campaigns that Dougherty was part of – the Western Desert, the battles of Greece and Crete, New Guinea and Borneo – and despite being the youngest and most junior commander in the Middle East, he proved his ability as a leader under all conditions – sand and desert in Libya, snow and blizzards in Greece and the heat and disease in the jungles of New Guinea.

In Libya, he was mentioned in dispatches and awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). For his services in Greece and Crete, Dougherty was mentioned in dispatches a second time. In the evacuation from Crete in May, 1941, and under fire from more than a hundred German *Stukas*, Dougherty waited until all his men were embarked on British warships before he departed on *HMS Kimberley*. Others in the 6th Division were not so lucky. Three entire battalions – the 2/1st, 2/7th and 2/11th - were lost on Crete. Those left behind became POWs.

After arriving back in Palestine, Dougherty received the sad news that his three year old daughter, Margaret had died in a playground accident back home in Mosman, NSW. The 2/4th Infantry Battalion rested and retrained and, in January, 1942, it embarked for Australia.

On arrival in Adelaide, Dougherty was informed that he was promoted to Brigadier and given command of the 23rd Infantry Brigade. In October 1942, he arrived in Port Moresby to take command of the 21st Infantry Brigade from Brigadier Arnold Potts and to mount an attack on the Japanese forces at Gona. During the campaign the brigade was almost wiped out by casualties and disease. Dougherty was admitted to hospital with malaria. For this campaign, Dougherty was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Order.

After this, Dougherty had to rebuild the brigade again and then advanced into the Ramu Valley and the Finisterre Range, overpowering the Japanese forces using speed and surprise. He was hospitalised in Port Moresby with a broken ankle and rejoined the brigade in early 1944 just in time for relief and return to Australia. For this campaign, Dougherty earned a third mention in dispatches.

Dougherty's final battle of the war was at Balikpapan on Borneo. Though the Japanese were outnumbered and outgunned, it was a fierce battle but the casualties were significantly lighter than previous engagements.

After the Japanese surrender, Dougherty became Military Governor of Makassar accepting the surrender of outlying Japanese forces, processing Japanese POWs and the release of Allied POWs and internees, organised the distribution of food and medical supplies and maintained civil order. In recognition of 'gallant and

distinguished services in the South West Pacific’, he was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1947.

Returning to civilian life, in 1946 Ivan Dougherty, as a Liberal candidate unsuccessfully challenged the sitting Labor member, Eddie Ward, for the State electorate of East Sydney. He returned to teaching the same year as Headmaster of Enmore Activity School. In 1948, he became Inspector of Schools in the Bega district. Leaving the Department of Education in 1955, he was appointed as the first Director of the New South Wales Defence Organisation and State Emergency Services, a position he held until retirement in 1972. He was knighted on 7 June 1968 for ‘services to ex-servicemen and the community’.

Dougherty was a Fellow of the senate of the University of Sydney, from 1954 to 1974, and served as Deputy Chancellor from 1958 to 1960. The University awarded him an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws in 1976. The Ivan Dougherty Gallery of the College of Fine Arts at the University of New South Wales was also named in his honour.

Sir Ivan Dougherty and Lady Phyllis established their family home in Cronulla in the Sutherland Shire in 1949. He became a member and Patron of the Cronulla RSL and was active in matters relating to ex-servicemen and women. He joined in and enjoyed other Shire activities such as Rotary.

After a long illness, he died at Cronulla on 4 March 1998 survived by his wife and four remaining children. More than 500 people attended his funeral service in St Andrew’s Cathedral, Sydney. He was cremated at Woronora Cemetery. Lady Emily Phyllis Dougherty died at Cronulla on 11 September 2004 and was cremated at Woronora Cemetery.

REFERENCES

Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org>

NSW BDM, <https://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au>

Australian Electoral Rolls, <https://www.ancestry.com.au>

The Proud 6th – Mark Johnston, Cambridge University Press, 2008

To Benghazi – Gavin Long, Second World War Official Histories

To Greece, Crete and Syria – Gavin Long, Second World War Official Histories

Woronora Memorial Park, <https://www.smcnsw.org.au/woronora/home>

Journal Contributions

All journal contributions – large or small – are welcome. Email your input to bbfhs_eds@yahoo.com.au, leave it in the Editor’s folder at the Research Centre or hand it to the Editor or any Committee member at our monthly meetings. Please add your name and contact details.

NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new Society members. Please take advantage of your membership by attending meeting nights, classes and the Research Centre (please ask for help if you need it).

| | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1869 | Toni Leonard | Kirrawee |
| 1870 | Malcolm McKenzie | Caringbah |
| 1871 | John Abbot | Carss Park |
| 1872 | Kathy Davis | Caringbah South |
| 1873 | Vanessa Colquhoun | Caringbah South |
| 1874 | Barbara Birkett | Caringbah South |
| 1875 | Christine O’Ryan | Maianbar |
| 1876 | Amy O’Keefe | Miranda |
| 1877 | Tyler O’Keefe | Miranda |
| 1878 | Carol McDonald | Bonnet Bay |
| 1879 | Jan Pittard | Caringbah |
| 1880 | Terry Hope | Sutherland |
| 1881 | Kim Wright | Miranda |
| 1882 | Jennifer Dyer | Alfords Point |
| 1883 | Deb Burton | Sylvania |
| 1884 | Joy Kirkpatrick | Kirrawee |
| 1885 | Linda Radulovitch | Penshurst |
| 1886 | Joe Knight | Gymea Bay |
| 1887 | Anne Knight | Gymea Bay |



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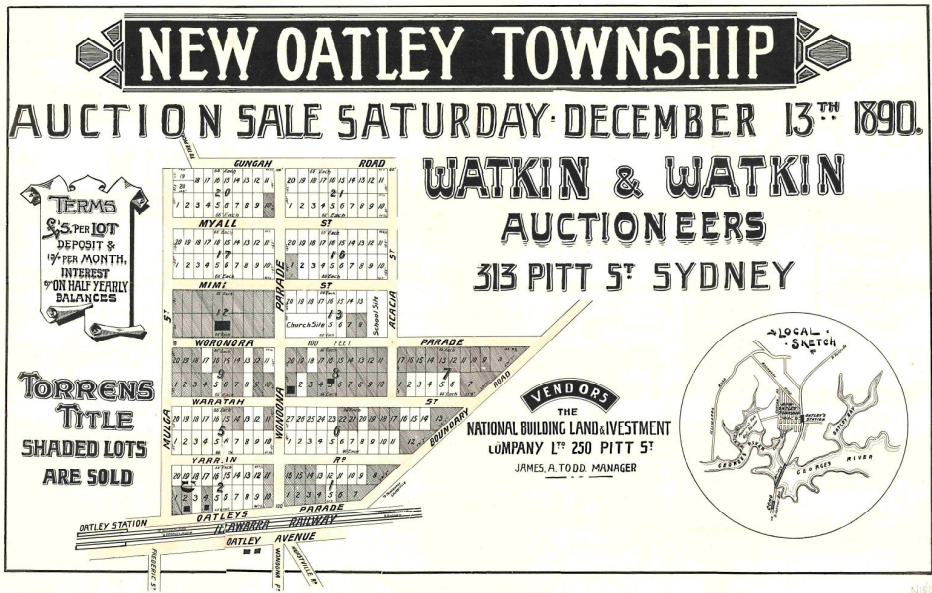
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OATLEY PARK – VOLUNTEERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PARTNERSHIP

by Leonie Bell (Member)

Bounded by Lime Kiln Bay on the north and Jew Fish Bay in the south, the natural bushland of Oatley Park occupies 45 hectares of a promontory jutting into the Georges River and was described in the twenties as a ‘splendid pleasure resort and recreation area’. Crowned by an anachronistic castellated tower, featuring a netted swimming pool at the water’s edge, and blessed with an abundance of native flora and fauna, it has been a popular picnic, walking and cycling destination for decades. Peakhurst Park was gazetted 25 March 1887. Its original name was changed to Oatley Park in 1922.



The circled insert in this subdivision map of the fledgling Oatley township shows the recently gazetted Peakhurst Park as a wild stretch of bushland with no roads or tracks.

Photo: NSW State Library

Oatley Park is an example of how enthusiastic volunteers can spearhead a project, assisted by local government. Hurstville Council was initially reluctant to invest in the area but was persuaded to provide financial and logistical support to volunteer organisations that made substantial contributions to park infrastructure: Mortdale Parents and Citizens Association, Mortdale Progress Association and Oatley District Amateur Swimming Club. As a result, the park evolved from a wild

untamed beauty spot to a desirable sporting and leisure venue, popular with both local Oatley residents and those across the Hurstville Council area.

Initially, Peakhurst Park was administered by the Peakhurst Park Trust, whose trustees cared for the reserve in a voluntary capacity. In 1906 the government introduced the contentious Local Government Act, creating 164 new administrative boundaries known as shires and providing for the election of shire councils, which were to take over ownership and care for roads, bridges and parks.

In 1906 Hurstville Council decided to ask the trustees to resign so that they could assume control of the bush reserve. Two trustees however, Hugh Patrick and Myles McRae, considered it their sacred duty to protect the park and refused to do so. Under the new act, the council did not have the power to take it over unless all trustees resigned. Finally in 1908 the Council wrested control of the park from the trustees under the authority of the Land Government Act.

Constructing a swimming enclosure

After World War 1, Mortdale Parents and Citizens Association (P&C), Mortdale Progress Association and Mortdale Chamber of Commerce identified a need in the community. Each week many parents made a lengthy journey to Sans Souci or Cronulla for their children to receive swimming instruction, although there was potentially a delightful swimming spot in their own backyard. The problem with the Georges River was the presence of sharks, making swimming highly dangerous. The Mortdale P&C saw the potential of Peakhurst Park not just as a reserve of native bushland, but for recreational purposes. However, councils of this era had limited funds, and few staff. Their efforts tended to focus on building permits, road construction, sewerage and sanitation, not recreational facilities.

In September 1919, the P&C Association requested that the Harbours and Rivers Department designate the area around Sandy Bay as a bathing place. The reply was unusually swift for a state government department. Three months later the application had been accepted and a Department of Lands representative was sent out to meet with the Mortdale Progress Association to discuss the exact location of the swimming area, which was selected as a 46 m frontage with a depth of 21 m to 37 m from high water mark. Hurstville Council was offered permissive occupancy of the Georges River site for a peppercorn rent from 1 January 1920.

Local government, in contrast, moved slowly. The Council Engineer reported that the chosen site did not provide for bathing at low tide. He recommended a site a little further south-west of the old stone pier, which would provide a one metre depth of water at low tide. The difficulty was that the revised site would need to be negotiated with the oyster farmer who currently leased it.

Sick of excuses and procrastination, the residents took matters into their own

hands. The Mortdale Progress Association called a Public Meeting in December 1921 to garner public and civic support to construct a swimming enclosure. Hurstville Mayor **Macken** favoured the project. He guaranteed £10 toward the cost if the local associations would agree to fund the balance and provide the labour. A wire enclosure was proposed, connected to piles sunk into the muddy riverbed. The Mayor promised to donate the old cables from Lugarno Punt and gave permission to obtain the necessary posts by felling old trees from Peakhurst Park.

A three-month series of Saturday working bees was scheduled, involving both the Progress Association and the Mortdale P&C. The senior boys from the school volunteered for what promised to be a fun but strenuous weekend activity, with the women providing refreshments to keep up their strength.

As a preliminary measure, the men constructed a rough dirt road leading to the proposed bathing site to enable easy access for the construction equipment and materials. The wire netting was provided by the council, who also delivered the materials for construction of a dressing shed.

By February the working parties had almost completed the sinking of the piles, and the enclosure would very soon be netted. The Scoutmaster, Mr **Batty**, and the Mortdale schoolmaster, Mr **Mitchell**, brought along a troupe of boys to clear the scrub at the top of the hill for a cricket pitch.

The baths opened with great fanfare on 10 March 1922 in the presence of 200 local residents. The scene was a festive one, complete with colourful bunting, food and drink supplied by the ladies, and music played by the Boy Scouts. The pool was a modest 15 m x 21 m, but the Mayor suggested in his opening speech that if they were to extend the pool to two hectares, from headland to headland, the council would be willing to provide further assistance.

Once the baths were completed, there was recognition that a committee would be needed to oversee its operation and maintenance. Hurstville Council was amenable to the formation of the Oatley Park Local Committee. The Committee continued to operate until 1928, at which time the Mortdale P&C and the Oatley West Progress Association took over the function of lobbying the council on park matters, but not administering the parkland, which by then was in council control.

Whereas today, ongoing maintenance of a pool and parkland would be funded by the local council, this was not the norm during the 1920s. Hurstville Council did not have sufficient money, or the inclination to do so. Instead, the opening ceremony included a fund-raising plea.

Recreational facilities

Not content with these simple facilities, the Oatley Park Local Committee went from strength to strength, constructing a boatshed and refreshment rooms in

the ensuing months. Council appointed Mr **Murray** as a caretaker and park ranger to supervise the baths, in exchange for permission to run a boatshed and refreshment rooms in the park.

In July 1922 the committee was in full fundraising mode for their next project, to erect a fence and ornamental memorial entrance gates, dedicated to the soldiers of the Great War. Despite the plans being adopted in principle, the fencing and gates would be some years in coming.

The residents' vision for the park was extensive. The local schoolboys had done some preliminary scrub clearing work earlier in the year, but in August 1922 a further working bee was organised to clear more of the bush, creating a large grassy area intended for informal sports such as cricket and football.

The following year the Georges River Cricket Association proposed laying two wickets for formal cricket matches, if the council would clear more of the vegetation and lease them the grounds for three years. Council preferred that the Oatley Park Local Committee decided the matter, because they didn't want to provide council labour and would leave it to the volunteers to carry out the work. The organisation was successful in its bid and began organising matches, with the cricket pitches becoming a fixture on the local sporting calendar for many years. Over time the pitch needed maintenance and the cricketers desired better amenities for their thriving club activities, so the cricket club asked the council to install mains water in the park in 1925, to level the cricket pitches and improve the access road, which council readily agreed to. Moreover, they called for council to remove a shed from Hurstville Park to Oatley Park for the cricket club's usage. The council were amenable and subsequently issued a call for tenders to undertake the work.

With residents proving that the park was both popular and well patronised, Hurstville Council was now interested in further park investment. They asked the engineer, G. **Heffernan**, to prepare specifications and cost construction of concrete baths to enable swimming at low tide. Three months later the engineer's report estimated the cost as a hefty £720 and tenders were called for contractors to erect a reinforced concrete enclosing wall for the existing swimming pool.

Conservation was also on their minds. Christmas bush, flannel flowers, and wild fuchsias bloomed profusely, while bird calls piped in the trees and possums leapt from branch to branch. A park ranger was appointed to protect the hundreds of plant and animal species present on the peninsula. In 1935 a valuable addition to the flora was made when the Mortdale Oatley sub-branch of the RSL donated two Lone Pine Seedlings obtained from Gallipoli.

The park began to be used for entertainment, with the Mortdale Citizens Band scheduling regular Sunday afternoon concerts, and the volunteers proposed the council should build a picnic shelter shed. Hurstville Council agreed to have its

engineer investigate the feasibility of the idea.

Combatting vandalism

Vandalism is nothing new. While civic minded residents were selflessly donating time and effort to make improvements, others were bent on destruction. A man was fined 5 shillings in Kogarah Police Court for cutting down trees in the reserve in 1926, with the sentence seen as a warning to others to refrain. Unlike today, where such action is usually aimed at improving water views, it is most likely he was cutting down firewood, a common practice at this time. The deterrent didn't work, and timber theft continued, prompting advice that further fencing was required to keep out the perpetrators. Some people interpreted the natural state of the park as meaning it was unused and therefore should be made available for stock grazing, an idea which was soundly rejected.

The volunteers were discouraged to find that vandals had also broken a water meter, shattered windows in the bathing pavilion, smashed shutters, and stolen a tap, leaving water to flow unimpeded. Local businessman C. **Pocock** requested permission to start a small refreshment kiosk business at the baths, in return for keeping an eye on the baths and the bush reserve. Eventually Hurstville Council decided in June 1927 that the long-awaited fence and gates were necessary in order to curb vandalism, wood cutting and flora theft, and additionally, a council inspector should be appointed, although this latter decision did not eventuate. They also decided to call for tenders from interested parties to conduct a refreshment kiosk, as advised by the Oatley Park Committee. One of the key functions of the kiosk business would be to deter vandalism, although this was not stated overtly in the advertisement which was placed in the *Propeller* in September.

In contrast to the earlier use of volunteer labour, the Oatley Park Local Committee in 1927 now drew up a list of works it wished the council to undertake. President Nicol **Murray** and Secretary D. **Ross** took the Hurstville Council Works Committee on a tour of inspection, to explain that these were projects which were beyond the capabilities of volunteers and needed substantial council funding rather than fundraising: a proper sanitary service to pavilion in park and at baths, good road to baths, water service to baths, better dressing accommodation, fireplaces to build in and around the park, baths to be properly cleaned out and deepened, and extra springboards erected, also a promenade wall to be built.

Oatley District Amateur Swimming Club

The Oatley District Amateur Swimming Club was formed in January 1927 and within five years had reached 170 members. Each Saturday the keen swimmers would turn up in all weathers, to combat the tides and jellyfish in the muddy enclosure, in their quest to gain competition points. The club staged junior and senior grade handicap races, novice events and diving competitions in the pool, and

organised fundraising social functions to pay for construction of a clubhouse.

The club controversially began holding activities on a Sunday, and the local clergy and church goers subsequently objected. In response, the Oatley West Progress Association held a public debate, where a cross-section of clergy could present their views alongside that of the sportsmen and women of the district.



Oatley Park Baths ca 1930. Races ran from the beach to the pontoons near the netting. Como railway bridge is in the background. Photo: Georges River Council Library

After almost a year of operation, the club decided to organise a working bee to use explosives to remove some of the rocks which were exposed at low tide. Gentlemen members were requested to bring along a pickaxe or heavy stone hammer to repair the aging landing pier at the baths. The council would provide the necessary concrete, while the ladies would prepare a picnic lunch and morning tea.

The swimming club had also suffered vandalism of the chained and locked pontoon, which had been detached from its mooring on several occasions. Springboards installed by members had been damaged. Alderman **Mallard** (who was also Oatley Swimming Club President 1927-29) declared that, 'Council should appoint a park ranger, who would also be a special constable, to protect the people's property. It was necessary also to have a police constable on duty for some portion of the day on Saturdays and holidays to restrict the horse-play indulged in by hoodlums who visited the baths. Young girls had been pushed into the water off

the rocks, and many other acts of lawlessness had been perpetrated.’



Members of Oatley District Amateur Swimming Club ca 1937.

Photo: Georges River Council Library

The cricket club was feeling similarly disheartened. Their pavilion had been wrecked by thieves who smashed the clubhouse and removed the doors and sashes. Additionally, signage had been destroyed and water taps broken. Everyone was crying out for council to appoint a park caretaker. The Impounding Officer was asked to temporarily patrol Oatley Park. His duties were rather varied, as was reported in February 1928. In a single week, ‘Besides impounding several stray animals in the municipality he had cleaned out and disinfected drains in various streets, burned a dead horse, buried three deceased cats, and carried out park patrol duties in Oatley Park.’

Perhaps he was relieved when four Special Constables were sworn in to patrol Oatley Park; Messrs. L. **Mallard** (Oatley Swimming Club Vice President 1931-32), F. **Walker**, C. **Quoye**, and W. L. **Packenhams** (Oatley Swimming Club Secretary 1931-35 and later President 1941-42), who would operate a roster system to hopefully prevent further vandalism. However they were ineffective. Numerous reports of vandalism were still being received in December that year, with the entrance gates torn off their hinges, smashed facilities, a kiosk set on fire and

vigorous timber removal for firewood. The Special Constables continued to carry out park patrols until the mid-30s.

Other club members were employed in volunteer labour on Sunday mornings to prepare the baths for the new season. The ladies were not required to exert themselves with hard outdoor labour, but to slave away in the kitchen preparing refreshments for their menfolk, as was customary in this period.

Increased council investment

The Council Engineer J.D. **Webster** and the Municipal Gardiner L. **Dunbar** presented a park development plan to the aldermen in August 1928. It suggested that Oatley Park Road be extended from Gungah Bay Road to the park gates and a line of trees planted alongside it to create an avenue. The allusion to park gates was somewhat optimistic, as the long-awaited memorial gates had still not been erected. An attractively planted 15 m diameter circular garden bed would direct traffic to either side, where a newly created one-way gravel scenic drive would meander around the peninsula amongst the native gums, with two cliff-top lookouts en-route. Road ballast for the construction work was blasted from the reserve itself, and the gravel excavated from the area around the sports oval. While these measures were quite cost effective, it would horrify today's environmentalists. A new promenade wall was constructed on the water's edge near the baths. They constructed additional picnic grounds and parking lots, created several new footpaths including one around the lower spur, and build a 2 m wide stone wall from the pier to the dressing sheds, enabling pedestrian access to the pier at high tide. They also constructed fireplaces and an 'ambulance dressing station'. The most expensive feature of the plan was a £2,000 concrete pavilion, incorporating a caretaker's cottage, dressing sheds, seating and kiosk.

Carnival

Looking forward to the completion of improvements to the road and facility upgrades, the swimming club was anxious to share the joys of their precious leisure grounds with others. They proposed holding a swimming and sports carnival to promote visitation to the area. The park became hugely popular in the lead up to the carnival. The publicity gained by newspaper reports of the improvements to the area was a factor in the noticeable increase in visitor numbers during the summer season. Although there were some fears that holes in the shark-proof enclosure made it less than safe for swimmers, and it was well known that sharks were in the vicinity, this didn't seem to deter swimming.

Hopes for an Eight Hour Day ceremonial opening were premature, and the official opening was delivered on a bright and sunny Anniversary Day (now known as Australia Day) – 26 January 1931. The organising committee had been busy, lining up local organisations to form a festive parade to proceed from the Soldiers

Monument at Mortdale Station. Unlike today's events where people are urged to take public transport, car owners were encouraged to drive to the event and participate in the procession. Decorated vehicles led the way, while Masonic lodge members and citizens marched along the gravel road to the music of Mortdale Citizens Band. The new ambulance wagon drove proudly in the convoy. It was announced that four men, who had been instrumental in implementing significant improvements to the park, would be honoured in the near future. They had acted not only to fulfil their duties as members of the civil service, but also contributed significant hours of their leisure time as members of local volunteer organisations. The new road would be divided into three sections, named after Aldermen Mallard and Walker (who were Special Constables), and Alderman **Christenson**, while the look-out was to be named Webster, in honour of the council engineer, who had championed the works so effectively in his reports to council.

The sports oval rang with merriment at the clash of sporting events and tug-o-war, while the 137 m pool, the longest in the state, was the scene of swimming competitions. Residents browsed the stalls dotted around the picnic area. The parade participants proudly received awards for Best Decorated Vehicle, Best Lodge Display, while the children entered the Best Decorated Scooter event. The swimming carnival went on to become an annual event.

By the mid-1930s the emphasis had changed from volunteer labour to an expectation that Hurstville Council would undertake any building works, landscaping, roadworks, cricket pitch maintenance, or improvements to the swimming pool. The question of vandalism was now referred to the police rather than relying solely on volunteer constables.

In 1935 the Department of Public Works began building the distinctive 'old English ruined castle' shelter shed at the peak of the hill. Hurstville Council was eventually forced to complete it themselves at a cost of £300. In the same year the council installed new shark proof nets to enlarge the pool, after the Department of Lands granted it a five-year lease on two hectares of waterfront., Although volunteers continue to this day to run the Oatley District Amateur Swimming Club, the era of self-help building and Saturday working bees at Oatley Park was over.

Conclusion

The partnership, between local council and the three volunteer organisations that operated in Oatley Park, could not exist in today's litigious world. In the twenty-first century there are thousands of parliamentary and local government acts, standards and regulations that govern construction and operation of swimming pools, sporting facilities and picnic grounds. These effectively preclude amateur construction and maintenance of civic facilities.

In the early part of the twentieth century there was much less regulation, and

this motivated ordinary unqualified people to construct all types of facilities, including their own houses, and public sporting and recreational facilities. Building regulations and tradesmen's licensing laws were looser, and workplace health and safety laws virtually non-existent. Councils did not have to fear being sued for negligence if facilities constructed by volunteers led to an accident. There was also a general expectation that if you needed something done, then the practical way to achieve it was to build it yourself rather than rely on expensive professional labour.

Ironically, as law-makers attempt to make life safer for everyone, the proliferation of legislation has prevented people from seeking creative solutions to community problems in the ways their ancestors did.

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St George Call

Sydney Morning Herald

BOTANY BAY FHS NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Botany Bay Family History Society Inc will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 7 September 2022 at 'Tradies', 57 Manchester Road, Gymea. Only financial members can vote. Any financial member may be nominated for election to the Committee by any two other financial members. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary at botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au.

BOTANY BAY FHS HERITAGE FAIR

by Noele **Watkins** (Member)

It was wonderful to be able to hold our 2022 Heritage Fair on Saturday 14 May at Tradies after some years cancelled because of Covid-19.

I would like to thank all those who gave their time to participate and also to those who came to visit.

Especially, my thanks go to those people who were on Tradies doorstep at 7.30 am to do the foundation work to enable the Fair to begin. Those people were John Hely, Harley Watkins, Roger Casey, Bob Barnett, John Levy, Chris Marshall, Jackie Butters and Ann Plum. What a team they were too!

About 210 people attended, which I feel was a good number considering a lot of people are still reluctant to be in a crowd. There was a good variety of tables, all the talks were interesting and well attended. Thank you to Jennie Fairs for looking after that side of the day, in-between looking after the English Interest table. I must make a mention of the great efforts of Ann and Elizabeth on the Irish Interest table. Well done ladies. Selected photos are shown below with more photos on our BBFHS Facebook page at <http://tinyurl.com/nv2xclx> (scroll down).





Welcome Table



Writer's Interest Group



Membership Table



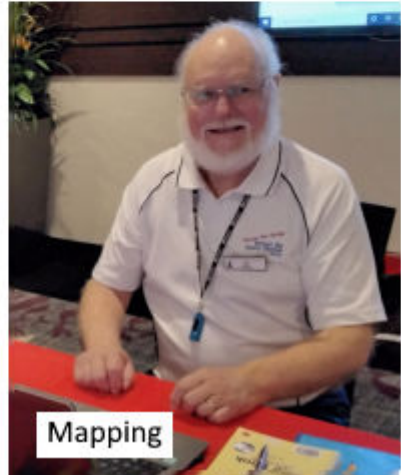
Botany Bay Connections



Our Fabulous Organisers -
Noele and Jennie



Books



RESEARCH CENTRE OPENING TIMES

Monday, Wednesday & Friday – 10am to 4 pm

While Covid-19 is still about, before attending, please phone 9523 8948 to make sure that the Centre is open on the day.

Closed public holidays.

When researching, please ask for help if you need it – it is why the Centre assistants are there and they love to help.

BBFHS EDUCATION PROGRAM

by Carol **Cronan** and Lillian **Magill** (Educators)

The Education Committee has been busy over the last couple of months, delivering two workshops and preparing others for delivery over the next four months.

In February there was a workshop on making better use of both the State and National Libraries. This was well attended and prompted participants to search in less obvious places for their ancestors and the family story.

RootsTech was the focus in March and many BBFHS members availed themselves of the many sessions offered. Members shared via the BBFHS io group, the titles of workshops they thought were particularly worthwhile and of course the benefit is that most of these workshops are available for viewing online throughout 2022.

Leonie **Bell** ran a wonderful workshop at the Research Centre in April called *Powerful PowerPoint* for documenting family stories. Leonie's workshop may be viewed at <http://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/powerfulpowerpoint.html>. This was a dynamic and very practical class and participants were keen to fine tune the use of the many tools on offer in the PowerPoint application. Hopefully we will get the chance to see some of the finished PowerPoint presentations later this year.

The program of classes on offer for the remainder of the year is available on the BBFHS website at <http://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/education.html>. The first of these is very much aimed at people beginning the journey of discovering their family history and will be held at the Research Centre on 26 May.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| May 26 | <i>Basic Beginners - Moving Off the Starting Plate</i> |
| Jun 23 | <i>Making More Effective Use of Family Search and Ryerson</i> |
| Jul 21 | <i>Getting Organised</i> |
| Aug 25 | <i>Continuing to be Organised</i> |

The Education Committee would love to hear from anyone who would be happy to share their expertise in a session or as a part of a workshop. The more sharing we do the richer we all are. Please give this some thought and if you are even vaguely interested contact one of the Committee to discuss what might work for you. Times, delivery modes and duration are all very flexible.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our classes soon.



DONALD GEORGE MACKAY – THE LAST OF THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN EXPLORERS

by Colleen **Passfield** (Member)

Donald George **Mackay**, F.R.G.S., CBE, a man who shunned publicity, was one of the most notable yet least known Australian personalities of the 20th century, the son of one of the pioneers of inland settlement in New South Wales. He was born on 29 June 1870 at Yass, New South Wales, the fourth child and second son of Alexander Mackay, owner of *Wallendbeen* station, and his wife Annie, nee **Mackenzie**, both Scottish born.

Alexander Mackay, J.P., was born on 28 January, 1815, at the seaside village of Kildary, in Cromartyshire, Scotland, the son of Alexander Mackay and his wife, Mary, nee **Grant**. His siblings were Norman (1817-), Donald (1822-1875), Margaret (1824-), and Janet (1827-). Through neighbours in Kildary, he met the Matheson family and, at the age of 25, was in the employ of Jardine, Matheson and Company, shippers and traders, in Canton, China.

The head of the company, Sir James **Matheson**, after the opium wars, decided to spread the company's investments in Australia. In 1835, he sent Alex. Mackay to New South Wales to buy pastoral leases and look into possibilities of tea-growing there. After jackerooing to gain experience and watching for chances to buy well, Mackay acquired, as agent, *Wallendbeen* in September, 1842. The original 'squatter' on the area was Ned **Ryan** whose claim included the present towns of Murrumburrah, Wallendbeen, Stockinbingal, Cootumundra and Bethungra, with his homestead at Galong where *The Castle* was built. As agent for James Matheson he also purchased *Greg Greg*, near Kosciusko, in 1845; *Aston* on the Monaro in 1846; and other properties in the area. In 1849, the area of *Wallendbeen* was gazetted as 60,160 acres, with a frontage to the Murrumbidgee.

As the holdings increased, Sir James sent out shepherds from the isle of



Donald George Mackay, CBE
(photo: *The Age*, 28 March 1942)

Lewis and two overseers, James Matheson Mackenzie and Alex Mackay's brother Donald, who became overseer of *Wallendbeen* while Mackenzie was overseer of the Monaro property. The township of Wallendbeen was gazetted on 25 November, 1853 and application was made in the name of James Matheson for the freehold of the homestead block of 320 acres at *Wallendbeen* station.

In 1855, Alexander Mackay, then aged 40, went back to Scotland, stayed at Sir James's castle, visited the village where he was born and met Annie Mackenzie (1836-1925) from nearby Invergordon and married her on 26 November, 1856, at Rosskeen, Ross and Cromarty, Scotland. In 1857, they returned to *Wallendbeen* where their children were born – James Alexander Kenneth on 5 June 1859 (NSW BDM 5313/1859), Annie Mary Williamina, 1863-1869 (5536/1863), Walterina Jane, 1867-1950 (6963/1867), and Donald George on 29 June 1870 (19233/1870).

When Sir James Matheson decided to sell his Australian properties, Alex. Mackay got first offer for the *Wallendbeen* station and the purchase was completed on 18 April, 1860. Later he owned *Memmagong*, *Kildary*, *Milbey West* and other properties but *Wallendbeen* was always his favourite.

Alexander Mackay died on 5 February 1890 (7098/1890), at Wallendbeen, Cootamundra, NSW, aged 75. (Reg.No.7098) He was buried in Yass cemetery next to the grave of his infant daughter, Annie Mary Williamina.

Annie M Mackay died on 19 October, 1825 (Reg.No.17810) and was buried in Yass Cemetery.

After the death of Alexander Mackay, his property was split between the two sons, James Alexander Kenneth, known as Kenneth, and Donald George. Kenneth took over the *Wallandoon* portion and Donald the *Wallendbeen* section. Both men would become significant in Australian history.

James Alexander Kenneth Mackay.

Born at *Wallendbeen* on 5 June, 1859, James Alexander Kenneth Mackay, known as Kenneth, became an accomplished horseman, well known in the bush, and riding as an amateur at meetings at Randwick and Rosehill. He was also a poet, an author, soldier, orator, M.P. and State Minister.

Kenneth Mackay was educated at home by a governess, and at Camden College and Sydney Grammar School. In his mid-twenties, he also furthered his education at H E **Southey**'s college at Mittagong, where, in 1885, he raised a volunteer cavalry troop called the West Camden Light Horse and was appointed captain in command. He returned to the family property to assist his aging father and began writing short stories and ballads which were published in newspapers and journals. His later books included *Outback* (1893) and *The Yellow Wave* (1895). On 19 March, 1891, he married Kate Mabel **White** at Scots Church, North

Melbourne (Vic.BDM Reg.No.1196). they would have two daughters, Annie Mabel (1892-1957)and Agnes (1906-1969).

Standing as a Protectionist, in 1895 Kenneth Mackay was elected as the Member for Boorowa, to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales. In 1899, he was nominated to the Legislative Council and remained in the Council until 1933.

In 1897, Mackay raised and was appointed to command the 1st Australian Lighthorse and in 1898 was promoted to Lieutenant-colonel. During the Boer War, he saw action in Rhodesia, Mafeking and the Transvaal. He returned to Sydney in July, 1901, and, for his war service was appointed CBE, mentioned in despatches, and granted the honorary rank of colonel.

In 1906-07, Mackay was chairman of a Royal Commission into the administration of Papua and went on an adventurous journey through the region. In 1909, his personal account, *Across Papua*, was published and in 1913, he commanded the military parade at Canberra for the setting of the foundation stone and naming of the Capital.

During World War I, Kenneth Mackay was appointed to raise an Australian Army Reserve and was its first director-general from 1916. In 1920, he was awarded the O.B.E. and retired from the Australian Military forces with the honorary rank of major-general.

Mackay had always maintained his interest in primary industry and the Australian bush man and, in retirement, returned to his property *Wallendoon* and died in the Cootamundra District Hospital on 16 November, 1935. His remains were taken by train to Sydney where a service was held at Woronora Crematorium. The Cootamundra Troop of Light Horse was at the railway station to pay their respects and, among those present at the simple service were members of the old South African contingent. His wife and two daughters survived him.

Donald George Mackay.

Donald George Mackay, born in 1870 on his father's property *Willendbeen*, was educated at home by governess, then at Wallendbeen Public School and at Oaklands School, Mittagong. At age seventeen, he was apprenticed to an engineering firm in Sydney but, unhappy at that job, he soon returned to his father's property, *Willendbeen*, to work as a jackeroo. The bush and the outback were more to his liking.

After his father's death in 1890, he inherited a substantial income which allowed him to travel extensively throughout the world including New Zealand, Japan, and Europe. He lived life full of varied adventures including gold prospecting in western New South Wales.

On 29 July, 1899, Mackay set out from Brisbane, with Frank **White**, to bicycle around Australia. After White abandoned the ride, he returned to Brisbane on 27 March, 1900, having cycled 17,700 km through little known but huge areas which impressed on him the vastness of the country.

On 16 April, 1902, Donald Mackay married Amy Isobel **Little** at Burwood, New South Wales.(Reg.No.3692). They settled at Port Hacking where fishing, sailing, sculling, hiking and a speedboat were some of his interests. His ambitions for exploration found him, in 1908, with a party leaving for Papua to investigate the headwaters of the Purari River. During the expedition, they also discovered a coalfield.

During the next decade, Mackay bought a yacht and cruised in the South Seas in search of hidden treasure. During his travels, he collected tattoos until he was a walking art gallery.

He tried to enlist during World War I but, to his surprise, was declared medically unfit. He tried to help the war effort through donations and fund raising and, after the war, bore the entire cost of the war memorial – 11 m high, grey granite obelisk – erected in Wallendbeen to the memory of the men who had served in the armed forces abroad.

In 1826, Mackay financed and accompanied the first of several expeditions to the Northern Territory when, with anthropologist Dr. Herbert **Basedow**, he went into the Petermann Ranges by camel. In 1928 they explored Arnhem Land on horseback. In 1930, 1933, 1935 and 1937 Mackay financed and led aerial surveys of Central Australia and discovered a large lake which the government named after him.

The great possibilities of using aircraft in survey work were demonstrated for the first time in an attempt to produce accurate maps of the physical features of the inland. With flights leaving from three bases – in the Peterman Range, southeast of Port Hedland at the head of the Fortescue River and the Fitzroy River - the surveys covered some 1,450,000 square km and produced more useful maps than had previously existed and corrected the few maps that were already in existence. Copies of all Mackay's maps and reports were donated to the Commonwealth Government and the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

To commemorate the success of her husband's 1935 exploration, Amy Mackay presented a unique memorial to the Sutherland Shire Council – a drinking fountain for all living creatures. Designed by Thomas D **Esplin** and constructed by John (Jack) **Connors**, of Caringbah, an inscription from Isaiah 55.1, read 'Come ye to the waters' and there were separate drinking facilities for humans, small troughs for horses and dogs, a bird bath and bubblers with a step for small children. There was a sundial and a bronze pillar supporting a 36 cm diameter opal lighting ball.

Local sandstone was used for flagging, fountain and surrounding seats and walls. The fountain was located at the intersection of Port Hacking Road (South) and the Kingsway, Caringbah and was where the local RSL held their remembrance services on Anzac Day.

However, as Caringbah grew and traffic lights were planned for this important road junction, it was obvious that this memorial would have to be moved. On the recommendation of the Shire Engineer, in 1972, the memorial was moved to the small park adjoining the Caringbah Hotel. It was reconstructed in a more simple shape and minus the horse and dog troughs, the bubbler, the sundial and seats. The area behind was landscaped and the column was engraved with the words 'Lest We Forget' and is still used on Anzac Day.

In 1934 Donald George Mackay was awarded an OBE and, in 1937 he was awarded the CBE for his efforts and retired to his home on Port Hacking. He continued with his quiet acts of philanthropy and always attended Caringbah Public School for the Empire Day celebrations. Shortly after Caringbah RSL was formed, he learned that a site was needed on which to erect a second-hand Quonset hut. He offered the Sub-branch the free use of a block of land that he owned on the corner of Cawarra (then) and Banksia Roads. Some years later, he transferred the land to the Sub-branch so that the club building could be erected on the site. Although in poor health, Donald Mackay drove to the site to lay the foundation stone but did not live to see the building completed. The RSL asked the council to rename this short street 'Mackay Street' to which the Council agreed. For many years, on the Saturday closest to the 19 September, members would gather at the entrance to the Memorial Club, near a photograph of Donald Mackay to honour a generous man after whom the club building was named.

In 1942, the book *Last of the Explorers* by the Australian author, Frank Clune, was released. It is the story of a remarkable man, his adventurous life and pioneering family. In the book, Donald Mackay paid tribute to his wife, Amy, who accompanied him on many of his adventures; 'I got a real good sport for a life mate ... getting married was the most sensible thing I ever did in my life'.

Donald George Mackay died at Sutherland Hospital on 17 September, 1958 (Reg.No.21729) and was cremated at Woronora Cemetery. His wife, Amy Isobel, died in 1956 (Reg.No.32016) and was cremated at Woronora Cemetery. There were no children of the marriage.

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PLEASE MENTION *THE ENDEAVOUR* WHEN CONTACTING

BBFHS INTEREST GROUPS

by Barbara **Barnes** (Interest Groups Coordinator)

Our interest groups are led by co-ordinators who have a strong interest in the subject but are not necessarily ‘an expert’. They lead the groups who all share their knowledge to help each other in the group – ‘self-help’. In this sharing situation members get to know one another and this social interaction is often a wonderful by-product of their involvement.

Meeting details for Groups are published in advance through the regular eNEWS and other Society media arms. If you would like to participate in any of the groups, the contact details for co-ordinators appear below. All co-ordinators will be only too pleased to add your name and email address to their listing, to become part of their family.

The group coordinators are:

Writers Interest – Leonie **Bell** (0403 952 762, LNBell@iinet.net.au)

Irish Interest – Barbara **Wimble** (wwimble@iinet.net.au)

Scottish Interest – Jean **Campbell** (jeanhcampbell47@gmail.com)

Australian Interest – Lilian **Magill** (lily@researchbylily.com.au)

English Interest – Jennie **Fairs** (fairsj@optusnet.com.au)

Legacy – Sue **Jones** (scjones@optusnet.com.au)

Family Tree Maker for Windows and Macs – Pam **Heather**
(pamheather@gmail.com)

DNA for Family History – John **Levy** (j.levy@bigpond.net.au)

Note: From March 2022, BBFHS will again be charging members \$5 to attend an interest group meeting. Bookings and payments should be made through the BBFHS website at <http://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/payments.html>, preferably 24 hours prior to the meeting.

UPCOMING PROGRAM

WRITERS INTEREST:
At the Research Centre

Thursday 26 May 1.30 – 3.30pm
Thursday 28 July 1.30 – 3.30pm
Thursday 22 September 1.30 – 3.30pm

SCOTTISH INTEREST:
At the Research Centre

Saturday 4 June 2 – 4pm
Saturday 6 August 2 – 4pm

IRISH INTEREST:
By ZOOM

Saturday 25 June 2 – 4pm
Saturday 27 August 2 – 4pm

| | |
|--|--|
| ENGLISH INTEREST: By ZOOM | Saturday 9 July 2 – 4pm Saturday 10 September 2 – 4pm |
| AUSTRALIAN INTEREST: By ZOOM | Saturday 20 August 2 – 4pm |
| LEGACY: At the Research Centre | Tuesday 5 July – 4pm Tuesday 6 September 2 – 4pm |
| FAMILY TREE MAKER FOR WINDOWS & MACS: | Tuesday 9 August 1.30 – 3.30pm By ZOOM |
| DNA FOR FAMILY HISTORY: By ZOOM | Saturday 28 May 1.30 – 3.30pm No meeting in July Saturday 24 September 1.30 – 3.30pm |

DIGGINGS



D*iggings* are titles of articles in journals that we exchange with other societies. Not all articles appearing in that particular journal are listed but those that are noted as articles unrelated to the journal's origins. We recommend that you read any journal which originates from an area in which your ancestors had connections.

Members may borrow from the collection of printed journals exchanged with other family history societies held at the Research Centre and Library for the years 2016 to 2020. Please ask a volunteer for the loan procedure. Online exchange journals are also available at the Research Centre and may be viewed on the computers (click on the *Resources on the Server* icon on the desktop).

UNITED KINGDOM

Gloucestershire Family History Society (<https://gfhs.org.uk/resources/anzacs/>) has a list of names of about 118 Gloucestershire-born men who joined the Anzacs during WW1

Compiled by Kate **Anderson** (Member)



DISABLED ACCESS

is available for Research Centre users.
Please phone the Centre on 02 9523 8948
to make arrangements.

COBB & CO'S OLDEST DRIVER – RICHARD PALMER (1837-1931)

by Colleen Passfield (Member)

While trawling through *Trove*, I came across a story which intrigued me. Over four issues of *The Propellor* in June 1930, journalist Will Carter reported on an interview with Richard Palmer, described as ‘Cobb & Co.’s oldest driver’ and living in Allison Road Cronulla with his daughter, Mrs Stanley Latta (Beatrice). My grandparents lived in Allison Road and were friends of the Latta family so I was ‘hooked’ and continued to read,

It was like a story from a *Boys' Own Annual* but about the early days of the colony when bushrangers terrified the settlers, before the days of rail travel and the arrival of a Cobb & Co. coach in a country town was a big event. Was it all true?

In the opening narrative, Richard Palmer stated that his un-named father was whaling at Poverty Bay in New Zealand, bought land from the Maoris but did not make legal claim to it when he was in New South Wales. Several family trees on Ancestry do not support these claims and identify his father as Richard Palmer (1799-1875), a convict transported on the *Prince of Orange* in 1821 who served his term of seven years in New South Wales. Perhaps like many descendants at that time, Palmer was reluctant to expose a family connection to a convict past.

The New South Wales BDM register confirms that Richard Palmer, our subject, was born in 1837 (registration: 898/1837) to Richard and Frances and that his parents Richard Palmer and Frances Gold (1817-1901) were married at St Phillip's Church in Sydney in 1833 (72/1833). Frances was also known as Gutsell or Gutsall. She was born on 11 January 1817 and christened as Frances Gutsall at St Phillip's Church in Sydney on 4 April 1817.

Shortly after their marriage, Richard and Frances moved to St. Albans on the Macdonald River, a tributary of the Hawkesbury River, where he had a farm and later a hotel. During their marriage, Richard and Frances Palmer had eleven children: Richard William (1837-1931) (birth registration, 89/1837), Frances (1840-1908) (birth, 952/1840), Thomas George (1841-1875) (birth, 1841/1250, death 3074/1875), Rebecca (1844-1881) (birth, 1561/1844), Eliza (1846-1871) (birth, 1439/1846), Elizabeth (1848-1892) (birth, 1134/1848), Louisa (1851-1932) (birth, 1540/1851), Amelia (1853-1937) (birth, 390/1853), James Henry (1856-1889) (birth, 2382/1856), Joseph John (1859-1900) (birth, 3538/1859) and George (1862-1917) (birth, 3392/1862).

After 1851, the family moved to Sydney and the births of their last four children were registered in Paddington. They lived on Old South Head Road,

opposite the Sacred Heart Church, and Richard (Snr.) began a carrying service which developed into a horse-drawn bus company. In 1855 he was granted a Publican's Licence for the Prince Albert Inn on South Head Road. Richard Palmer died in January, 1875 and was buried in Balmain Cemetery. His wife Frances died in 1901 and was buried in Waverley Cemetery.

His son Richard began working in the business when he was thirteen thus beginning his long association with operating horse-drawn vehicles. When the vessel *Dunbar*, from London under Captain Green, was shipwrecked near the Gap at South Head on the night of 20 August 1857, there was a rush of sightseers to the cliff-tops. Buses were in much demand and, in his interview in 1931, Richard Palmer claimed that he made £7 per day in bus fares and that he helped to pull up the sole survivor, James Johnson, a crewman, from the rock ledge where he had been thrown after the vessel had struck the rocks.

After working in Sydney driving a horse-drawn hearse for an undertaker, Palmer decided to try his luck in the country and was driving a coach-van from Sydney to Mudgee conveying passengers and luggage, before the arrival of Cobb & Co in NSW. He was particularly proud of driving, in a coach-and-four, Robert Pemberton **Richardson** (1827-1900), founder in 1858 of the firm of Richardson & Wrench Real Estate Agents, across the Blue Mountains to Bathurst for the first land sale held in Bathurst where land had much appreciated in value due to the recent gold discoveries nearby.

The firm of Cobb & Co was established in Victoria in the 1850s at the time of the gold rush by Freeman **Cobb** and three friends who had all been associated with the main American coach businesses. The business thrived and developed a gold escort, passenger and mail service based on reliable and efficient schedules. After Cobb returned to America in 1856, the firm went through several changes of ownership and in 1862 a new consortium under the leadership of James **Rutherford** (1827-1911) further expanded operations in New South Wales and into Queensland.

On 26 June 1862, Bathurst residents were delighted by the arrival of a cavalcade of horses, coaches, wagons and drivers. Bathurst was chosen for the firm's headquarters because it was a centre for business and trade west of the Blue Mountains and close to the new goldfields like Hill End, Sofala and Lambing Flat (Young). James Rutherford settled in Bathurst, acquiring the *Hereford* estate close to the urban area of the town and, finding opportunities to diversify his and the company's interests, made a significant contribution to the Bathurst community.

Having established his reputation as a skilled coach driver, Palmer soon joined Cobb & Co. He was first employed for one month to run coaches from Mount Victoria to Bathurst. He was paid £10 per month, with free meals at the

pubs en route. The roads were rough and his ability to arrive safely and on time, with no breakdowns, impressed Rutherford and he was offered a permanent job which lasted 14 years. His other routes included Orange-Wellington, Bathurst-Trunkey and Wallerawang-Cunningham Creek. It could be a cold and dreary job with night driving over terrible roads and the dread of being bogged in rainy weather or being held up by bushrangers.

It was on the last named service on 21 February 1871 that Palmer was held up by the bushrangers **Stapleton, Rose** and **McGrath** at Cherry Tree Hill. The passengers were threatened by a gun and included Captain **Riley**, station owner at Rylston, Mr **Bennet**, Cobb & Co's manager at Wallerawang and twelve women. The bushrangers had apparently believed there was a shipment of gold on board but they were a day late. Only the day before, Palmer had handled the gold escort from Mudgee. After rifling through the mailbags and taking a small amount of money from the passengers, they rode off. After collecting the mail that had been left scattered about and reassuring the passengers, Palmer resumed the trip and, on arriving at Wallerawang, informed the police of the robbery. All three bushrangers were subsequently captured, tried and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

The life of a Cobb & Co driver was tough and, about this time, Palmer gave it up and turned to the hotel business. In 1871 Richard Palmer was granted a Publican's Licence for *Cobb's Coach & Horses Hotel* at Wallerawang. His father died on 17 January 1875 and he returned to Sydney and was granted a Publican's Licence for the *Rose of Denmark Hotel* in Waterloo. Sadly, it was at this address that his wife Julia died on 12 July 1875. She was buried at Balmain Cemetery and the funeral notice mentioned Richard as 'late mail driver to Cobb and Co on the Mudgee Road' and invited members of No.9 Branch Prince of Wales Lodge and Licensed Victuallers Association to attend the funeral.

Richard William Palmer had married Julia **Goodsell** in Sydney in 1857 (registration 54/1857). Julia was born in Sussex in 1835 to Robert **Lavender** and his wife, Ann nee Goodsell. Arriving in Sydney in 1838, Julia adopted her mother's surname after the collapse of her parents' marriage. Richard and Julia had three children – Thomas (1857-1857) (birth registration, 1460/1857, death 776/1857), Richard J (1859-1864) (birth, 64/1859, death, 862/1864) and Julia Ann (1862-1938) (birth, 311/1862, death, 12215/1938).

On 31 August 1875, only weeks after the death of Julia, Richard Palmer married Elizabeth Veall Inch **Thomas** (1848-1916), a widow with two young children – Frederick (1873-1919) born in Queensland and Ada (1874-1964) born in Sydney. Her husband, William Thomas was only recently deceased.

Richard and Elizabeth had five children – Alfred Ernest (1878-1944) (birth, 5157/1878, death, 14345/1944), Eliza (1881-1929), (birth 23976/1881, death,

16223/1929), Gertrude (1883-1958) (birth, 8479/1883, death 21484/1958), Beatrice Madeline (1886-1965) (birth, 12653/1886, death 30340/1965), Rose (1888-1889) (birth, 12985/1888, death 853/1889).

Sometime after the marriage, Palmer relocated to the New South Wales Northern Tablelands and renewed his connection with James Rutherford, General Manager of Cobb & Co. When Rutherford asked him to take the Tamworth to Bendemeer run he 'jibbed on the all-night driving' (11pm to 7am) and Rutherford gave him the Bendemeer to Armidale run which halved the run time and arrived at 2pm. It was while on this run, in August, 1877, that he witnessed the shooting, by Constable **Bowen**, of the bushranger **Crowley** who had stuck up Avery's Hotel which had the agency and handled a lot of cash for Cobb & Co. He was later told that Crowley had intended to attack him on the run.

After this, Palmer finally gave up coach driving and concentrated on the hotel business. In 1879 he applied for and was granted a Publicans Licence for the *Farmer's Rest Hotel*, renamed in 1880 as *The Advance Australia Hotel*, in Armidale. In 1881 he was publican of the *Great Northern Hotel* also in Armidale. By 1883, when Gertrude was born, he was back in Sydney.

The decision to construct the railway line from Hornsby to Brooklyn required a large number of 'navvies' who camped along the line. Many brought their families with them and later settled permanently in the area. Temporary hotels and inns sprang up including Palmer's Hotel which was pictured in the *Town and Country Journal* of 1884.

In 1886 Richard Palmer was granted a conditional licence for the *Royal Hotel* at Chatswood and by 1889 was publican at the *Dungate Inn* on the corner of Liverpool and Castlereagh Streets in Sydney. In 1891, he leased the *Royal Hotel* at Thornleigh for a few years after which he returned to Brooklyn and became the publican of the *Sanatorium Hotel*. In 1898, he applied for a new licence for the hotel which was renamed the *Tourist's Hotel*. In 1899, Palmer submitted plans to build a larger hotel closer to the village and railway station and, after an initial delay; in 1900 he was able to open *The Hawkesbury River Railway Hotel*. Palmer had established himself as a great host and was supported in the business by his wife Elizabeth, son Alfred and daughters Eliza, Gertrude and Beatrice. Elizabeth organised dances, balls and other social gatherings which were held in Palmer's Hall. The hotel built by Palmer still operates as *The Anglers' Rest*.

In 1909, the licence for the *Hawkesbury River Railway Hotel* was transferred to William Leslie **Butters**, a 22 year old who planned to operate the hotel with his parents. Now in his seventies, Richard Palmer retired to live with his wife in the Hornsby area in Sydney. By this time his children were all married. In 1916, Elizabeth Palmer died at Hornsby and was buried in Waverly Cemetery.

In May 1826, an article about Richard Palmer was published in Sydney in *The World's News* written by Will Carter a school teacher and prolific writer interested in the development of the Australian identity. He lived in Hurstville and his articles appeared in local and regional newspapers and *The Bulletin*. He was particularly interested in stories about Cobb and Co drivers. When he was young, his father was a hotel keeper in Adelong and he fondly remembered the excitement when the mail coach arrived from Gundagai. He became involved in the Driver's Re-union Association and wrote about some of them like Frank **Smiley**, Joe **Pittman** and Richard Palmer.

In 1930, Will Carter returned to Cronulla to interview Richard Palmer in greater depth and in June 1930, in four editions of *The Propellor*, a remarkable story emerged. Early days of Sydney, the Hawkesbury River area and residents who lived there were recalled in great detail. His life as a Cobb and Co driver reads like a film plot, following which he was a successful hotelier. He loved to tell about his exciting experiences on the 'box' of a Cobb & Co coach. It is easy to imagine him as 'mine host' retelling his tales of battling the elements, managing teams of spirited horses and facing down bushrangers.

Richard Palmer died in 1931 at the home of his daughter Beatrice Latta in Cronulla and was buried in Waverly Cemetery. He was survived by his son Alfred Ernest, daughters Julia, Gertrude and Beatrice and two sisters Louisa **Mansfield** (d.1937) and Amelia **Steed** (d.1932) who were living in Caringbah. The main benefactor of his will was his son Alfred who inherited a block of land, two graves at Waverley Cemetery, cash for his father's burial and other items. His estate was sworn at £32/15/6 net.

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BBFHS RESEARCH CENTRE AND LIBRARY

by Jean **Campbell** (Research Centre Coordinator)

As Covid-19 restrictions eased, we have been able to open the Research Centre more often for researchers. The roster is similar to the original one, so Volunteers can meet up with their colleagues on their usual rostered days. We are open from 10 am to 4 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, depending on the Centre Volunteers being available. If no researchers are in the room at 1pm, they can pack up and go home. If you want to go into the Centre to research, you are most welcome, but please either book in for the day you choose, by email to botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au or ring the Centre (9523 8948) on the morning you intend to go in to make sure there are Volunteers present.

We are still not open on Saturdays. That will come eventually, so please keep reading your eNEWS to see what is proposed each month.

The food and drink situation is up to each individual. Tea and coffee are available and the electric jug is in the kitchen, along with a microwave oven and the fridge. Perhaps you can eat and drink on the veranda, as the double doors are open for fresh air flow... which may be reviewed in winter!

Sometimes, on the fifth Monday, Wednesday or Friday of each month, the Centre is closed because no Volunteers are available. I know there are members who are catching up on holidays they have missed in the past two years.

The Research Centre is being used more often for Interest Groups and classes, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have tried hybrid meetings for some Interest Groups and now have a table microphone for the Centre, which makes it easier for those on Zoom to hear what is being said.

A number of Centre Volunteers have resigned. We sincerely thank them all for their years of time, knowledge and encouragement given to researchers.

Are you interested in being a Research Centre Volunteer? We would love to have some more members helping each other. Help is given to the Volunteers too. Just one day a month would be great! You can be on duty from 10am to 1pm only, if that suits. Please email botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au if you would like to 'put up your hand'. Thank you so much. We have quite a number of new members who would value your assistance.

Botany Bay Family History Society is a member of:

- **The NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies**
- **The Australasian Federation of Family History Societies**
- **The Family History Federation in the United Kingdom**

BOTANY BAY FHS DISTANCE MEMBERSHIP

by Carole **Goodyer** (Membership Officer)

Your Committee has instigated a new category of Distance Membership, for members who live 120 km or more from our Research Centre. This will replace the current interstate membership.

The Joining Fee is \$10 and annual subscription remains half of a single membership.

The only restriction for this membership category is you must receive your *Endeavour* journal via email.


You will have access to every other area of membership that incorporates electronic technology – presently via Zoom. The member's monthly meeting on the first Wednesday and the monthly chat group on the third Wednesdays will be free. However, you will pay, via our website, for any education class, interest group or special event held by hybrid technology, just as any other member does.

Of course, should you ever be in Sydney, you are more than welcome to free use of our Research Centre and Library.

Any current members who now qualify for Distance Membership, may transfer as from 1 July 2022. However, if you receive a printed copy of the *Endeavour*, you have to transfer to receiving your *Endeavour* via email, or remain in your present category. Renewal for distance membership this year will be \$20 + \$2 postage = \$22 (for name tag and receipt).

This year, payment can be easily made with credit card via the website, bank transfer or cheque.





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This article lists the new Library accessions. We remind members that there is a wealth of family history information accumulated over some 38 years in our Library. **Not everything is online!** Check out our library catalogue at <http://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/library--research-centre.html>. You may be very surprised at what you find! **Come to the Research Centre and have a look.** Thank you for the donations from those members who are ‘downsizing’.

AUSTRALIA

- Bushrangers – A Pictorial History [A.HIS.37.2LC]
- Gold, Gamblers & Sly Grog – Life on the Goldfields 1851-1900 [A.HIS.10.8LC]

NEW SOUTH WALES

- The Ferry the Branch the Creek – Aspects of Hawkesbury History [AN.LH.2756.10LC]
- A Short Authentic History of Cronulla [AN.LH.2230.8LC]
- Early Colonial Scandals – The Turbulent Times of Samuel Marsden [A.HIS.1.56LC]
- A Portrait of the Central West [AN.HIS.1.30LC]
- Bygone Queanbeyan [AN.LH.2620.3LC]
- Eastern Suburbs Album [AN.LH.2027.2LC]

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- Fremantle Prison – A Brief History [AW.HIS.37.1LC]

BRITAIN

- Timpson’s Towns of England and Wales – Oddities & Curiosities [BRIT.HIS.41.6LC]

ENGLAND

- Tracing Ancestors in North Stafford [E.STS.SOU.3.1LC]

GENERAL

- The Precarious Journey of Her Majesty’s Convict Transport Ship “Nile” to the Swan River Colony, 1857 [G.CONV.HIS.44LC]
- Bowler of Gallipoli – Witness to the Anzac Legend [G.BIOG.7.GLE.1LC]
- The Anzacs – Patsy Adam-Smith [G.MIL.A.HIS.46LC]
- Port Macquarie’s Last Convicts – The End of the Convict Establishment at Port Macquarie [G.CONV.SOU.28LC]

- Rivers and Resilience – Aboriginal People on Sydney’s Georges River [G.ABOR.17LC]
- The Timber Getters : Part 1 – The Timber Getters, Part 2 The Bark Boys [Milton Ulladulla Historical Society} [G.OCC.AN.HIS.1DVD]

Ku-ring-ai Historical Society

- Rallying the Troops – A World War I Commemoration, Volume I - The Trumpet Calls
- Rallying the Troops – A World War I Commemoration, Volume II – Forward to Victory – Enlist Now
- Rallying the Troops – A World War I Commemoration, Volume III – God Bless Daddy, 45,000 Australian Fathers are Fighting – Will you Help?
- Rallying the Troops – A World War I Commemoration, Volume IV – Were you There Then?

NOTE: ‘LC’ indicates a loan copy, which can be borrowed; ‘CD’ a compact disc.

Compiled by Janette Daly (Librarian)



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COPY DEADLINE

Copy for the September 2022 journal should be submitted as soon as you have it available but the deadline is **Wednesday 3 August** – preferably by email to the Editor at bbfhs_eds@yahoo.com.au . Copy may also be left in the Editor’s folder at the Research Centre, handed to the Editor or a committee member at a monthly meeting or posted to **PO Box 1006 Sutherland NSW 1499**. Please affix your name and date of submission to the copy and indicate if you want any materials returned.



George Stathers. I've received news that member George died on 12 April 2022. We send our sympathies to his wife Lois, his family and friends.

U3A Family History Course. In our never-ending quest to advertise our society and encourage more people to join BBFHS to investigate their family stories, we are producing a trial educational course which we will provide through the U3A (University of the 3rd Age) - Endeavour Region – Semester 2. Membership of U3A entitles members to take advantage of a very wide range of educational and leisure activities.

The aim of the course is to get people interested in recording their stories to pass on to their families. We have purposely stayed away from subjects we cover for our members' education classes. As this is an experimental course, there will be no charge for U3A members. We have already received widespread publicity in their Facebook page and newsletter, and U3A reports there appears to be much interest.

Course description – **EXPLORING YOUR FAMILY'S PAST HISTORY**

Embracing your family's past - why your story matters....

This course is an introduction to family history research and comprises four 'hands on' sessions. We explore family memories, start a family tree, and gather documents for proof. We discuss family history computer programmes, and various methods of recording the story for posterity. The class limit is 15.

The Australian Midwifery History Website covers the history of midwifery in Australia and includes the history of the Australian College of Midwives – <https://australianmidwiferyhistory.org.au/>. Midwifery is one of the oldest recorded professions. Throughout history, all towns and cities would have had local midwives. These women were important members of their communities. Besides attending women in childbirth, they were often the person who was called to assist families around death and dying.

Exhibition: Our Journeys \ Our Stories at the Hurstville Museum and Gallery (www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/hmg, 14 MacMahon Street, Hurstville NSW) from 30 April until 24 July 2022 explores the Chinese migration history of the Georges River area, interweaving social and cultural history with the work of contemporary Chinese-Australian artists. This exhibition aims to highlight and celebrate the significance of local Chinese migration from the 19th century through to the 2000s and the ongoing contribution of the Chinese community to the Georges River area.

NSW State Archives now have all 872.000 New South Wales Probate Packets for 1817-1976 (with no gaps) available for search on their website at <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au>

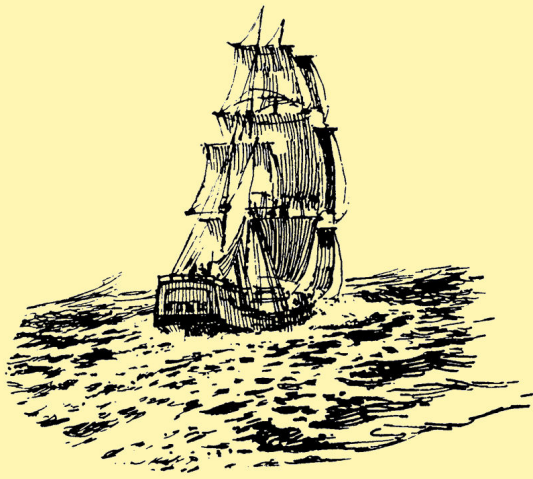
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