

MURRUMBIDGEE ANCESTOR

*The Journal of the
Wagga Wagga
and District Family History
Society Inc.*

October 2024
No. 143

WAGGA WAGGA AND DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

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Meetings

Committee Meetings: 2nd Wednesday each month at 9:30 am

Monthly Meetings: Third Wednesday of each month 1.30pm.

Location of Meetings: Society Rooms, 24 Tarakan Avenue, Ashmont

Annual Membership

Ordinary Member: \$38. *Pensioner:* \$28 (Pension number required).

Family Member living at same address (Additional) \$12.

MEMBER ENTITLEMENTS

Use of Society's extensive resources; receipt of monthly newsletter and the journal *Murrumbidgee Ancestor* three times a year (extra copies \$2.50 each); guidance with research; borrowing from the library and attendance at meetings and workshops. **Research** can be undertaken using the resources of the Society's library and at other repositories around Wagga, at a cost of \$25 per hour. Contact the Research Officer through the secretary.

Research Room: 24 Tarakan Avenue, Ashmont. **Opening Times: Monday & Wednesday** 10am to 4pm; **Tuesday** 1pm to 4pm. Closed on Public Holidays. Closing at 3 pm during Winter months.

Enquiries: ph. **02 59257217** during opening hours.

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October 2024 - No. 143



CONTENTS

President's Report	<i>Rob Walker</i>	4
Editor's Report	<i>Marcia McIntyre</i>	5
Society Happenings	<i>Jan Hurcum</i>	7
Notes From Wagga Wagga	<i>Compiled by Leanne Diessel</i>	9
Research	<i>Compiled by Leanne Diessel</i>	11
The Old Fork	<i>Diana Thompson</i>	12
Electoral Rolls and Family		
History Research	<i>Rob Walker</i>	19

Journal Contributions 2025

Contributions for publication in the journal are welcome. Electronic copies are preferred, in Word and Times New Roman font. Paper copy is welcome if electronic form is not possible.

There are no word length restraints, and no contribution is too short, but 1200 words is the preferred maximum length (this is 3-4 pages in the journal, depending on illustrations). No article of interest to the family historian will be rejected because of word length. The Society membership number of the author (s) should be included.

	February	June	October
Articles submitted	20 January	22 May	15 September
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NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all our new members

Sylvia Mulholland of Lockhart
Patricia Oliver of North Wagga
Lynette Clark of Aberfolyle, S.A.
Julie Fitzgerald of Dungog

It is hoped that you enjoy your time as members of the Wagga Wagga and District Family History Society Inc. and find it a very productive and worthwhile experience.

*Happy Family History
Month.*

*It is Year Round for
Most of us!*

CONTINUING MEMBERS

Please remember to renew subscriptions, returning your form and payment to the Society's rooms or by mail to PO Box 307, Wagga Wagga, NSW, 2650.
Direct Deposit: Bendigo Bank, BSB No. 633000. A/C No. 169210739
Please give details of name, membership number and reason for payment.

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting, September 2024

Rob Walker – Member 696

This past year leaves an impression of being very busy. Quite a few months were taken up with deadlines to complete complicated paperwork for our registration as a charity organisation. As part of this process the Society was required to alter our Constitution which necessitated a Special Meeting in May to approve the changes. Negotiating through the requirements for ACNC and ATO seemed endless even to finding financial statements for the past 12 years. The process is still ongoing as we wait on the slow wheels of bureaucracy for the ABN/ATO approvals. Had it not been for the slavish work of Geoff Burch, who had been through the process with the Historical Society, and Wendy Bellany, our Public Officer, the rest of us would have been all at sea.

The decision to change to day meetings from the beginning of 2024 has been vindicated with an increase in regular attendance and interest in the guest speakers. With a need to do fundraising, the committee pushed ahead with a one-off day at a Bunnings Sausage Sizzle, and this proved a viable decision for the end of financial year bottom line. Importantly also, Leanne Diessel, our Research Officer, continues to work very hard on investigative requests and attracts a significant annual income for the Society.

For some years our Society has been a cooperator in the maintenance of the Wal Fife Room at Mt Erin, but this will terminate later in 2024 with the Mt Erin School wishing to take over the space. We will benefit by the transfer of books, filing cabinets and other material, which will be noted in due course. There will still be an on-going Fife website for the dispersed records. In one case we picked up nine electoral rolls, relevant to this area, filling a gap in the mid 1970s of which Leanne and I spoke at our last general meeting.

Speaking of Electoral Rolls, which are very relevant to family history, we have received some 60 rolls from the Wagga Historical Society, under the Kevin Herring Donation. Some indexation is being carried out to allow researchers to find the time & place, for persons/family from the 1870s to 1960s. These additions, together with our collection of the Australian Rolls for 2000, gives us a wonderful opportunity to draw the attention of a wider audience to this resource on our Webpage and on Facebook.

We now have a growing number of followers on Facebook (138). In theory we should be able to link our Website to the Facebook page to expand our foray into family history on-line, but that task became more difficult in January 2024 when Susan Weisser, our Webmaster at the time, died suddenly, and we have lost her expertise. Obviously, we need a 20-year-old to guide us through this foreign land.

For many years we have held the *Quee Collection* of Australiana books (compiled by Sheila and Jack Quee) but with a premium on shelf space I have made the decision to deaccession this collection from the Library Guide.

In last year's report I provided an insight into creating indexes to books and collections. That work continues under Wendy Bellany's direction with an increase in members who are allocating time to this effort, which is an encouraging sign. Indexing will become more important with on-line interfaces, like Facebook, into the future, when we fully understand the potential. Is this the way to go in finding the next generation of family historians? A small group is also collaborating with NSW State Records on the digitisation of Goulburn Small Debt registers.

In the last month Wagga City Council carried out an inspection of the Rooms and approved repairs to flooring, and both internal and external fittings where damaged areas have been or will be repaired before the end of the year.

I would like to thank the committee of the past year. Jan Hurcum, Neil Dallinger, Leanne Diessel, Helen Lubke, Sharon Wheatley, Wendy Bellany, Geoff Burch and Marcia McIntyre have all played very important continuing roles, as has our membership secretary Diana Thomson. Likewise, I also thank those members who served as Duty Officers helping around the Rooms and a big thank you to Bruce Lally, a recent member who has been doing a great job with the outside garden maintenance during the year.

Finally like many similar groups we are all getting older and finding people, of any age, to take over management positions seems a forlorn hope but the resource we have is too valuable to fall into that scenario, so once again I put a call out to aspiring, or even people reluctant to put their hand up, members or possible members to accept this challenge to find innovative processes that will place our Society in good stead into the future.



Editor's Page

Marcia McIntyre—Member No. 840

Welcome to another edition of our journal, *The Murrumbidgee Ancestor*. Another year has passed and at our recent Annual General Meeting a new Committee member, Annette Brown, was elected. Welcome Annette! No doubt Annette will make a valuable contribution during her time on the Committee.

I would like to thank everyone for their articles in *The Murrumbidgee Ancestor* throughout the year. All articles have been very interesting and informative, relating the stories of Members' ancestors. Thank you to my proof readers for casting a keen eye over my efforts during the year. I appreciate their invaluable help correcting my many errors.

The top class display at the Library for National Family History Month was organised by Leanne, Wendy and Sharon. An addition to the exhibits this year was memorabilia contributed by members—*Memories are History*. I was pleased to contribute an autograph book which belonged to my father's twin sister, Edith (Edie) Harriett Champion nee Jones (1886 -1975). Auntie Edie was living in Marrickville in 1911, when she commenced collecting autographs in the book. The book is now 113 years old. It is one of my most treasured possessions. The book was given to me by my aunt's grandson, who was not interested in keeping it. Many of the inscriptions were contributed by Edie's cousins and relatives of her husband, George Champion, and it was fascinating to work out who these contributors were, and how they fitted into the family tree.

This edition has an article by Diana Thomson on page 12 about a family heirloom in her family which belonged to her great grandmother and on page 19 Rob Walker has shared some hints as to how electoral rolls can help with family history research, using as an example, tracking down the residential addresses of members of his family.



SOCIETY HAPPENINGS

Jan Hurcum, - Member No. 32

Our Research Officer, Leanne Diessel, spoke at the June meeting on *Brick Walls* in family research. She had received 6 requests from members who were stuck, and she gave lots of ideas for working around the blockages to surmount the brick wall. Leanne's hint of making a time line is a good one, as it sets the family members in the correct order and avoids 50 - to 60-year-old women appearing to have babies in far-flung places. Spelling of surnames, use of an alias, and other problems were discussed, so we are hoping that all six members are able to go forward and find their correct ancestors.



At the end of June, we organised the first 4-Societies' dinner since the beginning of COVID 19. There was a good attendance of 24 people from our Society, the Historical Society, Antiques Society, Railway Heritage Association, and Society of Model Engineers. We all had a pleasant night socialising with like-minded people, some of whom are members of more than one society/club.

Left: Leanne doing a great job at the June meeting, knocking down a few brick walls.

The July meeting was very different in that it was a book launch for new member Sylvia Mulholland's book *The Nixon Family – Pioneers of Wagga Wagga*. Sylvia has written four books, and it was interesting to hear that she has always had an interest in history and has applied her interest to writing about her family in her latest book. There was a very good attendance, (including some of Sylvia's relatives); so much so that we ran out of chairs!

August is National Family History month, and our celebratory morning tea was successful although the attendance was a little less than last year. However, the yummy food supplied was wonderful – thank you to all members who brought a plate (or two).

We had 10 visitors to our rooms, several phone calls, and Research Officer Leanne received 10 requests.

Members Leanne, Wendy and Sharon organised the exhibit in the display case at Wagga City Library. This included loaned items from members, and it really told the story *Memories are History*.

Research Officer Leanne and President Rob have collected some items from the Wal Fife Room, including a number of local Electoral Rolls, so they spoke at our August general meeting on the use of electoral rolls in family history research. They are really useful in making a timeline of exactly where families were living – easy when they stay in one place, but not so easy when the families are itinerant in search of work. Rob had examples of his own family and how he was able to track them.

Our Annual General Meeting is always the September general meeting, and we had more members attend this year than last which we presume is because we now have daytime meetings (lovely afternoon tea too!!). President Rob was hoping to hand his job to another member, but there were no takers and he is still the boss. We have lost one Committee person and gained another, so we are ready for the next year.



Right: Rob speaking at the August meeting on how we can use Electoral Rolls in our research.

NOTES FROM WAGGA WAGGA

Compiled by Leanne Diessel - Member No. 412

PERSONAL

The **Rev. N.C. King** and family, of Narrandera, motored to Wagga to spend Christmas with Mr King's mother, **Mrs. King** of Peter-street.

Miss Maude McDonald, who is engaged in private nursing in Sydney, is spending a holiday with her parents, **Mr. and Mrs. J.H. McDonald**, of Tumbarumba.

The following school teachers' transfers are announced: **Miss L. Forbes**, Temora to Muttama; **Miss E. Swords**, Aria Park to Temora primary; **Miss M. Simmonsens**, Penrith to Aria Park; **Miss B. Brandon**, Humula to Lismore; **Miss L. Veitch**, Matong to Wentworthville; **Miss F. Gale**, Wentworthville to Matong; **Miss M. O'Neil**, Alectown to Wagga...**Miss E. Flynn**, Urana to Carlingford; **Miss V. Bryan**, Rozelle to Urana...

Source: Daily Advertiser Wagga Wagga, Wednesday January 10, 1934.

PERSONAL

His many friends will regret to learn that **Mr. Charles Hardy, senr.**, whose health has not been satisfactory for some time past, was taken seriously ill yesterday morning. He is being nursed at his home "**Kalimna**" and on enquiry last night it was learned that there was an improvement in Mr. Hardy's condition.

Major-General Blamey, the Chief Commissioner of Police, celebrated his birthday on Wednesday. He was born at Wagga, New South Wales, on January 24, 1884. He joined the Australian Military Forces in 1906. During the war he was commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion, and in 1910 became chief of staff of the A.I.F. He was seven times mentioned in despatches. After the war he became Australian military representative at the War Office, London. He was appointed Chief Commissioner of Police in 1925. He was decorated with the D.S.O. in 1917; in 1918 he became a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, and in 1919 a Companion of the Order of the Bath. He has been commanding officer of the 3rd Division since 1931.

Source: Daily Advertiser Wagga Wagga, Friday 26 January 1934

FAREWELL TO MR. AND MRS. R.A. KENNEDY

An enjoyable evening was spent by many persons in Bomen and district when **Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy** and family, who have left Bomen to reside in Hamilton, were given a farewell. Mr. Kennedy had been ganger at Bomen for the last seven years. During the evening a presentation was made to Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, which consisted of a silver teapot, sugar basin, and silver-mounted tray, suitably inscribed, the presentation being made by **Miss G. McDonald**. **Mr. McDonald** who presided, referred to the high qualities of the Kennedy family, and wished them good luck and prosperity in their new home. Other speakers were Messrs. **T. Harper**, **L. Kennedy**,

Kirwin, and Rapley. Mr. Kennedy suitably responded on behalf of his wife and family. Supper was then served by the ladies and dancing and games were enjoyed by all until early morning, the music being supplied by **Mr. L. Kennedy** and **Mr. C. Pendrick** and other. The evening concluded with the singing of Auld Lang Syne. Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy and family left by the mail train, and many friends gathered at the station to bid them farewell.

Source: Daily Advertiser, Wednesday 21 February 1934



RESEARCH

Compiled by **Leanne Diessel—Member No: 412**

Information required on the following places & people:

For privacy reasons contact details cannot be published. If you can help with research, please email wwdfhs@yahoo.com.au or write to the Research Officer (C/- PO Box 307 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650) and information will be passed on.

The **HALLORAN/O'HALLORAN** family of Wagga.
Contact: Barbara SHARP

Isaac VINCENT, his wife **Elizabeth** & family of Wagga. Isaac died at Wagga 1847.
Contact: Helen McKEE.

John KEANE & family who had property at **Cookardinia & Pullitop**. Daughter **Bridget** married **James Bernard CROWE**. Nuns in the family are **Winifred & Susannah KEANE & Mary CROWE**.
Contact: Janet CROWE

Benjamin CASTLE 1816-1892 m1851 **Mary CONWAY**, son **James** 1854-1930 m1877 **Sarah CASTLE**, also **Samuel Martin SMITH** who lived at Narrandera but buried Wagga.
Contact: Roslyn SMITH

Joseph & Emma KENDALL nee GOODGER & his brother nee **Edward & Agnes KENDALL nee GOODGER**. Parents of the 3 KENDALL girls lost in the bush 1897. Mostly wanting to know who Joseph & Edward's parents are.
Contact: Karen TREMAINE.

Thomas & Ellen LANEY nee WRIGHT & family. Related names **CUPITT, REINEKER, PLANER**.
Contact: Bridget VARRASSO

Robert & Sarah STEWART nee BEVAN & family of Wantabadgery. Related names of JONES & JOHNSON.

Contact: Paul & Carmen JONES

JJ KELLY, Photographer who had Lorne Studios in Wagga 1924-1927

Contact: Rachel GREGG

Manus Station & J F MURPHY c1890s

Contact: Patricia DEERING

BESTS SPRINGS & Albert ROSSISTER who lived there c1870s.

Contact: Brian NEWTON

William Henry HOBSON of Wagga who died in 1934. Related families **BOSWELL, DAY & PENDRICK.**

Contact: Wendy SMITH



Above: Display at the Wagga Wagga Library during Family History Month in August.

The Old Fork

Diana Thomson - Member No. 461

The plain and well-worn electroplate fork engraved with the number 19 and her initials belonged to one of my English maternal great grandmothers, Emily Mary Porter. The fork was part of the possessions¹ required when she first attended the Casterton Clergy Daughters School, most likely when she turned eight in 1859.² The fork continued to accompany Emily Mary throughout her life and beyond as it passed down succeeding generations.

The school Emily Mary attended was founded in 1823 by the Rev William Carus Wilson as the Clergy Daughters School in Cowan Bridge, established as *a means of assisting Clergymen with limited incomes in the education of their children*³, a school made famous, or infamous, by the experiences of the Brontë sisters in the mid 1820's. In 1833 the school was moved a few miles north to its Casterton site. The Casterton school closed in 2013, merging with another nearby school.⁴

Emily Mary was born 18 December 1850 and appears in the 1851 Census at the age of 3 months with her brother Thomas (2), her father Lewis (29), her mother Emily née Edwards (25), her father's youngest sister Elizabeth (15) acting as a nurse and one domestic servant. Her father was a clergyman of Tonge, Bolton-le-Moors, part of present-day Greater Manchester and the family lived at 32 Bullock Street in the Parish of Little Bolton. Emily Mary was one of eleven children born between 1848 and 1873 and these were:

1848 Peter Thomas
1850 Emily Mary
1853 Adelaide
1855 Louisa
1858 Frederick
1860 Henry
1862 Charlotte
1864 Lewis Humphrey
1866 Clara
1870 Gertrude
1873 Alexandra

Emily Mary (11) and her sister Adelaide (8) are not at home at the time of the 1861 Census and, as they were of the right age, most likely away at school. The family now lived at Woodside in the nearby Parish of Brightmet. Peter was 12 and, besides Adelaide, three other children had been born since 1851, Louisa (6), Frederick (2) and 7-month-old Henry. There were no live-in servants.

It was not till the 1871 Census that a record of the staff and pupils of the Casterton Clergy Daughters School was found.

At this time both Adelaide, now 18 years old, and Charlotte (8) are recorded as scholars. The school had 101 pupils, five assistants or governesses and thirteen servants including needlewomen, a cook, a kitchen maid, a scullery maid, house maids, laundry maids and a parlour maid. However, Emily Mary now 20 and 16-year-old Louisa were at home, together with their parents and siblings, except for Peter Frederick (12) and Henry (10) who are no longer the youngest. New arrivals since 1861 were Lewis Humfrey (6), Clara (4) and Gertrude aged 9 months. Their father had become the Vicar of St. James Church, Brightmet, Bolton, and the family lived in the vicarage, where the fork would have been with Emily Mary.

Emily Mary and Louisa would have helped with the running of the household and with the younger children and their lessons. Emily Mary had further duties. In 1982 one of Emily Mary's daughters, then aged 94, and my mother's aunt, wrote about her mother saying that she carried out many of the duties of a clergyman's wife as her own mother was so busy with children. She also wrote that someone took Emily Mary's father out each day in a wheel chair and made "very fine tobacco cigarettes for him."



Above: Emily Mary Porter.

My mother's aunt did not know whether he was old or unwell. It would seem that he was unwell as he died some six years after the 1871 census on November 14th 1877 at the age of 55. He had been Vicar of Breightmet-with-Tonge for 30 years. His wife, Emily, lived for another 30 odd years and died 13th April 1908 at the age of 82.



Above: A family heirloom—The Old Fork

At some stage in the later 1870s Emily Mary had become engaged to Frederick Wilkinson, who wanted to migrate to South Australia. He and Emily Mary decided that Frederick would go first, find a job and get settled and then send for her. No dates or ships names are known but sometime, possibly during 1880, Emily Mary had packed up her belongings, including her school-days fork, and travelled by steamer to South Australia to marry Frederick on 18th February 1881, in Adelaide's St Pauls Church.

Frederick had difficulty finding work when he first came to South Australia and had even ventured to New Zealand looking for a job. However, he had no luck there and returned, taking a position in a bank in Yorktown. The bank manager apparently refused Frederick leave to meet Emily Mary when she arrived so he resigned. He probably could afford to do this as he had some money of his own as the family's Manchester cotton business had been wound up and he had received his share. After marrying, Frederick and Emily Mary lived in Adelaide where he again worked in a bank. This was where their two eldest daughters, Lilian and Annie, were born. Frederick wanted to buy some land and was offered a small property at McLaren Vale with a four-roomed thatched cottage, an established orchard, a piggery and enough land to graze some cows and grow wheat and barley. His brother Samuel had also come to South Australia and helped get the place in order. Family possessions were packed up, including Emily Mary's fork, and they moved to McLaren Vale, 33k south of central Adelaide and were settled in by the end of 1885.

The farm was called *Ryecroft* after the name of the Wilkinson family home in Manchester.

At the beginning it was a struggle to earn a livelihood as the soil was unsuitable to grow good pasture for the cows to produce enough milk to be separated and the cream made into butter at the small local factory. Frederick decided to plant grape vines and sell grapes. He then had the desire to make wine and more vines were planted. Three more children were born, Mary, Lewis Frederick and lastly my grandmother, Vera, in 1892.

By 1885 Frederick had succeeded in becoming a winemaker and had established the Ryecroft winery. The *Adelaide Advertiser* of 13th May 1907 stated that there were “upwards of sixty acres under vines and seven under currants” and that “all produce from the Ryecroft vineyard, made to comply with the demands of the export trade.” This newspaper also indicated that “the ladies of the household” were involved with the drying of currants. Was the fork in daily use or did it just rest in the back of a drawer? Its worn appearance indicates it was well-used.

Ryecroft was sold in 1919 as Emily Mary and Frederick’s only son, Lewis, had been killed near Ypres, Belgium, in 1917. Their four daughters had married and left home. Once again household possessions were packed and Emily Mary and Frederick moved back to Adelaide. It’s not known when the fork came into my grandmother’s possession. It may not have done so until Emily Mary and Frederick moved into a nearby Walkerville nursing home in the late 1930s. Emily Mary died 5 February 1942, at the age of 91, and Frederick 3 years later on 24 April 1945.

Whenever it came about, the fork ended up in a Gippsland farmhouse where my mother’s parents lived in the early 1940s. They had a small dairy farm at Willow Grove, north of Moe. My mother married in 1941 and at some time in the mid-1940’s the farm was sold and my grandparents moved into part of a house in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton. I remember visiting in the very early 1950s and being fascinated by the staircase to the second floor where my grandparents had a sitting room and bedroom. I also remember the downstairs kitchen that they shared. My grandfather had built a kitchen cupboard with shelves behind glass sliding doors and with various drawers, one of which may have held the old fork.

In 1955 my grandparents moved to another dairy farm at Kergunyah South in the Kiewa Valley of north-eastern Victoria when they came to live with us.

Naturally the fork, now nearly 100 years old, came with them as did the kitchen cupboard and other furniture.

I don’t remember the fork being used but it lived in one of that kitchen cupboard’s drawers. I do remember my grandmother explaining the initials and saying how much her mother had enjoyed her school days. The old fork remained in the cutlery drawer for over 55 years until the farm was sold in 2012. When the house was cleared, I took it as a reminder of part of my family story.

The old fork now lies in a Wagga Wagga drawer, not in the kitchen drawer with everyday utensils or even in the cutlery drawer, but in the sitting room sideboard drawer with other family memorabilia.

NOTES

¹ Another family member has the teaspoon but the whereabouts of other pieces of the cutlery set is unknown, as is the significance of the number 19. It could have been an enrolment number the year Emily Mary started school.

² The 1871 Census shows that the youngest girls at the Casterton Clergy Daughters School were 8 years old.

³ <https://www.bronteschoolhouse.com/history>. This website has a photo of a pamphlet advertising the school with the names of the patron, vice presidents, patronesses and the entrance rules etc.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casterton_School



Meri Stewart gave a presentation at the Wagga Library in August, on DNA research. Pictured with Geoff Burch, who organised the outreach program.



Above: Sylvia Mulholland, Author of *The Nixon Family—Pioneers of Wagga Wagga* speaking at the July Meeting.



Mayor Dallas Tout who visited during Family History Month.

Electoral Rolls and Family History Research

Rob Walker Member - 696

Electoral Rolls provide a record of TIME and PLACE, either for an individual or a family, but they can also be a mathematical exercise. Apart from the individual search, who else at the same address might be aged 21 or older. Are they living with the main family, married or living elsewhere?

An understanding of the family context, particularly birth dates/ages, and likely PLACES where all members of the target family lived, will be needed as well as thinking laterally for aged relatives, say a spouse's mother/father, who might be at the same address.

At the recent August 2024 general meeting of the Society, Leanne Diessel (our Research Officer) and I presented a resume of the Electoral Rolls in our library and how to use them, as well as using on-line databases (Ancestry and Find My Past). However, there are limitations on what years are available, within the general periods for NSW of 1903, 1913 and 1930 -1980, and not every year is included in most of the sources. Note: Reference Page prepared by Leanne, available on request. Mathematically, to be registered as an Elector, the person must be 21 years of age (or 18 from 1973 onwards) so calculations of the eligible ages of known family members is useful. When using on-line searches, you will generally be looking for an individual. Once you have established their location you would be hoping to pick up other members, with the same surname, like spouses, children etc.

Compare these findings to what you expect to get in census records, when all the family are in the same record. Alternatively, if you have access to a printed volume of Electoral Rolls, as we have in our library, for the same subdivision there is a wider option of finding family members having the same surname in the same section, or another relative (different surname) in another section of that roll.

Listings follow the same format, in order of Year, Division (Commonwealth), Electorate (State) and Subdivision (Locality). Within this last one (subdivision) surnames are in strictly alphabetical order, noting that spouses will generally not be listed together. Same surnames will be listed in order of first name. The record will list the house number, street address and an occupation. The source of your record should be recorded in the following format, e.g. NSW>1934> North Sydney >Chatswood, for later reference.

My approach for the presentation in August was to use both sets of my grandparents as examples with a focus on the records available between 1913 and 1950. I could find my grandparents, but few of their children would qualify with an entry until the late 1930s.

My paternal grandparents, William and Annie Florence Walker, were married in Hamilton, Scotland in 1903 and came to Sydney, with two children, in 1909. As a family they essentially resided in Chatswood and for a period of nearly 50 years in the same house at 12 Saywell Street. The only changes to their entries were when their five children reached 21.

My maternal grandparents, Robert George Reid and Elsie Hilda Reid (Asher) were married in Sydney in 1915, and on the other hand lived at various times in Murrumburrah, Crowther and then suburbs in Sydney, rarely living in a location more than 3 years. As no electoral rolls are available for the 1920's (except perhaps at CSU Archives) I don't have any specific data on when they had moved from the country, prior to 1930 but they had two girls, Rae Esme Reid (b 1916, Turramurra) and my mother Marie Osborne Reid (b 1920 Murrumburrah). My parents married in 1942, and it is not until 1949 that they appear together in a roll. Dad, William Walker (b 1919) had been with the AIF from 1942 until demobbed in 1945.

Just a word of caution when searching. Unrelated people may have the same names. There are certainly more *William Walkers*, *Robert George Reids* and *Elsie Hilda Reids* in electoral rolls and the same must be expected for most names. Settle only for records with the same residential address, before you accept a finding.

Below: Photo on left: Margaret Reid (Cowden), great-grandmother of Rob at 109 First Avenue, Five Dock, NSW. Circa 1949/1950.

Photo on right. Margaret Reid sitting in front. Standing left to right: Elsie Hilda Reid Asher, Rob's maternal grandmother, Grace Reid (Andison) aunt—Andison family of Wagga Wagga, Evelyn Wilson (Reid), aunt. Marie Osborne Walker (Reid), Rob's mother, Jessie Reid (Gibson), aunt, lived Roseville.



Also, because of strict alphabetical listings, you will not pick up other family members with different surnames who may be living at the same residence. A case in point is that later in this article, I find that Elsie Hilda Reid's mother, Rebecca Asher, is living with her daughter. Those surname records are quite a way apart in the rolls.

My first reference point was the 1913 roll for Robert George Reid. (We have that roll on CD in the Rooms). Brothers, Robert George Reid and Albert David Reid, are listed as Farmers at Crowther in the Burrangong >Koorawatha roll. Robert, the elder brother, had picked up the homestead block (1500 acres) of Crowther in 1911 in a ballot after the dismantling of an old squatting station (The Crowther Creek Run) and both brothers were running the farm until Albert enlisted in the Australian Light Horse for Gallipoli in 1915. Robert and Elsie Hilda Asher married in Sydney in 1915.

A succession of ordinary seasons and some ill health over that WWI period meant that my grandparents moved to Sydney on Albert's return to take over the property. David and Margaret Reid, Robert and Albert's parents were living in Sydney (possibly Ashfield or Haberfield). David died in 1922 after an accident at Crowther, and Margaret Reid continued to live in Five Dock for many years, so she becomes part of the electoral roll search criteria from 1930 together with her other children. I have photographic evidence of meeting great-grandmother Margaret Reid (nee Cowden) in First Avenue, Five Dock about 1950 not long before she died.

Incidentally, also in the 1913 Roll, I found that Rebecca Asher (see later) was living in Mosman with another daughter, Violet May Asher, a teacher then at North Sydney Public School. The first available electoral roll after 1913 was for 1930. Robert and Elsie Reid are found at Moreton St Lakemba. It was sometime later that I found that Elsie's mother, Rebecca Asher (1854-1944) was living at the same address and that only came about in a separate, and later search under "Asher".

It pays to think laterally (in hindsight). Those years, during the depression, may well have seen widowed parents living with their married children. Rebecca continued to live with Elsie in various localities until at least 1937 when I understand she relocated to Turrumurra (with Violet), and then Merriwa with another married daughter (Mabel Clark). Rebecca died in Merriwa in May 1944. Robert George and Elsie Hilda (with my mother and her older sister) are recorded living in

- Moreton St Lakemba (1930-1933)
- 19 Rose St Chatswood (1934)
- 2 Marshall Ave, Lane Cove (Gore Hill) (1935)
- 4 Saywell St, Chatswood (1936 – 1937)
- 39 Boundary St, Roseville
- 49 Hill St, Roseville

One question that may be answered by electoral rolls is “How did my parents get together?” If you have been concentrating, while reading this account, you may recognise that Saywell Street, Chatswood appears in addresses for both sets of Grandparents. House numbers 4 and 12, on the same side of the street, are the common denominator and then only for a short time frame (1936-37). That obviously answers the question.

Further searching for *Asher* surnames around that same time frame unearths the occupant of 5 Saywell Street, Chatswood. That is Bertha Asher, a nurse, daughter of Rebecca and sister of Elsie Hilda (Reid). Bertha also moved around the Chatswood area. The Reids next move was to 39 Boundary St, Roseville.

After Robert George Reid’s death in 1942, Elsie and Marie (my mother) moved from 39 Boundary Street to 49 Hill St, just opposite Roseville train station. Mum’s older sister Rae Esme Reid was nursing in other locations at this time. Incidentally, and this is where mathematics comes in again, Robert George Reid’s name appears in the 1943 electoral roll at his old address 39 Boundary Street, obviously an error in the rolls (he died 1942). His brother Albert David and Jessie Reid and their eldest daughter, Marion Russell Reid, are also in the 1943 roll for Roseville, living at 71 Lord Street, Roseville, where Albert’s occupation is *farmer*. In Roseville! Yes, but there is much more to that story. Elsie Hilda Reid, in 1943, is listed at 49 Hill Street, but Marie, now listed under her married name *Walker* is at the same address.

William and Marie Walker and Elsie Hilda Reid next appear in the 1949 electoral roll for East Sydney>Darlinghurst, living at 13 Elizabeth Bay Road, Elizabeth Bay. I’m there as well but not a mathematical statistic yet. This was our family home until 1969.

And another thing, it may be possible that electoral rolls can help in identifying old family photos where a location or street name is not shown. Old suburban houses probably have a distinctive look of a suburb or place and with the knowledge provided by a roll you may be able to PLACE your relatives.





Mayor of Wagga Wagga, Dallas Tout on the left, and Rob Walker, President of our Society on the right, at morning tea in August to celebrate National Family History Month.



Above: Leanne speaking about using electoral rolls for research at the August meeting.

The Last Word

*Preserve your memories, keep them well, what you forget
you can never retell. –*
Louisa May Alcott

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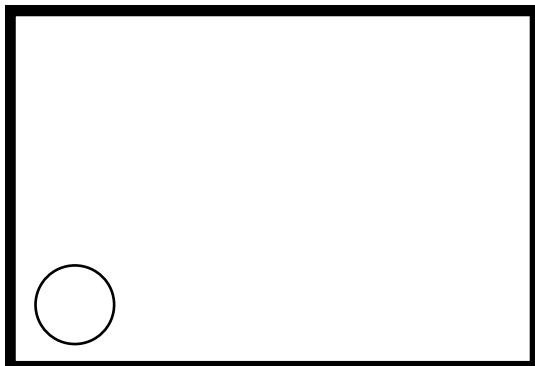
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