



Colac & District
Family History Group Inc.

Coladjins

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Spring & Summer 2019 Issue 110



WOOL WOOL SCHOOL - 1997 REUNION

The little one-roomed school at Wool Wool opened its doors in 1920, almost one hundred years ago. Miss Calcutt was the first head-teacher and her first eight students came from just three local families: Jack, Florence, Harold and Robert Bottrell, Frederick and Mary Rhodes, Kathleen and Emily Graydon. Located on the Wool Wool Road, the school was not far from Lake Corangamite, where the children would later have their swimming lessons. The land was donated by Charles Darcy, who was president of the school council for several years. R E Scott, Thomas Rhodes, Albert Gaydon, F Page and Charles Hester were all associated with the establishment and foundation of the school. There were eighteen teachers during its thirty-one year

history and part of the reason for the closure was the difficulty in finding accommodation for the teachers. In 1944, four trees were planted in memory of four past students who died in World War II: Lindsay Russell, who died on the Kakoda Trail and is buried in New Guinea, brothers George and Charlie Spokes, who are buried in Singapore and Port Moresby and James Dowie who was taken as a prisoner of war, died and is buried in Burma. A sad legacy for such a small school. Students who attended the school formed life-long friendships and many are in this photograph, taken in 1997 in the Colac Botanic Gardens. At the time it was the third reunion in the thirty-six years since the school's closure. (Photograph from Ray Colenso) *Cont. page 3*

Photograph: (roughly) clockwise from back left - Edna Cowley (Mewha), Joyce Hanan, Stan Russell, Pauline Hanlon (Chappell), Gordon Hanlon, Alan Hester, Margaret Heffernan (Evans), Ray Colenso, Jack Taylor, David Fleming, Jack Parker, Margaret Fleming (Morrissey), Ray Parker, Clem Paterson, Ray Parker, Mary Fleming (Lloyd), Doug Gibson, Harold Taylor, Winna Heron (Ballagh), Una Hester (Thompson), Evelyn McKenzie (Richardson), Joan Russell (Buckle), Graeme Gibson, Dorothy Harding, Anne Fleming (Harrington), Mavis Rhodes (Beatty), Dulcie Scott (Brooks), Willie Heffernan, Isobel Scott, Jack Hester, Elizabeth McKenzie (Bayne). Huge thanks to Ray Colenso for his work in finding all of these names

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Dates to Remember

January 13 & 14 Monday & Tuesday

◇ History Centre Re-opens for 2020

January 16 Thursday 2020 at 1:30pm

◇ History Centre Re-opens for 2020

◇ Research assistance

February 11 Tuesday 2020 at 1:30pm

◇ Annual General Meeting

◇ Election of Office Bearers

◇ Quarterly General Meeting

◇ General Business

Opening Times

Monday & Tuesday 10:00am to 2:00pm

Thursday, Friday 1:30pm to 4:30pm

Sunday 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Closed Public Holidays

Out of hours opening by arrangement



CHRISTMAS BREAK



History Centre Closed

Tuesday 17th December

and will

Re-open

Thursday 16th January 1:30pm

If you wish to visit the centre during the holiday period, arrangements can be made for opening out of hours.

A fee of \$10 applies

Merrill ph or text: 0400 055709

Email: merrillo@bigpond.net.au

We wish all of our members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Safe New Year

Contact Information

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Another year has almost passed for the Colac Family History Group. We have run several well attended events both by ourselves and together with COPACC and the Colac Community Library. Our volunteers have been working hard each week, extending our local database and developing a system to record and process our photographs. The major research project, "Almost Forgotten" (Pre-1900 burials in the Colac Cemetery), has kept our team busy, discovering new burials and learning about the history of our early white settlers. "Duty Called", our military personnel collection has also continued to grow, assisted by coverage on local media and TV. Our volunteers and members are essential. Without them the organisation wouldn't exist and we wouldn't be able to provide access to our growing range of resources, or assist with family history research.

"the management team has worked well this year, but it is time for some to step down"

The management team has worked well this year, but it is time for some to step down and for other members to bring their unique skills and experience to guide the operations of the Group.

Are you such a person?

Both the President and Treasurer roles will become vacant in February 2020. Reliable systems are in place for the Treasurer's activities which makes the role easier. The President's role has not been onerous this year, especially when shared between two and with the support of a very able committee.



Presidents: Robyn Currie & Diana McGarvie

Committee meetings are held monthly and regular personal holidays are taken into account and can be accommodated. There are also quarterly general meetings, usually with a guest speaker.

Everyday IT skills of email, internet banking and ability to use Word, Excel and/or Access programs are an asset to each role, but not essential.

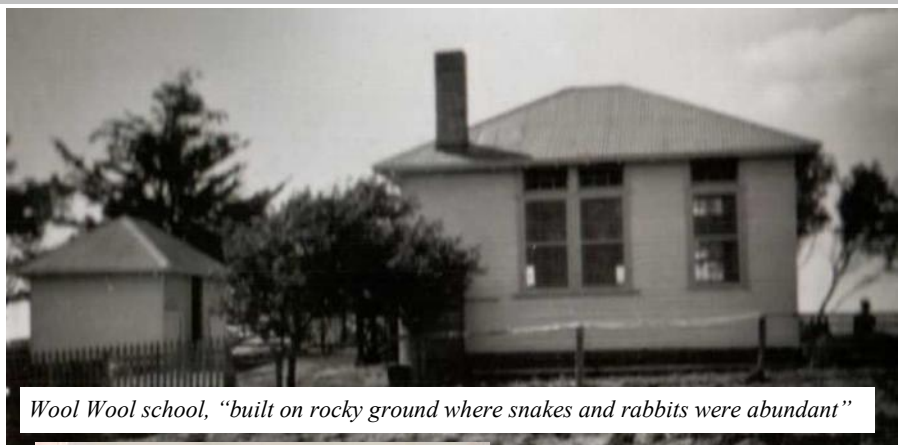
Any persons wishing to seek further information about a role as a committee member, or an office bearer are most welcome to do so. Please email: president@colacfamilyhistory.org.au or come in and have a chat.. We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming some new faces to the committee.

Robyn & Diana

WOOL WOOL SCHOOL continued from page 1

When Ray Colenso attended the Wool Wool school, most of the children either walked or rode a bike to get there, but Liz McKenzie came by horse which was then tied up under a tree until home-time - a method of transport that was used by many of the earlier students.

These c1950 photographs were provided by Gabrielle Bartels, daughter of Paul Bartels, second last head-teacher of the school.



Wool Wool school, "built on rocky ground where snakes and rabbits were abundant"



Inside the classroom in 1950



Home-time



School picnic in the Botanic Gardens

Almost Forgotten Pre-1900 Burials in the Colac Cemetery



STORIES FROM ALMOST FORGOTTEN PROJECT

THOMAS ALFORD

Thomas Alford was born in 1805 in Devises St Mary, Wiltshire, England, the son of Samuel Alford and Elizabeth Flowers. Nothing is known of his early life until 1822 when, at the age of 17, he was convicted of housebreaking and theft and transported to Australia for life.

Thomas left England on July 3, 1822, one of 154 convicts aboard the 'Arab'. The ship arrived in Van Diemens Land November 6, 1822.

Thomas' records show convictions for insolence, drunkenness and fighting. In 1827, at the age of 22, he was twice sentenced to receive 50 lashes.

But Thomas did settle down and in 1834, now 29, he married another convict, Sarah Cain, at St John's Church in Launceston. In September of the same year he was granted a pardon for his assistance in the capture of bushrangers. Sarah's fate is unknown and there is no record of any children from this marriage. In August, 1842, Thomas boarded the 'Scout' at Launceston and travelled to Port Phillip. There was no record of Sarah and it is presumed she had died prior to this date. Certainly, in 1853, at the age of 48, when Thomas remarried at St Paul's Melbourne he stated he was a widower. His second wife was 16 year old Irish girl Eliza Lydia McEffer, daughter of John McEffer and Eliza Jane Rutherford.

Between 1855 and 1879, Thomas and Eliza had fourteen children. The various places of birth show the family moved frequently around the goldfields area of Western Victoria; Castlemaine, Wattle Gully, Avoca and Amphitheatre. Eliza died at Ararat in 1887 at the age of 48. Eleven of their children were still living and the youngest was just eight years old.

The Age Thursday 22 December 1892 p 1

ALFORD.—On the 7th of May, 1892, at Colac, Thomas Alford, late of Stawell, native of Devises, Wiltshire, England, aged 87 years. A colonist of 70 years. —Inserted by his son, William J. Alford.

By 1892 Thomas was residing at Deans Marsh where he suffered a broken hip and died soon after in Colac Hospital. He was buried two days later on May 9, in the Church of England section of the Colac Cemetery. Thomas' death was reported in the Colac Herald at the time but it would be seven months before his death notices appeared in The Age and the Leader newspapers, inserted by his oldest son, William.

Story by Lorraine Black from research by Jill Judd.

JAMES WILSON BIRD

James Wilson Bird the eldest of nine children, was born in 1839 in King's County, Ireland. His parents were Benjamin Bird and Elizabeth Wilson. When he was 23 years old, along with his parents and most of his siblings, James emigrated on the *Great Australia*, departing Liverpool on April 25, 1862.

About 400 miles off the Cape of Good Hope, the ship encountered a terrific storm and the ship's rudder was damaged. The ship detoured to Algoa Bay for repairs, arriving in Melbourne almost five months later.

In 1866, James 27, married Annie Harrison, 20 and their first child, Elizabeth, was born in Ballarat two years later. Their next three children, Edith 1871, James 1872 and Henry 1874, were born at Birregurra. James built a stream powered flour mill in Birregurra with his partner, George Illidge, to process locally grown wheat. When George died in 1869, James was the sole owner. He became involved in local politics and represented the Cape Otway riding in the Shire of Winchelsea. The mill had problems as less wheat was grown in the district and James proposed turning it into a rabbit processing and fruit preserving factory. It is not known if this actually eventuated.

The family moved to Colac where twins Annie and Ethel were born in 1875. Soon afterwards, children Henry and Annie died. Another daughter, Liliias, was born in 1878 and that same year, James bought the Brewers Arms Hotel, now the Austral.

James became involved in local politics again and represented the Corangamite riding in the Shire of Colac for three years. He was also on the Hospital Committee, a founding member of the Masonic Lodge in Colac and Oddfellow of the IOOF order. He also became the lessee of the railway station refreshment rooms and had an interest in local coal exploration and improved train services.

His youngest daughter, Mabel, was born in 1879 but also died when just over a year old. James's had a lung complaint and was in poor health. In May 1885 he went for an extended holiday, visiting his brother in Tasmania. On his return James seemed in better health but he soon deteriorated and he died in Colac on November 26, 1885 at the age of 47 years.

Annie and a friend, Joshua Haberfield were named executors of James' Will and two years later, married. They continued to operate the Brewers Arms Hotel.

Story by Lorraine Black from research by Jill Judd

Almost Forgotten

Pre-1900 Burials in the Colac Cemetery



It is now five years since a small project team at the family history group began researching all of the people who were buried in the Colac Cemetery before 1900. The project was named “Almost Forgotten” because we had discovered information on death certificates that several people were buried in Colac who were not on our database or the on-line cemetery records

The project was estimated to take three to five years and cost around \$10,000 for administration and the purchase of certificates. Thousands of hours of volunteer labour would also be required. And after five years, we are not quite halfway! Almost 500 more burials have been found and 71 listed as Colac are buried elsewhere. We fund the project by fundraising, grants and donations.

SURNAMES RESEARCHED SO FAR - SOME HAVE MULTIPLE ENTRIES

ADAMS	BROWN	DAWKINS	GILMOUR	LEE	OLIVER	SPARK
AIKEN	BROWN	DEANS	GLEESON	LEES	OLNEY	SPARKS
ALFORD	BUCHANAN	DE LA RUE	GODLEY	LENNON	O'SULLIVAN	SPEED
ALLEN	BURDEN	DENMEAD	GOODALL	LESLIE	OWEN	SPRAGUE
ANDERSON	BURNIP	DEVINE	GRAHAM	LEWIS	PAGE	STANBURY
ANGUS	BURNS	DINAN	GRANT	LIDGERWOOD	PARKER	STEIN
ANLEZARK	BUTCHER	DOAK	GRIST	LLOYD	PARKINSON	STELLING
ANTHONY	CAHILL	DONNAN	GROVE	LUCAS	PEARCE	STEPHENS
ARCHER	CAHIR	DOOLEY	HAASY	MACKINNON	PEMBERTON	STEVENS
ARLETTE	CAIRNS	DOWLER	HABERFIELD	MAHONEY	PETER	STEVENSON
ARMITAGE	CAMERON	DOWLING	HAIMES	MALCOLM	PHALP	STEWART
ARMSTRONG	CAMPBELL	DOWNS	HALES	MARKS	PIERPOINT	STIRLING
ARNALL	CANT	DOWSLEY	HAMMOND	MARTIN	PITTS	SWALLOW
ARNOLD	CARMODY	DOYLE	HANSON	MASTIN	POWELL	SWAYN
ARNOTT	CARP	DUGGAN	HARKER	MATHESON	POWER	TAYLOR
AUSTIN	CASEY	DUNN	HARLAND	MCCARTHY	POWNEY	THOMAS
AUSTIN	CASTLE	DUNNE	HARRIS	McCLELLAND	POYNTON	THOMPSON
AYRES	CHAMPION	DUNOON	HARWOOD	McCLUSKEY	PRICE	TRIPOVITCH
BAILEY	CHAPMAN	DUNSTAN	HASSETT	McCURE	PRIGG	TROTTER
BAKER	CHAPPELL	DUNT	HAUGH	McDERMOTT	PROSSER	TUCKER
BALL	CHARITY	DURBRIDGE	HAYDEN	MCDONALD	QUINN	TULLOH
BAMFORD	CHILDS	DWYER	HAYES	McGONICAL	RAE	TURNBULL
BARR	CHING	EARP	HERRICK	McGREGOR	RATTRAY	TURNER
BARTLETT	CHRISTIE	EDGAR	HESTER	McKAY	REED	UNDERWOOD
BASSETT	CLANCEY	EDMONDS	HICKEY	McKEAN	REID	URQUHART
BATSON	CLARK	EDWARDS	HILL	McKENZIE	RICHARDS	USHER
BAEYERTZ	CLARKE	EMBREY	HILLHOUSE	McLAUGHLIN	RICHES	VAUGHAN
BAYLIS	CLEMENS	ERLANDSON	HILLS	McLEOD	RICKHUSS	VESEY
BECK	CLIFFORD	EVANS	HODGINS	McMANUS	RING	WALKER
BEECROFT	COLEMAN	FAIRBAIRN	HOLIEH	McMILLAN	ROBERTSON	WARNER
BELL	COLLINS	FALLON	HORAN	MILLAR	ROSCOE	WARR
BELYEA	CONDAN	FARRAR	HULME	MILLER	ROUT	WATKINS
BESLEY	CONY	FEDDERSEN	ILETT	MILNER	ROW	WEIR
BEWSHER	COOK	FERGUSON	INGLIS	MINCHINTON	RYAN	WESTLAKE
BILLINGS	COOMBS	FINNIS	JAMES	MITCHELMORE	RYE	WHEADON
BIRD	COOPER	FISHER	JENKINS	MOLONEY	RYMER	WHITE
BLUNDY	CORCORAN	FITZPATRICK	JESSUP	MOORE	SCOTT	WILLIAMS
BONNEY	CRABB	FLANIGAN	JOHNSTONE	MORRISON	SCRIMGEOUR	WILLIAMSON
BOTTRELL	CRAIG	FOORD	KEMP	MORRISSEY	SELFE	WILLIS
BOURK	CROCKER	FORBES	KENDALL	MORTON	SHARP	WILSON
BOURKE	CROTAZ	FRASER	KENNEDY	MURRAY	SHARROW	WINCHESTER
BOWEN	CROUGH	FRITH	KENNY	NANKIVELL	SHEAHAN	WINDSOR
BOWLES	CUMMINGS	FULTON	KERR	NEEDHAM	SHEEDY	WORDSWORTH
BOWLEY	DALRYMPLE	GAMBLE	KERVIN	NEYLON	SHOLL	WRAY
BRADLEY	LENNIE	GARDINER	KING	NICHOLAN	SHORT	WYNDHAM
BRADLEY	DALTON	GARRETT	KLINK	NICHOLAS	SIMMONS	YATES
BRADSHAW	DANAHER	GAYLARD	LAITY	NICHOLS	SITLINGTON	
BRISBANE	DARCY	GEARS	LANE	O'BRIEN	SMALLEY	
BROSE	DAVISON	GILHOLME	LEDWARD	O'DOWD	SMITH	

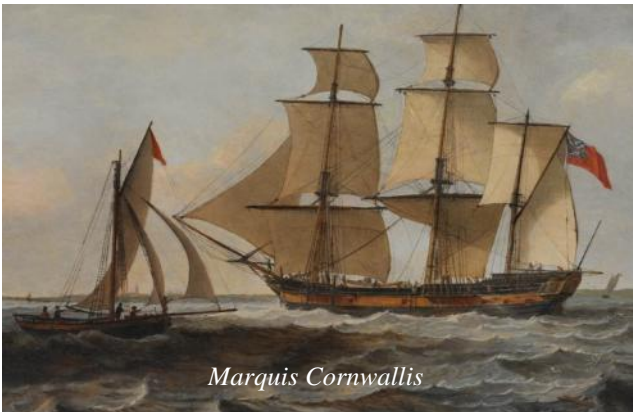
How can you help? You can become involved in the research, donate early Colac certificates or perhaps make a donation towards the purchase of a certificate, which cost \$24.50 each. We thank everyone who has contributed or been involved in this project so far, in particular our amazing researchers, Raye & Jill

A CONVICT IN THE FAMILY

CATHERINE KEARNEY 1769 – 1830 - *STORY WITH ASSISTANCE FROM LIZ SPENCE*

When Liz Spence learned that Janet McCalman would be conducting a workshop on convicts for the family history group, Catherine Kearney came to mind. Catherine, also known as Kearnon and McKearnan, is the great, great, great grandmother of Neville Spence, Liz's husband.

Catherine Kearney was 22 years old in March 1791 when she was convicted and sentenced to seven years transportation. The trial had taken place at Phillipston, Kings County, Ireland, now known as Offaly County.



Marquis Cornwallis

Catherine sailed for Port Jackson on *Marquis Cornwallis* which departed Cork on 9 August 1795, and arrived at Port Jackson six months later, on 11 February 1796. There were 163 males and 70 female convicts on board along with 36 soldiers of the New South Wales Corps and their families. About a month into the voyage the ship's master had to quell a mutiny, with the result that seven convicts and a sergeant, one of the mutineers, died of their injuries, including flogging. *Marquis Cornwallis* then stayed for almost a month at the Cape, re-provisioning.

Catherine was pregnant during the tumultuous voyage and a baby daughter was born at sea. The little girl was christened "Mary" on the 31st March at St Phillip's Church, Sydney. "*Mary, daughter of Mathew Wilson and Catherine Keirnan born at sea, on board the Marquis of Cornwallis*" The fate of both Mathew, who was thought to be a sailor, and baby Mary is not known. Catherine was sent to Norfolk Island where she lived with Thomas Smith and gave birth to sons William in 1798 and Thomas in 1799. Catherine is recorded later as living with Roger Gavin, a 25 year old Irishman who had been sentenced to transportation for life. Catherine gained her freedom in 1802 on Norfolk Island, but did not become a landowner.

After a few years, Norfolk Island was considered too remote and too expensive to maintain, and a plan was put in place to evacuate its population. During 1807 and 1808, all except 200 people were removed and relocated. Catherine arrived in Tasmania in the Derwent River area with her two young sons, William



Hobart Town early 1821 by Alan Carswell

aged nine and Thomas, aged seven in March, 1808. She was allotted a town lease in Hobart and began her own dairy farm. Catherine became well known and respected around Hobart Town, providing all dairy products to the colony, although she is said to have had such a sour temper that her tongue would make the milk curdle. Catherine maintained her relationship with Roger Gavin, although the couple appeared to live in different premises and, after her death is reported to have left her mare to her second husband, Thomas. Catherine's death took place at home on April, 1830. She was 61 years old and the following notice appeared in the local paper.

Colonial Times, Friday 9 April 1830 p 3

DIED—on Wednesday, at her house in Argyle-street, Mrs. CATHERINE KEARNEY, ages 61, an old and respected inhabitant of the Colony, having come to it on the evacuation of Norfolk Island

William, Catherine's eldest son, married and also had a son named William. William Jnr married and had four children: Frances (Fanny), Catherine Maria, Robert and William. Catherine married Edward Spence and there were five children. Leslie Edward James Spence, son of Catherine and Edward, is Neville's father.

Catherine Kearney – Great great great grandmother

→William – Great great grandfather

→William – Great grandfather

→Catherine – Grandmother

→Leslie – Father

→Neville Spence

This plaque, which is on the footpath on Collins Street where Catherine's dairy was located, records her convict history and honours her contribution to the colony.



FLIGHT OFFICER MURRAY JAMES FEDDERSEN

Of the 55,000 aircrew who failed to return or were missing in Bomber Command air operations during World War II, 3,486 were Australians. Murray James Feddersen was one of those RAAF airmen who failed to return. Murray was born in Colac on 24 April, 1924, the second son of Albert and Linda Feddersen, and younger brother to Alan. The family lived in Hesse Street, and Albert was the Store Manager at Bilsons Department Store. Both Murray and Alan attended Colac West Primary School, Colac High School and Geelong College. Fifty-four years before Murray was born, his grandfather, Theodor Feddersen departed from Hamburg for Australia in 1868 at the age of 16 years with more than 100 other German passengers on the ship the "Caesar Godeffroy". The ship arrived in South Australia and Theodore subsequently travelled to Victoria and Colac. In 1878, Theodor married Elizabeth Graham at Cressy, and they settled at their dairy farm "Hillside" at Colac East. (Before his marriage, Theodor had worked as an engineer at the Cressy Flour Mill). Theodore and Elizabeth had 5 children William, Frederick, Otto, Albert and Mathilda, and all the family members are remembered in the Colac Cemetery.



Returning to Murray, after finishing his schooling, he joined the National Bank and was posted to the Cobden branch for a time before enlisting in the RAAF at the age of eighteen. After initial RAAF training in Australia, he underwent further training in Canada and was eventually transferred to and based at RAF Waddington in the UK. Murray was the Captain of a seven-member crew, comprising Navigator, Bomb Aimer, Wireless Operator Air, Flight Engineer and two Air

Gunners. Lancaster NN714 took off from RAF Waddington at 1618 hours on 11 November 1944 to bomb Hamburg. Nothing was heard from the aircraft after takeoff and the aircraft did not return to base.

Nineteen aircraft from Squadron 467 took part in the raid that day and two of these aircraft including NN714 failed to return. Post war it was established that the aircraft crashed on fire at Bremerhaven (approx 90kms west of Hamburg), and that all the crew were killed.

They are buried in the Becklingen War Cemetery, which is located near Soltau on the west side of the road from Hamburg to Hanover.

Murray's tragic loss while flying over Hamburg is a poignant reminder of how futile war is. The Becklingen War Cemetery is located about 180 kilometres south of the town of Flensburg from which his Grandfather Theodor had migrated 76 years earlier. Remembrance Day, 11 November 2019 was the 75th anniversary of Murray's death. Murray's brother, Alan, also joined the RAAF after graduating in Medicine from the University of Melbourne in 1944. Between 1945 and 1949, Alan served as a Medical Officer at several RAAF Bases (Ballarat, East Sale and Darwin), then, after leaving the Air Force, served the community in General Practice in the Melbourne suburb of Kew for 36 years.



Camperdown Chronicle (Vic. : 1877 - 1954) Friday 19 October 1945 p 2 Article

A photo of the late F/O Murray Feddersen is to be hung in the Cobden Presbyterian Sunday School Hall. Murray was on the staff of the National Bank, Cobden, before enlisting, and was a teacher at the Presbyterian Sunday school. He lost his life in a flight over Germany. He was treasurer of the Cobden Presbyterian Tennis Club and special reference to him was made at the club's annual meeting.

This article was published in the Camperdown Chronicle following Murray's death. Sadly, Murray's photograph is no longer at the hall and all attempts to find it have so far proven to be futile. If anyone has any information of where it might be, please contact the family history group.

COUSINS MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME

“**W**hat a Wonderful Result” were the closing words of the email Dawn Missen sent to the family history group after spending a day with a cousin who she thought she might never find. There is a lot of satisfaction for a team of researchers in being able to find a family member for a person who had exhausted their own research. And it is extra satisfying when the person you are helping is a member and a generous friend of the family history group. Dawn regularly brings in photographs or other information about early Colac and Beeac families. That is why, when we were asked by Dawn Missen to help her find a cousin named Irene that she knew had been born in Sydney in about 1945, our team of researchers from the “Almost Forgotten” project dived into the research straight away. The outcome couldn’t have better. Within a couple of days Dawn was able to talk to her cousin and within weeks they were together in Irene’s Sydney home, exchanging photographs and stories over a lovely lunch. Briefly, Dawn’s uncle had been married in 1944 and a daughter, Irene, was born in January 1946.



Marriage of Albert Neale & wife Ivy Connell 1944

The marriage ended when Irene was nine months old and both parents later remarried. It wasn’t known if baby Irene had been raised with her father’s surname, mother’s name or perhaps her step-father’s surname. Other possibilities that could not be discounted were



Cousins meet for the first time Irene (left) and Dawn

adoption, or that the child might not have survived. It was also very possible that by now she would be married and have her husband’s surname. All of the obstacles researchers encounter when trying to find female relatives.

As it turned out, we were able to find Dawn’s cousin within a very short time, using the knowledge and skills gained through the extensive research for the “Almost Forgotten” project.

After finding the married name of Irene’s mother, we used the Ryerson Index website in case she had died and there had been a death or funeral notice.



www.ryersonindex.org

The notice came up straight away with the edition and date of the newspaper. That was a first breakthrough. One of the research team then contacted the library in NSW and asked if he could get an actual copy of the death and funeral notice. Within a very short time, that information was received and we were able pass on the findings on to Dawn. We suggested that she phone the funeral parlour (one of the resources we have used many times), and ask if they would contact the person who had organised the funeral of Irene’s mother and let them know that a relative was trying to locate them.

It didn’t seem very long before Dawn let us know that she had been in contact with her cousin and had a long phone conversation. Dawn and Irene were very excited that they had found each other. A trip to Sydney followed a few weeks later and on her return, Dawn sent these photographs. Many thanks to Dawn & Irene for sharing their story.

EXCURSION TO GEELONG HERITAGE CENTRE

A group of our members recently enjoyed a visit to the Geelong Heritage Centre, at the splendid building called “The Dome”, which includes the Geelong Regional Library.

Some members took the early train from Colac and had time to fill before the tour commenced at 11am. After a welcome coffee at the library cafe, under the guidance of Robyn, we explored the building. First we took in the view from the upper level, and then perused the other floors, admiring the light and spacious areas where the public can read and research. We then visited the Art Gallery, where we took particular notice of an old Geelong Football Club photograph which had been enlarged and displayed on the front window to advertise the current exhibition. This was especially interesting as we had attended a training session the previous day on a new program that had been set up by our IT volunteer, Bernie Gleeson, for managing our photo collection. We were welcomed at The Heritage Centre Vault by Judith Oke, who explained the cataloguing system, and process for accessing archives from the collection. Robyn had previously conducted a search and found that quite a lot of Colac material was held in Geelong. We were also given an insight into how records can be searched on-line, with their new project, “Unlock the Vault”, before being given access to a Colac rate book



Diana, Margaret, Robyn, Paul, Kevin and Deb in front of The Geelong Heritage Centre, “The Dome”

from 1901-1902 and being able to turn the pages. We had a brief look at the storage area, although it was undergoing maintenance at the time. There is ample space with a controlled atmosphere of 21deg. and 50% humidity to store archives. What a wealth of resources. The tour concluded with a discussion about the storage of photographs and documents and we were shown a variety of boxes, display folders and pockets. We all came away having enjoyed the day and having learnt a great deal. *Diana McGarvie*

CONNECTED BY A SMIDGEON OF DNA

If you haven't done a DNA test, you are possibly not aware of the significance, or value of the numbers of cMs or segments that connect relatives. My own highest connection so far is 622cM across 26 DNA segments and that person is disappointingly only my great grand-father's sister's grand-daughter! But it has been proven that even a smidgeon of DNA can help you make some interesting connections. Lorraine Greer had contacted Therese Moloney through ancestry.com to work out why they were connected. Therese has been a member of the family history group and spent many hours here researching her family. Neither Therese or Lorraine live in Colac, so the History Centre seemed an obvious place to meet, compare research, and use the resources if needed.

It is an interesting story. Ananiah Job left his wife and child in England with the promise to bring them out when he was established. He apparently did well on the goldfields, then bought a property near Colac where the next door neighbour's daughter caught his eye. (One of our maps shows has the two names on adjoining properties). Ananiah stated that he was a bachelor when he married Mary Bouchier and they had two children. All was well until his first wife and child made their way to Australia and found Ananiah with Mary. After some negotiation, his second wife and two children left with a sum of money and the first wife moved in. Mary later married Jacob Price and there were more children. It was just 8cM of DNA that brought Therese and Lorraine together.



Therese (left) and Lorraine check the Bouchier connection



Another part of the family history is uncovered

SEARCHING FOR IRISH ANCESTORS BY LYNETTE GENUA

For the last thirty years I have been researching my ancestors, from their arrival in Australia until the year 2000. Recently, I extended this research back to the United Kingdom and Ireland and finding information on people who lived in the 1800's has been quite challenging. In August and September this year, I journeyed overseas in search of three Irish ancestors: the McKenzies, McCreadys and Dawsons.



Lynette at St John's Church, Kilcrow, Co Monaghan, Ireland

Hugh McKenzie married Elizabeth Ann Hall on 7th of April 1863 at the Manse of the Church of Scotland in Geelong. From their marriage records, we know he was born around 1835 at County Down and she was born around 1845 at Antrim. Emigration records revealed Hugh migrated to Australia in 1859 on the *Great Britain*. A Google search revealed this ship is in a maritime museum at Bristol. This was our first stop. We spent a very informative afternoon on the vessel, which included viewing a black box with the ship's log and other documents that were held at the Brunel Institute. Interestingly, the source of many of these documents, which we had already seen, was in the Public Records of Victoria!

It was then on to Liverpool, where most of our ancestors had sailed from between 1840 and 1860. We were anxious to see the ships' logs and gather information on their departures. We went to the Mersey Maritime Museum at Albert Dock and to our dismay, we found they have no records before 1870. We were informed that earlier records were scattered amongst a number of sources and had either been destroyed or lost. Also, that if we came from Australia or New Zealand, we would be better searching arrivals records in those countries.

Next stop was Belfast, Northern Ireland. We spent two days searching the microfiche records at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) for information on Hugh McKenzie and Elizabeth Hall. We did know their parents' names, but not their parish, townland or religion, which made searching

almost impossible. We visited the Ulster Scots Centre and the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, but the answer was always the same.

Searching records in Ireland is quite difficult. Civic records in Northern Ireland for Church of Ireland marriages commenced from 1845 and births and deaths from 1864. Prior to this time records have to be sourced from church parish records. These records had to be sent to Dublin and unfortunately in the early 1900's a substantial number were destroyed. We moved on to Magherafelt about 45 kilometres west of Belfast, where we met two distant cousins. The McCready family lived in County Derry near Castledawson, a small town close to Magherafelt. Fortunately, we had information on many births and marriages between 1850 and 1880 and some burials up till 1950. These had been obtained in 2001 from searches of the records at the Parish of Christ Church, Castledawson and St Swithen's Church, Magherafelt. We spent a few days visiting old farms, churches and cemeteries. This allowed us to confirm and build on the information we had on the older generations of McCready's. We also had extensive conversations with the cousins about more recent generations.

Although they could not provide exact names or dates of events, they provided sufficient information to facilitate research on General Records or Northern Ireland (GRONI) where civic records are held.

It was then on to the County of Monaghan.

The Dawson family lived at Drumintin in the Parish of Emetris, Monaghan. Luckily, a few weeks before leaving for overseas we had found the marriage of our 3 times great grandparents on Roots Ireland index. Thomas Dawson of Drumintin had married Francis Megrane at St John, Kilcrow on 16th March 1812. We could not find Drumintin on any recent maps or on a Google search, so I posted a message on the Monaghan notice board of the Ireland Reaching Out website. Within a few days, I received a message from a local which included maps of the area.



SEARCHING FOR IRISH ANCESTORS CONTINUED

A search of Church of Ireland parishes also revealed that this church still conducted Sunday services. We therefore visited the Church on a Sunday morning and met the parishioners. Marion, who looked after the parish records, sent me an email with details of the Dawson's marriage, the baptism records of their children and Thomas's death. We searched the graves at the church cemetery but were unable to find where Thomas was buried. Another parishioner took us to the nearby farming area of Druminton. Tithe Appointment Book records listed Thomas and Fanny Dawson as occupying 22 acres of land there in 1830. Ireland really promotes family history research and associated tourism. There are Family History Centres

in most towns. Although they may not have the records you are looking for, they are very good at pointing you in the direction you need to look. The centre at Clones provided us with reference numbers for the micro fiche files we needed to search to find details of Church of Ireland records from the Emetris Parishes. We returned to Belfast and searched these files at PRONI. This allowed us to extend our information on the Dawson family considerably. Developing a profile of your family history is like doing a jigsaw puzzle. You find little bits and pieces of information and as you put this together a picture emerges. Recently we have found many pieces of the family puzzle, sometimes in unexpected places.

FAMILY REUNIONS

ARCHER FAMILY

Descendants of David and Elizabeth Archer, one of Colac's pioneering families, will travel from as far as New Zealand and the Cook Islands, to an Archer family reunion in Colac in late December. David Archer and his wife, Elizabeth Brown, both from Dundee, Scotland, settled in Colac after arriving in the colony in 1861. One of their sons, William, had moved to Colac with his family, several years earlier. David worked as a horse-breaker and the family soon became well-known and were well respected in the town. Several of the children married and remained in the district but son William chose to move to New Zealand with his wife Janet, and children Frederick and Christina, where he became a hotel licensee. Other members of the family became prominent in Colac. David Jnr, had been employed as a teacher in Scotland but became well known as a painter and photographic artist, located opposite the State School. The rest of the family were well known, with careers in teaching, dressmaking and owner of a livery stable. Elizabeth died at home in Gravesend Street in 1884 and less than twelve months later, David died.



Elizabeth Archer nee Brown with her grandchild

DUNSTONE FAMILY

In September 2020, there will be "A celebration of the strength and courage of Robert Dunstone, his wife Elizabeth Williams and their children's journey and arrival in Adelaide in 1840".

Howard Dunstone is urging anyone with a connection to the family to contact him for more information.

Howard's email is: hjd_54@hotmail.com

The Colac connection is James William Dunstone, a grandson of Robert and Elizabeth and son of James Dunstone and Matilda Cole. James was born in 1882 in the Cobden area. and died on June 15, 1925 at Devondale aged 42. There was an accident when he

was removing earth to do some road repair work with his employer, Cesare Ferrari. James was married to Margaret Hannah Errey in 1914 and there were five children. She died on December 1, 1960 at Cobden and is buried with James in the Church of England section of the Colac Cemetery.

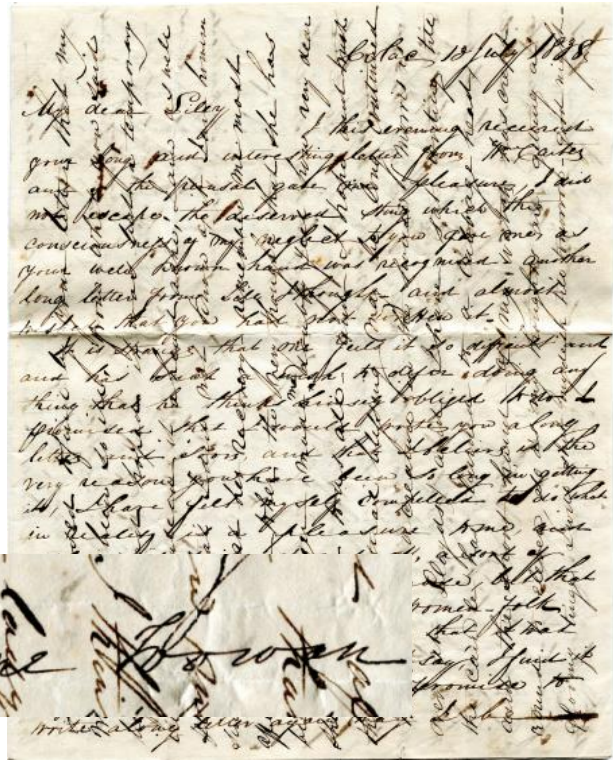
The children were Janet May, known as "Jean", Jack, Elizabeth Mary, known as "Beth", Thomas James and William Robert. Thomas married Christina Isobel Spring in 1948 and it appears that all of his siblings remained single. The five siblings and Thomas' wife Christina are all buried in the Cobden cemetery.

HUGH MURRAY LETTERS

When Hugh Murray first came to Colac, he remained in contact with friends and relatives by writing letters. Fortunately, more than 180 years later, some of those letters still exist.

On a trip to Scotland earlier this year, John and Bronwynne Calvert obtained copies of some of the letters and kindly shared them with the family history group. We attempted to transcribe the handwriting, even though some of the pages had been written on, then turned and overwritten. Seemingly, a method used to conserve paper supplies. We were able to make out most of the words, and it was interesting to read what seemed to be important to Hugh Murray at that time. There was a particular word, however, that continues to stump us. The word appears to be “Toowan” and yet we have not been able to find any reference to that word, or anything similar. The context it is written in is a post-script to the letter. “Arthur has got a Toowan for you. Mr Tanis will send it in the Sir John Franklin next time to Mr Cleburne who will send it to you”.

We are interested in your suggestions. Please contact the family history group on e: media@colacfamilhistory.org.au



“DUTY CALLED” ON WIN TV NEWS



WIN TV filming a report for the night-time news

When WIN TV were at the History Centre to cover a story earlier this year, they noticed the rows of folders of the military collection in the bookshelf and, after seeing the information they contained, asked if they could do a story for the news when they were next in Colac.

Beryl Clissold, who has continued with Shirley’s work and Cheryl Harlock, a descendant of two Colac men who died in the First World War, were interviewed for the news by reporter George Booth. It was an interesting experience for everyone and we were grateful that both ladies were willing to step outside their comfort zones

Shirley Anderson, a life member of the family history group, spent more than twenty-five years compiling information about local men and women who had served in the armed forces or nursing corps. The photographs, information and stories amassed in that time are now the basis of our “Duty Called” collection.



Life member, and local military historian, Shirley Anderson

DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES OF YOUR FAMILY HISTORY GROUP JULY TO DECEMBER CONT.

8 JULY COLAC LADIES PROBUS

We were asked to address the Colac Ladies Probus Club and had a delightful morning talking about the resources at the family history group and some of the current projects we are working on. The group were interested to hear some of the stories that have been uncovered from the “Almost Forgotten” project and talked about women’s lives and the hardship that families faced in those early days of white settlement in Colac. Some of the ladies shared their own family’s history in Colac and repeated stories

Photograph: Probus President Lilian Kelly with Merrill O’Donnell, C&DFHG



13 JULY FAMILY VISIT

Ebony Hickey had organised a reunion of her family and the relatives gathered from as far away as Queensland to meet and exchange stories. Co-incidentally Ebony’s family tree was on display at the History Centre as part of the “Local Aboriginal History” exhibition, organised by Deb Chant. We were pleased to be able to have a special opening of the Centre and to meet with the extended family of some of the Colac district’s earliest residents. The exhibition was well received and, even though it was possibly our coldest weekend for winter, they had anticipated the weather and were all well rugged up. At the end of the visit we asked if we could take this photograph before they braved the cold again.



*Above: Ebony, centre left, showing family members the display
Below: Family group rugged up for the reunion weekend in*



13 JULY FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Colac Otway Performing Arts & Cultural Centre (COPACC) sponsored our group to conduct two workshops during the year, in conjunction with two of their shows. The first workshop was held shortly before the performance of the family history based stories in *Stardust/The Mission*. It was an introduction to family history research. **Who are your ancestors? What are their stories?**

A small, but enthusiastic group participated in the workshop where various research methods were discussed and each participant was given a starter kit consisting of “dos and don’ts”, family charts, useful websites and lots more.



25 JULY MEDAL OWNER FOUND

Colac Leading Senior Constable Martin Howells phoned and asked for help to find the owner of WW1 medals that had been located with some stolen property. LSC Howells said that he had exhausted all of his networks, including social media, radio, newspapers and internet family history sites, all to no avail. It was then suggested that he contact the family history group. Using the resources at the history centre, which included the family history database, with more than 350,000 entries, our cemetery records that include the names of parents, spouses and other information, Colac Heralds on microfilm and funeral booklets, we were able to discover the owner within a couple of hours. It was a rewarding outcome for all of the work of our volunteers.



LSC Howells returns the medals to Geoff De La Rue

DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES OF YOUR FAMILY HISTORY GROUP ACTIVITIES JULY TO DECEMBER CONT.

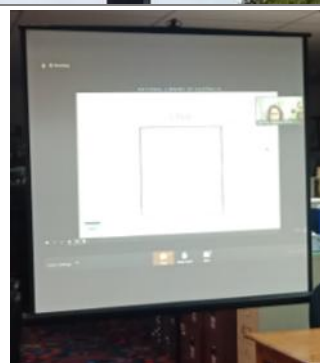
31 JULY HISTORY CENTRE SIGN

It might seem a strange thing to get excited about, but when you have spent years lobbying for a sign to let our visitors know where the History Centre is, it is something to celebrate when a sign finally appears. This sign is the result of lots and lots of discussions and emails with the local council. Look out for it the next time you are in Colac. It is on the roadside near the railway station.



7 AUGUST WEBINAR - NEWSPAPERS FOR FAMILY HISTORY

Over the years our group has invested in a range of equipment and resources. These items have been purchased through fundraising or grants and we always endeavour to utilise them as much as possible for the benefit of our members. Having been asked to conduct TROVE training, which is almost an essential tool for family history researchers, we decided to log into the training that the National Library of Australia conducts via webinar and project it onto our large screen. This enabled several people to undertake the training at the same time. We would also like to make some of the Genealogical Society of Victoria webcasts available for members at the History Centre in the future. Let us know if you are interested.



20 AUGUST CONSERVATION CLINIC

There was a full-house at the History Centre when Detlev Lueth conducted a Preservation Workshop and Conservation Clinic for the family history group. Detlev is Assistant Director, Preservation and Digitisation, at the National Archives of Australia and we were thrilled that he made time to come to Colac and share his expertise in these areas. During the workshop, which was open for our members and the general public, Detlev provided strategies on how to preserve precious documents and other items and the key risks that cause deterioration. He had brought preservation materials, including storage boxes, archival paper, acid free tissue and acid free plastic sleeves to demonstrate how items should be preserved. Following a break for afternoon the Conservation Clinic was held. Detlev had invited audience members to bring along items for individual advice and there were a large variety of objects including photographs, photograph albums, letters, family bibles, and business account books. Some of the more unusual items were a set of glass Xray slides from a soldier wounded in WW1 and this 19th century velvet smoker's hat from Germany. An entertaining and educational afternoon for all who attended.



Robyn introduces Detlev to the large audience Below; Detlev demonstrates conservation techniques



4 SEPTEMBER OCR FM INTERVIEW

The family history group was invited to OCR FM to be part of Community Connect, a program that aims to increase awareness of what is available in the community and to make for a healthier community. Hosts Edwina and Greg McHenry also invited us to bring along some favourite songs to play during the chat program. It was with a little trepidation that Norma and Merrill "volunteered" to represent the group, but any nervousness was soon overcome once the talk turned to the activities of the family history group. The hour was gone in a flash and there was so much more to tell. Norma, Merrill and the studio survived the ordeal and a huge thank you to Greg and Edwina for the opportunity to promote our group.



From left, Greg, Norma, Merrill & Edwina

DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES OF YOUR FAMILY HISTORY GROUP ACTIVITIES JULY TO DECEMBER CONT.

9 SEPTEMBER MYSTERY BADGE

We get some interesting requests at times and this day was no exception. A lady brought in this unusual badge and asked if we could identify it. After trying every combination of the letters without success, we searched TROVE for references to the motto “*We serve the Children*”. It was discovered to be a President’s badge of the **Victorian Mothers’ Clubs Federation**, an interesting and seemingly influential group. The Federation started about 1925 with a few member clubs and had risen to more than 170 by 1931, becoming very strong in the 1940s and 50s. The group met regularly and discussed everything from dental care in country schools, the amount of pocket money children should have, increased truancy due to working mothers and even text book content.



11 SEPTEMBER ST BRENDAN’S VISIT

A large group of students from St Brendan’s school visited the history centre to view the Aboriginal Exhibition. The children were particularly interested in the artefacts which are now on permanent display. Deb Chant, who researched and created the exhibition, gave a talk about the local Aboriginal people, and demonstrated basket weaving from stripped reeds.



Deb Chant and students from St Brendan’s School

11 SEPTEMBER MERIBA 20 YEARS

Two of our members attended a dinner to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Meriba Service Club of Colac. Previously a Quota Club, in 1999 it was restructured and re-named with the aim that funds raised by the club would be used to help local organisations and individuals. Along with many others, the family history group has been a beneficiary. Meriba generously donated funds to kick start our “Almost Forgotten” project and sponsored a writing project “Our Local Pioneer Stories”.



Current Meriba members celebrating 20 years of service

12 SEPTEMBER MOVIE FUND RAISER

The family history group is reliant on fundraisers, grants, membership subs and book sales to cover the costs of day to day expenses and to fund special projects. We hold two major fundraisers each year, a Mothers’ Day raffle and often a movie afternoon later in the year. When we learned that Colac Cinemas was going to show Downton Abbey, it was decided to use the movie as our fundraiser and, keeping with the theme of “high society”, follow it with a delicious High Tea. The event proved to be very popular and more than \$500 was raised from ticket sales and a raffle. Huge thanks to our members who contributed the amazing food and Pauline, manager of Colac Cinemas for her help.



18 SEPTEMBER NEW COMPUTERS

This year we were successful in gaining a grant of more than \$2000 from the **Public Records Office Local History Grant Program**. The money was used to buy two new computers to replace two old computers that we were given second-hand by the local council several years ago. It was pleasing to have the computers up and running. Our volunteers are pictured here working on various projects, including data entry, photographs, research and the library.

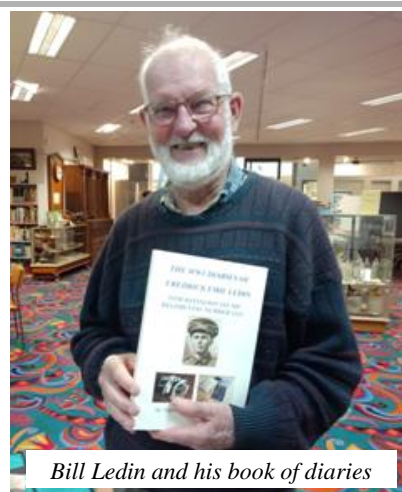


DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES OF YOUR FAMILY HISTORY GROUP ACTIVITIES JULY TO DECEMBER CONT.

19 SEPTEMBER WAR DIARIES

Some time ago, Bill Ledin was a guest speaker at a meeting of the family history group and he talked about his father's First World War diaries. There were a group of small diaries that would fit in a shirt pocket and each one was full of tiny, neat writing in lead pencil, which was fading. Bill is a wonderful story teller and his father seemed to also have a way with words. The diaries, although filled with almost mundane daily activities, gave an interesting insight into the life of a soldier at the front. We urged Bill to find a way to preserve their contents, possibly by copying or transcribing them. Recently he came to show us this book that he that he has produced for his family. Pages from the diaries have been meticulously scanned and recorded in this book and those fading words have now been preserved. It was a slow and painstaking job but well worth the effort.

Thanks Bill for allowing us to share this story and photograph.



Bill Ledin and his book of diaries

6 OCTOBER FEDERATION QUILT

The Otway District Historical Society was gifted a quilt that was found to be more than 100 years old. The squares in the white cotton quilt, which belonged to a lady originally from Beech Forest, contained sets of white initials or small graphics, believed to have been embroidered by early residents. Many of the initials have been matched to pioneer families and the society is trying to identify the rest. We were pleased to be able to help Anthony Zappelli, and the Otway Districts Group to launch and exhibit the quilt at the Colac History Centre. We helped organise publicity and assisted with the catering and looking after the guests at the launch and took care of the quilt during the weeks it was exhibited.



Past residents try to identify names on the quilt

26 OCTOBER CONVICT WORKSHOP

This year we were sometimes challenged for space to hold our workshops, exhibitions or meetings. When COPACC asked us to organise a family history workshop to co-incide with the performance of *This is Eden*, Janet McCalman was the obvious person to ask. Janet has an extensive background in convict history and was very generous in sharing her knowledge with a lovely, relaxed presentation. Janet began with some general history then discussed how to find details of a convict you want to research. She also provided a list of convicts who came to Colac from Van Diemen's Land, causing one or two surprises in the audience. All attendees were offered generous discounts by COPACC on tickets to the show.



11 NOVEMBER NEW BOOKSHELF

There is a range of books for sale at the family history group, but they were not very visible to visitors and there was an old Perspex shelf, broken on one end, possibly inherited from a book shop or newsagent. We asked Harry Dobber if he was able to make the shelf stable and this is what he did! Beautifully finished and polished timber ends attached to the clear Perspex shelf. We are very grateful for Harry's generosity and his skilful work.



A broken shelf - now a lovely, functional piece of furniture

DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES OF YOUR FAMILY HISTORY GROUP ACTIVITIES JULY TO DECEMBER CONT.

12 NOVEMBER OTWAY WATERFALLS

November General Meeting with guest speaker Anthony Car. Early this year we were contacted for assistance with some research on a project Anthony was working on. He has spent several years photographing more than 230 waterfalls in the Otways and researching how they came by their names. Often they were named after a person or family who had settled on the property, in a similar way that street and roads come by their name. Over time, as the landholders sold up, the names of some of the waterfalls changed. Anthony gave a delightful talk about his adventures in trying to get that “perfect shot” and showed a video of many of his photographs. He is working towards a book which could be launched in 2020.



Anthony and his waterfall photographs

11 NOVEMBER CHRISTMAS DINNER

We joined the Colac & District Historical Society, our co-tenants of the History Centre, for our annual Christmas get-together. We usually have a night out at a local restaurant but this year decided on lunch at Fusion in Colac. The numbers were down a little, but hopefully when the word gets around about how good it was, there will be a bigger roll-up next year. Unfortunately for Robert, the other men who had hoped to make it were unable to come on the day.



History Centre co-tenants enjoying Christmas lunch

17 NOVEMBER VOLUNTEER - END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

November 17 was officially the last working day for 2019 at the History Centre and it will re-open at 1:30 on Thursday, 16 January, 2020. Hopefully all of the volunteers will have a well-earned break.

It has been a very busy year and these last five pages of the newsletter give a bit of an insight into some of the day to day activities that your group has been engaged in during the last six months. As well the activities on these pages, there has been research of several families for the Almost Forgotten project, collation of records for Duty Called, thousands of entries added to the “CADinfo” database and hundreds of hours of work on the extensive photograph collection. On Tuesday, our final day for the year, the centre is closed at 12:30 for a luncheon. All of our volunteers and supporters are invited to bring a plate and share lunch. True to form, though, this photograph was taken shortly before the lunch and our team of dedicated volunteers have not slowed down and are trying to squeeze in “just a little bit more” work. Bernie and Phil, our IT volunteers are working on some issues on Raye’s computer, Lexie is auditing the Almost Forgotten project, Jill and Maree are discussing some research. Robyn and Norma are looking at some maps that were recently donated and Margaret and Lorraine are proof-reading.



Almost a typical day at the Family history Group

NEWSLETTERS

This newsletter is a combination issue for Spring and Summer 2019. Circumstances beyond our control meant that the Spring edition was not able to be completed within the time-frame and the decision was made to produce this bumper edition for summer

instead. Next year we will trial a smaller newsletter, produced more often and in a different format. Previous editions of Coladjins are available to download from the Colac & District Family History Group Inc website, www.colacfamilyhistory.org.au

ARCHER FAMILY CHRISTMAS WINDOWS



There are two window displays at the History Centre for the Archer family reunion. The first is a re-creation of David Archer, photographer, taking family photographs to send "back home". His sister-in-law is writing Christmas cards while nursing her young baby. Below—a portion of the family tree on display



WE THANK THESE ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT



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This newsletter is kindly printed by the staff at the office of Richard Riordan MP, member for Polwarth.



RICHARD RIORDAN MP
MEMBER FOR POLWARTH

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