

Issue >>>

Nov 2024

The Mallee Stump



Image: Wyalong Post Office, 1895
Source: Courtesy Les Miller

Wyalong District Family History Group Inc.

58 GILBERT ST, WYALONG NSW 2671

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On: 1st Saturday of every month at 1.30pm
(except January)

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Research: \$30 per hour plus a stamped large
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This fee includes publication of your
inquiry in our widely-circulated magazine.

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SAG: Society of Australian Genealogists



How To Use DNA in Family History

There are many sources of information about DNA testing, including Facebook and YouTube. Testing companies such as FamilyTree DNA, Ancestry DNA and 23andMe etc have useful resources, including webinars.

The Federation of Family History Societies in the UK has released a paper to help family historians understand DNA testing. While Australian laws may operate differently it contains worthwhile advice: <https://sag.org.au/How-do-I-use-DNA-in-family-history>

To be effective in DNA research you need to be familiar with testing company's evaluation tools and the key concepts that underpin the analysis process. Testing companies such as Family Tree DNA, AncestryDNA, 23andMe, My Heritage etc all provide a range of educational items to assist with their product.

If you would like to start your DNA journey visit SAG's DNA Research Group - Tools in Practice webpage for links to websites and blogs.

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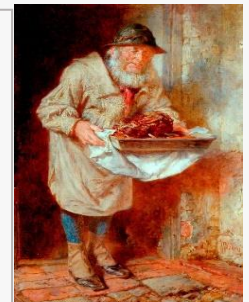
Did You Know?

It is believed that the simple Sunday roast was introduced during the reign of King Henry VII of England, in 1485.

The Royal Guards would eat roast beef every Sunday after church, hence their reputation as 'beefeaters'. The British public didn't want to miss out, so they dropped their meat off to the bakers before church and picked it up, cooked, after services. Roast dinner usually followed Yorkshire pudding, in the hope that everyone would be too full to eat a lot of roast. ¹

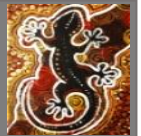
Image: Painting: 'Roast Beef of Old England' by James Lobbey. (1800s)

Source: Bradford Museums and Galleries.

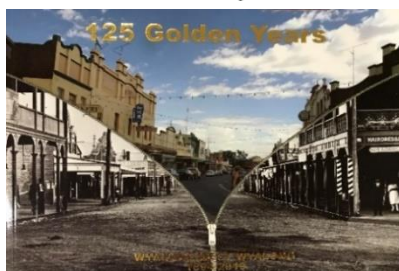


Wiradjuri Country

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this newsletter contains images and names of people who have died."



Publications 4 Sale:



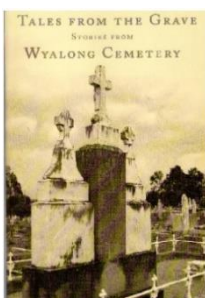
125 Golden Years

Wyalong & West Wyalong 1894 - 2019

A beautiful photographic book researching the changes and uses of the buildings in the main streets of Wyalong and West Wyalong.

Cost: \$40 + postage

Tales From The Grave Stories From Wyalong Cemetery.



How Wyalong and West Wyalong came to be the towns they are today through the lives of 100 people.

**Cost: \$20
+ \$10 postage**

Tales From The Grave 2 Stories From Wyalong Cemetery.

**Cost: \$25
+ \$10 postage**

Or

**Buy both books
for \$55.00
(includes postage)**



Funeral Superstitions

Although thunder after a funeral signifies that your loved one has reached heaven, thunder during a funeral signifies he or she can expect a less than pleasant afterlife.

—*Memorialplanning.com* ²



Contact >>> genealogy@wyalongfamilyhistory.com / butcher.pam@yahoo.com

Editor's Report

It's the last edition of *The Mallee Stump* for 2024, and my apologies for the delay—life got in the way!

Thanks for your continued membership and welcome to our new members!

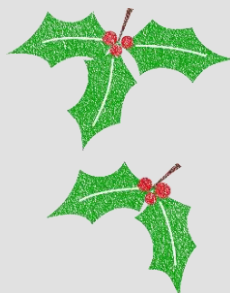
Another year has come and gone, and Christmas is around the corner. We've lost friends, made new ones, and perhaps, like me, you've become a grandparent this year.

That got me thinking about genealogy. By chance, I came across a story about the 'Whole Earth Genealogy Project', an ambitious endeavor that aims to create an interconnected family tree for all of humanity. This global genealogical database would map out the genetic and historical connections between individuals and populations across time and geography. It requires a multi-faceted approach, leveraging existing resources and forging new partnerships across various sectors. The first step is collaborating with genealogy platforms and DNA testing companies.³

Don't forget that any contributions you make to *The Mallee Stump* journal will be very much appreciated. Please email your stories and images to: victoriamiddleton33@gmail.com

Season's Greetings!

Victoria Middleton
Editor



Free Site Searches & Resources



The *Find and Connect* website.

Find and Connect was established to help Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants understand more about their past and about the historical context of child welfare in Australia.

The website offers:

- Historical Child Welfare Records
- BDM Records
- Cemetery and Burial Records
- Tools for Family History research

<https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/finding-family/family-history-research/>

Research Requests

Looking for the grave of **Maria Sophia Neideck (nee Lehmann)**.

Mother of Johann Gottlieb, who lived in West Wyalong from 1890s to around 1935. Arrived in Australia from England in 1882.

Maria lived with Johann and his wife, Elizabeth Hermantine Neideck (nee Ziebarth) on a property in West Wyalong.

The family believes that Maria is buried somewhere in West Wyalong.

—Contact Pam Butcher

Looking for **Joseph Riley** (1855-1919) and **Elizabeth Riley nee Morris** (1855-1904).

Ancestors from Wyalong.

—Contact Pam Butcher

Requesting research Information on **Roy Allan Joseph Walsh** who is on the Mallee Plains Back Creek Honour Board.

—Contact Pam Butcher

Barmedman: 150 Years

—Story: The Village of Barmedman celebrates its 150 Year Anniversary

Barmedman's 150 Year Anniversary took place between the 4th & 7th October, 2024.

It's estimated that over 500 family members, friends and visitors travelled to Barmedman for the festivities. An army of volunteers rallied to create a memorable weekend for all.

Among the items on the agenda, was the premier of 'The Barmedman Story' movie, the Temora Antique Motor Club display, shearing displays, raising the 1974 Centenary Time Capsule, a gala dinner, the tractor pull, BBQs at the mineral pool, and memorabilia displays at the court house.

There were ice cream trucks, coffee vans and market stalls, and the Arts & Craft Coffee Shop did a roaring trade all weekend.

Hot rods cars, 1950s caravans, and old and new mechanical equipment, showed how far we've come since the days of horsepower.

The infamous Clydesdale Rugby League 1974 Premiership Club enjoyed catching up with old mates at their reunion. The weekend was made even more special for the gents when Liam Martin won his fourth rugby premiership and the Clive Churchill medal with the Panthers on the Sunday. Liam grew up on a farm in Barmedman and was Dux of West Wyalong High School.



Image: Barmedman Post Office, c.1901.

Source: Courtesy National Archives of Australia



Image: Barmedman Post Office, c.2023.

Source: Courtesy Justin Green, YouTube



Image: The old and the new: Barmedman Fire Station 5th Oct, 2024

Source: Courtesy Victoria Middleton



Image: The Temora Antique car display, Barmedman 5th Oct, 2024

Source: Courtesy Victoria Middleton



Image: Barmedman Mineral Pool c.1950
Source: Courtesy Ian Moore, ABC News, abc.net.au



Image: Barmedman Mineral Pool 6th Oct, 2024
Source: Courtesy Back to Barmedman, Facebook

Barmedman Community Committee and volunteers, scrubbed the windows, tiles and walks of the old Queen Street shops that have almost entirely been converted into homes.

The Craft and Coffee Shop, Kokopelli Studios (furniture and furnishings). and the owners of former shops, created displays of memorabilia in their front window, with old photos, wedding dresses and fashions, and identified the original businesses at their addresses.

Returning residents commented on how clean the village was due to the removal of rubbish on empty blocks, mowed grass, tidy verges, beautifully kept gardens and spotless amenities.

The Barmedman Bowling Club bar was busy all weekend, and supplied drinks for the 400 people who attended the Gala Dinner in the community hall.

The Barmedman Tractor Pull was enjoyed again, and the Saturday market stalls on Queen Street sold out, thanks to great crowds and sunny weather which drew large numbers to the mineral pool.

Families reunited and friends caught up with neighbours and friends from school and sports teams.



Image: Miners at the Fiery Cross Mine, Barmedman, c.1885.
Source: Courtesy —Back to Barmedman, Facebook

Barmedman 150 Years continued...

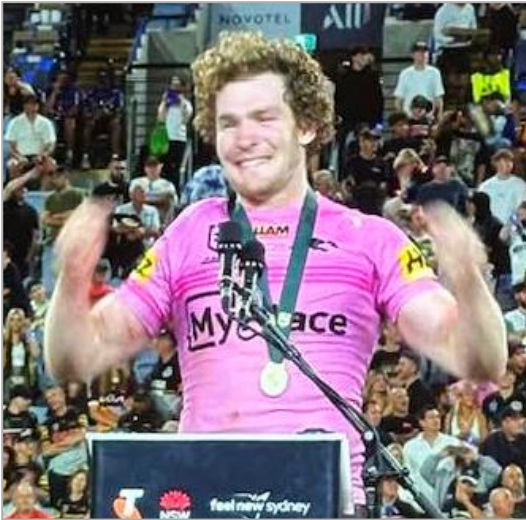


Image: Liam Martin, Clive Churchill Medalist 2024
Source: Courtesy Back to Barmedman, Facebook



Image: Barmedman's Centenary, October, 1974, local news article.
Source: Courtesy of barmedmancc.com



Image: Bill Batley's horse shoe in the Time Capsule from the Centenary
Source: Back to Barmedman, Facebook



Image: 150 Year Celebration Gala Dinner, 5th Oct 2024
Source: Back to Barmedman, Facebook



Image: The Clydesdale Rugby League Premiership Team of 1974 Reunion.
Source: Courtesy Back to Barmedman, Facebook.

The Ridleys of Bena — A History

—PART 2. The children of William and Anne Ridley of Bena, NSW



Image: William & Ann Ridley and family:

Back L to R: Joe, Jack, Alfred, George, Sam, William Jnr

Front L to R: Marion, Annie, William Snr, Ann, Louisa Shephard, Harriet

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

William James

William and Ann Ridley's eldest son, **William 'Bill' James Ridley** (7 May 1853-29 Jun 1928) grew into a capable lad despite an accident as a baby, where the wheel of a dray ran over his head. His father, William gently squeezed his son's out-of-shape head back into place and moulded it, until he was satisfied.

In 1878, Bill married Katherine 'Kate' McGrath (1858-1937) and had children: Charles William (1879-1965), Alfred William Henry (1881), Ethel May (1882-1961) George Ernest Hounsom (1884-1971), Horace Cardinal (1896-1942), Olive Muriel (1889-1981), Annie Estele (1893-1973) Reginald James (1897-1978) and Doris (1907-?).

Bill and Kate left Albury in 1885, and settled at Pine Hill Merino Stud, near Forbes, NSW. They built a wattle and daub home, sank a well, and erected a windmill. They carted the wool by bullock wagon to Cowra where they did once-a-year shopping.

Kate lived a lonely existence when William went to Cowra, fearing bushrangers and bad swaggies, snakes, and floods which left the homestead isolated.

William owned a team of draft horses and bred thoroughbreds and ponies for riding or sulkies. One stallion, 'Iolanthe', won the Champion Stallion prize at the Forbes Show in 1910.



Image: William Jnr Ridley c.1872

Source: Courtesy—Find a Grave.com ⁴



Image: William Jnr and Kate Ridley with Doris Kirby

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

In 1900, the family moved to a new weatherboard home in Grenoble, Bena. They enjoyed visits from Chinese grocer, George Acklee's fruit, vegetable and haberdashery wagon. People travelling between Wyalong and Condobolin stayed the night with Kate and Bill—even the rabbit inspector! Bill and Kate retired to Hornsby in 1910. Adopted daughter, Doris lived with her parents until she married Ron Kirby in 1934. Charles was the only child to remain in the district and his sons own and live at Pine Hill. Grandson, Jock Weir owns 'Waterview', William Snr and Ann Ridley's home.

The Ridleys of Bena—A History continued...

William and Ann's eldest daughter, **Harriett Ridley** (16 Oct 1864-2 Jun 1920) married George Dunn at 40 years of age, in 1895. Harriett's sister, Annie was married to George, but died in 1893. There was no issue from the marriage, but Harriett became a mother to Annie's teenage sons. Harriett died 2 June 1920 and is buried in Bena Cemetery. ⁵



Image: Harriett and George Dunn at their wedding, 1895.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978



Image: Annie and George Dunn.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

Annie Ridley (21 Jun 1856-14 Oct 1893) married George Dunn on 18th Apr 1876 and they settled at 'Moorwatha', NSW.

There they had sons, William (b.1878) and Alfred (b.1879) and daughter, May, who died as a baby. They moved to a property 'Fairview', near Condobolin, and were known for their melons and home brew. Annie died of consumption 14 Oct 1893, and is buried in Bena Cemetery. ⁶

William owned 'Carlowrie' (formerly 'Hawks Eye') and Alf acquired 'Ellerslie'. George died 9 Apr 1907, and is buried in Bena Cemetery. ⁷



Image: Samuel and Esther Ridley.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

Samuel Ridley (1 Dec 1857-4 May 1941) enjoyed breaking wild horses in his younger days and swimming them across rivers. On 18 March 1884, Samuel married Esther Lavis (1865-1946) in Albury, and they had 10 children: Leslie Reeves (b.1885), Bertie Percival (b.1886), Nellie Eveline (b.1887), Ada Rose (b.1889), Sidney Rupert (b.1891), Hilda Esther (b.1893), Ivy Elsie May (b.1896), Maurice Hector (b.1900), Harvey Raymond (b.1903) and Allen Oswald (b.1906). ⁸

In 1874, Samuel leased 416 acres at Burrumbuttock, NSW, where blood horse, 'Merrylegs' was raised and won 1st prize at the 1879 National Agriculture Society of Victoria Show.

In 1890, the family travelled to their 2560-acre homestead, 'Top Toft' in Wamboyne, Burcher, NSW, breeding Clydesdales, blood horses and show ponies. The 1906 split-slab woolshed of pine trees still stands.

After the gold rush, Samuel and brother, John opened a butcher shop in West Wyalong. In 1936, Samuel paid £696 to GR Butler to build 'Allenville Bakery' with a cottage in Burcher, named after son, Allen, who died in 1934.

In 1940, 'Sam' and Esther retired to West Wyalong, where Samuel passed away in 1941 and Esther, in 1946. ⁶

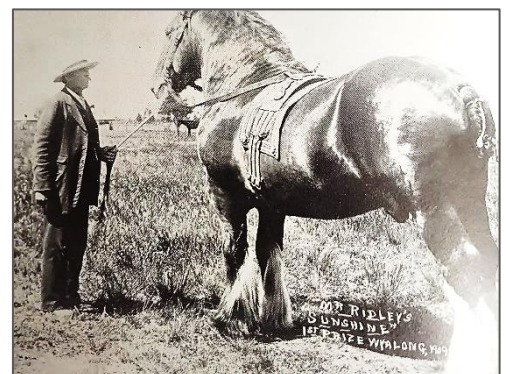


Image: Samuel with 'Sunshine', 1909.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

The Ridleys of Bena—A History continued...



Image: Marian and Walter Bassett married in 1886.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

Marian Ridley (28 Jul 1859-2 Apr 1892) married Walter 'Rooster' Bassett (1859-1947) in Forbes on 12 March, 1886.

They lived near Derriwong, between Condobolin and Forbes, and had sons, Harold Walter Harland (b.1886) and Linton Alfred Henry (b.1888). ⁹

Marian developed Bright's Disease and died at 33 years in 1892. She was the first person buried in Condobolin Cemetery. ⁶



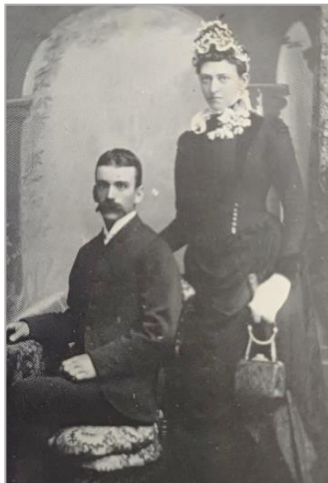
Image: **Back row L to R:** Rex, Evelyn, Vern, Irene, Clarence, Lily, Lyell, Sylvia, Orm. **Seated:** George and Alicia Ridley.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

George Hounsom Ridley (3 Jun 1861-25 May 1943) was a big man in size and ideas. George was 24 years when the family moved to Bena, NSW in 1885. George settled land at a property called 'Ina' at Cadow, near Forbes. George married Alicia Emma De Sally (1874-1951) at Forbes on 18 Jan 1891.

After 3 years, they moved to 'Lilydale' at Bena, and 11 children followed: Clarence George (b.1892), Laurence Francis (b.1893), Annie (b.1894), Alicia Irene (b.1895), Evelyn Blanche (b.1897), Vernal Eric (b.1899), Lyell Vincent (b.1900), Lily Ina (b.1902), Sylvia Iris (b.1903), Rex Francis (b.1906) and Ormond Lionel Vivian (b.1908). ¹⁰

George improved his line of sheep, and when the railway came to West Wyalong, he grew wheat. He was keen on all sports, was a man of high character and business integrity. Owning a great deal of land, George and Alicia retired to their West Wyalong home 'Glasgow'. Both Alicia and George are buried at Bena Cemetery. ⁶



Joseph 'Gentle Joe' Ridley (10 Apr 1863-9 Aug 1947) married Louise Emma Neideck (1867-1935) in Forbes in 1891. They had children: Joseph Alfred (b.1892), Selina Mary (b.1897), Harold Norman (b.1900) and Victor Frederick (b.1906). ¹¹

They lived at their property 'Sunnyside', beside 'Waterview', at Bena, but Emma became ill and wheelchair-bound at an early age, and they moved to 'Mallee Vale' near Wyalong to be close to doctors. Joe lived to 84 years and is buried at West Wyalong Cemetery. ⁶

Image: Joseph and Emma Ridley

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley,

The Ridleys of Bena—A History continued...

Louisa Esther Ridley (14 Dec 1865-6 Dec 1949) married Alexander 'Alex' Shephard (1862-1948) at 'Waterview', Bena on 20 May 1890.

They lived on land close by, until fire destroyed their home, then moved to land on Cadow Station, calling it 'Glencoe'. They reared a family of nine, but Cyril Arthur and Una died in infancy: Percival Alick (b.1891), Lillian Marian (b.1892), Myrtle Annie (b.1894), Daisy Maud (b.1896), Cyril Alfred (b.1898), Elsie Jessamine (b.1901) and Ronald Roy (b.1909).¹²

Louisa was gentle, a good horsewoman, a keen gardener and very religious. Louisa and her bushman husband retired to Lindfield, NSW. They both died 6 months apart and are buried at Bena Cemetery.⁶



Image: Back L to R: Jack, Alex Shephard, Daisy, Elsie, Perce. **Front:** Lillian, Louisa, Annie, Ronald.

Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978



Image: Back L to R: Gladys Read, Eve Packam, Ella Sutton, Gertrude Snow. **Front:** Ralph Ridley, Mary Ann Ridley, John Ridley. *Source:* Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

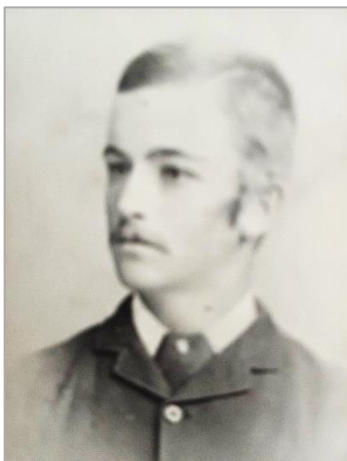


Image: John Ridley. *Source:* Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

John Ridley (29 Oct 1866-15 Sept 1900) selected 'Myrtle Vale' a couple of years after his parents moved to Bena. On 10 May 1888. John married his cousin, Mary Ann 'Polly' Woods (1865-1937). With the help of his brothers, John built 'Myrtle Vale' pine homestead, which is still in use.

Polly was a town girl, so John taught her how to shoot snakes. The butcher shop that he and brother, Sam built on the Wyalong gold fields was confiscated by a digger who staked a claim on it.

John worked hard on the farm, clearing ground, sinking dams and fencing, and was known as the fastest post hole borer around.

John and Polly had six children: Ella Myrtle Marie (b.1889), Gertrude Celine May (b. 1891), Ralph Samuel Gladstone (b.1893), Eva Daphne Dahlia (b.1895), Roy Norman Trevor (b.1897) and Gladys Blossom (b.1899).¹³

Suffering from consumption and fencing in the rain, John contracted pneumonia and died at Forbes on 15 Sept 1900. He was buried at Bena Cemetery.

Polly stayed on at Myrtle Vale and her brother, Joe Woods came to manage the property until son, Ralph was old enough to take over.

Myrtle Vale was sold to Uncle Hedley Woods in 1926, and resold to Alan Ridley, Samuel's grandson, in 1968.⁶



Image: Alfred and Clara Ridley.
Source: Courtesy—'From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978

Alfred 'Alf' Ernest Reeves Ridley (3 Mar 1868-16 Apr 1902) was only six weeks old when parents, William and Ann Ridley made the trek to Albury from South Australia.

In 1886, Alfred selected land in Bena, calling it 'Orange Grove', which is still in the Ridley family. He married Clara Ann Jones (1871-1910) on 6 July 1888, and they built a home on the bank of Humbug Creek.

Alf was a great cricket bowler, industrious and well-respected in the community. He and Clara had seven children: Walter George Hounsom (b.1889), Violet Emily (b.1890), Lindsay Alfred Ernest (b.1892), Arthur Lester Reeves (b.1896), Alice Effie Murilla (b.1896), Heylyn Wilfred Henry (b.1899) and John Edward (b.1901). ¹⁴

Alfred died at 34 years in 1902 after suffering from a long time with an unknown ailment. He was buried at Bena Cemetery. ⁶

After Alfred's death, Clara married Charles Amey in 1905, in West Wyalong, NSW, and they had two daughters, before her death in 1910. ¹⁵



Excerpt from the Condobolin Argus, 1976

—Settlers of Bena—

This small corner of Australia, called Bena, has been the land of rainbow gold for the Ridleys. Generation after generation have turned its soil. The district of Bena, unlike Wyalong with its gold, grew out of its primary products.

From our Bena Correspondent, 21 Dec, 1894, "Weather 108°, some thunderstorms. Bushfires at Mr Alf Ridleys. Little damage, one of Sam Ridleys, burnt half his grass, one on James Porters, burned a little more than half his feed. Mr Rhelan, near Ungarie lost a lot of grass. Crops not up to average. When dury is taken off, a further reduction of 6d. per bushel will hardly pay for gathering."

Years have passed since that notice in 1894, but the excerpt is as relevant today. When Bena gets her quota of rain, she can grow almost anything. In the 1976 wheat harvest, twenty bags to the acre was stripped and seventeen and eighteen bags were common.

Wonderful sporting events used to take place at Bena. Perhaps this was on account of the very large families. Even the breaking in of young horses...seemed to call for a lot of young men getting together and having a paddy-melon fight...to wind up proceedings.

One old timer, the son of the secretary of the Bena Jockey Club, tells me they never had a race without incident of accident, such as running into trees!! I think they would still come today if you could guarantee a gumtree of two on the track. ⁶

The Rush to Wyalong: 1894

—Story: Four thousand men on the Wyalong goldfield

Joseph Neeld, a former Bendigo gold prospector who settled on land near Wyalong station, discovered gold there in September, 1893, one month after starting to prospect. Neeld began an intensive search for the reef, by following the trail of gold in surficial rubble, through dollying and washing the contained quartz and ironstone.

Eventually, Neeld located the reef which became the Pioneer claim. Members of his family continued prospecting for months in adjacent areas of thick mallee scrub and discovered two other reefs using the same technique. These became the Dead Rabbit and Harry's claims. ¹⁶

In October 1893, a find was made near White Tank on the outskirts of the Billabong Run, and this became the Neeld's' Prospecting Claim when it was pegged in December 1893. Subsequently this claim was developed as Neeld's Gold Mine.

Other prospectors soon arrived, their number reaching 500 by January 1894. Quartz was sent to Barmedman for crushing and when the results were revealed in March, there was a major rush of possibly 10,000 people to the field. The NSW Government was severely criticised for encouraging the unemployed to move to the virgin field. During 1894, at least 900 quartz claims were registered, and at the end of the year, the number of miners had settled to just over 4,000.

Intense prospecting at Wyalong discovered 12 significant lines of lode within 4 km², and multiple claims were taken up along the different lodes. The main lines included the Mallee Bull, Santa Clause-Klink's, Klondyke, Currajong, and Barrier. Major mines were developed on the Mallee Bull line of lode including Neeld's and the True Blue, the latter worked to a depth of 411 m, making it one of the deepest gold mines in NSW. ¹⁶

Thomas O'Shaunessy's Diary, Part 26:

13 Mar 1894 Getting ready to go to Wyalong gold rush.

22 Mar 1894 Hurst, Daly and I went to the claim. James O'Shaughnessy sick. Great number of swagmen coming. The unemployed from Sydney. Fine day.

23 Mar 1894 Good Friday. James and Sam went to the claim. Hurst and I went along the Mallee Bull Line, north into the mallee. There are two more lines of beef[?] going into the mallee half a mile apart.

25 Mar 1894 Easter Sunday. I got some specimens from a prospecting claim of Neeld's, Mallee Bull Line. Hurst and I prospecting north in the mallee.



Image: Mallee Bull Claim, Wyalong goldfields c.1894

Source: Courtesy Goldtrails.com.au

26 Mar 1894 James and Sam went to the claim. Hurst and I went out prospecting out by Dempsey's slaughter yards. We turned east through the mallee, and back through the mallee to the camp.

27 Mar 1894 We all went out to the claim and pegged out 8 men's ground and I went from there to a new find near Bolte's selection and back to where James and Sam were working. Fine day.

29 Mar 1894 Hurst stayed at the camp. James, Sam and I went to Conway's Erin Isle claim running north and south 1 ½ miles from the township. We saw some good gold here in ironstone. From there to Neild's Pioneer claim – reef running east and west from there to our own claim. And back to camp.

The Rush to Wyalong: 1894 continued...

30 Mar 1894 We went to the claim in the mallee where we got the specimens. Sam and Jim sinking on a leader. I went to the pine ridge. Coming back across the next claim to ours, I came across some men in the middle of the mallee. They had just found some gold in quartz within 20 yards of our boundary. Harry Henderson and Bob Anderson came to where we were working.

1 Apr 1894 Daley and I commenced to trench to see if we could cut the reef. The white tank going down fast.

3 Apr 1894 Trenching. We put a notice on the claim.

4 Apr 1894 Trenching on the claim about one mile south along the old brush fence from the new township. Peter and Bill Links came with a spring cart. Going to start baking.

5 Apr 1894 Sinking on the reef and trenching and getting timber for a windlass.

6 Apr 1894 George Hurst went with Peter and Bill Links to a rush 7 miles north from the new township, called Mallee Plain run, and pegged out two claims. We were putting up a windlass.

7 Apr 1894 We are trying to trace the reef from the prospectors today.

8 Apr 1894 Sunday. James O'Shaughnessy, Sam Daly, George Hurst and I went to Mallee Plains rush. Peter took our swags out in his spring cart. We pegged out a residence site and put up our tent. Hurst went back to Wyalong with P Links.

9 Apr 1894 We worked on our claims. James O'Shaughnessy and Sam Daly went back to Wyalong to work on our old claim.

10 Apr 1894 Working on the claim No1 south from the prospectors. People crowding in. Very hot day.

13 Apr 1894 Worked up to 12 o'clock. Reported alluvial rush 20 miles south west from Wyalong in the direction of Narrandera on the Murrumbidgee River.

14 Apr 1894 Working all day. Prospectors sinking down the side of the reef.

16 Apr 1894 Working all day on the claim. Hurst and Ford finished the bakehouse for P Links. Great many miners leaving.

17 Apr 1894 Commenced to rain last night and continued all day. Light rain.

18 Apr 1894 Raining all day.

19 Apr 1894 Raining all day. We went up to the claim. The ground is so boggy you cannot walk. A lot of tents flooded out.

21 Apr 1894 Worked up to 12 o'clock. Prospectors work in a new place.

22 Apr 1894 Sunday. W Guinan and I prospecting north west. Hurst gone to Wyalong. James O'Shaughnessy came from Wyalong. So did Sam Daly.

23 Apr 1894 Working up at the claim all day.

24 Apr 1894 James started from Wyalong riding Sam Daly's horse going to Cowra. Harry Ford, W Guinan and I went to a rush ten miles north from Mallee Plains. The prospectors are on good stone showing good gold. We and two other men pegged out a claim. We got back to Mallee Plain at 5 o'clock. S Daly came from Wyalong.

25 Apr 1894 I worked at the claim. S Daly, H Ford, W Guinan went with Harry Whiteman's cart to the new rush. People leaving fast.

29 Apr 1894 Sunday. I got some belar[?] to make pick handles. Harry Ford went to Wyalong. Only 50 miners left on mallee Plains rush.

30 Apr 1894 I walked into our claim a mile south of the new township, East Wyalong. I met George Hurst and his brother there, and Harry Ford.

1 May 1894 Harry Ford and I walked out to the 10 mile. We saw Sam Daly and W Guinan there. Nothing fresh there. ¹⁷

The Rush to Wyalong 1894 continued...

Thomas O'Shaughnessy Jnr (1835 – 1911) was born in Sydney on 1 Jan 1835 to Thomas Shaughnessy (later O'Shaughnessy), and Anne Byrne. The Diary, from which these BMD references have been extracted, records his progression from early childhood on the Lachlan River, N S W.



Image: Tattersall's Hotel, West Wyalong, built in 1894

Source: smartguide.org



Image: Thom's Corner and Post office. In 1894 Mr James Thom of Temora sent three wagons to build one of West Wyalong's first general stores.¹⁹

Source: smartguide.org

Cowra Free Press (NSW),
Saturday 18 November 1911, page 6

Obituary. THE LATE MR. THOMAS O'SHAUGHNESSY.

After protracted suffering, Mr. Thomas O'Shaughnessy, a very old and well-known resident of the district, breathed his last at the residence of his son, Mr. James O'Shaughnessy, Liverpool-street, on Tuesday, death being due to a complaint of long standing. Despite his advanced age (77 years) he up to a few years back followed the avocation of a miner, his perseverance as a prospector for mineral deposits being remarkable. He was of an optimistic temperament, hence when he succeeded in unearthing what in his eyes appeared to be a promising reef or lode he was hopeful of having at length reached the goal of his ambition. Unfortunately, none of his discoveries proved remunerative.

The late Mr. O'Shaughnessy was a native of Sydney, and when he had attained his majority he married at Cowra Miss Margaret Walsh, sister of the late Mr. Thomas Walsh (Cowra)... Since the death of his wife and the scattering of his children many years ago, he has had no settled home, his inclinations leading him to devote the greater portion of his time and energies to prospecting. Of late years he had resided partly with his son at Cowra and partly with his daughter at Grenfell...

With the late Mr. Adam Potts (another old miner) he explored and opened up the Belubula and Walli caves, from which he obtained many interesting and valuable fossils. Being well versed in geology, his knowledge in that connection being principally based upon practical experience, he was regarded by those interested in mining as an authority whose opinions commanded respect...¹⁸

The Journal of Marjorie Jean Staniforth

—Story: PART 1. Reflections of life from a West Wyalong resident

Marjorie ‘Marg’ Jean Staniforth (4 Mar 1922-22 Feb 2016) was born in Ivanhoe, Victoria, to William Harold Bracher and Laura Mary Bracher. Sister, Nancy arrived 6 years later.

Her father was a bank manager and the family moved to Rupanyup, Stawell and Kaniva, until a final move to West Wyalong in 1942.

Marjorie Jean Staniforth Journal —Started January 2000

“Grandpa Irwin [maternal grandfather] ran away from his home in County Armagh, Northern Ireland. As a very young man, landing in Melbourne with only 10/- he spent his first night in a cemetery which he considered safe and then went to Romsey where he had relatives. There he met his future wife, Sarah Johnston...

Grandpa, (who I christened ‘Putty’) became a successful businessman with several grocery stores. He did go back to Ireland to be reconciled with his father, who unfortunately died while he was at sea.

I remember Grandma well—tall, dignified, hair very white, which went white after typhoid fever in her thirties. She loved her garden and her granddaughters!

Laura [mother] had a very sheltered childhood with her three brothers, Will, Chris and Arch and her sister, Mabel—her sister, Elsie died of heart failure when two years old, she was running to meet her father returning from work.

She [mother] and Mabel both met their husbands at church.



Image: Mother, Nancy and Marj at the Grampians, 1931.
Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth



Image: 4 Generations: Grandma Irwin, mother Laura, Great Grandpa Johnston and Marj.
Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth



Image: Marj as a child.
Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth

Mother suffered a lot of ill health when I was young... One thing I remember, she was very superstitious of green and would never wear anything in that colour nor have anything in the house—is it my contrary nature that green is my favourite colour!!!

She was a good cook and dressmaker and enjoyed all handcrafts.



Image: Debutante Marjorie Bracher, Masonic Ball, 1940.

Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth

Grandpa [paternal grandfather] came from France when their name was De Turpe, but changed it to Turpie when they migrated to Scotland. The Brachers came from Surrey, England, Great Grandfather emigrating prior to the Victorian goldrush.

Grandpa Bracher died of a stroke when I was 18 days old, but I remember Grandma living at Sandringham with her only daughter, Aunt Muriel who ran the family business in Richmond selling haberdashery and toys. Dad's only brother, Edgar was killed in the 1st World War.

Dad always loved his cars. He was always involved in community affairs...his main interest otherwise was in Masonic circles where he gained high positions. Dad was a bank manager with Commercial bank...and retired in 1957.

My earliest memory of school was my first day at Rupanyup, when I ran away at recess and being hastily returned by my irate father. My nickname at school was 'Midge'.

My clothes were always made at home—big thrill to buy first frock from first wages—tan wool with brown trim. Always loved reading and had lots of books. Remember listening to test match cricket relayed from England late at night. Grandma left me her piano so I had lessons for years.

[I was] friends with lots of boys, but with the war, we enjoyed it when they were on leave, otherwise it was keeping in touch by letters.

My first full-time job was as a secretary at Evans & Englert Solicitors, West Wyalong. Didn't like the rare times when I had to help on the bookkeeping desk—no calculators then. I lived with my parents until my wedding day when I moved to 'Lochbuie', West Wyalong.

One amusing (now) episode was when Iris Wade, another workmate and friend, received a cable from overseas from her Airforce boyfriend, Stan Townsend (from Lake Cargelligo) and it was in code of numbered phrases and it read "I love you—will you marry me". So, she got all our good advice and opinions before replying "I love you—yes I will". They are still married 55 years later.

On 24 Aug 1943, prior to going to a ball, my friend Eileen Staniforth invited a few young folk to meet at her sister, Audrey's home, where I met her brother Bruce. Later that night, Audrey gave birth to her first child, John, so a date to be remembered.

Bruce was and remained a farmer. After working very hard on his parents' property during the 2nd World War when three older brothers were in the armed services, he then purchased Lochbuie and later 'The Kurrajongs' and other properties.



Image: Marj and 'Bruce' Staniforth engaged, 1946.

Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth

We announced our engagement 4th March 1946, but owing to economic problems we didn't marry for 2 years (14th February 1948). My main memory is that it was an extremely hot day and Bruce had to mop his brow—whether from the heat or nerves.

The Journal of Marjorie Jean Staniforth continued...

[Lochbuie was] a very nice well farmed property but too small for our ambitions. We were very lucky to have Sonny, Betty Rankin and Goldie (Ridley) as neighbours. I had to change from a 'townie' to being a farmer's wife.

Bruce enjoyed being his own boss and running his own farm and felt satisfied with the results of his hard work...

[It was] a steep learning curve to coping with no electricity or sewage—and being 25 miles from town. And a bucket of milk (luckily Grandma Stani advised me not to learn to milk a cow) which had to be separated to produce cream, from which I made our butter. Not to mention a chip heater (first remember to get said chips) which went 'whoomph pop pop, whoomph pop pop' as it produced our hot bath water. And the bane of my life was a party line telephone—with nine other families sharing it...and could listen to all your conversations.

Bruce's main compromise was having to put up with such a hopeless wife.

[Our] children: Peter Bruce (b.8 Apr 1949), David William (b.21 Sept 1951) and Julie Anne (b.6 Aug 1953).



Image: Marj on the new car during their honeymoon, 1948.

Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth



Image: 'Lochbuie' Bolygamy, West Wyalong.

Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth

Peter loved company, had an imaginary friend, (Whitey). David...could always amuse himself. Julie—always happy and also loved company. We were members of the Wamboyne Pony Club.

We had a beach holiday every year. In later years we purchased 14 Ena St in Terrigal where we all had many holidays.

Hazeldoon School was the venue where the children had their primary education through correspondence



School, under the guidance of the very good governesses, Miss Hammond (known by all as 'Hammy') and Betty Pinkerton, called 'Pinky'. Later on the boys went to All Saints College at Bathurst, and Julie went to Marsden, Bathurst, and on to Sydney Teachers College.

After their schooling, Peter and David returned home to help run 'The Kurrajongs'. David did a pilot's course and received his commercial licence, but decided he preferred a farmer's life. Julie became a PE teacher at St Ives High School before marrying Noel."

—Read Part 2 in next issue.

Image: Peter Bruce, David William and Julie Anne
Source: Marjorie Staniforth Journal, Courtesy Peter Staniforth

Funeral Superstitions

“Stop the Clocks!”

In Victorian times, when someone died, clocks were stopped at the moment of death. This allowed for an accurate doctor's report and death certificate. And, time had stopped for their mortal life so respect was given to the dead. When the family's mourning period had ended, they started their clocks again.²⁰



Image: www.neonclock.org

‘Funeral Blues’

—W H Auden

Stop all the clocks, cut off the
telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking
with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with
muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the
mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning
overhead
Scribbling on the sky the
message 'He is Dead'...²⁰



Funeral Superstitions

“Saved by the Bell!”

In previous generations, it was sometimes difficult to tell if someone had actually died or if they were just in a coma. So craftsmen began putting bells on the top of coffins with chains that ran to the inside for the deceased to pull. Then they could ring the bell if they woke up.²⁰



Image: FutureMuseum.co.uk

‘Death Bell’

-Mehta Hasmukh Amathaal

The bells are ringing and singing
the death songs
I think it is not "wrong"
"I shall never die" and always try
to be never dying
But I am really lying
in youth I was always defying the
death with no trouble in
breathing
I had everything
those bold scenes rush and push
me to think back
but now I am struck.²¹

Funeral Superstitions

“Leave Feet First!”

If the deceased was carried out of the home headfirst they might look back and call another family member to follow them into the afterlife, so they were always carried out feet first.²⁰



“Cover The Mirrors!”

Another common superstition was the belief that the spirits of the deceased could enter the mirrors, which served as portals to the “other side”. So as soon as someone passed away, family members rushed around covering the mirrors with blankets or cloths.²⁰

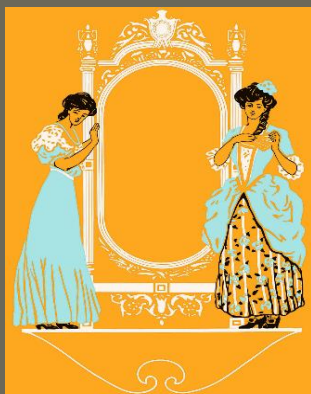


Image: Courtesy GDJ, Pixabay

Book Release 2024

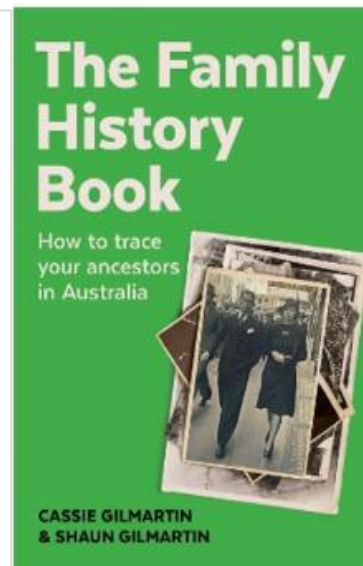
The Family History Book: How to trace your ancestors in Australia

By Cassie Gilmartin & Shaun Gilmartin

October 2024

\$24.72

<https://www.fishpond.com.au>



Do you wonder if that family legend your grandparents told was true? Or have you never known much about your family history and would like to find out more?

The Family History Book takes you through the steps of researching and building a family tree, finding records of births, deaths and marriages, looking up newspaper archives and probate records, researching immigration and shipping, examining military records, as well as discovering your story through DNA testing. Whether you're just beginning or have already made a start, this book guides you through all the places you can learn about genealogy in Australia.

Filled with tools, tips and tricks, and featuring interviews with experts in the field, Cassie and Shaun Gilmartin share everything you need to unlock the story of your past.

'Now your frequent cry, "I'd write the family history if I knew where to start", is silenced. This book is so rich in example and so charming that it will not only tell you exactly where to start and proceed but will also entertain and enthuse you. Your descendants in 2524 are crying for you to follow this guide and leave them a history that makes their forebears enchanting.' Tom Keneally.

'An excellent new resource for anyone seeking to trace their family tree, or do historical research.' The Australian.

Notice Board

November

FREE!

RAHS Special Lecture—Life So Full of Promise: Further Biographies of Australia's Lost Generation

Online Zoom: 20 Nov 2024, 1:00 p.m.



Life So Full of Promise, winner of the 2024 Age Book of the Year Award, is Ross McMullin's second multi-biography about Australia's lost generation of World War I. It provides insights into the experiences of Australians before, during and after the war, whether they were combatants or civilians, or soldiers' wives or parents.

<https://www.rahs.org.au/rahs-events/>

December

FREE!

State Library of New South Wales Starting Your Family History Research

Online Zoom: 6 Dec 11:30am



In this session you will be introduced to the State Library's diverse family history collections, which you can access both online and onsite. This Family History Month webinar is suitable for beginners to family history.

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events/starting-your-family-history-research-0>

Society of Australian Genealogists DNA Research Group: Working with FamilyTreeDNA Tools



Online Zoom: \$20.00 | 7 Dec, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

This session will explore the various tools available on the FamilyTreeDNA site for use with autosomal, Y-DNA and mtDNA.

To register: <https://sag.org.au/event-5626955?CalendarViewType=1&SelectedDate=11/6/2024>

The National Library of Australia Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories Parkes Place, Canberra, ACT

FREE!



Exhibition: Ongoing til 2 Feb 2025

Somewhere in your family tree is an ancestor who embarked on a long and difficult journey and eventually made it to Australia.

<https://www.nla.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/hopes-and-fears-australian-migration-stories>

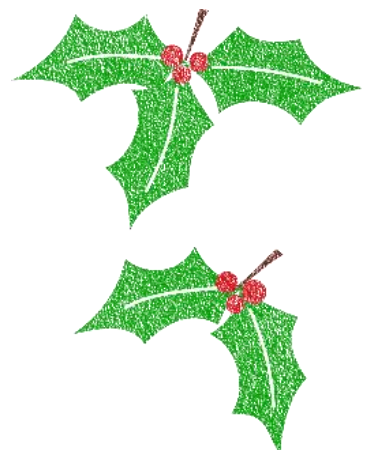
Funeral Superstitions

“Funeral Biscuits!”

During the Victorian era people began substituting cookies called ‘funeral biscuits’ for the communion bread. They were distributed to guests by the lady of the house, to take on the sins of the deceased, allowing their departed one to pass straight into heaven. Known as “sin-eating”, to avoid the business of taking on someone's sins, in England and Wales people paid social outcasts sixpence to eat the funeral-biscuits.¹⁸



Image: Courtesy, photo 2011 Hoag Levins.



Further Reading/Footnotes:

- ¹ <https://wikioo.org/en/paintings.php?refarticle=ARAFD2>
- ² <https://www.memorialplanning.com/blog/5-superstitions-about-funerals-and-cemeteries>
- ³ <https://futuristspeaker.com/futurist-thomas-frey-insights/roots-of-the-future-how-the-whole-earth-genealogy-project-could-reverse-global-population-decline/>
- ⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131018130/william-james-ridley>
- ⁵ https://www.myheritage.com/names/harriett_ridley
- ⁶ From Whence We Came, The Ridley Saga,' Viscount Ridley, 1978
- ⁷ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-372919291-1-503294/george-dunn-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ⁸ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-536705/samuel-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ⁹ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-536947/marian-bassettt-born-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹⁰ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-537034/george-hounsom-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹¹ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-537228/joseph-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹² <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-537249/louisa-esther-shephard-born-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹³ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-537325/john-edward-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹⁴ <https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-1-208112921-1-537463/alfred-ernest-reeves-ridley-in-myheritage-family-trees>
- ¹⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/131772600/clara-ann-amey>
- ¹⁶ <https://www.mininghistory.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/5.-McQueen-Ashley-v21.pdf>
- ¹⁷ <https://www.frankmurray.com.au/oshaughnessy/thomas-oshaughnessys-diary-part-26-1894>
- ¹⁸ <https://www.geni.com/people/Thomas-O-Shaughnessy/6000000017048068027>
- ¹⁹ <https://www.smart-guide.org/destinations/en/wyalong/?place=Thom%27s+Corner+%26+Post+Office>
- ²⁰ <https://blog.billiongraves.com/cemetery-superstitions/>
- ²¹ <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/death-bell/>

*Happy
New Year* ★★