

E-MUSTER

Central Coast Family History Society Inc.

December 2024 Issue 40



***THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL COAST
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.***

CENTRAL COAST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.



Members of NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc. (State Body)
Australian Federation of Family History Organisation (National Body)
Federation of Family History Societies, United Kingdom (International Body)
Associate Member, Royal Australian Historical Society of NSW.

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Treasurer: Brent Jones

Public Officer: Ken Clark

Committee:

Ken Clark, Brian Davies, Marlene Davidson,
Robyn Gregg, Yvonne Potts, Jacqueline Smith, Heather Yates.

RESEARCH CENTRE

Building 4, 8 Russell Drysdale Street, EAST GOSFORD NSW 2250
Phone: 4324 5164 - Email admin@centralcoastfhs.org.au
Open: Tues to Fri 9.30am-2.00pm;
Thursday evening 6.00pm-9.30pm
First Saturday of the month 9.30am-12noon
Research Centre Closed on Mondays for Administration

MEETINGS

First Saturday of each month from February to November
Commencing at 1.00pm – doors open 12.00 noon
Research Centre opens from 9.30am
Venue: Gosford Lions Community Hall
Rear of 8 Russell Drysdale Street, EAST GOSFORD NSW



THE E-MUSTER

December 2024 – No: 40

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The Society does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed by advertisers or authors of articles appearing in **E- MUSTER**.

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All articles to: admin@centralcoastfhs.org.au

E- MUSTER deadlines are
March 20th
July 20th
November 20th

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EDITORIAL

As the Editor of your December 2024 **e-Muster**, I thank the contributors who have provided articles for our enjoyment. Interesting information about Central Coast residents from past days and their contributions to others. Read about a recent call from a fellow Family History Society which enabled the return of valued memorabilia to the family descendants and the next instalment from member- Rosalie Donnelly- about a distinguished family member and a series of recollections from his life. Also a tip for listening to local maritime history and where to find it.

Heather YATES Member 675

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Another summer has arrived, and with Christmas just a few weeks away, it's hard not to wonder where the year has gone. Perhaps it's just me, but the years seem to pass by even faster as we get older.

Maybe it's time to slow down a little, and enjoy this December edition of the E-Muster. Heather has gathered some wonderful stories from our members that are sure to both entertain and inform.

This year, the Research Centre has undergone significant transformations as our Society evolves to meet the demands of the modern era. Our library has been extensively upgraded, offering an expanded collection of titles, and we've established a dedicated office space, away from the daily foot traffic at the front door. Additional enhancements include the installation of a new printer and the launch of an updated website featuring a brand-new logo. These improvements contribute to make our Society a more dynamic and inviting environment for research and collaboration.

And as we relax and embrace the festive season, let's also take a moment to think of those suffering in war-torn regions around the world. The loss of life has been devastating, with countless innocent victims, but the destruction of historical buildings, monuments, and infrastructure is equally tragic. It's sobering to remember that despite our differences, our DNA tells us that we are all 99.9% the same, yet that 0.1% can make such a profound impact on the world around us.

With that thought in mind, I'd like to extend my warmest wishes to all our readers for a very Merry Christmas. This is the season for giving and sharing time with family and friends. I hope the New Year brings peace, joy, and the removal of any roadblocks in your family tree.

Rod HORTON Member 1280J
President CCFHS.



LATEST NEWS

MEMBERSHIP

The Management Committee is entrusted with the appropriate operation of the Society and this includes the health and wellbeing/safety of the members while on the premises and during activities. By law we are required to comply with the directives of the Gov. Medical Authorities.

We are also required to comply with any directives applied by our landlord, Central Coast Council/Properties. We have to consider the general age and health of our members.

E-JOURNALS

Societies and Groups send their journals and newsletters to us via email. They are downloaded on to Pelicanet and are available for you to read on Computers 1-4 and 7-10 at the Research Centre. How? From the desktop select the Pelican logo, and then select E- Journals.

SPEAKERS 2025

Guest Speaker 1st February 2025



Bernadette Flynn, Director and Founder of Heritage Ventures

Bernadette outlines techniques for making history come alive with a specific focus on the Lower Hawkesbury Rive, the webs of human connection and stories of place are just a few strategies that are explored in relation to the Spencer, Mangrove Creek area of the Lower Hawkesbury River.



Guest Speaker 1st March 2025

Dr. Matt Lohmeyer

President

Fairview Homestead Association Inc.

Fairview is a heritage-listed traditional Australian homestead located on Ten Mile Hollow Road in Upper Mangrove, Central Coast Shire, New South Wales Australia. It is a historically significant landmark, being the last remaining example of the settlements and farms along Mangrove Creek.

Fairview Homestead stands on a 50 acre lot in the heart of Mangrove Creek valley. The land was first offered for sale by the Crown as lot 32 on 5 Jan 1835 and sold to John Dakin at auction on 8 April 1835, but the purchase was never completed

CENTRAL COAST MARITIME HISTORY



Central Coast Maritime History with Lance Godwin is featured each week on CoastFM96.3 and then Podcasted on the 'Coastfm963' Podcast.

Episodes are on each Tuesday morning around 10:40 am and repeated on Sunday at 8:15am.

Tune in and listen to learn about the history of shipping on the Central Coast.

Very informative and entertaining with a cast of characters depicting maritime events from the early days when shipping was the main link to Sydney.



Introduction to City of Sydney Archives

Background of our collection

The City Archives is the Archives of the City of Sydney Council, formerly known as the Municipal Council of Sydney and then Sydney City Council. The Council was formed in 1842.

Prior to that the Colonial Government managed Sydney (archives at Museums of History NSW).

We keep a small percentage of records documenting Council functions that are worthy of permanent retention. For example, we manage development and building, rates and rubbish, parks and trees, public art, cycling and laneways, street lighting, and community events – in our case including New Years Eve and the Lunar Festival. As the City is so old, we also have records of former functions such as managing markets, water and sewerage and the introduction of electricity. As we are called the 'City of Sydney Archives' some people think we cover the whole of Sydney but we don't – only the Sydney local government area which includes the CBD and a number of surrounding suburbs.

This area did change over time, but we have a [Historic Boundaries tool](#) on our website that tracks the boundary changes.

The City Archives is also a collecting archive – we acquire archives from the community (usually by donation) but again collecting is primarily focused on the Sydney local government area.

Archives catalogue

The main access to our collection is via the Archives & History Resources catalogue at <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/> There you will find descriptions of over 1 million items we hold and nearly half of those items are digitised and available for download.

The catalogue is linked to TROVE and to Google as well.

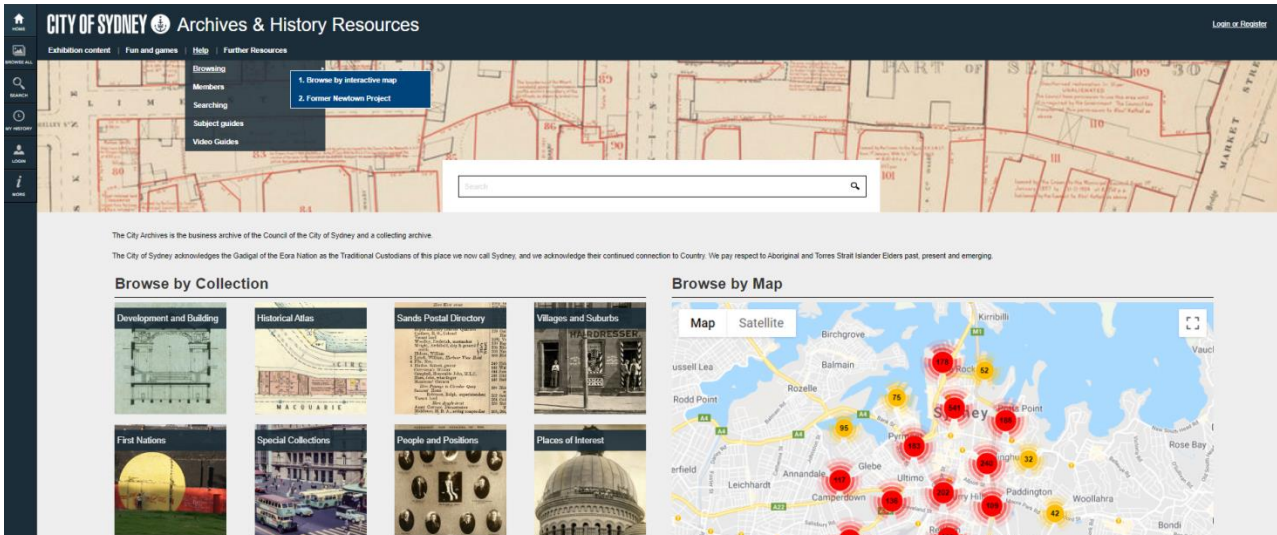
Home Page

Note: You can search the catalogue without registering. However, if you register (email address and password) and are logged in, you can see more content and can save your favourites.

There are various ways to find information in our catalogue.

- (1) Simple search - in the middle of the home page
- (2) Advanced search - search button on the left of screen
- (3) 'Collection tiles' - lead to aspects of the collection

(4) Interactive map - The map search is currently limited and defaults to photos



Simple search

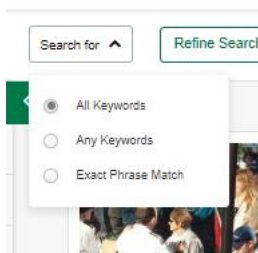
To use the Simple search, type in one or more keywords into the search bar.

You could use a surname, street name; suburb, building name etc

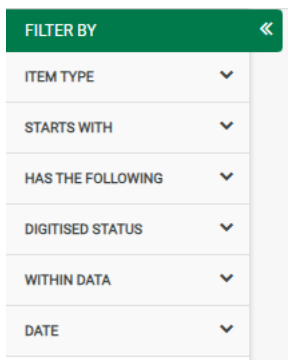
If you search for more than one word it will look for all words in the title or description of the records.

Once your results appear, you can:

- Change to exact phrase if you wish using the 'search for' dropdown:



- Filter and refine your search on the left by clicking your mouse on the options



For example, if you only want the photographs 'item type' click on the word 'photographs'. You could also choose digitisation status 'yes' to see only digitised records, and you can even choose a date filter.

Advanced search



Advanced Search is very similar, but unlike the simple search you can set the filters up front and search on more than one type of item at the same time e.g. photographs and plans.

Browse by collection tiles

Highly used collections

Some of these tiles are for particular series of records that were in former systems we had at the archives. For example, Historical Atlas of Sydney, Assessment Books, Sands Directory.

Curated collections

Other tiles on the Home Page are here to showcase highlights of our collection. For example, Places of Interest is a curated collection of the best images and other sources such as maps, plans and letters focusing on certain places.

One of the most popular collection tiles is the Villages and Suburbs tile.

Special collections

Special Collections include some large donated or amassed collections. They are everything we hold in those collections, not just selections.

All collection items can also be found via the search.

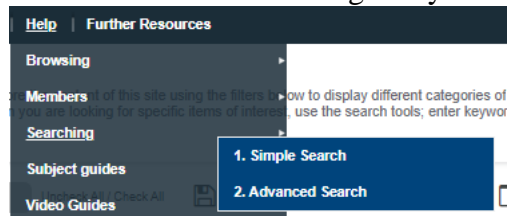
Interactive map

Another way into our collection is browsing via an interactive map. At present we have only 83,000 of our 1 million items geotagged and available on the map but we are hoping to increase this over time.

If you search by map, it will default automatically to photographs only but you can change this to other types of records once you are in the interactive map.

Guides

For further information to guide your use of the system, on the menu bar go to Help



There are search guides, browse guides, subject guides and video guides. There is also a guide under 'Members' on how to save and return to your favourites.

Further assistance

If you need assistance with using our catalogue or collection, we respond to written questions – we can point you in the right direction, but we don't have the resources to do research on your behalf.

Contact archives@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

If something is undigitised you can request its digitisation (at a small fee) or view it in our reading room at Town Hall House, just behind the Sydney Town Hall. An appointment is required (as records are offsite) and we are open Tuesday to Thursday 9:30-3:30.



Useful links for accessing information about the State Archives Collection.

State Archives Collection Home Page

<https://mhnsw.au/collections/state-archives-collection/>

Subjects A-Z

<https://mhnsw.au/archive/subjects/>

Digital Shipping Lists

<https://mhnsw.au/guides/assisted-immigrants-digital-shipping-lists/>

Ask an Archivist

<https://mhnsw.au/collections/state-archives-collection/ask-an-archivist/>

Plan your visit

<https://mhnsw.au/visit-us/state-archives-reading-room/plan-your-visit/>

Webinars

<https://www.youtube.com/@MHNSWStateArchivesCollection>

State Archives Collection Catalogue https://records-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/search?vid=61SRA&sortby=rank&lang=en_US

Convict Reference Sites

This is a short list of various sites which are of assistance when researching convict ancestors. Hopefully it will be of use to those just getting started on this journey. There are also many helpful Facebook groups which are worth searching for.

Free Claim a Convict

<https://www.hawkesbury.net.au/claimaconvict/search.php>

Established by genealogist Lesley Uebel, the Claim a Convict website originally went online on the 19 August 1998. The site offered researchers a free service that enabled those researching the same convicts ancestors to contact each other directly by email.

Irish Convicts to NSW <http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/cgi-bin/irish/irish.cgi>

Provides a free searchable database thanks to Peter Mayberry Digital Panopticon <https://www.digitalpanopticon.org/>

This website allows you to search millions of records from around fifty datasets, relating to the lives of 90,000 convicts from the Old Bailey. Use our site to search individual convict life archives, explore and visualise data, and learn more about crime and criminal justice in the past.

Convict Records

<https://convictrecords.com.au/> This website allows you to search the British Convict transportation register for convicts transported to Australia between 1787-1867.

NEW MEMBERS

We wish to extend a very warm welcome to our new and returned members. We hope they have many happy researching and social hours with us. Please remember to lodge your Members' Interest form with Brian Davies for inclusion on the Website.

2248	Susan Austin	2254	Margaret Thorogood
2249	Lesla Moore	2255	Elinor Hawkins
2250	Victoria Gearside	2235J	Peter Samsom
2251	Karen Barraclough	2256J	Jannis Hayman, Wes Eggins
2252	Sue Jeffreys	2257	Sharon Rochford
2253	Lynette Batterham		

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



A Gold coin donation is gratefully received when attending the Research Centre to assist in offsetting the cost of online subscription sites. A Day Research fee for Non-Members is \$10.

All workshops will incur a fee of \$25 for members unless otherwise stipulated and must be paid for prior to the day.

OUR MEMBERSHIP FORM is available to download from the website. From the front page click on the ...read more information Tab under Membership on the banner and all will be revealed. Remember the website is www.centralcoastfhs.org.au

Please read the two additional questions on your membership form regarding the Rotary Raffle to the value of \$10.00 and/or a once per year donation of \$10.00 to the Equipment Maintenance Fund. You can choose to collect the Tickets from the Centre or send in a stamped addressed envelope and we will post them to you.

Next Issue

No. 41 April 2025 E-MUSTER

Deadline for articles for the next edition of the e-Muster
20th March, 2025.

Do you have any Gold diggers in the family?

The Hill End & Tambaroora Times and Miners' Advocate (1871–1875) has been digitised and a few issues are now on Trove. See if your ancestor rated a mention in the local newspaper.

There are only 9 known issues in existence at the State Library of NSW. Hoping more will come online soon. Check it out nla.gov.au/nla.news-title1894.

The quality of the microfilm used is pretty poor so if you feel like logging into Trove and correcting any text you can, it will be of great benefit to all.

I will enquire if Trove plans to digitise more. In the meantime, we have an interesting article covering all Hill End newspapers on our webpage.

Check out heatgg.org.au/newspapers.

Lorraine Purcell, Convener, Hill End & Tambaroora Gathering Group Inc.

ARTICLES

A GREAT RESULT!

It all began with a phone call a few weeks ago from a member of another Family History Society in NSW enquiring about a possible member of our Society that he had noticed on Ancestry.com.

We did not recognize the name as being one of our members but agreed to ask at our next members meeting which coincidentally was on the next day.

Why? What was of importance you may ask! Well the enquiry pertained to a bundle of cards- 30 or so- that were over 100 years old and in the keeping of this gentleman and his wife. The author of the cards was a young man born in Dungog NSW in 1889 and were written to his wife who was living on the family property at Doon Doon near Murwillumbah, NSW.

He was a Private in the AIF who served in the First World War enlisting at the age of 24 and unfortunately was killed in action in 1917, and buried in Belgium leaving his young wife and 2 children, a son aged 2 and an infant daughter he had never met.

The cards turned up in an antique shop on the NSW North Coast and were looked after by an employee at the shop who passed them on to her daughter in the hope that the family could be found.

Much research ensued and family names were searched and investigated hoping to find a match resulting in the Ancestry connection.

Well what could we do on a Friday at the Research Centre but start looking and see if there was a Central Coast connection? After several hours of research (and quite a few more at home) a connection with one branch of the family was found at Kincumber Cemetery- none other than the Army Private's daughter and her husband who had lived on a property at Cullens road Kincumber. Unfortunately, the Ancestry match was not a member of our Society.

The couple had raised 5 daughters and this is where things became more difficult trying to match their married names with the surname which identified with the Ancestry match.

A bit more investigation showed that this person, also female was a resident of the Gosford area, had attended a local High school and worked locally.

We contacted the original gentleman and his wife who were caring for the documents and compared notes agreeing on all of the details we had discovered thus far. An agreement was made to keep looking in the hope to restore the cards to the family.

After another week or so of research a breakthrough was madean obituary of the Private's daughter was discovered that listed all of her daughters and their husbands and a definite match was made after checking electoral rolls, to the name belonging to the Ancestry match.

Yes! She was a resident of the Central Coast, had attended a local High School, worked locally and was a descendant of the Army Private.

We contacted our co-investigator and he informed us that he had reached the same conclusions and he and his wife had contacted her and had packaged up the family treasure to be presented to her at a meeting they would hold together.

What a fabulous result... the return of the loving letters/cards from the family patriarch serving his country to his future family.

It is so wonderful and heartwarming to achieve a result like this....every researchers dream.

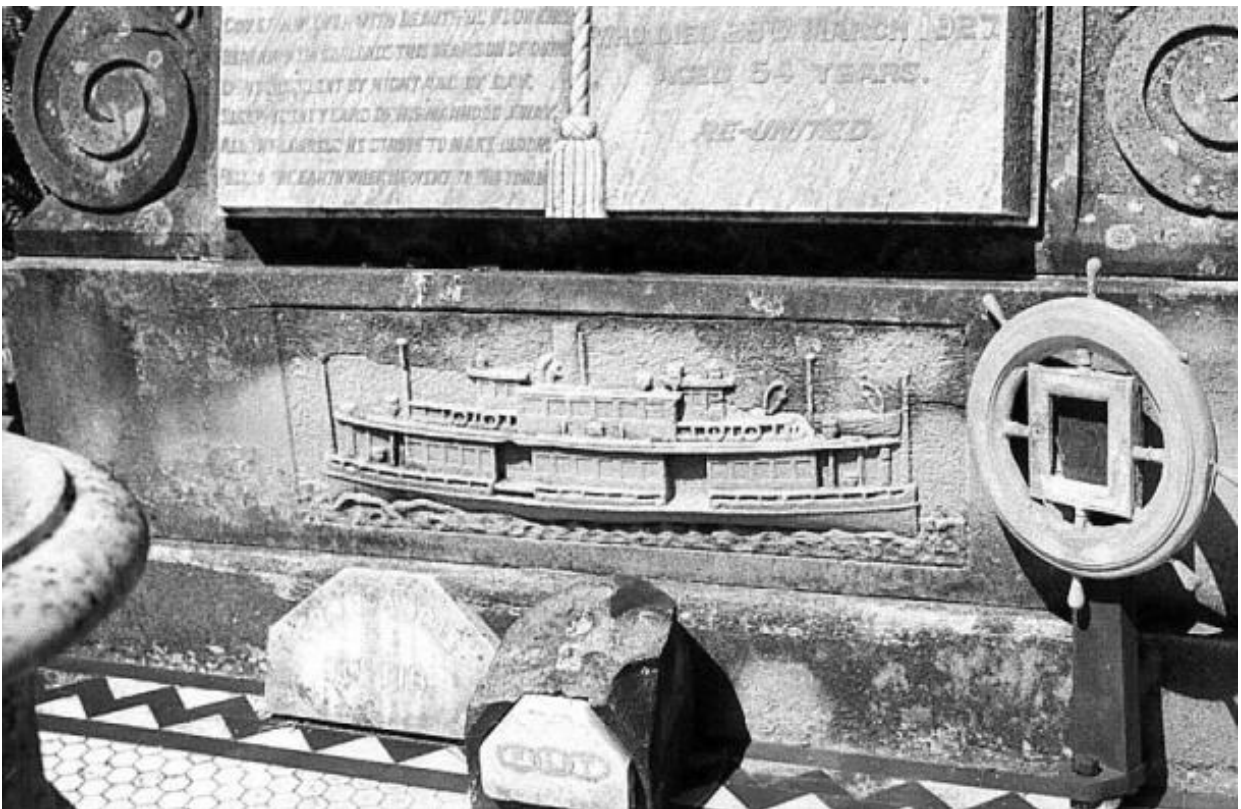
Names withheld for privacy.

Heather YATES Member 675

DESCRIPTIVE HEADSTONES – A LITTLE MORE THAN WORDS

A headstone in Rookwood Cemetery must be one of the most unusual of those to be found among thousands. On it is featured a beautifully carved bas-relief of the 1914 double-ended steam ferry *Lady Ferguson*, once so well-known on Sydney Harbour.

George William Robertson was employed on board as a fireman and drowned from this ferry on 30 October 1918, the year he turned 22. A search of old newspapers online did not produce any news item explaining the circumstances of his death, and I did not look for an inquest.



Maritime author, the late Graeme Andrews of Koolewong, wrote about the headstone and the carving in his book *Ferries of Sydney* [3rd ed. 1994] and mentioned that George – or “Tib” as he was known - was an only child.

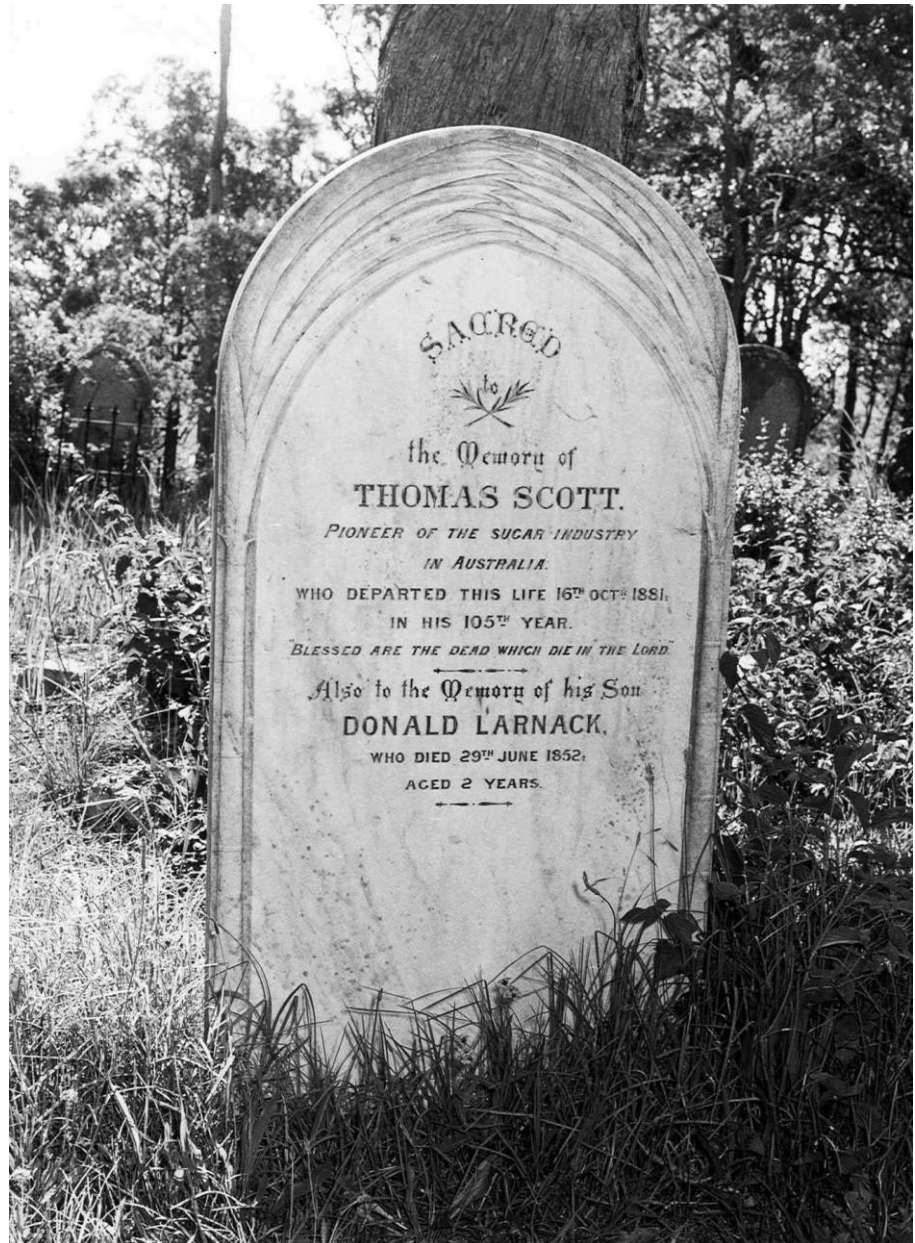
Further research has shown that he was born in 1896 to George A. Robertson and wife Frances Amelia, nee Sullivan, of Brandling Street, Alexandria, Sydney.

Evidently he had fallen from the ferry and was not noticed in time to save him from drowning.

Details of *Lady Ferguson* are: 95 tons, dimensions 110.7 x 24.3 x 9.0 ft., 560 pax, launched at the David Drake Ltd shipyard at Balmain in July 1914 for Balmain New Ferry Co. Ltd, and she was later with Sydney Ferries Ltd, and Sydney Harbour Transport Board.
Converted to mv 1937.
Towed to Hobart in 1975, and subsequently broken up 1977.



Closer to home on the NSW Central Coast, there are certain headstones that can qualify as “descriptive” although not in such dramatic fashion as the one mentioned above. In Point Frederick cemetery (Pioneer Park) at Gosford is the headstone of sugar pioneer Thomas Alison Scott who died on 16 October 1881 at the great age of 105 years. His stone was embellished by carved sugarcane around the top, truly a pertinent reminder of his particular endeavours.





In the same cemetery we see the headstone of Charles Watkins whose tragic death occurred at the age of 47 when he was killed by a tree falling on him on 13 November 1876.

A tree swishing down is depicted in bas relief on his headstone.

There are many descriptive headstones in NSW cemeteries.

Gwen DUNDON
Member 134

MIDWIVES IN THE BRISBANE WATER DISTRICT OF NSW

In the early days of our district, there were a number of midwives who gave their tireless efforts to helping women giving birth, oft times in horrendous living conditions. Many a couple lived in tall timber country where the husband was employed in a variety of jobs – ranging from all facets of the local timber industry, including the handling of bullock teams in the forests, or doing the tasks of a blacksmith.

Home was usually a slab hut, the women boiling the clothes in a large tub outdoors and cooking what food the land provided, both animal and vegetable. Early midwives were almost always mothers of large families who could be relied upon to know a lot about childbirth. However, not much was known about the risks of bacteria and in poor conditions, the mothers sometimes did not survive their ordeal.

The midwife, when a message arrived at her door asking her to come at once, went by horse (with a buggy if lucky), or by rowing boat. At the expectant mother's home she would make sure a good fire was blazing, a container filled with water put on to boil, clean rags unwrapped from her bag, and all animals banished from the hut.

After the birth, and giving any extra attention needed to the new mother and baby, the midwife would often stay to do cleaning, washing up all dishes, and cooking a meal for the hungry family before going back to her home.

These women were revered and often loved for their care, and were usually known as "Granny So-and-So".

One of these staunch helpers was Granny Medhurst who made the news in 1894 when she was described in the Sydney press as "The Oldest Australian Living" – Australian-born that was.



John and Catherine Medhurst

Born Catherine Shaw at Dawe's Point, Sydney, on 1st January, 1799, she was baptised on 25.12.1801, her parents being William and Catherine Shaw. [Baptism Certificate].

She married Thomas Carpenter in 1818, and in 1833 she was wed for a second time, to John Medhurst (sometimes called Meadows).

The latter died when he fell down a well or waterhole at Wyoming in 1887 when suffering from dementia.



Granny Medhurst became a very well-known midwife in our district, where according to the 1894 obituary article in the *Australian Town and Country Journal* of 18 August, she had been living in the Gosford area for 60 years. She was the mother of a very large family.

Her eldest daughter, Mrs Mary Pateman, was also a noted midwife who had been married three times: to James Radford Allen, Joseph Bridge and Samuel Pateman. She too had a very large family with many descendants living in the district.



Mary Pateman and
grandson Bill Pateman



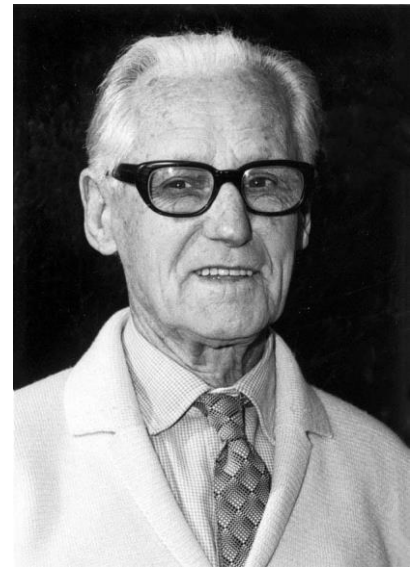
Another Gosford midwife of note was Mrs Elizabeth (Betsy) Muddle, the eldest daughter of Robert Creighton and his wife Elizabeth (Eliza), nee Dunlop. Betsy came to Australia with her parents on the ship *Jessie* in 1839.

Mrs Muddle lived for much of her later life at the end of Donnison Street, Gosford, near Albany St, North. Her husband William died in 1863 aged 35 when his horse ran him against a sharp tree limb. Midwifery became the means of an income for his widow.

Elizabeth Muddle

Mr Richard Creighton, principal of R.H.Creighton's Funeral Service in Gosford died in 1989 aged 96. He told me that he had been delivered by his relative, Mrs Muddle.

It was not until 1870 that midwifery training was introduced in Sydney.



Richard Creighton

Gwen DUNDON Member 134



The Pickles from Facebook

Historians in Ireland have discovered what they believe to be the headstone of the worlds oldest ever living man.

He was 193 and his name was Miles from Dublin



Otto Adderley's harpsichord 1964.

My father E.E. "Otto" Adderley (1914-1992) was interested in two topics: woodworking and Baroque music. He also had keen interest in Australian timbers for use in building musical instruments.

He was also an accomplished musician and played guitar, recorder and balalaika. In 1955 our family (Otto, his wife Judy, and three kids: Penelope, John and Peter) moved into a 1928 weatherboard house in Turrumurra and Otto built a workshop under the house.

He became incensed by senior classical musicians peering down their noses stating that "Australian timber is no good: chop it up for firewood."

And so began Otto's pledge to prove them wrong.

He started making musical instruments by building ukuleles and the occasional boomerang. He then progressed to building several successful acoustic guitars here he learned more about Australian timbers.

He obtained the basic specifications for an Italianate harpsichord from an SSO flautist Neville Amardio

Now the design was called Italianate because during the 17th century only the Italians were able to achieve instrument with such a delicate sound, as opposed to the Northern European instruments whose sound was much more strident.

The choice of Australian timbers was made by comparing the original European timbers with local timber species.

He did this with the help of a NSW Forestry Commission wood technologist Ken Bamber, with which they compared the species right down to the microscopic cellular level.

Now Otto's work within CSIRO required him to travel Australia-wide and by doing this he was able to go out into the forest, choose his own tree, have it milled to strict specifications, i.e. quarter-sawn, so that the timber remained stable and did not buckle or crack when it matured (dried out). The main sound board was made from King William pine from Tasmania.

The original steel strings were the product of another friendship Otto had with an industrial chemist from BHP at Newcastle Steelworks.

BHP cooperated by producing a special steel dropping of the exact chemical composition of the C17th strings.

This steel was then drawn into strings of varying diameter accord to pitch. During the 2015 restoration the original strings had aged and were replaced with brass.

As an anecdote the Central Coast Conservatorium arranged a concert at the Greenway Chapel at Kincumber. Just before the recital by Erin Halyard I whispered in the keyboardist's ear so when he began he introduced the concert with the first bar of The Addams Family theme. This brought the house down with appreciative applause and cheering! **Peter ADDERLEY Member 2023**

The Recollections of Stephen Augustine Donnelly- Representative of Miners in the Australian Parliament and Public Works Dept. of NSW.

Stephen Augustine Donnelly was an Irish-born Australian politician. He was born in Cork on 01/01/1835 to Cornelius Donnelly and Mary O'Leary, and grew up in Oxford in England. In 1850 he and his family migrated to Western Australia, following the gold rush to Victoria in 1852. He later mined at Lucknow in New South Wales. In 1864 he was elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for Goldfields West, but he resigned in 1866.

On 2 May 1868 he married Catherine Agnes Cummings, with whom he had seven children. He worked for the Public Works Department, eventually becoming roads superintendent at Armidale. He retired in 1896 and around 1898 moved to Waratah, where he died in 1910.

My first impressions of Sydney and New South Wales

On to BLACKHEATH....

As no one of the passengers seemed inclined to speak, Percy commenced to sing for our delectation, the song then so popular in New South Wales, but, as I have stated, was so unpopular in Victoria, viz. "John Brown, Glory Alleluiah"! But he had not sung more than a dozen verses of that lachrymose yet hopeful and interminable dirge, hymn, threnody, or whatever it may be termed, - when flop! One of the hind wheels of our coach dropped into a hole about 18 inches - in the track, and a mass of flying spokes and felloes was the result. Our dreams of the forthcoming dinner were rudely dispelled! How could we get on?

The driver seemed helpless, the Indian gentleman was silent; the sheriff's officer was sarcastically eloquent; the other men looked on annoyed and suggested a walk on. The driver told us there was another "pub" known as the "Weatherboard" about two miles further on, and if he could reach there, he thought he could borrow another wheel and so continue his journey,

But how to get there puzzled him. A good memory came to my assistance for I remembered having once seen a coach coming into Ballarat similarly disabled, but the driver thereof had fixed a long stout sapling in such a manner that by fastening the thick end securely to the lamp socket on the box seat, then lifting the body of the coach and thereby getting the axle arm on which, had run the broken wheel, to rest on the sapling, had fastened them together and left the free end of the latter to trail on the ground, and so got along.

This I explained to Percy, but he for a time demurred, stating that he carried no axe, or tomahawk by which to cut a sapling - even if a suitable one could be procured amongst the scrubby timber nearby. But after a little persuasion he went in search of a team to try to get an axe and in about 15 minutes returned with a very blunt tomahawk. It was certainly difficult to get a suitable sapling, and after another quarter of an hour we, by taking alternative spells at the work managed to cut, or more properly speaking to "gnaw" the sapling - a very poor one - from its stump.

The stripping of the small branches did not take long and soon we had the rough device attached - as I have described - to the coach, and then proceeded at a walk until the "Weatherboard" was reached, where, fortunately, a spare wheel was obtained. The inn was not an attractive one, so we soon on our way again.

The "Weatherboard" inn was on the site of the present town of Katoomba. When I first saw the place excepting the inn in question, and a blacksmith's forge, I noticed no other buildings.

Bad as the road was, it was a vast improvement on some of the older tracks, which were to be seen passing over steep ridges, with grades of perhaps one (1) in three (3) or four (4), and more resembling the scoured out beds of mountain torrents than of roads for travelling upon. One of which known as "The Soldier's Pinch" was specially pointed out to me, as deserving its name from the fact of a soldier of the guard in the convict days having been crushed under a cart while trying to block the wheel; in an attempt to prevent the cart and horse from slipping backwards down the steep incline.

From our various delays it was almost dark before we reached Blackheath, where certainly, a good and acceptable meal awaited us. This place is near, if not identical with, the present sanatorium of Medlow, but at that time (1863) there was little in the way of habitation to be seen, other than the hotel.



Blackheath Railway Station c1889
NSW State Archives

The meal being dispatched, and fresh horses put in, the coach was started again. Passing a rocky point at a turn of the road, a small rocky eminence was pointed out. Known as Pulpit Hill and so named by reason of the fact that from it, in years long before, - the old time pioneer Anglican Chaplain – Rev. Marsden – used to preach to the convict gangs who were making the roads in that locality.

It was now quite dark, and the driver began to refer to a steep hill, a few miles ahead which we had to descend, and from him I learned it was nearly two miles in length from the top to the bottom, and was the final descent from the Blue Mountains westward – altogether I was impressed with the belief that the descent would be a very formidable affair to negotiate the more especially as I had noticed the brake of the coach did not cover the whole of the surface of the tire of the borrowed wheel.



Mount Victoria
Ref: NRS 16410 Blue
Mountains Shire

I did not however let that trouble me much. In due time we at the top of the famous Mount Victoria, in honour of the British victory over the French, name in Spain during the Peninsular War.

The descent was made without any accident, but if ever I put my weight on anything heavily in my life, it was that night on my arm of the coach brake which I never relaxed until we reached the comfortable looking two story inn at the foot of the hill. I should state that some years after I found on taking some levels, the chief grade of the road was 1 foot vertical to 6 feet horizontal. But I shall have yet to relate a much more (a really) thrilling adventure at this hill sometime later on.

The chief trouble of this my first experience of the famed Blue Mountains was that the heavy Scotch Mist prevented me from seeing any of its many beauties, of which I had already heard so much. The inn however, was not the end of our day's journey, but while waiting there for a few minutes, my attention was attracted by what seemed to be an itinerant minstrel singing and at the same time accompanying his vocal efforts on a violin.

His song a lugubrious one both in subject and melody brought to my memory a long forgotten ditty that I had heard year before amongst the seafaring people of Southampton or Portsmouth; and referred to the exploits of a lovelorn maiden in her endeavours to find her sailor lover, how she possessed herself of a small boat, and alone sailed out upon the great ocean, in the hope of meeting him on board some homeward bound ship, but in the words of the song;- "She had not sailed far on the Deep, When three Queen's ships she chanced to meet, She cried, 'tell me sailors! Tell me true! Does my sweet William sail among your crew?"

And their bluff but honest reply: "oh no, fair lady! He is not here, He is drowned we greatly fear. On your island as we passed by, There we left your sailor boy!" And several verse more of the trilling and tragic love romance; until worn out by despair, the fair heroine ended it all by suiciding, thereby finishing all her earthly troubles in an ocean grave.

But quite apart from its merits (if any) as a musical composition, or, as a specimen of poetry; it gave me matter for thought in another direction viz. Queen's ships were mentioned. But in the year of 1863 Queen Victoria was reigning and the term "Queen's ships" had long been obsolete, while Queen Anne, the latest Queen Regnant prior to this time had been dead for about 150 years, and Elizabeth the previous Queen Regnant – in whose reign the modern British Navy be said to have practically started – was dead 260 years.

Then there was the abandonment of the young sailor, otherwise the "Marooning" of him on the island – mentioned in the song. Thus, clearly the period to which the song referred, was either in the reign of Elizabeth, or of Anne, probably that of the former; when those semi – if not wholly – pirates, Drake and his contemporaries, each made a law for themselves when on the ocean; and thereby did so much to raise the glory of the sovereign, they served, and the power of the Nation over which she ruled. "Marooning" would seem to have been greatly practised at that time, and as a legacy of that piratical period continued for many years with its partner in crime – piracy, ceased to be fashionable. Nevertheless it is surprising to find such old songs, having for such a long time, so great a hold on the public sympathies.

The next four miles the road passed over a fairly level stretch of country, we passed through a small township – Little Hartley – while the lights from the cottages revealed to us, and at length arrived at Shelden's Hotel, at "Big" Hartley, our halting place for the night.



**Built by James Nairn and first
licensed as Hartley Hotel in
1846**

From Penrith to “Big” Hartley the distance by road is 48 miles. Not much for over 12 hours travelling by coach. This inn was certainly a very comfortable one. A spacious well-furnished dining room, a small spread table, a bright fire of wood blazing in an ample hearth, and a neatly attired and neat handed Phyllis to wait on them was most welcome to the belated, cold and hungry travellers, and full justice was done to Host Sheldon’s good fare by my fellow travellers, while I, at once went to my room, and having undressed, was soon fast asleep. I had not however been long asleep when I was awakened by a loud knocking at the bedroom door.

Thinking that something dreadful had happened, that the house had been attacked by bushrangers, I jumped out of bed and instantly pulled the door wide open, when Lo! There stood Phyllis who, catching sight of me in my dishabille, in an instant turned on her heel, and fairly bolted down the passageway. I then reclosed the door, at which again I shortly heard another, but a gentler knock and my asking what was the matter I was told by a feminine voice, “Please, you have not paid for your bed Sir”. “Oh” I replied, “won’t it do in the morning?” To which came the answer, “The coach leaves early, and you might forget Sir”. “All right” I said and searched in the dark for my pants to get the necessary half crown, when I heard another voice speaking in a low tone to the girl, whereupon she addressed me again and said “it doesn’t matter Sir, ‘twill do in the morning”.

Evidently, I must have made an unfavourable impression on the fair waiting maid, who probably had been victimised before, and was therefore chary of suspicious looking travellers, poor Phyllis, if such was her name.

I did not blame in the slightest; but the circumstance jarred on my feelings, as indicating the poor estimate strangers held of each other in New South Wales, and the possible reason for such suspicious feelings amongst them. Could it have been the leaven of the old convict system that had thus manifested itself?

Early next morning, after partaking of a cup of coffee, we were again underway; but in another coach, an old ramshackle affair, with a very high roof and box seat, all painted a glaring yellow. The driver a different man in many ways to the fairly intelligent John of the previous day, whose chief methods of entertaining his box seat companion – me – were by relating smutty yarns, or singing snatches of obscene songs, which methods I soon gave him to understand were not pleasing or agreeable to me, and as I therefore did not seek much information from him, he soon lapsed into silence.

Leaving the “town” – which was only a small and poor looking roadside hamlet, supported almost entirely by the carrying trade using the Great Western Road, - we by means of a long, but roughly constructed wooden bridge – crossed the river Lett, a broad but shallow water course – which in flood time carried an enormous quantity of water over its rough and rocky bed. No sooner had we crossed the bridge than we had to face a hill with a stiff upgrade of about 1 in 7, and although the road was a fairly macadamised one – as indeed it had been since we had left the top of Mount Victoria; the driver called out, “Now gents, get out and stretch your legs”.

All dismounted for an uphill walk of about a mile; until a level length of road being reached we remounted and drove on without incident until we reached Bowenfels a fairly decent looking and picturesquely situated village distant 5 miles from Hartley. The main road between those places winds, for the most part, around the spurs of the western scarp of the Blue Mountains whose great sloping yet rough taluses, surmounted by rugged, and almost awe inspiring precipices unfold a magnificent panorama of captivating scenery to the traveller, and which, doubtless some from fancied resemblance of the romantic Rhanish rock Drachenfels had furnished the affix "fels" to the cogriorsen of a distinguished Irish pioneer of Australia, once somewhat famous, but now all but forgotten named Bowen. Bowenfels had two good inns, a police lock-up, a school, a blacksmith shop and the usual etcetera's of an Australian roadside village.

From here the direct road to Mudgee; even then an important town – leaves the Main Western road and proceeds in a generally north western direction to the town named some 90 miles distant.

After a short halt at one of the inns we continue our journey westerly. The road was in a fairly good condition, but it passed over a rugged country winding around the spurs of hills by means of narrow side cuttings until we reached the top of a gorge at the bottom of which a deep and turbulent mountain stream rushed along over a deeply worn bed of a hard shale rock. To get down which in order to reach bridge at the bottom, a considerable detour in the road was necessary, such having been negotiated and the bridge passed over, we had to make a turn sharply and continue along the western bank of the stream for nearly a quarter of a mile parallel to the portion of the road on the other side which we had just travelled over. The road here was cut into the side of a hard shale cliff, too high to allow the rays of the sun to shine on the road for the greater part of the day.

The cutting continued for about a mile, when another mountain water course, much larger than the previous one, was met with, across which had been thrown a large wooden bridge of three trussed spans. This was known as the Cox River, which joining with the other stream just mentioned, as well as the Lett river, which we had passed at Hartley, flows through a portion of the grand canyon of Burraborang when it joins the Wollondilly river coming from Goulburn in the south and then the Nepean river from the east passes by Penrith; after which, known as the Hawkesbury it passes Richmond, Windsor and other places it flows into the Pacific Ocean at Broken Bay.



Photo by
State Records NSW. Burraborang Valley

I may state here; the Cox is the last of what are called the Eastern waters and forces its way in deep gorges through the Blue Mountains as I have indicated; and hence that range is not the great watershed of N.S.W. as many people believe. Such watershed is immediately west of the Cox, which range we commenced to ascend directly as we crossed over the bridge.

Here we were joined by two other male passengers. "Now gents get out and stretch your legs." And a walk of over a mile ensued. The road which had a grade of about 1 in 8, continued through cuttings of the hard shaly rock already met with, very smooth and pleasant to travel over when the weather is fine, but, which cuts very quickly after rain, becoming very boggy, if subjected to heavy traffic.

This was the second time that morning that we had to "get out and stretch our legs", and as none of us had any breakfast as yet, it was not very pleasant. However in time we got on board again, but still there a fair stiff upgrade; at length the summit was reached, and a short run of about half a mile brought us to Solitary Creek, known later as Rydal and now a somewhat important township and station on the Great Western Railway. Then it consisted of a couple of dilapidated pubs, a small store or two, and a blacksmiths shop, the place was appropriately named.

But Solitary creek was interesting as being the first stream after rain we met with belonging to the Western waters and in fact was a tributary of the Macquarie, a large and important river flowing towards northwest, but ultimately ending in a vast swamp south east of the Darling River.

After a short halt at one of those inns we drove on, skirting around the north side of a formidable hill, known as Mount Lambie, over the steep sides of which the original G.W. Road used to pass. In about two miles, we reached another roadside inn known as the Fern grove Hotel, where we stopped for breakfast, as well as to change horses. The meal was a passable one, but we were too hungry (it was now 10 a.m.) to be hypercritical as to food provided it was clean and sufficient.

On the wall, I noticed framed and glazed a large coloured print, representing the historic "battle" – fought a couple of years before – between Sayers and Heenan, otherwise the "Benicia Boy"; besides the contestants there were depicted some hundreds of other faces, each one of which, I was assured, was the portraits of great sport, or the patron of sports in England. Pugilism was then, and as I thought properly so, one of the most degrading and brutal of sports. So it – the picture – seemed to me to evince the wide existence of a very low tone; however public taste in that respect has changed since then. The meal finished, we again started.

The country we were now passing over though hilly and fairly timbered was not as wild in contour or as picturesque as was that we had journeyed over earlier in the day. The soil, however, seemed very poor and but few signs of cultivation were to be seen. In about half an hour we reached Thorpe's Pinch (a steep but short incline) which is the highest point on the road between Sydney and Bathurst; it was and is a bleak spot upon the top of which rested another road side inn. Here a young woman passenger joined us, to whom our John allotted a seat on the box between himself and me; and with whom he flirted for the rest of the trip.

A run of about two miles down brought us to the well-known hostelry of Medlow Flat then ably conducted by the genial and obliging Larry Durack and his excellent family. He has long since joined the great majority; peace to his ashes, but his descendants, by their well-directed energies, has made themselves famous as explorers and cattle kings. This inn - like Buss' and Sheldens which I have mentioned – was one of the halting places for travellers using their own vehicles, as also it was for Cobb & Co coaches.

Onwards we passed and glimpses of cultivation could be seen- gratifying to the sight even if they were of no great extent.

Then again more hills, and more cultivation, small farms could be seen at each side of the road, then a church built of timber, its numerous crosses, revealing it to be a Catholic one; then rising another hill further on a fair sized nursery of young fruit trees presented itself; which had at the front gate, a large boarded sign bearing the name "E. O'Meara, Nurseryman", such scattered aggregation of rural dwellings was known as Kirkconnell, was famed for its apples and stone fruit.

Another run downhill brought us to a more compact village, in which there was a large school, as also a police lockup, some small stores, two pubs, and a blacksmith's forge. This place was shown on the maps as Yetholme, but it was better known as "The Frying Pan". Passing on through the village, and after rising another hill we obtained the first glimpse of the Bathurst Plains, and as quickly lost sight of both; then rapidly descended a rough road winding through a fairly dense forest to another pub, at Green Swamp; where the coach pulled up. An old man, grey, and very much bent, came to the door – no other person was to be seen neither was there any other sign of life. The coach driver, recognising the man, exclaimed "Hallo, Barsden, what's up?" The latter was about to reply when our erstwhile loquacious traveller joined in with "What's the matter Barsden?" "Oh it's this way Mr J - " was the reply, "Roberts – when I came out to XXXX the execution on his effects, I found to be very drunk and silly and hasn't been sober these two days, his wife and others all cleared out as he threatened to kill 'em".

Just at this moment Cobb's coach bringing passengers who left Sydney but yesterday afternoon, whereas we had left the day before that, came dashing by. At which our driver started his horses and we followed, soon reaching Woodside and entering upon the famed Bathurst Plains.



 [Pauline Conolly](#)

coach across the Blue Mountains ...

Just before reaching the last mentioned stage of our journey we met the N.S.W. gold escort, which consisted of one of Cobb's coaches drawn by four stout horses, carrying four or five big powerful policemen, the sergeant in charge of whom rode on the box seat beside the driver and all of the police were armed with rifles and revolvers. I do not know if such style of escort afforded a better method of defence from attacks of marauders than did the Victorian practice of having mounted outriders surrounding the conveyance carrying the gold etc.

At the time I did not think so, for indeed not, many months before, the N.S.W. escort did not make a very effective or brilliant defence, when attacked by Gilbert's gang of bushrangers at Eugowra.



NSW State Archives

The railways, have now, superseded both of the above ways of carrying the precious metals. But they may be interesting as a recollection of the past. I noticed the telegraph line, although it then had been in use for about ten years, had but only one wire upon which to carry on all the business, or work pertaining to it, as far as the extensive western districts were affected. Another inn known as "Woodside" was halted at, and then over a fairly good road we rattled on across the Bathurst Plains, the gently rolling surface of which was dotted here and there by an occasional clump of trees.

To be continued... Rosalie DONNELLY Member 2224

THE ORIGINAL NAMES OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



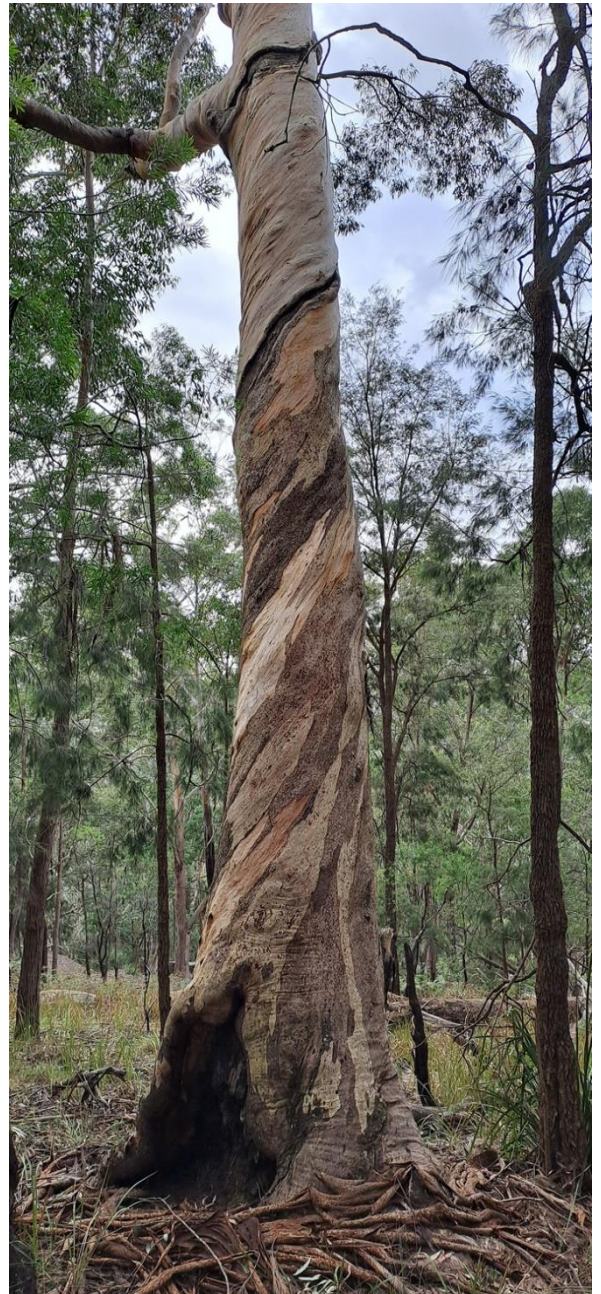
A Different Type of Tree.

I am a tree lover, both my genealogical family tree and also the horticultural variety. I often gaze upon particularly beautiful specimens around the Central Coast.

This e-Muster I have included 2 trees:-

The first an ancient Olive tree from Puglia in Italy that looks like a person in reflection.

The second is the amazing coloured trunk of an *Angophora Costata* situated at Rumbalara Reserve, Gosford when losing its bark and showing the beautiful spiralling colours. Commonly known as **Sydney red gum**, **rusty gum** or **smooth-barked apple** is a species of tree that is endemic to eastern Australia. Reaching 30 m (100 ft.) in height, the species has distinctive smooth bark that is pinkish or orange-brown when new and fades to grey with age.



I am inviting you to share a tree with us in each issue of the *E-muster*, one that has enraptured you or one that is your favourite. Please email details and a photograph to our email address and we will feature them in our Journal.

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