

WANGARATTA THREADS

The Quarterly Newsletter of the

WANGARATTA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

A0022724T

ABN No. 72 673 863 599

No. 100, December 2014



OPEN DAYS:

Tuesday & Thursday each week
10.00am to 3.00pm.

3rd Saturday of each month
11.00am to 3.00pm.

LOCATION:

1st Floor
100-104 Murphy Street
Wangaratta, Vic, Australia.
(above Visitor Information
Centre).

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Web Address:

www.wfhs.org.au



100th Edition of our newsletter 'Wangaratta Threads' and celebrating the 30th year of our Society.

A lot of people near and far have contributed to the success of our Society. They've undertaken many tasks to record and preserve the history of the people of our district and purchased a large collection of local, Australian and international resources to assist in family history research.

This edition acknowledges all members over the last thirty years; the work undertaken by the many volunteers; and looks at the way some have searched and sometimes found those elusive ancestors.



Saturday 13 December 2014 at 12.00

Christmas lunch and Members Meeting at the Vine Hotel, North Wangaratta.

Christmas and New Year break

Thursday 18 December 2014 will be our last open day and we will reopen on Tuesday 27 Jan 2015. Project Group can still meet during this period.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:



President: Ray McKenzie
03 5721 7553



Vice President: Val Brennan
03 5727 6229

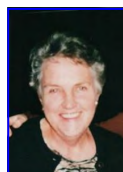


Treasurer: Dianne Cavedon
03 5722 2607

Other committee members:



- Val McPherson



- Elaine Jones



- Paddy Milne



- Cheryl Price (Editor)



Committee members wish you all the very best over the Christmas holidays and hope the New Year brings joy and happiness to you all.

MEMBERSHIP:

Initial 1st year Admin Fee	\$10
Single Full Membership	\$25
Joint Full Membership	\$35
Single Pensioner	\$20
Joint Pensioner	\$30
Newsletter only	\$12

PRESIDENT RAY MCKENZIE'S REPORT:

Congratulations on the 100th edition of 'Wangaratta Threads'.

First a big thank you to Cheryl for all her work in getting 'Threads' out to members.

Also, a special mention to people who saw a need for a group to trace family histories, for without them we would not exist as we are today.

I joined our Society about 2002 but had been doing a bit of research since the mid 1990s. Since joining, I've had a lot of joy but also some heartaches.

What a lot has been achieved, all by members volunteering time and expertise in getting us to where we are today.

We have a group of very knowledgeable volunteers with expertise in various aspects of our workings, ie computers, digitising, deciphering early writing and spelling, photography etc.

We are always looking for more volunteers for projects (more hands make light work), don't be shy, our more advanced people will show you what is needed and how to achieve it.



REFLECTING BACK:

The 60th edition of 'Wangaratta Threads' gives the following summary of 20 years of our Society:

- Inaugural meeting 18 April 1985—venue Latter Day Saints, Wangaratta.
- June 1988 Voted to incorporate—Wangaratta Family Research Group Inc. Twelve books in library but no microfiche.
- January 1989—Change of venue—St Patrick's Primary School Hall, Ovens St, Wangaratta.
- September 1989—name changed to Wangaratta Branch of the Genealogical Society of Victoria.
- August 1990—commenced purchasing microfiche.
- February 1992—commenced transcribing Wangaratta Cemetery records.
- June 1992—Change of venue—Scout Hall, Vincent Rd, Wangaratta.
- August 1992—Received council grant to transcribe Honour Boards of Wangaratta.
- February 1997—Change of venue—Room 11 Old St Joseph's School, Ryley St, Wangaratta.
- August 1997—name changed to Wangaratta Family History Society Inc.
- February 1998—First computer purchased.
- October 1999—Change of venue—Room C, Christian Victory Centre Hall, Willow Drive, Wangaratta.
- November 2001—purchased first photocopier.
- January 2002—Change of venue—1st floor, Old Library Building, 100 Murphy St, Wangaratta.
- June 2002—Launch of Wangaratta Cemetery CD.

UPDATE TO DECEMBER 2014:

- 2008—Doubled the size of our premises at 100 Murphy St, Wangaratta.
- August 2010—Launch of Bowmans Forest CD
- 2010—Commenced digitising and updating Wangaratta Cemetery records as well as other district cemetery records.
- 2014—Commenced digitising and indexing rate books and Beechworth Cemetery records.
- Current holdings: Sixteen computers; digitising equipment including cameras; fileservers; internet, electronic resources including 450 CDs, 4,000 books, 350 sets of microfiche plus readers, 7,000 surname files and 260,000 names indexed against library books.

ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY SINCE 1985:

Ivan ADAIR	Barbara BRYANT	Elaine DOOLAN	Sandra Joy HICKEY
Thelma ADAIR	Laurel BRYANT	Jillian DOUGLAS	Christine HICKS
Barbara ADAMS	Naomi Anne BULL	Kate DOWNIE	Russell HILL
Irene Kay ADAMS	Brian BURGESS	Sue DOWNIE	Dawn HODGES
May ADAMS	Kerry BURGOYNE	Tony DOYLE	Violet HOGAN
Robert John ADAMS	Paul BURGOYNE	Faye DREHER	Faylene HOWARD
Maureen ADCOCK	Barbara Joan BURNS	Kathryn DUFFY	Terence HOWARD
Jenny AIREY	Janette BUSSELL	Rex DUNCOMBE	Gayle HULETT
Malcolm ALDRIDGE	Pamela BUTLER	Gaye DWYER	David HURLEY
Jennifer ALLAN	Kathleen CAIRNS	Bert DYER	Mrs M HUTCHIESON
Lyn ALLAN	Aileen CALDWELL	Joan DYSON	John ILOTT
Margaret Elizabeth AN- DREWS	Jacqueline Mary CALLINAN	Victor EDGAR	Merle IRELAND
Doreen ARCHIBALD	Ina CAMPBELL	Ray ELLIOTT	Jenny JACKEL
Nicole AUGUST	Mary CANAVAN	G. J ELLIS	Loris JAMES
Michael BAILLE	Joan CANNY	Jean ELLIS	Joy JOHNSON
Kim BAIRD	Eunice Wilma CARD- WELL	Jean ELLIS	Loretto JOHNSTONE
Margaret BALDRY	Daniel CAREY	P Joan ELLIS	Elaine JONES
Elma BARKER	Leila CAREY	Berice ELLWOOD	Mavis JONES
Megan BARLOW	Margaret CARLTON	Lena EVANS	Vicki JONES
David Bruce BARRY	Rosemarie CARMAN	Nancy EVANS	Elizabeth KAY
Neil BARTER	Max CARMICHAEL	Kari FERGUSON	Jack KAY
Jim BAXTER	Patricia CASEY	Geoffery FINK	Stephen KAZENWADEL
Rebecca BEARD	Mrs E.E CATTANACH	Jim FINSTER	James KEENAN
Vicki BECHAZ	Dianne CAVEDON	Jill FLEMING	Barry KELLY
Maureen BEDFORD	Marjorie CAVEDON	Carolyn FOOTE	Justin KELLY
Cheryle BELL	Vicki CAZALY	Brian FOX	Mary KELLY
Anne BENSER	Graeme CHAMBERLAIN	Brian FRENCH	Michelle KELLY
Brian BERGIN	Karen CHAMBERLAIN	Graham GALES	William KENEALY
Therese BERRY	Joanne CHAMBERS	Mike GARDINER	Brian KENSINGTON
Sue BLACKWELL	June Violet CHOPPING	Pam GARDINER	Marie KENSINGTON
Maureen BLADES	Ralph CLARKE	Peter GAY	Robert KERR
Cecily Ann (Sue) BLAIR	Jean CLIFTON	Margaret GEMMILL	Christine KILMINSTER
Kathryn BLAKE	Jennifer COBURN	Lynette GIBB	Helen Joyce KIRWIN
Valarie BLAKE	Ronald L COBURN	Margaret GIBB	Hilary KISBEE
Diane BOAG	Jean COOK	Howard GIBSON	Keiran KLEMM
Catherine BODSWORTH	David COOPER	Ashley GILMARTIN	David KNEEBONE
Lorraine BOLING	Mary COOPER	Val GLEESON	Ann KNIGHT
Mike BOLING	Monica Alice COOPER	Rosa GLEN	Robert KNIGHT
Matilda BOOTH	Dennis (Dan) COSTIGAN	Jennifer GOWLAND	Thelma KNOX
Ron BOOTH	Elva COX	Margaret GRADY	Rosemary LACEY/ WILLIAMS
Maureen BORDIGNON	Kenneth CRAIG	Rosemary GRAHAM	Father Leo LANE
Leanne BOWDLER	Georgina CUSACK	Susan GRAHAM	Heather LANE
Jean BOX	Robert CUSACK	Bev GRANT	Elizabeth LAW
Rachel BOYD	Frances DALEY	Jillian GRANT	Trish LAWSON
Joyce BRADSHAW	John DART	Debbie GRASSI	Bert LE MESCAM
Val BRENNAN	Wilma DART	Beverley GRESKIE	Peter Murray LEACH
Cynthia BRESNEHAN	Anne DAVIDSON	Peter HAM	Simone LEARY
Jasmine BRIGGS	Jim DAVIDSON	Anne HANSON	Diane LEWIS
Lynette BRIGGS	Sue DAVIDSON	Rosemary HARRIS	Dianne Marree LEWIS
Ron BRIGGS	Bill DAVIS	John HARRISON	Patricia Maureen LEWIS
Neil BROCK	Christine DENTON	Sally HARRISON	Jan LINDSAY
Doug BROCKFIELD	Lesley DESBOROUGH	Barbara HARVEY	Jan Maree LINDSAY
John BROWN	Anne DUFFEY	Rev Neil HARVEY	Jill LLOYD
June BROWN	Rhonda DIFFY	June HAYES	L.N. (Nancy) LOVE
Mary BROWN	Nelson DINNING	Christine HEARD	Michelle LOVE
David BRUCE	Elizabeth DIXON	Robin HENWOOD	Margaret LYNCH
Patricia BRUCE		Joy HESTER	Kevin MACKLIN
		Joan HEYWOOD	

ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY SINCE 1985 cont:

Wilma MAIDMENT	Isabel NIBBS	Claire RUSSELL	Beverly UNDERWOOD
Christine Lee MAPLEY	Dianne NICHOLSON	Denise RYAN	Noelle VAN DAMME
Kerryn 'Kerry' MARSDEN	Susan NICHOLSON	Glenn RYAN	June Lucy VEARING
Malcolm 'Keith' MARSDEN	Bernard NOLAN	Judith RYAN	Michelle VERWEY
Geraldine MARSH	Freda OAKLEY	Lois RYAN	Janice WAGNER
Hazel MARSH	Gordon OAKLEY	Norm RYAN	Nena WALDRON
Janet MARTIN	Margaret O'BRIEN	Barbara SANDERS	Ian WALKER
Lillian MARTIN	Carole OCKENDEN	Daphne SANDFORD	Carol WALLEY
Denise MASON	Peter OCKENDEN	Pam SAWYER	Ken WALLEY
Joy MASON	Helen OCONNELL	Faye SCHUSSER	Marie WALLIS
Neville McCORMICK	Lawrence O'CONNOR	Jackie SELWOOD	Elizabeth WALPOLE
Anne McDONALD	Daniel O'FLAHERTY	Peter SEWELL	Beryl WARBURTON
Beryl McDONALD	Ruth O'HAGAN	Estelle SHAW	Peter WATSON
Ross McDONALD	Shirley O'NEILL	Stephen SHEARER	Steven WATSON
Denise McINTOSH	Phillip OSMOND	Trevor SHERIDAN	Debbie WATTS
Henry A McKENZIE	Ottonie (Ottie) OSWALD	Betty SHERRY	Victoria WATTS
Joan McKenzie	Margaret OWENS	Robert SIMPSON	James WEBSTER
Ray McKENZIE	Beryl PARKER	Rosemary SIMPSON	Donna WELLINGTON
Doug McLAREN-SMITH	Doreen PARKER	Beverly SMITH	Lorraine WELLS
Lynette McLAURIN	Leonard PARKER	Bronwen SMITH	Brian WEST
Ron McMAHON	Scott PARKER	Colin SMITH	Evelyn WEST
Joan McNAUGHT	Erin PASCOE	Kevin SMITH	Barbara WESTMACOTT
Valerie McPHERSON	Ian PAYNE	Patricia STAFFORD	Kerry Lee WEVERS
Stephen MELHUIISH	Joan PEACOCK	Lesley STIELOW	Helen WEYBURY
Joan MEMERY	Ron PEACOCK	Julie STONE	Keith WEYBURY
Dianne MICALLEF	Jan PETERSEN	Beryl STRANG	Jennifer WHEELER
Judith MILNE	Marlene PIERCY	Avis STRIBLEY	Carol WHINRAY
Paddy MILNE	William PLEMING	Linda STURGESS	Janice WHINRAY
Donald MITCHELL	Des POLE	Ronald SUMMERS	Tania WHINRAY
Annette MONSHING	Donald POLLARD	Janice SWINBURNE	Edwina WHITE
Lorraine MONSHING	Ray POND	Dianne TAIT	Jane WHITE
Isabelle MOORE	K POWLEY	Helen TATE	Max WHITE
Wendy MOORE	Jayson PRATT	Sarah TAYLOR-O'BRIEN	Adrian WILLIAMS
Nancy MOORHEAD	Cheryl PRICE	Peggy TEMPLETON	Alison WILLIAMS
Roslyn MORGAN	Joan PRITCHARD	John TERPSTRA	K.R.WILLIAMS
Charmaie MORLEY	Margaret PULLEN	Bernadette THOMPSON	Maureen WILLOUGHBY
Jean MORLEY	Mary PURCELL	Julie THOMPSON	Bill WILSON
Morrie MORLEY	Dennis RADISICH	Albert THOMSON	Dennis WILSON
Christine MORRISON	Faye RAMSAY	Carole THORNYCROFT	Margaret WILSON
David MORRISON	Joan RAMSDALE	Gary TOAL	Michael WILSON
Carmel MOSS	Max RAMSDALE	Kathleen TOAL	Shirley WILSON
Elaine MUDGE	Jean RANKINS	Ailsa TOOHEY	Lorraine WISENER
Peter MUDGE	Penelope REDPATH	Pat TOOHEY	Hilda WOODFORD
Joan MUMMERY	Helen REYNOLDS	Philomena TREVOR-	Horace WOODFORD
Jane MUNRO	Patricia RICHENS	HUNT	Pamela WORK
Len MURPHY	Joanne ROBERTS	Greg TRIMBLE	Keith WRIGHT
Dorothy MURRAY	Margot ROBINSON	Marie TRIMBLE	Thelma WRIGHT
Judith MURRAY	Sarina ROCHE	Rhonda TUCCI	Mary Ann WYATT
Peter MURRAY	Mrs G ROHAN	Adrian TWYFORD	Alice WYLLIE
Janine NEAL	Coral ROSS	Loueen TWYFORD	Sheree WYLLIE
Robert John NEWMAN	Helen ROSS	Adele TYLER	Lorna YOUNGER



EVENTS:



First meeting held on **18 April 1985**. At table from left – Sarina Roche, Gordon Oakley, Edna Harman, Carole Ockenden, Hilda & Horace Woodford, Eunice Cardwell, Doreen Archibald, Matilda Booth, Hazel Marsh. Standing from left – Clarice Tobias, Neville McCormack, Ron & Joan Peacock and Freda Oakley.



1995. From left—Rosemarie Carman, Keith Weybury, Vicki Jones, Helen Weybury, Denise McIntosh, Jasmine Briggs, Bronwen Smith and Charmaie Morley.

EVENTS:



Early 2002. Steve Bracks, the then Premier of Victoria and Minister of the Arts, presents a Local History Grant to Valerie McPherson of the Wangaratta Family History Society. The grant was for the development of the Wangaratta Cemetery CD.

3rd June 2002. The then Member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly, Ken Jasper, launches the new Wangaratta Cemetery CD. Valerie McPherson and Judi Ryan of our Society hold the ribbon and Keiran Klemm is in the background.



June 2002. Some of our volunteers who helped produce the Wangaratta Cemetery CD which contains 14,000 burials up to the year 1999.

From left—Bronwen Smith, Jannae Ryan, Judi Ryan, Donna Wellington, Narellie Ryan, Keiran Klemm, Valerie McPherson and Elaine Jones.

20 August 2008. Launch of our internet site www.wfhs.org.au

From left—Sophie Mirabella, the then Member of the House of Representatives, views our new website. Members Val Gleeson and Peter Sewell look on.



EVENTS:



20 August 2008. Members who attended the launch of our internet site. From left— Kevin O'Hagan, Val Gleeson, Loueen Twyford, Ruth O'Hagan, Mary Ann Wyatt, Dianne Cavedon, Dianne Nicholson, Joan Canny, Sue Nicholson, Bronwyn Smith and Maureen Bedford.

3 August 2010. Launch of the Bowmans Forest Cemetery CD.

From left— Anthony Griffiths, the then Mayor of the Rural City of Wangaratta, Valerie Brennan of our Society and James Neary of the Bowmans Cemetery Trust.



BURIAL SECRETS: Members and volunteers from the Wangaratta Family History Society celebrated the launch of the Bowmans Forest Cemetery Burials CD at the Exhibition Room of the Visitor Information Centre yesterday. The launch marks the completion of the volunteer-run project, which has seen the recording of details relating to more than 580 burials made at the historic cemetery on to a CD, which will be available for public use. Pictured at the launch are (from left) Rural City of Wangaratta mayor Anthony Griffiths, Val Brennan and James Neary.
PHOTO: Cheryl Browne

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA
Annual Report to the Minister 2011-2012

APPENDIX 5: APPROVED PLACES OF DEPOSIT FOR TEMPORARY RECORDS

Places of Deposit are community facilities that meet the storage standards required by PROV to preserve records of significance to local communities.

For a complete list of Places of Deposit see www.prov.vic.gov.au/community-programs/places-of-deposit.

Public Record Office Victoria's Lauren Bourke (far right) Coordinator Community Archives presents Valerie Brennan (left) and Cheryl Price (centre) with Wangaratta Family History Society's Place Of Deposit Certificate

Early 2012. Our Society was appointed by Ted Baillieu, the then Premier of Victoria and Minister for the Arts, as a Place of Deposit (POD) to care for certain types of public records.

From left—Valerie Brennan and Cheryl Price of our Society, and Lauren Bourke of the Public Records Office of Victoria.

EVENTS:



3 July 2014. Tim McCurdy, Member of the Legislative Assembly, presents a Local History Grant to digitise rate books to Ray McKenzie, President of our Society.



Project work in progress. Above, Karen Chetcutti of the Rural City of Wangaratta and Valerie Brennan of our Society shown with old rate books to be digitised.



Similarly with Terry Walsh of the Beechworth Cemetery Trust and Valerie Brennan shown with Cemetery Trust records.



17 Nov 2014. Georgina and Bob Cusack digitising rate books.



17 Nov 2014. Meeting of the Project Group. Seated from left—Valerie McPherson, Elaine Mudge, Pam Gardiner and Elaine Jones. Standing from left—Valerie Brennan, Denise McIntosh, Jean Rankins, Peggy Templeton and Christine Heard. Absent: Cheryl Price, Jan Lindsay and Ray McKenzie.



Members Meeting held in December 2013. Back row from left: Elaine Jones, Cheryl Price, Joan Ellis, Ray McKenzie, Dianne Cavedon, Christine Heard and Valerie Brennan. Middle two from left: Elaine Mudge and Joan McKenzie. Front four from left: Georgina Cusack, Valerie McPherson, Paddy Milne and Denise McIntosh.

MEMBERS' PROFILES:



Doreen Archibald (nee Airds). Member since the first meeting on 18 April 1985.

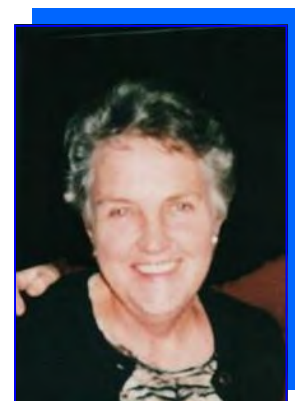
I was born at a little place called Mitiamo in Victoria where our family farmed sheep, cattle and raised crops in the Pinegrove district. My sister, brother and I had to ride our bikes four miles to school along terrible roads, but we all loved our farming life. Both my parents were from big Scottish families, Airds on my father's side and McBeaths on Mum's, so I grew up knowing what big Scottish family gatherings were like every week.

With Dad's encouragement, I traced his relations in Scotland and later visited them which was wonderful. I still correspond with them. So over the many years I've recorded many family trees and helped a lot of relations with theirs and kept in touch with many of them. I am fortunate to have three children, six grandchildren and many nephews and nieces, and we all keep in touch even though all are scattered in many directions.

Elaine Jones. Member since 1991.

I became interested in family history after I found some of my husband's long lost relatives in the late 1980's. I joined the Wangaratta Genealogical Society (as it was known then) in August 1991. I went on the committee in March 1992 taking on the position of Treasurer, then I took on the positions of Librarian and the Newsletter. I've worked on many projects including transcribing headstones for the Wangaratta Cemetery since 1992.

My favourite ancestor is Charles Oakley Erwood who served in the Boer War and enlisted for WW1 in WA and died of multiple gunshot wounds on 11th August 1981. He is buried in Daours Cemetery France.



Margaret Baldry. Member since 1995.

I was born in Mansfield and moved to Wangaratta in 1979 with three of my children. Matilda Booth convinced me to join the Wangaratta Family History Society when the Society was located in the Scout Hall in Vincent Rd. All the microfiche, readers, books etc were transported there each open day which was a Thursday. Daphne Sandford kept the microfiche and readers in her lounge room so there wasn't much room left for her to sit. Members could hire a reader and fiche for a week to do some research at home. I always ended up with phone calls and visitors during that week, and I had some late nights also. We took the microfiche and readers to Galen College sometimes for students to do some research.

One day I had a phone call from a cousin who I didn't know – a daughter of one of Mum's sisters. I filled her in on the part of the family I knew but received absolutely nothing back from her on her side of the family – nothing new, I still get no help from some.

When I was young, we went to people's houses to visit, and I only found out when I started researching my family history that they were relations. Not much information was given by my parents, uncles, aunts etc back then.

MEMBERS' PROFILES cont:



Jean Rankins. Member since 1995.

I was born at the Lister Hospital, Wangaratta, and lived at Eldorado until I started employment. I attended the State School at Eldorado obtaining my Merit Certificate there, then I travelled by bus to the Wangaratta High School.

A school mate and I applied for the same employment position. Fortunately I didn't get the position as two days later I received a letter telling me to attend for an Interview at the National Service Office.

It was war time and, if you did not find work yourself, you were told where to work. It was at this office I obtained my employment, although only for the duration of the war. I enjoyed my work at this office where records of each individual, except military and school students, were kept.

Also, a record of the prisoners of war at the Myrtleford and Corryong Camps and military personnel who went AWOL were recorded in the National Service Office. Personal descriptions and details of each individual were recorded. A person could not start employment, or an employer employ anyone, without the permission of this office. If a person moved into an area where there was another office, their records were transferred to that office. We all had to carry identification cards during the war years.

About a dozen of us from Eldorado who worked in Wangaratta – each Sunday afternoon we joined up at the Gun House then we rode our bicycles the 14 miles to Wangaratta. We boarded in town during the week and each one of us went home individually as some finished work on Friday and others on Saturday. After the mine closed my parents moved into Wangaratta, then I lived with them.

My last employment was with a debt collecting company where I worked for 32 years before retiring four months after my 65th birthday. There was a lot of record keeping in this organisation. Every item done had to be recorded, even telephone conversations. Also any records of instructions given to our solicitor plus any effort made to trace a person who had left the area leaving debts owing.

Long before I joined the Wangaratta Family History Society I had started tracing my family. There were no computers then to give any help with information. I had to rely on information wherever I could obtain it.



OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ETC SINCE 1985:

Symbols: P=President; VP=Vice President; S=Secretary; T=Treasurer; Cmt=Ordinary Committee Member; R=Research; L=Library; PO=Public Officer; MC=Microfiche Coordinator; MR=Magazine Reporter; E=Editor.

May	ADAMS	Cmt 2000-6.
Malcolm	ALDRIDGE	VP 2000/1; R 1997-2000; Cmt 1998-2002.
Doreen	ARCHIBALD	Cmt 1989/90; L 1991-3
Margaret	BALDRY	L 2009-15
Jim	BAXTER	Cmt 1996/7
Cheryl	BELL	MR 1990/1
Mike	BOLING	PO 1998-2011
M	BOOTH	R 1988/9
Valerie	BRENNAN	VP 2012-15; Cmt 2009-12; E 2008-11
Jasmine	BRIGGS	P 1988-91; VP 1991/2; Cmt 1992-2001; PO 1993/4
Neal	BROCK	Cmt 2002/3
Patricia	BRUCE	T 1996-2000; Cmt 2000/1 & 2005-7.
Eunice	CARDWELL	R 1985/6 & 1998/9
Margaret	CARLTON	Cmt 1998/9; R 1997-2000
Rosemarie	CARMAN	P 1995/6; Cmt 1994/5
Dianne	CAVEDON	T 2013-15; Cmt 2003-8 & 2012/13
Georgina	CUSACK	Cmt 2006-11
Robert	CUSACK	VP 2006-8; S 2008/9

cont


OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ETC SINCE 1985 cont:

Symbols: P=President; VP=Vice President; S=Secretary; T=Treasurer; Cmt=Ordinary Committee Member; R=Research; L=Library; PO=Public Officer; MC=Microfiche Coordinator; MR=Magazine Reporter; E=Editor.


Frances	DALEY	S 1998-2000
Anne	DAVIDSON	E 2010-2013
Mike	GARDINER	Cmt 2008-11
Beverley	GRANT	T 1991/2; L 1990/1
Beverley	GRESKIE	Cmt 2012/13
John	HARRISON	Cmt 1992/3
Sally	HARRISON	P 1992/3; R 1992-8; E 1994-6; MC 1997/8
Christine	HEARD	Cmt 2012/13
Gayle	HULETT	Cmt 2001-4
Elaine	JONES	T 1992-4; Cmt 1994/5 & 2012-15; L 1996-2015; PO 1995/6; E 1995-2001
Vicki	JONES	S Minutes 1994/5; Cmt 1995/6; E 1997/8
Hilary	KISBEE	S 2000-2
Bert	LE MASCAM	T 1987-1991; Cmt 1991/2; E 1988/9; PO 1988/9
Peter	LEACH	VP 1998/9
Jan	LINDSAY	R 1988/9
Hazel	MARSH	R 1987/8
Lillian	MARTIN	R 1991/2
Joy	MASON	E 1999/2000
Denise	McINTOSH	S 1993-6
Ray	McKENZIE	P 2012-15; Cmt 2007-12; PO 2013/14
Ron	McMAHON	S 1997/8
Valerie	McPHERSON	VP 1999/2000; T 2000-13; Cmt 2013-15
Stephen	MELHUIISH	VP 1992-5; L 1993-5
Paddy	MILNE	Cmt 2013-15
Annette	MONSHING	VP 2001-6; E 2000-6
Wendy	MOORE	VP 1998/9; E 1987-9
Charmaie	MORLEY	P 1996-8; VP 1988/9; Cmt 1988/9; E 1988-1996
Dianne	NICHOLSON	S 2007/8; Cmt 2006/7 & 2008/9
Sue	NICHOLSON	S 2004-7
Freda	OAKLEY	R 1987-9
Gordon	OAKLEY	S & T 1985/6; S 1986/7; Asst S 1987/8; R 1987/8
Peter	OCKENDEN	P 1985-7; S 1988-90; Plan Cmt 1987/8; Social Coord 1989/90; E 1990/1
Ron	PEACOCK	Cmt 1988/9; R 1989-91
Don	POLLARD	Cmt 2011/12
Dianne	POPLE	E 1997/8
Jayson	PRATT	Cmt 2010-12
Cheryl	PRICE	S 2009-13; E 2010-15; PO 2011-13
Jean	RANKINS	Cmt 2011/12; L 2010-15
Penelope	REDPATH	Cmt 2012/13
Coral	ROSS	R 1985-8; Planning Cmt 1987/8
Judi	RYAN	P 1998-2008; VP 2008-11; E 2006-8
Norm	RYAN	VP 1997-8; Acting P 1998/9
Barbara	SANDERS	Minutes S 1996-8
Daphne	SANDFORD	P 1994/5; VP 1990/1; Cmt 1998-2006; MC 1993-2004
Peter	SEWELL	P 2008-12; Cmt 2007/8
Beverley	SMITH	Cmt 2007-11
Bronwen	SMITH	Cmt 1996-2009; L 1995-2010; R 1996/7
Philomena	TREVOR-HUNT	P 1987/8 & 1991/2; T 1986/7; E 1986/7; Planning Cmt 1987/8; PO 1987/8
June	VEARING	Cmt 1999/2000
Marie	WALLIS	Cmt 1997/8; Correspondence S 1996/7; R 1987-9
Beryle	WARBURTON	VP 1987/8; Planning Cmt 1987/8
Debbie	WATTS	P 1993/4; VP 1987/8 & 1990/1; S 1991-3; Cmt 1987-90; R 1985/6
Donna	WELLINGTON	S 2002-4
Helen	WEYBURY	T 1994-6; E 1996-8
Keith	WEYBURY	VP 1995/6; E 1996/7
Bill	WILSON	VP 1996-8

SCREEN GRAB OF OUR SOCIETY'S WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK:

The following images are of the 'home' pages of our web and Facebook sites. In the future, members can look back and see what those sites look like in the year 2014.



- home
- about us
- research
- news
- calendar of events
- library
- members
- items for sale
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Website donated by Val Gleeson winner of Design Experts website giveaway competition

WANGARATTA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC VICTORIA AUSTRALIA

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[Transcribed Burial Information & Memorials](#)

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WELCOME to our Website

We are a significant Family History organisation in North East Victoria, with an extensive collection of resources covering this region and available for use by novice and experienced researchers.

We are a non profit organisation with the aim of promoting and encouraging the study of family history and the preservation of records from our local region. Our Research Library has Donor Gift Recipient Endorsement which allows donors making gifts of \$2.00 or more to claim a tax deduction.

We have experienced researchers available on our regular Open Days to assist members and visitors with family history inquiries.

The Society is also engaged in digitising and indexing archival records for various district history Groups, Societies and Trusts primarily to -

- ensure the preservation of the original archives,
- provide working copy for the owners and
- make the information available to family history researchers.

We are always keen to talk with individuals interested in working with us either as members or volunteers in the Library, assisting with research or project work.

Our extensive collection of reference material is housed on the First Floor at 100 - 104 Murphy Street, Wangaratta, above the Visitor Information Centre. It includes books, microfiche, CDs and computer databases, also pamphlets, maps and periodicals. Our records not only cover North East Victoria but also Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland and other countries.

A0022724T

OPENING HOURS

Tuesdays & Thursdays
10am - 3pm

3rd Saturday of each month
11am - 3pm

Other times by appointment

VENUE

1st Floor,
100-104 Murphy St
Wangaratta
VIC 3676
(above visitor information centre)

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TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE:

By Bob Cusack

My father knew his family had originated in Ireland, of which he was quite proud. To prove it he had a map of Ireland bearing the locations of all the Irish family names and he had our name, Cusack, highlighted in every County where it appeared. As he approached retirement in the late 1970's, he expressed interest in tracing his family history. To help him, we gave him a pre-printed Family History Album in which to enter details of his family. This was the extent of my interest in family history.

Dad passed away in 1992 and during the following years, while sorting his possessions, I discovered his Family History Album containing details of his parents, siblings and cousins, but little else. Inside the book were loose sheets of lists of names, repeated up to half a dozen times, of extended families and their children, no doubt collected from relatives at weddings or more likely funerals he attended. Reluctant to throw it away, I put the album in a "safe place".

In 2002, following my mother's death, I re-discovered Dad's family history album. This same year, my desire to know more of my family origins began stirring when my wife, Georgina, and I attended a free "Introduction to Genealogy" session conducted by Wangaratta Library. As well as having the "recent" information from my Dad's book and lists, I now had an added benefit of a little note book my mother had commenced in her teens into which she stuck newspaper notices of births, deaths and marriages of family and friends, to which she entered the date of publication. Under the impression it would be reasonably simple to complete the work my Dad had commenced, I soon realised that the information they had collected was just the starting point on my journey to tracing my ancestors.

As I became aware of the facilities available to me, I ventured between the Wangaratta Library, the Church of Latter Day Saints and the Wangaratta Family History Society, gradually discovering more details of preceding generations. At this stage my information was written on individual family history sheets contained in a plastic folder but eventually we purchased a copy of the computer program 'Family Tree Maker' onto which I transferred my information. Transferring my data highlighted a serious mistake I had made. For the past year or so, in my excitement of discovering new family members, I had not recorded from where I had located each piece of information. Consequently, I had to re-visit each entry again and record my sources in 'Family Tree Maker'.

My research techniques and resource database steadily improved and I discovered that my father was correct and our Cusack family had come from Ireland. My great grandfather, John Cusack, an 18 year old labourer, left Liverpool England alone on board the *Tornado* on 2 July 1867. In August 1869, his mother, Bridget Cusack nee Morgan, and her other two children, Catherine 15 years and James 13 years, arrived at Geelong on the clipper *Electric*. By Irish standards this was a very small family, having only three children, but it was my little family from County Clare. My great-great grandfather, Michael Cusack, Bridget's husband, did not travel to Australia, so I presumed he had died in Ireland. My research in Australia now established, I needed to look to Ireland to resolve the puzzle of where in County Clare my little family came from.

My inquiries had also revealed that my entire paternal line were Irish. My grandmother Elizabeth Madigan's father was Thomas Madigan from Knockpatrick, and her mother, Jane Barrett, was from Ballyine, both in County Limerick. My great grandmother Helena Berkery's parents were Patrick Berkery from Borrisoleigh and Johanna Spellman, both from County Tipperary.

Once my inquiries took me to Ireland, and particularly County Clare, I quickly realised that researching Ireland for family history is complex.

Firstly, a large portion of the country's early genealogical records for the 1800's were destroyed in a fire at the Four Courts Building in Dublin in 1922 during their civil war. This largely left Ireland with just two important means of identifying a family's whereabouts prior to Civil Registration which commenced in 1864.



Success! After Bob's twelve year search.

TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE cont:

The Tithe Applotment books compiled in the early 1820's and the 1855 Griffiths Valuation are the primary source of land and property records on which researchers rely heavily. Lease holders or tenants were recorded along with property owners. At this time Irish law forbade Catholics from possessing land, with the majority of very large estates being owned by Protestants or absentee English gentry.

Secondly, Ireland's landmass divisions can be puzzling and complicated with many place names repeated throughout the country and even within an individual County. The largest sub-division of Ireland are the Provinces, of which there are four, each containing several Counties. Counties are then sub-divided into Baronies, (11 in County Clare), Civil Parishes, (78 in County Clare), Poor Law Unions, (9 in County Clare), Probate Districts, District Electoral Divisions, Roman Catholic parishes and finally the smallest division, Townlands. A Townland can vary in size from ten acres to several thousand and there are over 2,100 Townlands in County Clare. They are the best means by which to identify ones family as most people in Ireland remained their entire life within a five mile radius of their townland. No boundaries of any of these various divisions in County Clare coincide and it is very rare for Civil Parishes and Roman Catholic parishes to share the same boundaries although they usually share the same name.

Once I had overcome some of these anomalies the Irish trunks of my family history tree began to slowly grow.

Historically, County Clare is also unique in its tragic and sometimes rebellious history. The annual journal of The Shannon Archaeological & Historical Society "The Other Clare" reported in the article "The Rural Poor in Clare before the Great Famine" in Volume 34 of 2010 "... the Great Famine, during which Clare was one of the worst affected counties. The fungal disease struck the potato crop, initially during 1845, and the Famine persisted for seven pestilential years."

As previously stated, Irish law prevented Catholics from owning property but they were allowed to vote in elections. They were however told who they were to vote for by their landlords. With the growing popularity of Catholic political candidate Daniel O'Connell, Clare farmers and freeholders marched with banners to welcome him to the 1828 elections. They marched en masse with their banners to vote for O'Connell, even though landlords had threatened eviction for anyone who voted for him. The weight of numbers gave him victory. With this defiant activity the Irish law was altered and allowed O'Connell to be the first Catholic to sit in parliament. County Clare is thus named the banner county. The bright yellow and blue banners are held high whenever Clare is competing in hurling or football and from the stands the crowd roar "Up the Banner".

Perhaps because of this historically strong determination which exists in County Clare inhabitants, the Clare Library has become a central facility for all County Clare historical records. The copious amount of accurate information is freely shared to all and is of great benefit to the genealogist.

Also in Clare is the unique County Clare Heritage Centre at Corrofin. This organisation several years ago obtained all baptism and marriage registers in existence from all Catholic parish offices. They copied each register, indexed the names within the registers and returned them, together with indexed folders, to the parish offices. For an expensive fee this Centre will do your Clare research for you and provide you with a copy of their findings.

In 2003, Georgina and I made our first trip overseas to join our son Brendan and his wife Melissa in London where they had been working for a year. At the end of their terms of employment we spent two weeks travelling around Ireland. While there I learned that the Irish paid homage to a Michael Cusack, born at Carron in the limestone covered Burren region of County Clare in 1847. This Michael became a teacher and was the founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) which promoted the sport of Irish football and hurling. His statue and one of the huge stands at Croake Park in Dublin bear his name. Unfortunately, this was not the Michael Cusack I was searching for. Returning home, I realised that finding my Cusacks in Ireland was definitely not an easy task. Every search for Michael Cusack came up with "the" Michael Cusack of GAA fame.

As time went on gradually more Irish genealogy information appeared on the internet but finding the actual townland to identify my Irish relatives and where they came from was proving a frustrating process.

TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE cont:

Georgina and I were fortunate enough to make another trip to Ireland in 2009. Preceding our trip we had downloaded details of the six Michael Cusacks recorded in the Griffiths Valuation (GV), feeling sure that he would be one as our Victorian certificates listed his occupation as a farmer. Arriving in Dublin, we spent three solid days looking at films of Parish Registers for those areas where Michael Cusack was listed on the GV. We also went to the National Archives of Ireland in an attempt to unearth further information and to purchase death certificates for the two Michaels recorded as dying between 1864, the year civil registration commenced in Ireland, and 1869, the year Bridget and her children Catherine and James travelled to Australia.

In the months prior to our trip we had also corresponded by email with the manager of the Michael Cusack Centre at Carron, so this was our first contact point after leaving Dublin. He told us he had spoken to researchers of the famous Michael Cusack and they were of the opinion that my Michael was most likely his uncle, but could not assist any further. We searched cemeteries in the region as records revealed it housed the highest concentration of Cusacks with no results. We also managed to decipher information on one of the Michael Cusack death certificates purchased and found a Biddy Cusack had been present at Michael's death at their house at Lickeen, which was on the edge of the Burren close to the famous Michael's home. Confident that we had found my family, a check of our research notes to verify our finding revealed that widow Bridget and her 7 year old daughter were listed on the 1866 census for the RC parishes of Kilfenora and Kiltoraught – wrong family! We had allowed just a couple of days in this area so we left Ireland feeling dejected having gained no positive information.

Back home research continued with little or no gains on my Cusack line. Small steps were achieved in my other Irish family lines by accessing sites via the internet. A breakthrough was made in my Berkery (which has no fewer than 50 plus spelling variations) family line when Georgina, using her lateral thinking, discovered a public notice in newspapers on the National Library Canberra, Trove site. The notice was a whereabouts for Johanna Berkery and her children and had been placed by one of her sons in New South Wales. Not only did it have all the family names but it included the townland in County Tipperary.

I also discovered the townland in County Limerick for my Madigan family through the death notices available on Trove. The townland of the Barrett leg of this family was gained from the Latter Day Saints site.

Apart from an insolvency notice, court case reports and a couple of obituaries all in Victoria, unfortunately nowhere were my Cusacks mentioned and I had come to realise that my little family did very little to attract attention. Even a visit to the Public Records Office in North Melbourne to view the original Victorian Crown Grantees Index document, my great grandfather John completed in 1871 to purchase three blocks totalling seven acres of land at Warrenheip near Ballarat, did not have any hint of his origins in Ireland. Several visits to the Public Records Office in Ballarat to view rate records and other documents and to the Ballarat Library to check its extensive array of localised records only produced small snippets of local information. The Bungaree Historical Centre provided me with substantial information relating to three generations of my family. Having moved from Warrenheip to Leigh Creek, the adult males in my family managed to appear before the Court on several occasions for a variety of minor offences. They also provided me with details of school enrolments and attendances as some of the children reached school age. In March 1892, Bridget was admitted to Nazareth House, Ballarat where she remained for the next four years until her death. Her details in the admissions register noted her birthplace as County Clare. The admittance register at the Ballarat Hospital, completed when several family members attended there, again only recorded County Clare as their place of birth. Baptismal and Marriage records at the Ballarat Cathedral were also inspected, again with no further information gleaned.

Still persisting that I personally wanted to find my family without having others locating vital information, I stubbornly continued researching alone, with occasional help from Georgina. Trying to keep costs to a minimum, I had also only purchased the birth, marriage and death certificates of the "adults" in my Cusack line.

From the certificate of my great grand aunt Catherine's wedding in Ballarat I discovered her witness was a Susan Cusack. Unknown in my family, I found that Susan had been born at Ballytarsna near Ennistymon in County Clare and that her parents Patrick Cusack and Hannah Lynch had remained on their farm. Thinking Susan must be a cousin, my research covered her entire line from the 1940's back to 1855 in Ireland. I also discovered that adjacent to her parent's property, Michael Cusack and Catherine Lynch resided with their family. Ballytarsna, on the edge of the Burren area, was part of the area historical records indicated as having the highest concentration of Cusack inhabitants.

cont

TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE cont:

Georgina and I made another trip to Ireland in 2012. This time I was better prepared to make the most of my time there. With GV maps of my Madigan, Barrett and Berkery family properties and their townlands, I was able to go to their home sites and photograph the ruins of their homes. For this trip I pledged to myself that instead of seeking family townlands alone I would ask local folk in the immediate area for help. This process proved beneficial gaining considerable more information about the families and uncovered cousins, even though they were twice or three times removed.

I plotted a map of the Civil Parishes of Clare with all the Cusacks and Morgans we had located prior to leaving Australia, with a view that we would concentrate on the parish films where the larger numbers were found. My laptop carried spreadsheets of all these family's locations found in any records of Clare. While following my Morgan research I discovered a retired Christian Brother, Willie Morgan, who resided at Lahinch in Clare and who was close to completing his Morgan family history.

We based ourselves in Ennis, County Clare for three days at the B&B of Declan Barron, a genealogist, hoping to gain from his knowledge and assistance. We then moved to another B&B at Ennistymon for a further four days. While at both locations we made use of the excellent facilities of the Local Studies Centre of the Clare County Library. We viewed films of the Parish Registers and made notes of all the Cusack and Morgan entries we came across.

Continuing my decision to ask locals for assistance, we called at the farm which had been owned by Michael Cusack and Catherine Lynch in 1855. To our surprise we met Michael Cusack and his mother Bridget. Bridget's deceased husband was a Michael and a direct descendant of Michael and Catherine. They told us that brothers Michael and Patrick Cusack came to Ballytarsna from Kilmihil, which is in south west Clare, and married sisters Catherine and Hannah Lynch, settling on the two properties owned by the girl's father. They then introduced us to a nearby neighbour who was allegedly a descendant of the adjacent property owned by Patrick and Hannah, but she knew nothing of Susan Cusack (my great grand aunt Catherine Cusack's bridesmaid) and was unable to assist with any positive information.

We also called on Brother Willie Morgan and he provided us with considerable Morgan information but he was unable to help with my Michael Cusack and Bridget Morgan, although some theories were put forward.

Leaving Ireland this time, I felt we had gained a lot of information but my little Cusack family still remained lost. None of the records we recorded related to my family. Back in Wangaratta, my research went on hold as I hit the "brick wall" many family history researchers speak of. In an attempt to break through "the wall" I purchased all 25 Victorian birth certificates for the children of my great grandfather John and my great grand-aunt Catherine, as well as a couple of others for family members not obtained already. Each gave the place of birth of my Irish relative as County Clare only with no townland. In all I had purchased 31 certificates which stated only "County Clare".

In June 2013 Georgina and I began to plan what we said was our final trip to Ireland to find my little family. This was going to be our last ditched effort and we decided that instead of writing down all the Cusack and Morgan records we came across we would view every film of all Parish Registers solely looking for the five names making up this family. We booked a cottage for a month at Killinaboy near Corrofin, 15 kilometres from Ennis and in the region with the highest number of Cusack and Morgan surnames occurred in historic records for County Clare.

We made the Local Studies Centre at the Clare Library our research centre and were given every assistance possible by Mr Peter Beirne, manager of the Centre, a man who lives and breathes Clare history. After four and a half days at looking at Parish Register films, I found myself looking at the baptism record for 24 March 1855 of James, son of Michael Cusack and Bridget Morgan, but with no townland entered. The two entries above for the same date by the same priest showed the townland of Tromora. This record was on the Kilmurry-Ibrickan film with records being located at the Mullagh Parish Office. Kilmurry-Ibrickan is in West Clare on the coast, miles from our search focus area used on this and previous trips.

We travelled to Mullagh and viewed the Parish Registers. It was surreal to see the actual entry for James and to realise that finally I had a location in County Clare where my family had resided.

cont

TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE cont:

We travelled to other Parish Offices in West Clare but with no further success. Returning to our research centre, Peter Beirne provided us with as much information as he had on hand relating to West Clare and Kilmurry-Ibrickan and mentioned that Kilkee Parish Records close to this area had not been filmed for prior to 1869. While in the Local Studies Centre we had the good fortune to meet Gerry Kennedy, author and researcher of County Clare and Clara Hoyne and secretary of the Clare Roots Society, who invited us to their meeting that evening. The meeting was attended by, I would suggest, the cream of Clare historians who were all extremely keen to assist us in our search. They provided helpful information and several contacts who could perhaps assist us.

We were now approaching our last week in Ireland and with these new possibilities felt the pressure of again leaving without finding Michael Cusack. I had however resigned myself to the fact that I was happy to have found that my family appeared to have come from the Tromora area in Kilmurry-Ibrickan parish of West Clare.

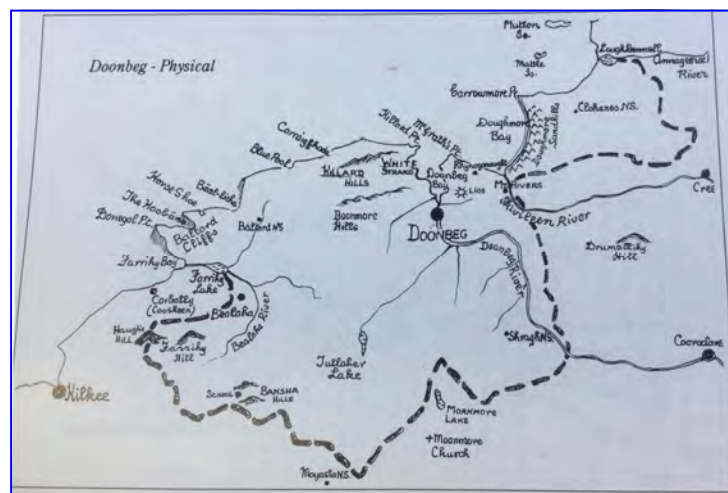
We emailed the Parish Office at Kilkee to set up an appointment to view the Registers. Karen at the Kilkee office included in her reply, all the Cusack baptisms and marriages they had recorded in their index. With all our running around chasing up the possible leads given by Clare Roots members and others it was a day or so before I sat and looked at her email. Amongst the lists of names was a marriage of Michael Cusack and a Bridget Morgan in February 1846 with the witness John Doherty and Ann Gypson. The entry also showed the townland Rynogonaut. I called Georgina to confirm what I was seeing and then looked further and saw that there was a baptism in 1847 for a John to Michael Cusack and a Bridget Moylan – could this be a mis-spelling and perhaps be my great grandfather, John?

We attended at Kilkee Parish Office, where Karen had the index and original parish registers ready for us. A check of the marriage register confirmed that this was in fact my great great grandparents wedding entry. The baptism register was indeed misread by the person transcribing the records for the index and the entry clearly showed John to Michael Cusack and Bridget Morgan, of Clohans, with witnesses Stephen Morgan and Catty Cusack. The surreal feelings returned, tears flowed and strange feeling of a huge burden having been lifted from our shoulders came over us. The twelve year search for my family roots had reached a conclusion.

With just a couple of days left in Ireland we spent time at each townland listed and also back with Peter Beirne at the Local Studies Office at the Clare Library, Ennis finding out as much as possible about these locations in West Clare. One record which leapt out at us was that Michael Cusack among others, was evicted, his house thrown down and he was driven from the lands of Clohanes, Rhineagonnought, Doonbeg, Parish of Killard in a report dated 5th July 1848 by Captain Kennedy to the Poor Law Commissioners. This occurred because he could not pay his rent to his landlord during the great famine. As previously identified, residents of West Clare suffered worse than most during the great famine. This eviction, together with the information that the two Cusack brothers, Michael and Patrick came from Kilmihil, close to my family's townland locations in West Clare, has opened up new lines of research to be undertaken to further build the story of my Cusack family in Ireland. I may yet find a link connecting bridesmaid Susan Cusack with my Cusack family.

During our last days in Ireland, Clara Hoyne of the Clare Roots Society confirmed my inner feelings that I had returned home, saying that "At times I look at you and I can see that you are a Clare man"

"UP THE BANNER"



cont

TWELVE YEAR SEARCH FOR THE CUSACKS OF COUNTY CLARE cont:

FOOTNOTE: In the early stages of my research I visited cemeteries to view graves and headstones of my relatives and ancestors. In the New Ballarat Cemetery, where many of my relations are buried, I located the unmarked double grave site of my great great grandmother Bridget Cusack, nee Morgan, my great grandfather, John, four of John's children Johanna 23 months, Mary Ann 8 months, Winifred 6 months and Patrick William 14 months and Bridget's other son, James. The sparsely covered bare earth in the Catholic section of the cemetery looked cold and unpleasant.

In July 2014, on another visit to Ballarat, Georgina and I decided that my Cusack ancestors from County Clare, should be recognised as having been part of the early life of our country and were now resting at this location in the cemetery. While arranging to erect a headstone on the two graves and completing the necessary paperwork at the cemetery office, staff informed us that a very small deposit had been paid for the plots in 1885 but my ancestors had never completed the purchase and fully paid for the sites. Therefore, before we could give recognition to my ancestral family from County Clare by erecting a headstone, we first had to buy both plots, thankfully at a reduced price.

An attractive headstone now sits above both graves, but I have to say my little family from County Clare have not made any stage of this family history search easy.



LESSONS I HAVE LEARNT ALONG THE WAY: *by Bob Cusack*

- Commence your search by purchasing a family history computer program. It is far easier to enter information once only.
- ASAP talk to your older relations about their parents, grandparents etc. Ask them to record names on the rear of photos, put old letters, cards and similar items away safely.
- Consider speaking with neighbours where your ancestors resided also as they often have been close friends and can at times know more about your family than you do. This is particularly important in Ireland as oral history is very traditional and stories are passed from one generation to the next.
- Seek out advice and help wherever possible and don't try to go it alone.
- Always record your sources of information. It is handy to include the date and physical location of your research and details of the book or catalogue where you found the source.
- Always use an exercise book or similar to record information. Sheets of paper are often lost. Keep your old exercise books as I guarantee you will refer back to them more than once.
- If going to Ireland, ensure you have sufficient preparation and have allowed yourself time to research effectively. Working together, we still used a full month to find my family. If possible, give yourself plenty of time and don't be afraid to knock on doors and ask for help.
- When viewing films, of parish records in particular, don't worry about recording and saving all records of the same names that you are looking for in case they may be members of your family. Concentrate on just looking for your known relatives. You can waste a lot of time writing for no benefit to yourself. By all means record the Parishes that you may wish to view again but do not get distracted by recording everything you read.
- After our previous trip I had said that perhaps one day someone would find a box of previously unfiled records and I feel that this is in effect what has happened with these Kilkee Registers as the National Library of Ireland does not have these films in their vast collection.
- My final comments would have to be, never give up as the rewards and feeling of satisfaction are immense when you finally achieve your goal.

BILL COOLEY OF THE DARGO HIGH PLAINS:

By Ian Stapleton

Ed: Ian is asking for your help in finding more about Bill Cooley. His phone number is at the end of this interesting article.

A car trip across the remote Dargo High Plains today can often be a lonely experience. It's not unusual to go all the way from the Hotham Road to Dargo without meeting another car or seeing another human being the whole way. Back in the 1800's, before there was any semblance of a road, the area was even more isolated of course, but not nearly as lonely. It was teeming with people and bustling with activity. Gold had been discovered in upper reaches of the Dargo River in the 1850's, and before long the pioneering prospectors had worked out that there was an ancient river bed wandering its way along, about 70' under the rich volcanic soils of the Dargo High Plains. It was no easy task, digging down through 70' of basalt to reach it, mind you, and a fair old gamble picking a spot to dig that was actually above the river bed. But a few early ones, (such as Sol Morris on Boiler Plain), had been lucky and struck it pretty rich, and there were plenty of eager diggers willing to give it a go.

The place was soon a hive of activity, attracting all sorts of characters from all over the world, from humble first-time prospectors to well-heeled mining entrepreneurs. And of course, amongst all the rough & tumble of life up there, were lots of colourful bush characters, most of whom never found much gold and moved on leaving hardly a trace. Bill Cooley though, was one who stuck it out for several decades, and who stood out in people's memories.

Here are some extracts of what I was able to put together about him in 'From Fraser's to Freezeout,' a few years back, drawing heavily on snippets of information left by various members of the Treasure family and other local identities.

.....

Harry Treasure knew Bill Cooley well, and wrote quite a bit about him;

"William Cooley, besides being a digger for alluvial gold, was also a great prospector for reefs. He had found many shows, and some rather good ones. Unfortunately for himself, he was unable to read or write but, at the same time, he was not bad at mental arithmetic. He usually either sold, gave away or got swindled out of his finds for very little more than the inevitable bottle of whisky. It was a more than common thing for him to sell twelve 1/8th shares in one mine. Or he might dispose of eight or ten 1/8th shares along with a number of 1/16th shares in another. He found a reef near Smoko on the Ovens River, and named it the 'Homeward Bound.' He later found another reef in the same locality which he used to say was running 'paralysed' with the first one.

Cooley had a habit of partaking rather too freely in strong drink when in company, provided he had money. At times he would make himself very ill, and on one occasion he was so ill he was sure he would not last long. His hut mates advised him to make a Will, stating that they could draw it up for him.

Cooley consented, and to James Coburg, he would leave 1 pound of butter, 2 tins of jam, 1½ pounds of candles, and whatever sugar and flour there was in the bags. To Bill Clark, he would leave a wheelbarrow, a pick, a shovel and a prospecting dish, but he would like him to drive a few nails into the barrow and fix up the wheel. To Mary Thomas of Grant, he would leave his horse, saddle and bridle, requesting that Mary be informed that the horse was quiet, but that she must be careful when getting on.

'And what about your concertina and cash Cooley?' they asked. 'Oh,' he said, 'I think I will keep that for myself.'"

cont

BILL COOLEY OF THE DARGO HIGH PLAINS cont:

Jim Treasure (Harry's son), recalled the story of him calling by Treasure's one day in the 1880's, to buy 5 lb of potatoes from Harry's mother, Emily Treasure.

'But none of those big ones, thanks,' he insisted.

'They're much too heavy to carry.'

And Jim's brother, Jack Treasure, remembered the story of the day Cooley sold a ½ share in the 'Happy Home' mine to old George Treasure, (Harry's father);

"Quite by chance, George was up at Grant shortly after, and soon discovered, whilst at the bar of one of the many pubs there, that in addition to his half share, Cooley had also sold quarter shares in the reef to at least ten other men! He (George) immediately announced that he would fight any man claiming to hold any part of his half share. He took on seven of them that day, and flattened them all. The other three weren't game to present themselves!"

The 'Happy Home' went on to do very well for the Treasure family, but it eventually fizzled out and was abandoned. But not before a good supply of 'Cooley Stories' had become part of the accumulated Treasure family folklore. Here are a few more from Harry's daughter, Freda;

"My grandparents were always very grateful to old Bill Cooley for letting them in on the Happy Home reef. It was the money made from this mine that really got them going. But poor old Bill Cooley really was a sad thing! He was unable to read or write at all, and other people often took advantage of him because of it. One time he had purchased a reef somewhere, and the tenderer was requested to write a receipt on the ceiling of Cooley's hut in charcoal. Knowing Cooley couldn't read, he wrote;

'Cooley's got the reef. Let him go to hell!'

It was written up there for ages and proudly shown to every visitor! The reef turned out to be no good either!

Father remembered lots of his funny little sayings. Anything he didn't understand was, 'out of my jurisdiction,' and a pile of tools hidden in the bush somewhere were once described as, 'too visible to be seen.'

Artie Dibbin from Freeburgh was a miner as well as a cattleman, and so the story of old Bill Cooley interested him;

"He'd prospect the Dargo River in the summer months, and come back to work various mines at Smoko during the Winter. He had an old horse he used to ride up to the Dargo on. On various occasions, his horse would arrive back in Harrierville on its own, with a sign strung around its neck saying,

'Put me in the paddock.'

One year his old horse had a foal, and the foal had a sign strung around its neck too, saying,

'Me too!'

Christ knows who wrote the signs out for 'im!

(Vic Attridge from Harrierville remembered this story too, but insisted that the signs were painted on the horses, not strung around their necks).

cont

BILL COOLEY OF THE DARGO HIGH PLAINS cont:

One of his mates died at Harrierville. At the inquest, the coroner found it to be death by misadventure. Cooley, who'd brought the body in, and who was dressed in his mate's suit at the time, (which was at least three times too big for him!), was asked if he'd incurred any costs.

'£3. 10.0 for my time and fifteen guineas for medical attention,' came the prompt reply.'

Sadly, there are no photos of Bill Cooley at all. One might turn up one day, but it's highly unlikely now. He probably ran a mile at the very sight of a camera. And maybe it's better for us to have to imagine what he looked like anyway. He died a pauper in the Wangaratta Hospital in 1909, aged 75, and is buried at the Wangaratta Cemetery.

.....

A wonderful old character, for sure, whose story should be recorded. Recently, (and quite by accident), Val McPherson (whose own family were amongst the early diggers on the Dargo High Plains), came across the details of Bill Cooley's final resting place, in an unmarked pauper's grave (Plot 145S in the C of E Section) at Wangaratta Cemetery in 1909. The Harrierville Historical Society was keen to put a small plaque on his grave, but those plans soon collapsed when we discovered that the cheapest possible plaque these days in a large regional cemetery costs around \$1250!

But is the grave at Wangaratta 'our Bill Cooley' anyway? Val Brennan did a bit more digging, and found another Bill Cooley who died at Yackandandah in 1904, aged 73. There was also a family of Cooleys listed as living at 'Hotham West' in the early 1900's, which had us thinking for a while, until we realised that 'Hotham West' was a Melbourne suburb in those days. It does seem likely that 'our Bill' is the one buried at Wangaratta, but it would be nice to be more certain.

Has anyone ever come across any other snippets of information relating to the burial of Bill Cooley from the Dargo High Plains or Harrierville, at Wangaratta or Yackandandah? Or anything else pertaining to any other Cooleys in this district, for that matter. We would be very grateful to hear from you.

Ian Stapleton. Ph (03) 5759 2740.



IN MEMORIAM:

The following former members have passed away in the last six months:

- Joan PEACOCK and her husband Ron attended the inaugural meeting of our Society. Joan died on 17th October 2014.
- Charmaie MORLEY, former President of our Society, died on 28 August 2014.
- Bert DYER died on 21st June 2014.
- Marie TRIMBLE died on 17th June 2014, two months before her 81st birthday.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY:

Books:

'101 World Heroes. Great Men and Women for an Unheroic Age', 2007, Simon Sebag Montefiore, Publisher: Quercus Publisher London.

'A to Z of Australian Towns and Cities', 1989, Robert Wilson, Publisher: Weldon Publishing Sydney.

'A Guide to Government Records About Aboriginal People in Victoria. Walata Tyamateetji', 2014, Public Records Office Victoria and National Archives of Australia.

'A Guide to Australian War Memorial', 1955, Halstead Press P/L Sydney.

'An Abridged Guide to Genealogical Sources at CSU Regional Archives', Charles Sturt University.

'Apologies & Appendages. A Final Tally of High Country Characters', 2014, Ian Stapleton – Author & Publisher, Printed by Ligare Book Printer Riverwood NSW.

'Brigidine Sisters in Wangaratta 1887 – 1987', by S R Marcella, Bill O'Callaghan, Joan Canny & Helen Fogarty.

'Cracking the Code of Old Handwriting', 2011, Graham Jaunay, Publisher: Unlock the Past

'Death Certificates and Archaic Medical Terms', 2011, Helen V Smith, Publisher: Unlock the Past.

'Family History Research in Yorkshire' Pauline M Litten, 1997, Publisher: Federation of Family History Societies Ltd.

'Migrant Sailing Ships From Hamburg', 1993, Ronald Parsons, Publisher: Gould Publishing Services.

'North Irish Roots', 1998 & 1999, Journal of the North of Ireland Family History Society.

'Over a Century of News from the Archives of *Truth* 1890 – 1992', 1993, Compiled & Published by Adrian Savvas.

'Reminiscences of David Reid as given to J C H Ogier in November 1905'.

'Tay Valley Family Historian 25th Anniversary 1980-2005', 2005, Journal of the Tay Valley Family History Society No. 70.

'The Complete Book of Great Australian Women. Thirty Six Women Who Changed the Course of Australia', 2003, Susanna De Vries, Publisher: Harper Collins.

'The Genealogy Handbook. The Complete Guide to Tracing Your Family Tree', 2001, Ellen Galford, Publisher: Readers Digest (Australia) P/L.

'The History and Records of West Terrace Cemetery Adelaide', 1986, Andrew G Peake, Publisher: Tudor Australia Press SA.

'Tracing Your Ancestors in Northern Ireland', 1997, Ian Maxwell, Publisher: Public Records Office of Northern Ireland.



WANGARATTA THREADS

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