

DUBBO & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC



Newsletter 49 – July-August 2020 (Another Covid-19 issue)

Location: Ground floor – Two storey Community Arts Building Western Plains Gallery, Cnr. Gipps and Wingewarra Streets, Dubbo.

Opening hours: Tuesday 1.00-4pm, Thursday 2.00-6.00pm, Friday 10.00-1.00pm, Saturday 10.00-4.00pm

Society webpage: www.dubbofamilyhistory.org.au

Society email: info@dubbofamilyhistory.org.au

Postal address: PO Box 868, Dubbo. 2830 NSW

Society phone no: 02 6881 8635 (during opening hours)

Management Committee

Linda Barnes	68878284	martinandlinda@gmail.com	President/Librarian
Lyn Smith	68850107	baretsmiths@bigpond.com	Vice President
Ken Fuller	68818128	kfuller8@bigpond.com	Treasurer
Robyn Allan	68844572	rpallan@bigpond.net.au	Minute Secretary
June Wilson	68825366	juniwil1943@gmail.com	
Karlynn Robinson	68855773	karlynrobinson@tpg.com.au	
Kathy Furney	68825533	kathyfurney47@gmail.com	Newsletter
Lesley Abrahams	68822242	ljabrahams@bigpond.com	

Management Committee Meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10am in DDFHS Library. Members are welcome to attend these meetings, or simply contact any of the committee listed above if you have anything you would like discussed at the meeting. **No meetings currently being held during Covid-19 pandemic.**

Newsletter Information Please share any interesting information, news of an interesting website, or maybe a breakthrough with your family history, with other members. Contact Kathy Ph.0427 971 232 or email kathyfurney47@gmail.com if you have anything that can be shared. We would love to print your item as it is exciting to hear about our members' research.

Website and Facebook Check out the website and Facebook regularly as there is often useful information on them. Regular updates, with information for our members, are being made to both, and always 'like' our Facebook page where Karlyn has lots of interesting snippets.

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Society News 😊😊👐👐🌻🌻🌻🌻

The family history rooms have re-opened on a limited basis. At this stage we will only be opening on **Tuesdays (1pm-3pm) and Saturdays (10am-12noon)**. It has been good to see members coming in, despite the restricted hours. Please ensure you check the information sheet forwarded to all members by email on the 22nd June, before coming into the rooms.

From Our President I am delighted that we have been able to open our rooms for our members from July and will be doing so again in August and September. We will review this regularly, hoping to resume to 'normal' as soon as is safe to do so.

I thank those Research Assistants who have volunteered on the roster and who clean our rooms after each session. It has been great to see members in our rooms pursuing their research and able to have a chat again.

As always, the health and safety of our members is our top priority and we have put in place all legal requirements to ensure this. I thank everyone for staying home if they are not well, using the hand sanitizer provided and maintaining safe social distancing. We are only open two days a week so any resources not able to be cleaned have the necessary quarantine time.

At this time, we will **not** be able to recommence our other activities but plan to do so when we are confident it is safe. Our AGM will be held in March **next** year if all is well. Please use our resources albeit with limited hours and be patient as we slowly and safely transition to our old 'normal'. Do explore online resources and check blogs as well as websites for new ideas and tips and tricks.

I hope to see you in our rooms in the near future.

Linda Barnes, President

Family History Research Our **face book** page has turned up information relating to my own family with even a photo of my great, great grandparents, who appear in the front of this photo on the left and right. They are John and Susan (nee Marlin) Cross. The inquiry was from a descendant of John's sister Fanny who is sitting next to Jane in the front row. So, keep your eye on our face book, you never know who will turn up there.



Journals Received With the rooms being closed for over four months, we have a build-up of new journals in our rooms. Many people like to look at the **UK Family Tree** magazine which comes out every month. We now have issues from February through to June on the shelves.

The latest issue of the **Digger** magazine is also available. For anyone interested in the first world war and stories relating to soldiers, this is a very interesting magazine. There are stories relating to soldiers from many areas, with soldiers from Dubbo, Forbes, Gilgandra and many other towns in the west.

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In addition, the June issue of **UK Family Tree** has two good articles on WW 1 and WW2.

History magazine issue for March, from the Royal Australian Historical Society has an interesting article on Australian miners who travelled to Canada in the late 1890's chasing the **Klondike Gold**. This article is by Dr. Robin McLachlan.

Descent magazine for March has a short article on "**Tips to Tidy Your Ancestry Family Tree**" by Katrina Bowman which might be useful.

This issue also has an article by Dr. Rosemary Kerr relating to roadside "**big things**". The "Big Banana" at Coffs Harbour and "Big Bogan" at Nyngan are just a couple of the "big things" covered.



The Big Bogan at Nyngan



Big Banana at Coffs Harbour

Using Trove for Research - An Actress named Florence "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" is the opening line of Jane Austen's novel "Pride and Prejudice", the book recounting the romance between Elizabeth Bennet and her Mr Darcy. Those words to some extent remind me of Florence Ethel Sproule and her D'Arcy Lambton. My interest in Florence came about while exploring my Sproule (and variations of the surname) ancestors in online newspapers, where I would often come across headlines about her in newspapers both in the United Kingdom and Australia (including Dubbo). It did not take long to confirm that she was the niece of my great grandfather, Samuel Joseph Sprowles.

Florence was born in 1870 in Goulburn, her parents being Andrew Arthur Sproule and Jane Amelia Whelan. The local Goulburn newspaper made reference to her promising acting ability in her teenage years and in her late teens she moved to Sydney and appeared on the stage in Haymarket. Here she met D'Arcy Lambton and they were married in Sydney in 1888. But D'Arcy was not a colonial lad but the Honourable D'Arcy Lambton, a Naval Officer, the son of Lord George Frederick D'Arcy Lambton the 2nd Earl of Durham and Lady Beatrix Frances Hamilton, Countess of Durham. Florence misrepresented herself as coming from a good family, the possessor of a small competence and considerable expectations, receiving £400 or £500 a year. In 1890 they sailed for England (together with a maid) and in 1891 their only child, Eileen, was born. The 1891 Census shows them living at Ashted, Surrey with 5 servants.

Whist in Paris in about 1892, and without her husband, Florence became ill when she tried to take poison. A Richard Berridge, telegraphed D'Arcy, who then proceeded to Paris. D'Arcy became friendly with Mr Berridge, who visited them in England and they, in turn, visited him in Ireland. But then D'Arcy's brother alerted him to the fact that Florence and Mr Berridge were having relations of an "improper nature". Hence, divorce proceedings commenced, citing Lambton v. Lambton, Pedro, Biondi and Berridge. Pedro (real name Joe Esquivel) was a showman riding horses in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show who Florence obviously met when the show was touring England. Ugo Biondi was an Italian theatre singer (who even came to Australia). "Dearly loved a petticoat" was one description of him in a newspaper. It was in 1899 when headlines appeared in various newspapers, some being - "A Living Lie", "Aristocratic Divorce", "A Society Scandal" "Ten Years of Bliss and Misery".

In a long pitiful letter to D'Arcy, Florence made her confessions. Some of the sentiments expressed in the letter stated that she had begun with a lie and had so often tried to end her life. She confessed that she was poor when she married, and was not expecting to come into money. Also, that her father was a

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drunkard and that with drink and extravagance she had fallen very low. A divorce was granted after which D'Arcy and his daughter remained in England and Florence returned to Australia. Florence married James Nicholson in 1900 in Sydney where she died in 1941 and is buried in Botany Cemetery. There were no children of that marriage.

The Dubbo connection. Florence's mother (Jane) separated from Andrew and came to live in Dubbo, together with Florence's siblings, although it is not known why the move took place. Andrew died in 1909 and in that year Jane (Florence's mother) married William Hawken/Hawkins in St Andrew's Manse, Dubbo. Her obituary in the Dubbo Dispatch in 1932 states that she came to Dubbo about 1881 but had left the town a couple of decades ago. Florence had four siblings, with Ada, married Charles Richards 1885 in Dubbo, Albert married Maud Feebery 1895 in Dubbo, Leslie married Mabel Emmett in Sydney in 1895 but they lived in Dubbo, Arthur married Isabella Gillies 1901 in Dubbo.

Thank you to member Pam Harvey for sharing this part of her family history research, and people say family history is boring!!

Help Needed Can anyone help with the following inquiry we have received?

"I know this is a tall ask but I have a Holy Bible which I found in my Mothers belongings. She may have been given it, or bought it from a second hand store. The name mentioned is not related to my family as I do my family history.

On the front page it says '**Presented to ENA by Bruce Hinds (pastor) A Davey (sec) from the members of Dubbo Baptist Church DATE 14-10-38**'.

Some good sleuthing by member Pam Harvey came up with the following information on the Trove website. There was an **Ena** who left Dubbo in October 1938 to sail with her sister (**Beryl**) and mother (**Mrs Watts**) to make their home in England with Mrs Watts' mother.

The daughter Beryl, married in England and returned to Australia in 1939 with her husband.

in another issue in August 1946 it appeared that **Mrs. Watts** and **Ena** returned to Australia, and were met by Mrs. Watts sister **Mrs. Bell** from Dubbo. The newspapers indicate Mrs Watts was a member of the Dubbo Baptist Church and that they lived at Brocklehurst, which is very close to Dubbo. Whether this the same Ena cannot be verified, so if any member knows anything and could help with inquiry please contact **Kathy Furney** (0427 971 232 or email kathyfurney47@gmail.com)

Aboriginality Research We often get asked questions about researching aboriginal heritage. This is always a difficult topic of research as early records are very sketchy in relation to births, deaths and marriages in this area. However, the NTSCORP (National Title Service Corp) does have a genealogy research team headed by Michael Bennett. We have referred people to Michael in the past to help them with research in this area. Their office is in Redfern, and they can be contacted on 02 9310 3188 or email information@ntscorp.com.au

Research in our rooms You may recall a recent story in the Dubbo Daily Liberal relating to research by Peter Woodley from Canberra. Peter, who was born and raised in the Dubbo region, is currently researching and writing a social history of Dubbo's rural area between about 1880 and 1950. As part of his research while in Dubbo, he spent many hours going through the Talbragar Shire Rates which our society is fortunate enough to be custodians of. Another area he is researching is the whereabouts of a 'small sub-machine gun' which was displayed at Wongarbron for some time after WW1. If anyone can help Peter with information relating to the early social history of our area or the 'small sub-machine gun' he would be more than happy to hear from them. He can be contacted on 0422 002 084.

