

# DUBBO & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC



## Newsletter 50 – September-October 2020 (And yet 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](http://www.dubbofamilyhistory.org.au)

Society email: [info@dubbofamilyhistory.org.au](mailto:info@dubbofamilyhistory.org.au)

Postal address: PO Box 868, Dubbo. 2830 NSW

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

### Management Committee

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Lesley Abrahams	68822242	<a href="mailto:ljabrahams@bigpond.com">ljabrahams@bigpond.com</a>	

**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](mailto: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 are still operating on a restricted basis. At this stage 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 22<sup>nd</sup> June, before coming into the rooms.

**Aboriginality Research** In the last newsletter I suggested contacting the NTSCORP (National Title Service Corp) genealogy research team. We have referred people to this group in the past to help them with research in this area. Please note that I have been advised that this corporation is now **only** conducting family history research for native land title clients.

However **Michael Bennett** who does some research for this group has advised that he is willing to assist people with their aboriginal family history research. He can be contacted at [tracker.history@gmail.com](mailto:tracker.history@gmail.com) You should also check out the website <http://pathfindersnsw.org.au> for interesting stories relating to aboriginal trackers in New South Wales, particularly around our area. You will need to confer with Michael as to the cost of any research he carries out. In the Wellington District inquiries can be made with the Wellington Aboriginal Health Service. Another group is the Wellington Valley Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation. Their email is [wvac@hotmail.com](mailto:wvac@hotmail.com) Thanks to Dorothy Blake for this information).

Michael Bennett recently published a book called **"Pathfinders"** relating to this subject. A copy of the book is available in our rooms, so if you want some interesting reading have a look at this publication.

On the personal side Michael grew up in Dubbo and went to South Dubbo High School. His family were involved in Bennett Brickworks which had brick kilns in both south and north Dubbo. His interest in trackers was piqued by his grandparents Egbert (Eggie) and Heather Bennett who told him of some of the exploits of Dubbo's well known "Tracker Riley".



Author of 'Pathfinders', Michael Bennett.

**Aboriginal History** Further to our information last issue relating to researching Aboriginal history, you may find some of the books we have on our shelves useful for your research. A couple of publications that come to mind are "Legacies" which are stories from Aboriginal settlements of southeastern Australia, with some family trees and photographs. This book is written by Peter Kabaila and is a very readable publication.

There are several other books on our shelves, which you can find by looking in the locality section, such as Narrabri, Wilcannia, or checking out our index on the library computer.

**Did you know.** (1) In the 1400s a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence, we have '*the rule of thumb.*'

(2) In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence, we have '*goodnight, sleep tight.*'

*(Thanks to Pam Harvey)*

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**Family Search** website has recently added over 6.5million records to their site. They have been added to such areas as France, Nord Parish and Civil Registrations, 1524-1893, the 1851 Canada Census, New York Passenger Lists 1897-1902, and New Jersey Naturalization records 1905-1944. Collections were also expanded for Brazil, England, Germany, Peru, S. Africa, Venezuela, and the US (Obituaries, civil, and church records for CA, HI, IL, MS, NC, NJ, PA, TX, UT, VA, and WA). This site, which is available in our rooms to members, now has over **8 billion free** names and record images available.

**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 September on the shelves.

The June issue of **Digger** magazine which is published by Friends and Family of the First AIF, has stories on soldiers in WW1. Of interest in this issue are articles on **Private Leslie Gow** who came from the **Obley** area and enlisted in **Dubbo** on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 1916. He had a younger brother David who travelled to Tooraweenah and was one of the 23 original members of the Kookaburra Enlistment March. Leslie Gow's story tells of the horrendous injuries he survived, and his return to civilian life in Australia. He is mentioned on the **Obley War Memorial**.

Another story relates **Lance Corporal Herman Coath** from **Wellington**, who was a train driver. The story about this part of his life is an interesting segment, without his war story. Herman Coath was born at **Mumbil**.

**Pte Stanley Stephens** who enlisted at **Gilgandra** and was part of the Coo-ee March has a story provided by Helen Thompson of Dubbo.

If you are interested in WW1, you should check out this journal when you are next in our rooms.

**Nazi Victim Records** The Arolsen Archives in Bad Arolsen Germany has announced it has reached a milestone, with 26 million records added to its database of Nazi victims and survivors. Working in conjunction with Yad Vashem, the holocaust Memorial Centre in Jerusalem, Israel, archivists have created an invaluable database for finding Jewish relatives whose fate might have been unknown in the wake of World War 11. The new uploads include data on the deportations of Jews, Roma and Sinti from the former German Empire, Austria, Bohemia and Moravia. Website: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en>  
*From UK Family Tree Magazine of July 2020, reported by Dick Eastman on his Online Genealogy newsletter.*

**National Archives** has announced that it is offering free access to its digital records for as long as it remains closed to the public during the Coronavirus pandemic. Registered users can order and download up to 10 items at no cost, to a maximum of 50 items over 30 days. National Archives explains that the limits are there 'to try and help manage the demand for content and ensure the availability of our digital services for everyone'. Register for a free account at <https://familytr.ee/freenat>

**AIF Diggers photos wanted** Do you have a photo of an AIF ancestor who played in or attended the AIF cricket, tennis, rugby (union and league), Aussie rules, rowing, athletics, swimming, rifle shooting, football, tug of war, inter-battalion or divisional sports competitions in the UK, Middle East or France. Photos could also include AIF members attending sports events or regattas such as diggers amongst crowds, as spectators or in grandstands at any sporting event in Egypt; France or the UK.

Any other photographs of the April 25, 1919 Anzac Day march in London; AIF ancestors getting married in the UK; or attending vocational workshops or training classes during repatriation would also be helpful. I would require permission from interested families to use the photos in The Oarsmen documentary. Families would be respectively credited and acknowledged in the tail credit sequence of the final film.

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What is needed: High resolution digital copies (ideally scanned) of original photos (jpegs or tiffs) would need to be no less than 300dpi and originate from personal family photograph albums only. Copies of photos from newspapers cannot be used.

Please see the link to the Documentary Australia Foundation website that has further information.

<https://documentaryaustralia.com.au/project/the-oarsmen/> Contact: Scott Patterson,

Director+Producer+Editor, Slamcam Films Ph. 0412 465 745 if you can help at all.

**River Crossing in Dubbo** In the early 1860s, there were no bridges across the Macquarie River but Mr Charles Lloyd Purvis established a punt and ferrying service, charging 1/- per head to ford the river. Horses and cattle swam across. In 1861 the New South Wales Legislative Assembly first discussed the cost of building a bridge, rather than investing in a newer punt system across the Macquarie. By 1864 the Legislative Council voted for £7000 to erect a bridge across the river. The Government Gazette reported on 27 April 1864 that a tender for the bridge had been accepted by Andrew McCauley.

The bridge, spanning the river from the foot of Bultje Street, was opened amid much fanfare on 24 May 1866. It was opened and christened twice on the same day. Mrs Serisier and Miss Carroll, representing the ladies of Dubbo, named it the Oxley Bridge. The Royalist faction of the town declared the name of the bridge as the Albert Bridge. Interestingly, this toll bridge became known generally as the White Bridge. By 1871, and with much public protest including burning of effigies of politicians, the toll was removed the following year.

In 1905 a new bridge was constructed across the Macquarie in the same location at the foot of Bultje Street and it retained the name of The White Bridge.

No further changes were made until a new, longer and wider bridge spanned the river from the foot of Cobra Street - the L H Ford Bridge, that opened on 26 September 1969.

A further river crossing at the end of Erskine Street is the low-level Emile Serisier Bridge. Built in 1986, it forms part of the Newell Highway freight corridor.

And today, in 2020, we await further news and developments of a bridge across the Macquarie River at River Street in North Dubbo, expected for 2022. As well, plans are in progress for yet another bridge to cross the Macquarie into south Dubbo.

*This article was written by Karlyn Robinson and appeared on our Face book page. Thank you Karlyn for your ongoing research into interesting history which you publish for us.*



The White Bridge opened 1866, Photo by Henry Beaufoy Merlin 1873



Old White Bridge on left, built 1905 and L H Ford Bridge built 1969, Photo Dubbo Reg. Council

