

# The Hawkesbury Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE HAWKESBURY FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

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**Cricket team, Windsor 1923**

For more information see p. 17 ~ Image courtesy Bev Leaney

## *June 2010*

### **HAWKESBURY FAMILY HISTORY FAIR**

**Saturday 7 August 2010 9am-5pm**

Anyone with an interest in family history is invited to attend the **Hawkesbury Family History Fair** at Hawkesbury City Library on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2010 9am to 5pm**. For more details see p. 28

Hawkesbury Central Library, 300 George Street Windsor NSW  
Enquiries T: 02 4560-4466 E: [history@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:history@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

## REX PHILIP STUBBS 1950-2010



It is with regret that we record the passing of Councillor (Dr) Rex Stubbs OAM well known in the community as well as to members of the Hawkesbury Family History Group. Rex was born and raised in the Hawkesbury and an advocate of the area that he grew up in. His passion for history may stem from his family background. Born in 1950 at Pitt Town, Rex was a descendant of six generations of Hawkesbury families including Stubbs, Hobbs, Wilbow and Wright and had a keen interest in family history. A number of years ago, the Hawkesbury Family History Group compiled the Hawkesbury Pioneer Register (1994) to celebrate European settlement in the Hawkesbury. Rex and wife Linda supported this project by contributing information about Rex's ancestors. At this time it is interesting to view his family tree and appreciate his strong connection to the Hawkesbury.

Councillor Rex Stubbs was the longest serving Councillor on Hawkesbury City Council, elected in 1983. Rex had an abiding love of art, history and culture. Rex Stubbs passed away on the 24 April 2010 aged 60 years. His funeral was one of the largest held in St Matthew's Anglican Church and was buried at Pitt Town.

Rex is survived by his wife Linda and children Philip and Alicia.

## HAWKESBURY FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

The Hawkesbury Family History Group is available to people who have an interest in family history of the Hawkesbury area or live in the Hawkesbury and are researching their family history. There are no joining or membership fees. The group meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month (except January) at Hawkesbury Central Library, 300 George Street, Windsor commencing at 10am. The **HAWKESBURY CRIER** is the quarterly newsletter of the group & is available on application from the address below. The cost is \$20 per annum posted or \$5x1 year / \$10x2 years, electronically. **Articles, notices & enquiries are always welcome for the Hawkesbury Crier. Preferably typed although clear legible handwritten items are also acceptable.** Additional information regarding the group or the Local Studies Collection of Hawkesbury City Council Library Service is available from the Local Studies Librarian Michelle Nichols, c/- Hawkesbury City Council Library Service, 300 George Windsor 2756 NSW Tel (02) 4560-4466 / Fax (02) 4560-4472 or by email [mnichols@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mnichols@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

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TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY  
OR THE AUTHENTICITY OF ARTICLES, OR ANY  
STATEMENTS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

# THE ARGENT FAMILY at WILBERFORCE

by Judy Sanders (nee Argent)



*My Dad was Charles Albert Edward Argent. Charles, his father Albert and grandfather Edward all made a living by farming our Wilberforce property known as Portion 235, in the Parish of Wilberforce, County of Cook. The Argents knew this property as Charmaray when Albert was the owner. Later it was called Elovera when Charles married Ada Salt and built a new home there. My Mum Ada still lives in that home. Today my husband John and I live on the farm (Portion 235) and we call it Tin Gully.*

*We care for the property by conserving the soil, saving the water and maintaining the vegetation. We recycle everything that can be reused. We share Tin Gully with our cattle and the many other creatures that have made their home there.*

***This is the story of the Argents who lived on Portion 235, a jigsaw pieced together from tales Dad told and also from published records of the period. The original farmhouse which we call 'the old house' is still standing. It has been used for many different purposes over the years since Dad's family called it home. The property has been continually owned by our family since 1898, and there was no Council garbage collection until around the late 1960s.***

My Great Grandfather Edward came to Australia from Sheffield England in about 1885 aged 37, on a sailing ship (whose name I have yet to discover). He brought with him two children Albert Edward (aged 2) and Emily (aged 12). Not long before leaving England, Edward's wife Sarah Ann had died at the age of 38. Their daughter Elizabeth had died in 1881 at age 15.

Edward's eldest son Arthur William had come to Sydney on 24 March 1885 on the 'Gulf of Mexico' and on 28 October 1885 he married Catherine Angeline Johnson. Catherine's parents lived at Watsons Bay where her father Henry was the keeper of Hornby lighthouse. As Albert was only 2 years of age when he arrived in Sydney it seems Catherine Johnson's mother, Mary raised Albert at Hornby lighthouse, Watson's Bay. Dad called Catherine 'Auntie Kate'.

According to this 'missing persons notice' published in the *Brisbane Courier* newspaper on Monday 18 January 1892 Edward was residing with the Johnsons at the lighthouse in 1888.

## **Missing Persons: ARGENT, Edward**

About four years ago Edward was residing at Mrs. Johnson's, Watson's Bay, Sydney, New South Wales. He had two children when he left England. His parents entreat news of him or his family.

It was in 1892 that Edward's father Thomas died, so the family back in England were trying to contact Edward and his children. It would seem that the family had received no news from them during the previous four years. It was understood that Edward had a coal and coke business on South Head during this period.

On 3 November 1898 Edward was successful in being granted 40 acres of land at Wilberforce under the Homestead Selection scheme. Under this scheme the selector was required to commence residency on the block within 3 months and to erect a dwelling with a value not less than £20 within 18 months of the date of confirmation

of the application with the Department'. Confirmation date for Edward was December 13 1898. Edward and Albert moved onto this land, and started to clear it for farming. To meet the conditions of the homestead selection grant we can assume Edward had commenced residency by February 1899 and a dwelling erected by May 1900. A slab hut was erected on the site, where the kitchen and back room of the 'old house' stands today.

Dad always said that his father and grandfather were living on this block during the flood of 1902. Records show a 14.1m (46 ft) flood in July 1900 and another in 1904 of 12.2m (40ft). The biggest flood recorded in the district was in 1867 reaching 19m (63ft). The July 1900 flood was the highest flood recorded since 1867.

*Imagine the scene: English born father and son (18 years old) sheltering in a slab hut with water roaring through Tin Gully into Currency Creek. We have experienced two floods of the proportions of the one of 1900 while living on this property: one in 1961 (15m) and another in 1964 (14.5m). They were frightening - and we had the benefit of warnings from the weather bureau and modern communications like telephone, radio and TV.*

Nearby was another portion of around 40 acres of land (Portion 233, Parish of Wilberforce, County of Cook), owned by David McLagan. When Mr McLagan died the land was left to Albert, who continued to make the payments required under the Homestead Selection scheme. We knew this as the property where the Vincent family lived in the 1950-60s, on the eastern side of Putty Road, with the northern boundary being Currency Creek.

Dad told me that around 1900 Albert used a Crescent Incubator (imported, probably American) to hatch batches of 100 eggs. This incubator is still owned by the family. Albert despatched eggs to Sydney (prior to NSW Egg Marketing Board coming into existence). There must have been enough poultry on the farm, or available locally at that time, to regularly supply these 100 eggs.



It seems both Edward and Albert took paid 'off farm' work whenever possible, as the farm was not yet producing an income. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 19<sup>th</sup> October 1901 states 'A meeting of the trustees of the Wilberforce Recreation reserve was held on Monday evening last when the contract for working around the trees, repairing the tennis court etc. was given to Mr E Argent.'

**This photo is of Edward with his elder son Arthur William. Arthur is holding a chicken! It appears poultry keeping ran in the family.**

In July 1902 Albert appears in a photo as a member of 'A' Windsor company of 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment. This photo is in the Hawkesbury Historical Society's collection housed at the Hawkesbury Regional Museum in Windsor. Each winter Albert went rabbiting in western NSW with a horse and cart. He trapped rabbits for years out near Nyngan, and in the Pilliga scrub area, and told Dad that he used to catch two rabbits for each trap set per night! There was a rabbit plague in that area at this time. He was the owner of the horse bell that we still own. This bell was used when the horse was hobbled at night. The horse could wander along grazing, but the hobbles prevented it galloping away. The ringing of the bell allowed Albert to locate the horse next morning. Later Albert was employed by the Country Freezing Co. buying rabbits from other trappers and inspecting them for hydatids. By then he was travelling to Nyngan by train, and told Dad of one train driver who was carry him on for half a mile beyond the station. He had to walk back, carrying his gear, to Nyngan township. Albert Argent married Gertrude Williams in 1910, the marriage was registered in Redfern. Gertrude was the daughter of Charles and Alice Williams. Her family had come to NSW from Birmingham England around 1880. She had eight brothers and sisters. In early 1900s the Williams family lived at Redfern and by 1910 were at Rockdale. Gertie was a member of the Redfern Musical Society.



After their marriage Albert and Gertie made their home on the Wilberforce farm. Edward lived there too. The farmhouse was still the 1900 vintage slab hut that had provided shelter for Edward and Albert. Before Gertie's arrival a new section was built, to the east of the old hut, providing two bedrooms. The house also had a lovely front verandah, complete with bull-nosed iron roof and lattice surround. A grapevine grew around it. Dad used to sleep on this verandah, and in winter woke to find frost on his blanket! Later the formal lounge room was added.



The timber for the lounge room came from company called 'Hart Hitchcock'. Dad thought the company was at Parramatta. The farmhouse was built close to a waterhole in Tin Gully Creek. A water filter was used to clean the water before it was used in the kitchen. Later two water tanks caught rain water from the northern and southern sides of the house, supplying kitchen and laundry.

Some sheds were built close to the house, facing north where the dam is now. There was a stable to the north west of this area and we have found horse shoes there, buried in the soil. Around 1910 Albert had a job with Boxall's Cordial factory in Windsor. He would ride a bike to the Windsor factory. His job was to deliver drinks, using two horses pulling a four wheeled cart, to the Richmond, North Richmond and Windsor areas. In his spare time Albert worked on the farm clearing more land and he planted small crops with a horse and single furrow plough. (*Several of these ploughs were later found lying where they were last used!*) He planted vegetables like turnips and onions. The furrows were straight as a die and no weeds were allowed to grow. More citrus trees were also planted. The first planting of citrus trees was not yet producing a crop. Albert and Gertrude Argent had three children; all born at Rockdale hospital, close to Gibbes Street where Gertie's parents lived. Charles Albert Edward was born in 1911, Mavis Alice in 1914 and Raynor Arthur in 1918. At this time the Wilberforce property was called 'Charmaray' (made up from the names of these three children).

Albert loved his vegetable garden. The edges of the garden were marked with upturned bottles, which became obvious when the soil in front of the old house was exposed during the 1980s drought. We still have the cane basket he used for gathering vegetables.

The citrus trees, closest to Argents Road, were so big when Charles was very young that the ground around them couldn't be worked with two horses, without damaging the trees. These trees were pulled out when they were about 40 years old. Edward and Albert Argent made cider from their own apples. Usually the apples were sliced, but one year they put them through a mincer. The brew, as a result, was much more potent than usual. The baker was given some, as a Christmas drink. He went off to sleep in his baker's cart on the way back to Windsor, and woke up seeing double. Albert had a drink and went to chip around orange trees and kept working into the middle of the row, instead of around the trees. Gertie had a drink too and went to sleep. When Albert and Edward returned for lunch none was prepared. Dad's cousin Billy Mullard put his head under a big cask of cider, thinking it was water, and made his hair very sticky, and he was soon covered in flies.

As a child Charles took milking cows around to McLagan's block before school. After school he brought them home for milking. The cows stayed overnight at Charmaray, probably milked next morning before their trip back to McLagan's. Every Saturday morning he walked up to Salters Road near the Salter family home to buy meat from a butcher who came from Sackville with a 'cutting cart'. Meat was transported, ready for cutting, in the cart. Charles' mother ordered meat a week ahead. The land he travelled through was all government owned. In about 1918 the slab hut was pulled down and a new kitchen and back verandah built. A barn, complete with loft was built by Albert Argent and Mr Becroft for packing fruit in about 1920s. It had a 'bush timber' frame, and second-hand iron was used for the walls and roof. We call this the 'feed shed'. Although badly damaged by a severe windstorm a few years ago this shed still exists today.



Albert bought one of the first Ford model T trucks in the district in 1923. He carted 9 tons of timber in this truck for Mr and Mrs Carr's house in Carrs Road Wilberforce. He had two seats made, to put on the back, to carry passengers to local events like Hawkesbury Show. Albert operated a carrying business from Wilberforce to Windsor station. He carried fruit for 3<sup>d</sup> per case. Two of his clients were Harry and Billy Smith, who had orchards at Glossodia.

***This photo***, taken about 1949 shows Charles, myself and Mum's dog 'Mackie' with the Ford model T truck in the background. Charles used this truck for carrying goods and equipment around the farm, until he was able to afford to buy

a grey 'Fergie' tractor, in the 1950s. The truck was then left parked, unused beside one of the poultry sheds, and I loved playing on it as a child. Remnants of it can still be found around the farm.

My Dad, Charles, started school at Wilberforce in 1916 at the age of 5. A school coach was provided; one draught horse pulled a four wheeled covered wagon, and had room for about twelve children. If you lived between 1.5 and 3 miles from the school you were eligible for free travel from home to school (paid for by the State). Charles didn't qualify as he lived less than 1.5 miles from the school.

Gertie's sister Rose had married Fred Buick and they were operating Dunstan's store in Wilberforce. They allowed Charles to ride their horse 'Nigger' to and from school. He left school in 1925 at 14 years of age. There were no high schools in the district, the closest was Parramatta. Charles reached 6<sup>th</sup> class - Qualifying Certificate standard. At this time an insurance policy taken out by his parents matured and Charles was presented with £50. His father advised him to buy a Trehwella Pulling Machine (costing £42) to clear the property originally owned by David McLagan. He did so, clearing 5 acres and planted citrus trees with the aid of his father. After leaving school in 1925 Charles worked on his father's farm. In 1927 Charles started work at Klein's Garage in Wilberforce and continued there until 1934. While working at the garage he bought a property at Kulnura, on the NSW Central Coast. Gertie's relations, the Mullard family, owned property in that area. When Charles was about 17 years old (1928) citrus prices were so low, due to drought that the family decided to try to make a living from poultry, by producing eggs.



In 1930 there was a drought during the winter with severe frosts and two consecutive crops of citrus were ploughed in. The fruit was dry and burnt by frost –hundreds of cases lost and the citrus trees ruined. So the family had to diversify again to mixed farming and poultry. The orchards eventually gave way completely to poultry. Poultry farming produced a more stable living. When you bought a batch of day old chickens you received a mixture of both pullets and cockerels. The cockerels were sold for meat. There were no meat chicken breeds in those days.

Albert then bought a Chevrolet 4 one ton truck to take goods all the way to Sydney. He also carried chaff and pollard from Windsor to Wilberforce. Goods would arrive at Windsor station and had to be unloaded and carried away, as quickly as possible, to avoid paying demurrage. In 1932 the back verandah of the farmhouse was closed in and was ready for the celebration of Charles 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The farms in this area were self supporting. Families could live on home-grown vegetables, milk, butter, eggs and fruit, and they'd kill their own pigs. Corn, pumpkins and potatoes were main crops grown on the flood plain. It was harder up here in the 'highland' dry farming area, but people seemed to get by with not much money. Drilling for underground water in the area was generally not satisfactory - the water was too salty. They depended on surface water, caught in dams. They used dry farming methods, with no irrigation, so if there was no rain then there were no crops. This was a bit unreliable but creeks and dams provided enough water until the droughts of the 1980s. It was not like having the river to irrigate from.

Our neighbours were Becrofts on the eastern boundary and Salters further up, on the top of the hill. Mr and Mrs Good lived next door, on the western side of our property. They brought up a young English lad called Gordon. He and Charles were great mates. Mrs Good taught Charles how to play the piano 'by ear'. Gordon kept in touch with Dad and Mum all his life –we knew him then as Ernest. Mum thinks his name must have been Gordon Ernest Good as she recalls he was nicknamed 'GEG'. He appears with Dad beside the school coach in the picture above.

The property on the southern corner of Argents and Putty Roads was once owned by Salters, and later by Hilliers. It extended to Browns Road and included all properties up to and including where Cecil and Shirley Jeffery live today. It was covered with citrus. It was then purchased by Bill Taylor. Then the property was used for grazing and a track for training trotting horses was later constructed. (This track was still in use in 1950s)

Country dances were held at Glossodia. Music was provided by an old chap playing a piano accordion. Later the Wilberforce School of Arts was built. During its construction there was a severe storm and the frame collapsed.

The Sunshine Club was a social club with voluntary musicians. A few of the locals played piano and helped out with dance music. You paid 1/6 to attend and a good spread was provided for supper. The womenfolk were good cooks. There was a dance held about once a month.

They made their own amusement, playing cricket and tennis. There was a tennis court on 'Charmaray' on the eastern side of Tin Gully Creek, close to the boundary fence in what we call the 'bull paddock' today. It was used from about 1926 to the mid 1930s. It was a sandy court with wire netting around the perimeter. The court was used every Saturday, with up to twenty players. People walked out from Wilberforce. Albert and Gertie would play. Wilberforce residents Alf Greentree and his wife were also players. They would boil the billy, there was plenty of firewood and racquets were a reasonable price. Social evenings were held at different homes as most families had a piano and someone could play. There was a big room at the old place where these were socials were held. When the farm consisted only of an orchard the family could leave it and go away for a week. Dad recalled Christmases spent at Kulnura, with the Mullard family. They travelled in the Model T Ford truck, and later in a Plymouth sedan.

Gertie Argent was a member of the County Women's Association and the family attended Wilberforce Methodist Church. Gertie's interest in music was still evident as she trained the children to perform for Sunday School Anniversaries. Her life on the farm wasn't easy. Evidence of their way of life has surfaced here on the farm over the years. In the old house laundry there is still the fireplace in which a copper was fitted. Items for washing were boiled in the copper, a pair of concrete laundry tubs was alongside and the mangle nearby. Many of her heavy old irons are used today as doorstops.

As a child I remember an ornate side-board with lots of mirrors and curved timber, in the lounge room of the old house. Dad always said the children weren't allowed into this room, except for special occasions. Mum remembers Gertie had a silver tea service, and a whatnot displayed special ornaments and photos. Also there was a treadle sewing machine with a shuttle instead of a bobbin. There was an ice chest and a big old kitchen table and outside the kitchen window, beside a tankstand is a small shallow well-like area. This apparently was filled with water and used for keeping items cool, such as butter.



The kitchen chimney was made of pieces of iron, cut, shaped and joined together. *It is also still standing, although we need to straighten it up sometimes after a gale has knocked the top sideways.* There are still hooks on the ceiling of the kitchen and lounge rooms which must have held lamps. The one in the lounge room is very fancy. It has a retractable cord, which is out of the way until required to attach the lamp. *Often a tiny bat flies out from where the cord retracts, when we turn on the electric light at night. When I retired from full time work I setup a desk in this old lounge room and I feel like the spirit of the family are around me as I write this story!*

Household rubbish was carted to a tip on rocky ground which has been excavated. Lots of bottles have been unearthed, they date from 1920. Culinary preferences of the family can be determined by looking at these bottles. Albert liked to drink coffee and chicory and much Pick-Me-Up sauce was used! Advertisements like 'Burnetts Jellies set on the hottest day' are embossed on some of these bottles. Dr Sheldon's 'New Discovery' or 'Magnetic Liniment' and Morse's Indian Root Pills must have been home remedies.

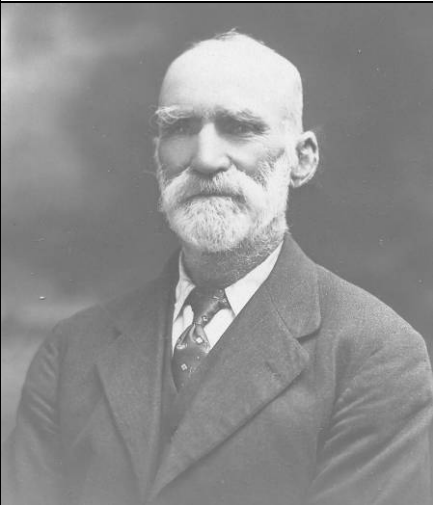
Some plants and trees from the old garden survive. Peach and fig trees still grow beside the old house. The old Isabella grapevine has this year produced a great crop. It was radically pruned several years ago to make way for our new septic tank. The honeysuckle had to go though, as it was trying to pull down the roof of the verandah. I often find it trying to make a comeback in my new vegetable garden, which I created once I retired (in almost the same area where Albert had his garden). Mint still grows under the front verandah. In winter there is a great show of jonquils along the old footpath. Persimmons grow on three old trees in one of the paddocks, and cattle love their dense shade in summer and they keep them trimmed by reaching up to try to eat the fruit!



Mavis Argent was Girl Guide and in 1934 entered Windsor Hospital as a nurse. She married Joe Farlow in 1938. (Joe's family lived at Kurrajong, and had a guest house and taxi service, catering for travellers on the old steam train 'Pansy').

In 1940 poultry sheds were built to the south of the farmhouse and the windmill which still turns gracefully in that paddock is a 1939 model. Dad said the windmill was installed to supply water to the poultry. Water tanks were set up beside some of the free range poultry sheds and there were two tanks catching water from the roof of the feed shed. Water pipes crisscrossed the property in all directions. (*We often trip over them, as they get exposed in places where we had forgotten they existed.*)

Clipping from *Sydney Morning Herald* 1935 (Curiously Edward was called A.E Argent in this article)

MR A.E. ARGENT IN HIS 99TH YEAR	
	Although in his 99 <sup>th</sup> year Mr. Albert E. Argent, of West Ryde, is able to get about with the ease of a much younger man, and is able to read the "Herald" without the aid of glasses. In fact Mr Argent says he has never worn glasses. Born in Huntingdonshire, England on Feb 20 1837 Mr Argent says he did not have a day's schooling, because there were no schools near his home. However as he grew up he educated himself and he is a well informed man. As a young man he had charge of the horses at the firm of Brown and Ellis in Sheffield and on the death of his wife he came to Australia and settled on a homestead selection of 88 acres at Wilberforce. Ten years ago he handed the property over to a son and came to reside with Mr and Mrs H.A Monk of Nunnington Ave West Ryde, Mrs Monk being a granddaughter. "I have always taken care of myself" said Mr Argent when interviewed "and I believe that is the reason I have lived so long. My hour for bed every night is 9 and I rise at 5 every morning, Sundays included. I like a smoke when I feel like one, but do not drink, and have not touched an ale or spirits for many years. Recently when a neighbour went away to the country I milked his cows and tended the poultry and live stock for him". Mrs E. Parkes of Rose Bay is a daughter and his sons are Mr A.W. Argent of Rockdale and Mr A.E. Argent of Wilberforce.

There is some doubt about Edward's date of birth – so he may not have been 99 years old at this time! He died on 24 June 1939, and is buried in an unmarked grave at Wilberforce cemetery. My husband John often found items covered with cobwebs, hanging on nails in the farm sheds. One of these was a small guillotine-like article. We understand it was used for cutting 'plug tobacco', which Edward was reported to enjoy. A dressing gown of Gertie's hung in my parents' house for 50 years after she died. It was made of a black silky material and was elaborately embroidered with flowers surrounding egret-like birds. This gown intrigued me and so I took it to the Hawkesbury Family History Group 'Show and Tell' meeting in December 2008, to ask for suggestions of its origin. (It seemed so out of place in the Charmararay farmhouse). A member suggested it could have been a costume from the Mikado, and so perhaps dated back to Gertie's days in the Redfern Musical Society!

Recently Mum reminded me we had Gertie's autograph book in a drawer at Elouera. There are entries dating from December 1909 recorded in this book, and suggest that the book was given to Gertie just prior to her marriage to Albert. Many friends wished her well in her 'new life', using pen and ink and copperplate handwriting. *Gertie was leaving the comfort of her parents' home at Rockdale, for the slab hut on the homestead selection block in the bush at Wilberforce.* Some entries are dated later, during World War I and more entries from the 1930s. An entry signed by 'A.E Argent' dated 6.1.36 amused me.

*Pop goes the ginger beer, Pop goes the cider,  
My old girl pops into bed and I pop in beside her!*

Charles and Raynor both saw war service during World War II. Raynor enlisted in 1940 and Charles in 1941. They both served overseas. Raynor was discharged in 1944 and Charles in 1945. This photo shows Raynor, Albert, Gertie



and Charles. It was taken at the family home at Oakville of Raynor's future wife Mary Smith (known as 'Trixie'). Perhaps it was taken in 1940 as Raynor is in uniform and Charles is not.

When war broke out Mavis and Joe, came back to live on the McLagan property. They had been living on Charles' property at Kulnura, where Joe operated a carrying business. Albert managed the farm during the war, without the aid of his two sons. *What a difficult time that must have been. The only item we have found dating from that time are some covers used to conceal headlights on motor vehicles.*

After returning from war service in 1944 Raynor married Mary Smith (a local Hawkesbury girl from Oakville). In recent years Trixie Eves (nee Mary Smith – whose first husband was Raynor Argent) remembered:



*There was another house on the block up above Charles and Ada's house, many years ago. Mrs Williams (Gertie Williams' mother) lived there. Charles owned a block of land at Kulnura. That house was moved to Kulnura when Mavis and Joe married. They lived there for some time, and later moved back to Wilberforce and built their home on the block which had been Mr McLagans. There was a patch of ground in the bush but still near (Currency) Creek where millet and lucerne were grown for the chooks. When Raynor and I lived in the homestead we made the verandah into a kitchen or bedroom. Eventually we swapped our block of ground beside Charles and Ada's house for the Kulnura site, where we lived for 30 years*

Alice Williams moved to Charmaray, probably in 1920s, after her husband Charles died. One of her daughters, known as 'Lil', lived with her. We have a small leather suitcase containing a photo album and greeting cards. This year (2010) I have put them all together again in a new album and during the period since they were found we have been able to identify most of these family members. Photos date back into mid 1800s. the family also has an old sea chest with roughly hewn dovetailed sides and handmade nails! Plus a tea-chest which contained an ornately patterned metal lamp base, wrapped in tissue paper. Dad had never seen these items before, and he assumed they must have been removed from Alice's house before it was relocated to Kulnura. After Alice died in 1931 her daughter Lil moved away and lived with other relatives. Alice's cottage was rented to Mrs Anngrave and her two daughters. (Mrs Anngrave was Freddy Sparkes' sister.) The house must have been relocated to Kulnura before 1938 for Joe and Mavis to live in it after their marriage.

I made my own discovery when the Wilberforce Methodist Church was demolished in 1984. A book containing the Minutes of the Ladies Church Aid meetings from 1930-1938 was in the back of a cupboard in the vestry. It contained a tribute to Alice Williams, written soon after her death in 1931 by the Methodist minister at the time, Rev J. Egan Moulton. So this summary of her life has been placed with her photos in the new album. Charles married Ada Salt in 1947. Ada's parents (Arthur and Elizabeth Salt) owned 'Sherbrooke', on the Putty Road on the northern side of Currency Creek. Charles and Ada knew each other as children. They built a home facing Argents Road and created a lovely garden. Charles died in 2003, having spent most of his life on this property. Ada is still very active and continues to garden!

We had no photos at all of life on Charmaray. I guess if any were taken then Dad's sister Mavis may have had them. Unfortunately, as often happens, I didn't think to ask about photos until it was too late. Mavis, Joe and their daughter Marilyn all died before my own Dad. Once Ada lived on the farm she started taking photos with a Box Brownie camera, so we have photos from about 1947 onwards.

This is a treasured snap of Albert, Gertie, Charles, Raynor, Judith (myself), Ada and Trixie (Raynor's wife) nursing their son Robert. It was taken in a park at Hornsby, where the families used to meet in 1950s, halfway between Kulnura and Wilberforce. Raynor and Trix had two sons, Robert and Alan, so they carried on the Argent name.



This is the story of the first 50 years of Argents living in the Parish of Wilberforce, County of Cook from 1898 to 1947. We continued with farming poultry right up until 1982. Originally there was free range shedding with long yards enclosed with chicken wire, attached to tall posts. Later we built an intensive shed, where the poultry was enclosed in pens with litter on the floor. Eventually we built a shed with layer cages, and this saved a lot of labour, but perhaps was not as interesting a life for the hens. Foxes, goannas and hawks were always a worry to the poultry farmer. Many were shot and even now the sound of a fox calling at night sends a shiver up my spine. I have come to admire the hawks and eagles though, which we see spiralling overhead on a windy day. There are no chickens on Tin Gully property today.

How did the road become Argents Road? It had had no formal name and people were always getting lost. Around 1970 Ada phoned Colo Shire Council asking if they could give the road a name, (explaining how often we had to direct lost travellers). The Council suggested 'Argents' as they were naming streets after the first settlers in the area. So then our address became 'C & A Argent, Argents Rd Wilberforce' which was always a conversation starter!

I will pause here –and let you contemplate life in those earlier days. The next 50 years of Argents at Wilberforce are during my lifetime, so they may be easier to write!!

Judith Sanders [sanderj@live.com.au](mailto:sanderj@live.com.au)

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## Thomas Cross & Martha Bryant Grave Restoration

Information has been received from "The Surprise" newsletter of the Jane Ison Family History Group Inc. Volume 72 – February 2010. The group have been working on the restoration of the grave of Thomas Cross and his wife, Martha Bryant which is located in the St Peter's Anglican Cemetery at Richmond. The work is now complete and as there was extra work required to complete the project, the total cost ended up being \$4057, a little over budget. The Group had collected \$3130 in donations but need to raise an additional \$827. The group's regular newsletter is donated and made available as part of the Local Studies Collection at Hawkesbury City Library. For more details contact the group as follows: c/- Jane Ison Family History Group Inc. PO Box 200, Burpengary Qld 4505

*Below - Before and after shots of the Cross vault at St. Peter's Anglican Cemetery, Richmond.*

Courtesy Lorraine Turnbull E: [lorgrah@bigpond.net.au](mailto:lorgrah@bigpond.net.au) from the Jane Ison Family History Group Inc.



## CONSERVATION OF HEADSTONES

Remember it is the responsibility of family and friends to maintain the actual headstones within a cemetery however permission is required from both the trustees of the cemetery (either the church trustees or Hawkesbury City Council) for any conservation work. For advise about conservation work contact the Heritage Advisor, Donald Ellsmore at Hawkesbury City Council (02) 4560-4444.

# William Cross - *Grant of 55 Acres at Wilberforce*

© Louise Wilson, 2010

In the process of writing the book **'Paul Bushell, Second Fleeter'**, I have puzzled for some years over the ownership of the William Cross grant of 55 acres at Wilberforce, which Paul Bushell bequeathed in his will, written in 1853.<sup>1</sup>

Why was it that, back in November 1804, Paul Bushell had warned trespassers with stock or those cutting timber to keep off his farm known as Robinson's Lagoon farm, adjoining that of Charles Cross?<sup>2</sup> Paul by now owned the Thomas Lawrence grant, next to the William Cross grant of 55 acres.<sup>3</sup> So why was the grant in the name of William Cross? Paul said his next door neighbour was Charles Cross. The Second Fleeter Charles Cross had no known son named William, and there seemed to be no connection between the Cross families at the Hawkesbury around 1800. Flynn's work on the Second Fleet shed no light on this matter.<sup>4</sup>

Other researchers have skated over and around this issue. Lorraine Prothero does not mention any block of 55 acres in her coverage of the early life of William Cross, 1797-1845.<sup>5</sup> 'Her' William Cross, son of First Fleeter John Cross, married at the end of 1819. No sales by William Cross have been located at the Land Titles Office, and none of the transactions by his father John Cross mention an area of 55 acres.

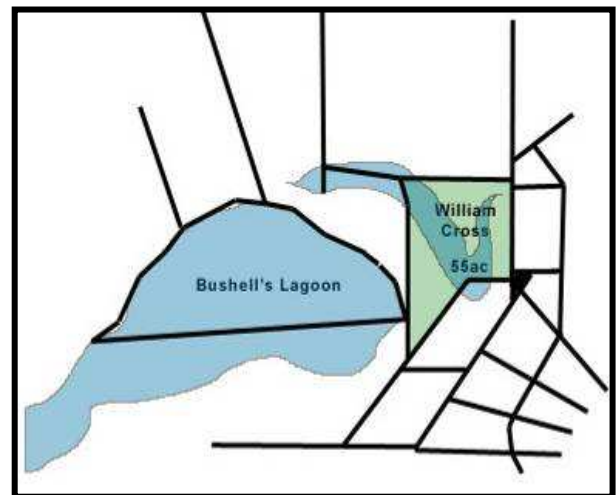
Jan Barkley-Jack has also struggled to identify this grant. She speculates that 'William Cross's acquisition of a second Hawkesbury grant may have been a spot of dummyming for free settler Thomas Rose, after the Rose family removed from Liberty Plains and purchased Laurell Farm. Cross registered as Rose Farm on 12 March 1800'.<sup>6</sup> However other sources date the presence of the Rose family at the Hawkesbury later than March 1800, around 1802.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, the name William Cross is apparently an administrative error. I believe the grant was indeed made to Charles Cross and it was named 'Rose Farm' after his wife, Rose Hannah Flood, not the Rose family. William Cross had already taken the name Cross Farm for his own 30 acre grant.<sup>8</sup> The evidence follows.

When Charles Cross died in October 1835 his family members clearly felt they had some claim on the land. They believed the 55 acres had been granted to their family, but were not sure of the name on the title. Through R Mansfield in Sydney, who had an involvement with the Court of Claims, Charles' son-in-law initiated some enquiries in December 1835.<sup>9</sup> Richard Rose of Wilberforce asked for a copy of the deed of grant, offering to pay the required fee. This letter contains an office note dated 1 January 1836 – *'no reason is given for asking for this – told if this person is still alive and a caveat lodged, then the deed may be prepared'*.

**The grant was supposed to have been issued by Governor King in favour of Charles Cross for 56 acres situated at Wilberforce, otherwise Mulgrave Place, in the County of Cook. Commencing at the south east corner of Thomas Dargin's 150 acres grant, the Cross grant was bounded on the north by Thomas Dargin's south boundary to the lagoon, on the west partly by the lagoon and partly by Edward Robinson's and Benjamin Cusley's eastern boundaries to Thomas Lawrence's south west corner pin, and on the south west and south by Thomas Lawrence's north west and north boundaries.**

*Drawn by J. Auld - May 2010*



<sup>1</sup> SRNSW, Probate Record Series 1, No 2825, 22 Mar 1854

<sup>2</sup> Sydney Gazette, Sunday 25 Nov 1804 p. 1.1

<sup>3</sup> Research of Louise Wilson, in her forthcoming book 'Paul Bushell, Second Fleeter'.

<sup>4</sup> Flynn, Michael, *The Second Fleet, Britain's Grim Convict Armada of 1790* (Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1993), pp 226-228

<sup>5</sup> Prothero, Lorraine, 'Cross - His Mark', Self-Published, North Ryde, 1987, pp 199-200

<sup>6</sup> Barkley-Jack, Jan, *Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed – A New Look at Australia's Third Mainland Settlement, 1793-1802*, (Rosenberg Publishing, Dural, 2009), p 156. Again on p 439 she refers to William Cross having the 55 acre 'Rose Farm'.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Bowd, D.G., *Macquarie Country - A History of the Hawkesbury* (Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1994), p 119

<sup>8</sup> Barkley-Jack, Jan, *Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed*, p 433

<sup>9</sup> Col Sec Letters Re Land, SRNSW Ref 2/7961, Reel 1178 – letter from R Mansfield of Wentworth Place, Sydney, dated 18 Dec 1835 to Col Sec re Richard Rose of Wilberforce

In April 1836 a second letter was written.<sup>10</sup> It concerned a request for a deed of grant supposed to have been issued by Governor King in favour of Charles Cross, this time for 60 acres of land at Wilberforce. The deed was required to enable the children of the grantee to establish their rights in a court of law. The writer now possessed more information and believed the deed was issued in the name of Rose Cross, the wife of Charles Cross.

A note on this letter says 'I cannot find any such deed executed by Gov King – only a deed from Gov Hunter of 53 acres dated 12 Mar 1800 which I think is the one alluded to'. This was yet another variation in the supposed acreage of the Cross grant. All the Bushell documents refer to it as 55 acres. Nothing that is known about the life of Charles Cross helps to identify the date of Paul Bushell's acquisition of Rose Farm, except that Cross no longer owned it in 1806 and Bushell definitely owned it by January 1821.<sup>11</sup> In fact Paul's land holdings suggest he owned the land by October 1820.<sup>12</sup> For Cross, the 1806 Muster lists only his Burgess Farm of 150 acres, further down the river near today's Ebenezer Church, with no mention of his 55 acres. Yet Paul Bushell did not count the 55 acres within his holdings in 1806. Someone else obviously did - as a mortgagee perhaps. Perhaps Paul took over that unknown lender's mortgage after 1806 and allowed Charles and Rose Cross to return to their old home, because they were recorded as farmers at Wilberforce in 1828. If they were living on Rose Farm when Charles Cross died, the family may not have understood that control of the land had long since passed out of the family, to Paul Bushell before October 1820.

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**NSW & ACT ASSOC OF FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2010**  
**HOSTED BY SHOALHAVEN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY 17-19 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT BOMADERRY**  
**BOWLING CLUB, Cnr MEROO & CAMBEWARRA ROADS, BOMADERRY**

"A Most Suitable Place" was how Alexander Berry, the first land holder of the Shoalhaven described the area when he first sighted this beautiful region. There will be a mini History Fair from 10am-3pm on Friday only. The Conference registration will open from 5pm on Friday night with the meet and greet for registrants to begin at 6pm. Registration will open again at 8am on Saturday morning for registration with the program to commence at 8.30am. Registration Forms are available on website. There will be a full program of very interesting and educational speakers for the conference with ample time to visit the many stalls. Full details see <http://www.shoalhaven.net.au/fhsconference2010/>

**Speakers are:**

Keith Campbell (local historian) - First years of Alexander Berry's settlement in the Shoalhaven John Crowe Memorial Address

- Brad Argent from Ancestry.com - Media in your Society
- Fiona Burns from the National Archives
- Shauna Hicks, a well respected historian and consultant
- Keith Johnson and Carol Baxter
- Sarah Lethbridge - Noel Butlin Library
- Gary Luke - Jewish research and European migration
- Cora Num - researching on the Internet
- Joyce Purtscher, a renowned Tasmanian historian and author
- Babette Smith - researcher of Female Convicts and author
- Rebecca Stubbs - Canberra Aboriginal Family History Section
- Christine Yeats from the State Records Office of NSW

There will be a delicious 3 course dinner with entertainment, to be held on Saturday night at the Bowling Club, 6.30pm. Our research centre in Greenwell Point Rd, Pyree will be open from 10am to 2pm on Friday, Sunday afternoon 3pm to 5pm and Monday from 10am for those that wish to undertake research or just visit our facilities. If not sure where to find it, please ask for directions. We also have some suggested activities for Sunday afternoon for those that are not in a hurry to return home, see the Program Page for details. Please take advantage of some of the special attractions that this beautiful area offers and extend your visit into a holiday. You can contact us by E: [jcvost@people.net.au](mailto:jcvost@people.net.au) or post: Conference Secretary PO Box 1509 NOWRA NSW 2541

<sup>10</sup> Col Sec Letters Re Land, SRNSW Ref 2/7961, Reel 1178 - letter from R Mansfield of Wentworth Place, Sydney, dated 28.4.1836 to Col Sec re Richard Rose of Wilberforce

<sup>11</sup> Bigge's Appendix, 'The Return of Land in the District of Wilberforce, January 1821', Ref CO201/123 pp 445-447, or BT 25, Frames 164-167, (pp 5455-5457), ML. Paul Bushell's sources of his various land holdings are listed.

<sup>12</sup> Bigge's Appendix, 'A List of Persons residing in the districts of the Hawkesbury (Wilberforce/Portland Head) who were formerly convicts, prepared by William Cox as at 24.10.1820', BT24, p 294, ML, also CO210/123, PRO/AJCP Reel 111, p 205. Paul Bushell's total acreage did not change between Oct 1820 and Jan 1821.



**LECTORS**  
next, at two  
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Company.  
1862

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the 1st August

L.L. Secretary.  
1893

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D.  
ing Director.  
July 22.  
1890

1890

Company hereby  
before Monday,  
Commercial Bank.

Of New South Wales, that having arrived  
from Paris, he intends practicing as above.  
Mr. E. proposes introducing an entirely new  
method of stopping decayed teeth with his  
**NEW PREPARATION OF GOLD.**  
which from its durability surpasses all other  
metal. This is applied without giving the slightest  
pain, prevents further decay, renders extraction  
easy, and preserves that unpleasant odour  
in the breath invariably accompanying decayed  
teeth.  
Mr. E. likewise supplies deficiencies of teeth  
in a very superior style, and in every case re-  
storing perfect articulation and mastication.  
Loose teeth fastened, whether arising from  
neglect, the use of false teeth, or decay of the  
gums.  
Mr. E. extracts all teeth with the greatest  
facility, also treats all diseases appertaining to  
Dental Surgery.  
At home from Ten, a.m., till Four, p.m.  
On Mondays and Saturdays, from nine to ten  
a.m. Mr. Bissard will prescribe for the needy poor.  
Residence—Wyatt's Buildings, Castlereagh-  
street North.  
7866

To Commence selling of at 2 o'clock  
**MESSRS. WILSON, COSER, AND**  
of the Trustees, the **BANKRUPT STOCK** of  
N. S. DRUMMOND, they will open the above pre-  
mises opposite the City Market, for the express  
purpose of clearing off the whole in four days,  
in preference to bringing it to their Establish-  
ment, Trafalgar House, George-street, as they  
intend to open that establishment with an ex-  
tensive and entire new and choice selected stock  
of every article belonging to the trade. 1414  
**TRAFALGAR HOUSE, GEORGE-STREET.**  
(NEARLY OPPOSITE THE CITY MARKET)

**Political meeting at Miller's Inn,  
Wilberforce 1843**

**Contributed by Dorothy Miller**

John Panton was born in Midlothian in Scotland in 1815. He was the son of George Panton, who was the Postmaster-General of NSW and Maria Kerr. The Panton family arrived in Sydney in 1818 onboard the 'General Stewart' Panton established the business, Betts & Panton in Windsor in about 1840 with John Betts (his brother-in-law). John married Isabella Frederica North in Windsor in 1842 and they had a large family. He was elected as the Member of the NSW Legislative Council in 1843 until 1848. Between 1843 and 1856 he was also an Elective Member of the first Legislative Council for the Counties of Cook and Westmoreland. He later moved to Brisbane and started Panton & Company in Brisbane Street and was also well known in the cotton industry in Queensland. Panton died in 1866 in Ipswich in Queensland.<sup>13</sup>

"A MEETING was held, on Monday last at **MILLER'S Inn**, Wilberforce, convened by Mr John Panton's committee, to enable him to announce his political views & sentiments as a candidate for the representation of the Counties of Cook & Westmoreland in the ensuing Legislative Council. It was appointed by Mr G. S HALL, & seconded by Mr BALDWIN, that Joshua VICKERY, Esq do take the chair, which was unanimously carried. The Chairman stated, in opening the meeting, that a most important boon had been conferred on the colony, which was the birth right of independence & that was the bounden duty of all propriety & circumspection.

The electors ought to judge of the responsibility, which must necessarily be attached to him to whom they entrust their interests; but viewing all these matters in their strongest light I had no hesitation in stating that Mr Panton was one who would do ample justice, as far as lay in his power, to their interests, & forward in the very uttermost every project beneficial to the Counties of Cook & Westmoreland, & the colonist at large. The Chairman further stated, that many statements had emanated from individuals, which, if that gentleman were not well known, might tend to injure his cause & one of the insinuations was that Mr Panton was too young to act in the capacity to which he aspired but it was remarked that, from his thorough knowledge of business & his general connection with agricultural pursuits, such an assertion was completely unfounded, & could not for one moment apply to Mr Panton.

It was therefore proposed by Mr B LAMBERT, seconded by Mr Thomas LYNCH – "That John PANTON Esq, possessing as he does the confidence of the electors together with the requisite qualifications, & a thorough knowledge of the county & its wants, is a fit & proper person to be returned to the Legislative Council of New South Wales as the representative of the United Counties of Cook & Westmoreland". Mr Lambert in making the proposition stated that Mr Panton was a man of

probity & honour, & a true friend, in every sense of the word, in the settlers.

Mr Lynch, in seconding the above resolution, mentioned that he perfectly agreed with the sentiments of the Chairman, & in all that had fallen from him; & that he himself further begged leave to state that Mr Panton had come forward at the unanimous desire of the inhabitants, who are well aware that his character has always been untarnished, & that he never signed "the petition". As to the statement that Mr Panton was connected by marriage with our worthy & highly respected Police Magistrate, he could not see why in any way whatever that circumstances should militate against him; for every person who knows Mr North is aware, that so far from overstepping the line of rectitude in his official capacity, he would, if on the bench, act as unanimously against a relative of his own as he would against a stranger; & when off it, he would spurn to take the slightest undue advantage of the situation he holds in any way whatever.

Mr Panton then came forward, & was received with long & continued cheering, which prevented him from speaking for sometime. When the applause had subsided Mr Panton stated he considered himself highly honoured by the manner in which he had been received by the electors, & that, if elected, it would always be his anxious study & endeavour to forward by every legitimate means in his power, the interests of the settlers & guard their rights, as he was one who had their interests at heart. It had been stated that many individuals being in his debt, he had used an undue influence over these parties; but he begged to state, in the most unequivocal terms, that any such aspersion was unfounded in principle as it was repugnant to his feelings & intentions. He wished to see every voter totally unbiased by any intimidation – & if his election could not be secured by upright & honourable means, he would certainly wish to remain without a seat in the house.

Mr. Panton further remarked, that although he gloried in the church of which he was a humble, but he trusted, a strictly conscientious member, he never would allow, as far as his voice would go, any other denomination of Christians at present receiving support from the Crown, to be trampled upon or disregarded; but would wish in their privileges that all should stand unscathed, without vicious distinctions or sectarian intoleration. That an objection had been made as to his being a merchant in Sydney. However that must not only be perfectly futile but must be distinctly in his favour when it is known that he is also largely connected with the grazing & agricultural interest, for they are so close in affinity as to render the separation injurious in either. Mr Panton further announced, that in prosecuting the interests of the settlers, he would vote for an ad voluem duty of 15 per cent, on all foreign grain, as it would be far more beneficial to pay 10s for our own produce than 4s for that from other countries. Mr Panton then laid before the meeting a statistical account of our trade with South America for the last year.

<sup>13</sup> Former Members Index A-Z, Parliament of NSW  
<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/members.nsf/V3ListFormerMembers> [viewed 3.6.2010]

IMPORTS	
126,626 Bushels of wheat at 6s about	38,000
262 tons of flour	5,000
Beef, barley, walnuts etc.	3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46,000</b>
EXPORTS	
Cedar & hay	294
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45,706</b>

VIZ: Showing that in exchange for £16,000 they take from us 294 leaving the bulk of the remainder to be paid for in our hard cash. Mr Panton stated on general principles, that he is in favour of free trade, but so long as our imports exceed exports he would most decidedly protect all colonial interests as far as possible; for if we continued as we are now, we should be getting poorer & poorer but gentleman, said Mr Panton you must not look to the Legislative Council to supply all your wants to give value to your produce; most certainly not, let every man in his station EXERT himself – let him use as few imported goods as possible & raise as many exportable commodities as he can – & will find your affairs improve. And when your Exports exceed your imports you will grow rich, & not till then can you permanently be so. As regarded immigration, Mr Panton was adverse in the introduction of Coolies at the expense of the public, so long as we could obtain Britons, thousands of whom were starving at home. Mr. Panton concluded by stating that he would be happy to answer any questions which might be paid to him; upon which Mr GORRICK did so, but they were answered in such a manner as to meet not only with the approbation of the querist, but also with that of the audience. Mr H White next came forward & stated that the dictates of his heart compelled him to do so. He had long known Mr Panton & was fully aware that he was capable of representing the Counties of Cook & Westmoreland. That there was no doubt of his being returned & however a public man might be subjected to slurs of many descriptions which may be levelled at him by political opponents or their friends in politics there could be no doubt that, when elected, he would be unflinching in his duty to his constituents & that his conduct would be satisfactory to the public at large

Mr LABAN WHITE moved the following resolution – That this meeting pledges itself to use all lawful & honourable means to ensure the election of Mr Panton. Mr White in proposing this resolution stated that he had long known Mr Panton, & had much pleasure in bearing evidence as in his capacity to fill the office to which he is so justly entitled. That the objection to his being a merchant was perfectly foolish, his interest being indissolubly connected to the agricultural. Mr Panton was not only perfectly versed in the one, but was also closely connected with the other, & from all known of Mr Panton, his conduct has been such as universally to command respect & esteem. MR J HOSKISSON seconded the motion, which was carried. The next resolution was neatly introduced by Mr GOW & seconded by Mr Farlow. That committees of Mr Panton's friends be immediately formed at Portland Head & Kurrajong, in addition to that already formed at Wilberforce. MR FITZGERALD, J.P next addressed the meeting, & with considerable humour refused to come to the platform when requested to do so. He said that he had been identified with what he termed the "mob" & he would rather remain among them, as he never was as happy as when intermingling with the people. With regard to Mr Panton he had no hesitation in

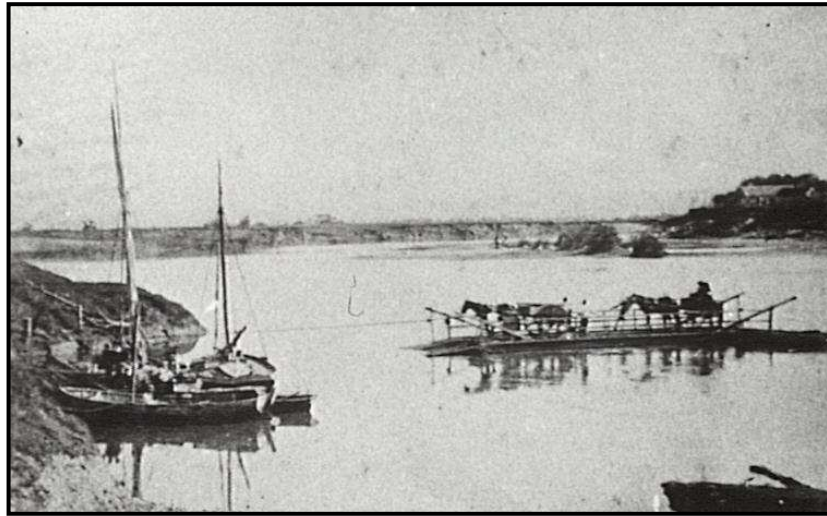
pronouncing him a fit & proper person to represent...Cook & Westmoreland. He was intimately acquainted with business, & so far from his being a merchant operating against him, it speaks much in his favour. Mr Fitzgerald next said that there was a certain medical man, who had lately taken an emetic "which operating in the usual way on the stomach, only tended to disgorge the delusions of an infatuated imagination". Mr Fitzgerald further added that he had every wish for the propriety of the settlers & if he did not believe that Mr Panton had the same, he never would have had his support, because the interest of all, more or less, is bound up in their prosperity. He had known Mr Panton long & from all observations, he could only come to one conclusion, that Mr Panton was one who had earned his wealth by industry, that he had always been a highly respectable member of society, a good man of business – a trustworthy friend, & a kind, affectionate, & dutiful son. MR NORTH stated that some aspersions had been unwarrantably circulated against him, for his being in any way connected with the election. He begged to say, that in attending any meetings of this sort, he never came as Chief Magistrate, but he was surely entitled to come forward as a private gentleman, more especially when he had a stake in the country as a landholder & it would in his opinion be very strange, if his official situation were to act as a bar or hindrance or prove a prohibition against his looking after his own interest.

MR BEDDEK next addressed the meeting. He eulogised Mr Panton, & stated that they could not choose a better principle, conduct, uprightness, business habits, & urbanity, & he had no question of his return. Mr Beddek further alluded to the gratification which Mr Panton must feel, in not only having so many firm & masculine supporters & adherents, but also the pleasure he must derive from the faces of the softer sex milling around him. It may be added that the procession which accompanied Mr Panton consisted of about 200 horseman, together with a long train of carriages, gigs etc, preceded by various banners & the number assembled at Wilberforce could not be less than 400. Mr Panton's sentiments & opinions were received with loud applause: & thanks having been given to the Chairman for his conduct during the meeting, the parties quietly dispersed. A similar meeting was held on the following day at the Woolpack Inn, North Richmond, in order to give Mr Panton an opportunity of addressing the electors in that part of the country.

The meeting was most numerous attended; Among those present were S. North, Esq PM, J.T. Bell Esq JP, Robert Fitzgerald Esq JP, & many others of high respectability, who are landed proprietors of the county. Mr Panton recapitulated his political sentiments, which were received by loud cheers. The Chair was ably filled by Joshua Vickery, Esq: to whom the thanks were returned, & the assemblage separated. There were about 200 persons present & when the Chairman left the Chair Mr Bell, of Belmont was voted into it while the usual vote of thanks was passed. The meetings of both places were conducted with great propriety, & not the slightest disturbance took place. We were much grateful at the Wilberforce meeting to see a number of ladies of the highest respectability seated in their carriages, sufficiently near to the platform to hear the speeches."

# Windsor and a new river crossing in the 1850s

It seems that some things never change. Just as the inhabitants of the Hawkesbury are debating about a new river crossing, the community in 1854 were discussing similar issues.



*The punt crossing the Hawkesbury River at Windsor courtesy Hawkesbury City Library [007297]*

"A well-attended and respectable meeting of the inhabitants of Windsor and Wilberforce, called by public advertisement, took place on the afternoon of Monday last, at Mr J. B. Ridge's, Royal Oak Inn, Windsor, for the purpose of considering the propriety of and adopting means for, putting an end to the existing private monopoly in the Punt at Windsor, and petitioning the Government to take the responsibility and management of another punt in the same locality into their hands.

James Ascough, Esq. JP, having been moved into the chair, read the advertisement calling the meeting, and explained the objects thereof, prefacing his remarks with a wish that some other gentleman had been called upon, more efficient for the duty of chairman than himself. He then said that they would all know that the present punt was in the hands of a private person, who afforded no redress to the public when that punt was out of repair and otherwise neglected. This he thought ought not to be. He was of opinion that a punt should be viewed in the same light as a turnpike; and as for a private individual holding a punt in perpetuity, he thought they might as well talk about giving a turnpike away in the same manner. It was not to be expected that private individuals holding a monopoly "*would study the interests of the public*" so much as their own; they of course would seek to have as much profit as they could, and the consequence was, the public would suffer. The interests of the individual and the public clashed and could not be of mutual advantage. As to the facts in the present matter he was not clearly aware of them. It may be that perhaps the Government had given the right of plying a punt at Windsor to the late Mr Howe for some services rendered to the country by that gentleman, but when it was found that such a monopoly became prejudicial to the public weal, the

conviction forced itself upon his mind that such a state of things ought to be ended. He could see no reason why the interests of one individual should override the interests of the public. The present matter was one which affected not only the interests but the lives of the public; for their lives were in danger while using the punt in its now state, & it was the business of the present meeting to say & decide what steps should be taken to alleviate the evils complained of. He would now call upon the gentlemen present to move the resolutions entrusted to them. (Cheers.)

Mr John Cunningham, Jun., rose to move the first resolution. He said they were all well aware of the dangerous state of the Windsor punt. In fact, Mr Plunkett, the lessee, only a few days ago, told him that he had to bail it out twice-a-day to keep it afloat. It was therefore, necessary that some steps should be taken at once to have another punt, under different auspices, placed on the river. They were also aware that the present punt was held by the late Mr Howe's representatives; but as to the statement that it was theirs "*forever*" he had been creditably informed that Mr Howe had only a verbal permission to keep it during the pleasure of the Government. However, it was high time the matter was looked into, & it was for that reason that the present meeting had been called. The present punt, too, was too small for the wants of the public. When a heavy load comes to it, the driver is compelled to unload, and only to take half over at a time. He would now submit the first resolution to the meeting: "*That the punt placed on the river Hawkesbury, at Windsor to Wilberforce, is & has for some time past been, in a very unsafe state, and is not of sufficient size for the requirements of these districts, besides being managed in a very unsatisfactory manner. And this meeting is of opinion that such unsafeness, insufficiency, & mismanagement are wholly*



*attributable to the fact that the said punt belongs to, and is under the control and management of, an irresponsible private individual, instead of her Majesty's Government, as trustee for the public."*

With reference to the mismanagement referred to in the resolution, he begged to explain that it was not intended to be applied to the present lessee, but to the owner, as the former had always done his best, under the circumstances, in keeping up the punt as well as he could, repairing the roads on each side thereof, and assisting the passengers as much as possible with heavy loading. In fact, he had always done the best he could with the bad tools placed in his hands. Mr Charles Tilley seconded the resolution.

Mr Richard Cobcroft, before the motion was put, wished to draw the attention of the meeting to the fact that some persons at Wilberforce had already taken steps regarding the unsafeness of the punt, and had memorialized the Government thereon; to which an answer had been received from the Colonial Secretary stating that measures were in progress for the establishment of a public ferry over the river at Windsor. The meeting were somewhat agreeably taken by surprise by this information; however the general opinion was, that they should go on as they commenced, as it would urge on and strengthen any proceedings already taken.

The Chairman then put the resolution to the meeting, which was carried unanimously. Mr Springett rose and said, as some reference had been made to the exclusive right of the Wilberforce people to the possession of the punt, he thought that the Windsor people had equally as good a claim as they had. (Hear, hear.) The Windsor people often had occasion to cross the water for grain & other matters, & the interests of both parties were identical. He agreed with what had been said by previous speakers, that measures ought to be adopted to secure the better management of the Windsor punt not, however, with a reflection on the present lessee. And as to the letter produced by Mr Cobcroft, he thought it would only back up the steps to be adopted by the present meeting. He would now submit to the meeting a petition to His Excellency the Governor, stating the grievance respecting the punt, and praying for a remedy. His own opinion was that punts should be placed on exactly the same footing as toll-gates, and that the whole of the rental, less expenses, should be appropriated on the repair of the roads on each side thereof. The owner of the present punt, he had been informed, never lays out a shilling in the repair of the approaches, although they were as bad as they possibly could be. It therefore seemed to him that no time should be lost in bringing the whole affair strenuously under the notice of the Government. He then moved the adoption of the following memorial:

To his Excellency Sir Charles Augustus FitzRoy...*The Memorial of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Districts of Windsor and Wilberforce, in public meeting assembled, Respectfully Showeth: That the punt placed on the river Hawkesbury, at Windsor to Wilberforce, is, and has for some time past been, in a very unsafe state, and is not of sufficient size for the requirements of these districts, besides being managed in a very unsatisfactory manner. And your Memorialists are of opinion that such unsafeness, insufficiency & mismanagement are wholly attributable to the fact, that the said Punt belongs to, & is under the control of, an irresponsible private individual, instead of her Majesty's Government, as trustee for the public. That your memorialists believe that the cause of such private monopoly of the said punt ... in favour of a Mr. John Howe, who has since deceased, and whos legal representatives still persist In their right to the exclusive privilege of plying a punt across the Hawkesbury, at Windsor. ... That your memorialists would further take the liberty of suggesting to your Excellency, as the Head of the Colonial Executive Government, that as the proprietor of the said punt has hitherto declined to expend any portion of his annual receipts from the said punt in the repair of the roads on each side thereof. It is desirable that the local management of any future punt should be placed in the hands of the Windsor Road Trust, or another body, with the understanding & direction that the whole of the net annual rental of such punt should be expended in the maintenance & repair of the several approaches thereto ... taking the premises into consideration, will devise some means for abolishing the present monopoly in the Windsor Punt & take steps for placing another punt in the same locality, to be under the control & responsibility of Her Majesty's Colonial Government, as in other parts of the said colony...*

Mr. Edward Robinson seconded the adoption of the memorial, which, on being put to the meeting, was passed unanimously. Mr Thomas Hain then moved, and Mr John Wood seconded, "*That the following gentlemen, with power to add to their number, be appointed a Committee for the purpose of carrying out the intentions of this meeting of obtaining signatures to the memorial, and securing its due presentation to his Excellency the Governor; namely, James Ascough, Esq JP; Messrs. Springett & Kemp, Edward Robinson, Richard Ridge, James Rochester, John Cunningham, jun, and George Wood.*"

The resolution was put to the meeting, and carried unanimously.

It was then moved and seconded, that Mr Ascough to leave the chair, and that Mr Springett take the same. After which a vote of thanks was proposed, and carried by acclamation, to Mr Ascough, for the efficient manner in which he had discharged the duties of chairman. Signatures were then attached by all present to the memorial, and some subscriptions freely entered into to pay expenses. After which the meeting separated, having passed off in the most harmonious manner.

Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* Friday 4 August 1854 p. 3 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12956457>



# Family Treasures

Contributed by Bev Leaney [barrybev@tpg.com.au](mailto:barrybev@tpg.com.au)



The medallion shown left, belongs to the family of Bev Leaney and was shown at the Hawkesbury Family History Group's Show & Tell meeting recently. Approximately 25mm the gold medallion belonged to Bev's grandfather, Edwin Marsh. The inscription on the medallion has "W.J.B.S.C. 1916" and the family are trying to discover what the initials stood for. His granddaughter Bev has been advised that Edwin was a very good swimmer and so thinks the inscription could relate to a swimming club. Perhaps **Windsor Junior Boys Swimming Club**? *Does anyone have any additional information?*

Edwin Alfred Marsh was born 12 April 1891 in Woolwich, Kent, England and left for Australia on 5 July 1911 according to a bible given to him by his mother and father. Apparently he came out to get work and was supposed to have stayed on a farm at Pitt Town but instead went looking for work and board. He worked for Claude Farlow, a butcher, in George Street and used to deliver meat by horse and cart as far out as Cattai. At some time Edwin, also known as Ted, applied to work on the railways and was sent to Young NSW in 1916. He was possibly engaged to Elsie Betts who had gone to live with her brother Bertie Betts and his wife who, were also living in Young. Edwin and Elsie were married at St. John's Church of England in Young on the 22 March 1916. The family later moved to Katoomba where they remained all their life, Edwin died on 28 September 1949.

Bev's grandmother, Elsie Betts was born 10 September 1894 at the Toll House in Bridge Street near Fitzroy Bridge at Windsor. Her father Harry Betts had been Toll keeper at some stage. Elsie was part of a very large family including William born 1877, Arthur born 1880, Ethel born 1882, Edith born 1883, Harry born 1886, Bertie 1887, Minnie 1890, Walter born 1891, Elsie born 1894, Martha 1896. Her parents were Henry 'Harry' Betts (born 6 Oct 1844 Bearsted Kent and died 28 Jun 1913 at Emu Plains) and Rebecca Mary West (born 31 Jan 1857 Wilberforce and died 1 Apr 1913 at Windsor).



## Cricket Club, Windsor 1923

Identified is Arthur George Betts (1880-1959) 2nd row from back, on right, with arms folded, an **X** beside his head (see arrow) in front of the elderly gent in the hat. His first wife (Wilhelmina Carswell Melvin) died in 1920, he remarried Ada Easterbrook in 1923 and she is seated in the front row.

*Photograph courtesy Bev Leaney*

# INVITATION TO DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM BAKER 'NEPTUNE' 1790 FAMILY REUNION ON 26 JUNE 2010

*Written by: Heather Green*

I would like to introduce myself. My name is William Baker and I was born 16 Apr 1775 in Parish Of St. Clement Danes, London. Due to dire financial circumstances, in my early teens I went out and found myself a job as a pot boy in a London hotel. I made the mistake of taking a couple of silver spoons and selling them. Of course the Publican wasn't happy and reported his lose to the Constables. I was arrested in due course, and tried. I ended up on the hulks and then on to the transport "Neptune" which arrived in Sydney Cove 28 June 1788.

The next few years were hell on earth. Lack of food, clothing or a roof over our heads. The constant fear of the new land, the brutal overseers all contributed to make our lives a misery. On one occasion, I had picked some wild herbs to add some flavour to the wild dog stew and ended up being severely punished for my perceived misdemeanour. On the 18 Nov 1798, I married the delightful fellow convict, Sarah Draper. The marriage produced a daughter also called Sarah. Unfortunately, our union didn't last and Sarah moved to Tasmania for a few years while our daughter Sarah was sent to the female factory for quite awhile.

I eventually met and fell in love with Mary Raycraft. Despite the fact that according to the laws at the time, we were unable to marry as I could not divorce Sarah, we had a good and productive life together bringing six children into the world. After obtaining my freedom, I opened a store in the area that you now call The Rocks near Sydney Cove.

After awhile, I was given a forty acre land grant in Windsor. I also built a two storey hotel called the "Royal Oak" in Windsor. I went to meet my maker on 01 Sep 1829 in Windsor and was buried at St Matthews Church of England in Windsor. My Children are:

<b>Sarah</b>	<b>1801 – 1868</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>John Single</b>
<b>William</b>	<b>1808 – 1857</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>Mary Ann Smith</b>
<b>Elizabeth</b>	<b>1810 – 1878</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>William Smith</b>
<b>John Thomas</b>	<b>1813 – 1890</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>Jane Ware</b>
<b>Mary</b>	<b>1815 – 1903</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>Thomas Bailey</b>
<b>Daniel Raycroft</b>	<b>1820 – 1882</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>Mary Ann Duncombe</b>
<b>James Henry</b>	<b>1822 – 1853</b>	<b>married</b>	<b>Mary Ann Hayes</b>

My children, Sarah, Mary and I would like to invite you to join us for a **family reunion on 26 June 2010** at St Matthews Church Hall in Moses Street Windsor NSW from 10 am.

To all descendants of William BAKER - convict arrived Sydney Cove 1790 on the "Neptune" please be advised that the Inaugural Reunion is to be held on 26 June 2010 at St Matthews Church of England, Windsor NSW. Anyone interested in attending should email Bev Borey with numbers of adults/children. The recent publications by the William Baker - Neptune 1790 Descendants Group, are also available :

*William Baker Register - containing over 11,000 names (and growing)*

*William Baker Gentleman a Documented Family Story Vol 1 & 2 by Thomas Le Sueur 1984 - Pub 2009 with permission.*

Enquiries can be directed to the following:

<b>Bev Savill</b>	<b>President</b>	<a href="mailto:bmsavill@bigpond.com"><b>bmsavill@bigpond.com</b></a>
<b>Bev Borey</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<a href="mailto:borjobe69@bigpond.com"><b>borjobe69@bigpond.com</b></a>
<b>Lorae Johnson</b>	<b>Registrar</b>	<a href="mailto:lorae@uqconnect.net"><b>lorae@uqconnect.net</b></a>

For more information contact the above or check out the website [\*\*http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WilliamBaker-Neptune1790/\*\*](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WilliamBaker-Neptune1790/)

# PITT FAMILY REUNION

Descendants of Mary and Robert Pitt of Dorset UK

by Libby White and Patsy Trench



On October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009 the descendants of Mary and Robert Pitt [pictured above] met for the first extended family reunion at 'Coorah', now the Blue Mountains Grammar School, at Wentworth Falls. Mary was a widow living near Sturminster Newton in Dorset when she took the advice of her cousin George Matcham, husband of Lord Nelson's youngest sister Catherine, to emigrate to New South Wales in 1801. At that time the colony was barely thirteen years old and of a European population of less than 6,000, fewer than forty of them were free settlers. It was an astonishingly courageous move and the assumption is that Mary had been left penniless after her husband Robert died, and cousin George, who had always taken interest in the fledgling colony, decided that emigrating to New South Wales might offer Mary and her family a better life.

At the age of fifty-three Mary and her four daughters – Susanna, Lucy, Jemima and Hester, aged from twenty-seven to fifteen – and her only surviving son Thomas, aged twenty, arrived at Port Jackson on the ship *Canada* in December 1801. They brought with them a letter of introduction to Governor King from Lord Nelson and his father. Mary and Thomas initially received two grants of 100 acres each at Agnes Banks, later known as Richmond. Mary's children all married, and their descendants became successful early Australian pioneers as land owners and farmers, business people and government officials. It was not an easy business trying to locate so many branches of the family, but in the end over one hundred people turned up at Wentworth Falls, and every branch of the family was represented. Some came from overseas and others sent apologies from the UK, Hong Kong and the USA.

Susanna married William Faithfull, who arrived in the colony as an illiterate private with the New South Wales Corps and whose son went on to found Springfield, the renowned sheep station near Goulburn. Lucy married John Wood, seaman, and spent the first eighteen months of her married life at sea, with her infant son, surviving shipwreck. Jemima married first Austin Forrest and then Robert Jenkins, who began his life in the colony as a bankrupt but went on to become reputedly the third richest man in New South Wales. Thomas married Elizabeth Laycock, daughter of Quartermaster Thomas Laycock, and Hester married James Wilshire, deputy commissary and owner of the largest tannery in the colony.

Coorah was built by Robert Matcham (RM) Pitt on land bequeathed to him by his father George Matcham (GM) Pitt, who was Thomas' son. It is a beautiful place for a reunion: a grand old colonial-style house, built in the 1880s, with its sweeping lawns and trees in spring blossom and the last of the famous Coorah daffodils hanging on.





**Coorah built in the 1880s by R. M. Pitt**

The day was cold, wet and misty, as it so often is in the mountains, but this disappointment became a positive, forcing people inside to mingle with other family members they had never met before. Colour coded name tags helped us identify which branch of the family we were descended from, and along with a number of displays of photos, family trees, charts and maps people brought their own family memorabilia and photos. One octogenarian met her first cousin for the first time, plus an old school friend she hadn't seen for years and who she did not even realise she was related to. Another guest had no notion she had such a huge extended family.



**Special reunion cake (left) & Cake cutting ceremony (right)**

The oldest living descendant Barbara Lambie, aged 98, who spent many happy Christmases at Coorah with her grandparents and other family members, was unfortunately too frail to attend. Barbara spent many years in the 1980s and '90s researching the family history, and it was her findings that became the catalyst for many other family members' research into their pioneering ancestors.

We began with champagne and nibbles and ended with a cake cut by the oldest person present, Jim Maple-Brown, a Faithfull descendant who until recently farmed Springfield, and the youngest (to be trusted with a knife), Millie Beetson. The cake was decorated with a quote from a letter written by Mary Pitt while waiting to sail to New South Wales: *'I have brought up my children with fear and care.'*

Finally, we drank a heartfelt toast ***'to the remarkable woman whose courage and resourcefulness is the reason we are all here today -- MARY PITT (née Matcham) c1748 – 1815'***

Contributed by :

Libby White [libbywhite@pacific.net.au](mailto:libbywhite@pacific.net.au) and

Patsy Trench [patsytrench@aim.com](mailto:patsytrench@aim.com) (pictured left)

For more details of the Pitt family see **'Mary Pitt - An Australian Pioneer Woman'** in the *Hawkesbury Crier* – June 2009 pp. 15-16



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**POSTSCRIPT** – A new publication by Janelle Cust has been published on the Pitt Family and released. For more information contact Libby White or Patsy Trench details above. A copy of the book has kindly been donated to the Local Studies Collection, Hawkesbury City Library.



# Yarramundi and Howell's Mill

*Contributed by Cathy McHardy*

*Reminiscences of Richmond* written by 'Cooramill' (Sam Boughton) commencing in 1903 is not only about Richmond. Amongst the interesting and varied writings penned by this intelligent and educated man can be found valuable research information on other localities such as Kurrajong, Mt Tomah and Yarramundi. In December 1903, Boughton wrote a detailed description of the workings of Howell's water mill at Yarramundi and the appearance of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River at the point where the river changes its name from Nepean to Hawkesbury.

Of particular interest is his assertion that the junction of the Grose and Nepean Rivers moved 'nearly a mile lower down than it was before the '68 floods' due to a great washaway of the banks at this time. So in days gone by, those who live on the banks of the (now) Nepean River may have identified themselves as living on the banks of the Hawkesbury!

This article includes instalments 37, 38 & 39 which were published in *The Hawkesbury Herald* newspaper on the 11, 18 & 25 December 1903. The complete Boughton's *Reminiscences of Richmond* are to be reprinted shortly by Cathy McHardy. Any enquiries email [cathy@nisch.org](mailto:cathy@nisch.org)

***The Hawkesbury Herald***  
**Friday, December 11, 1903**  
**Reminiscences of Richmond No. 37**  
**FROM THE FORTIES DOWN.**  
**[By "Cooramill."]**

Before attempting to describe the old Yarramundi water-mill, perhaps it would be as well to give a brief history of the builder and owner.

Mr. George Howell came to the colony with the late Rev. Samuel Marsden, and settled down for some time in Parramatta, and while there built one, if not two, mills. One I remember well. It was on the Parramatta River, on the spot where the gas-works are now erected in George-street. It was conveniently arranged to be driven by either wind or water. In order to obtain water power a dam was built across the river, in which a flood-gate was constructed, which was opened as the tide rose and closed when at its full, thus impounding sufficient water to work the mill for a considerable time.

In addition to the water wheel there were four large fans erected, with sails attached, so they had the advantage of both wind and water. At times the two elements would be at work, at other times neither.

It was at this mill that young George Howell—who was left in charge when his father came to reside at Yarramundi—was killed by one of the fans striking him on the head, while he was engaged doing some repairs.

He was a fine young man, and I have heard my grandmother say his death was very much regretted by all who knew him.

I remember the old place well, and the old stepping-stones—the remains of the old dam—where we used to cross at low tide. The last time I was in Parramatta I saw they had a foot-bridge erected over the same spot.

But to return to Yarramundi and Mr. Howell, sen. He came here from Parramatta after building the mills above-mentioned, bringing four of his sons and one daughter with him, who all settled at a later period on different parts of the river. The name is still well-known on the Nepean. In fact, I may say all over Australia—aye. And England, too—through the skill of our "Billy" as a cricketer. He is a great-grandson of the above-mentioned. And I may add that those people who know Billy Howell's ancestors, and also have the privilege of knowing Billy, will say he is a Howell, both in figure and disposition.

The year that Mr. Howell arrived in this district I am not in a position to state, but no doubt he, being so much interested in mills and milling, left Parramatta to settle in the Hawkesbury, which was at that time considered the granary of New South Wales—where wheat could be grown to the extent of 40 bushels to the acre.

Many people that I have spoken to respecting the above will scarcely credit the assertion, but I have seen it, and helped to cut and thresh it, and could name the farms in which the quantity stated grew. Tim Reay's father, when overseer for Mrs. Cox, of Hobartville, grew that quantity in the highland paddocks at the back of Richmond. Jem Knott gathered the same amount per acre on the same land, when managing for old "Daddy" Sharp. Jemmy Williams exceeded the quantity named

on his Grose farm (now Denny Clemson's), which is situated near where the old mill stood. There are other farms lower down the river which have even exceeded the above in the yield of wheat.

Jemmy Williams and Jem Knott are still alive, and can bear testimony to the above statement.

The year that Mr. Howell arrived in the district I have not been able to ascertain, but from events which I have heard related it must have been about the year 1820, and, judging from the buildings he erected, he must have been busily engaged while here, for he died in 1837 at the age of 79 years. His wife—old granny Howell—I remember well. She survived him several years.

But I often think he must have had the bump of construction very largely developed, when I remember the many (and some of them very quaint) structures he erected. I do not know in what order, or what were the dates of the different buildings, but we will suppose that he had to build a house to live in first. And that was to all appearance a substantial structure. It was on the hill at the rear of where the Presbyterian Church now stands. I have often been inside it, and used to wonder at the massive timbers that were used in it. Harry Farlow pulled it down about 10 years ago. Then in order to gain access to the mill, he had to build a bridge over the lagoon. A "rustic bridge," right enough, but with a substantial structure, which stood the storms and floods for many years. Many of the poles are still standing and can be seen from the new bridge. It was built entirely at Mr. Howell's expense, but was used by the general public free of charge.

But before I go to the mill allow me to describe two other structures he built, which I have before alluded to. One was an octagonal building. We used to call it the round house, I could never imagine what it was built for.

The other was the more quaint looking of the two, but it had its use. It was built for a barn, and was constructed in the following manner : —There were two very high iron-bark trees growing about 40ft apart. The first branch on each was about 40ft from the ground, thus forming forks, on which he rested a ridge-pole, and that ridge-pole, when resting in the forks of the two trees, was perfectly horizontal. Then against this ridge-pole he raised other timbers to act as principal rafters, forming an isosceles triangle, the ground being the base. It was not so much the style of architecture

that was peculiar, but the extreme height of such a building that attracted notice. It was covered with shingles of extraordinary length, which added still more to its grotesque appearance. I think Harry Farlow pulled it down to make room for the church.

I will now cross the bridge, and get down to the mill, and in doing so we have to cross the picturesque and fertile valley of the Hawkesbury. But hold! I may not be correct. It used to be the Hawkesbury 50 years ago but since the Nepean changes its name only at its junction with the Grose, and that junction is now nearly a mile lower down than it was before the '68 floods, the Nepeanite might object. But let us hope they are not so conservative, and that they will allow me to proceed.

***The Hawkesbury Herald***  
**Friday, December 18, 1903**  
**Reminiscences of Richmond - No. 38**  
**FROM THE FORTIES DOWN.**  
**[By "Cooramill."]**

On the way from the lagoon to the river we pass the homes of several very old residents. The Palmers, the Timminses, the Pearces, and others, of whom I shall say something later on. I wish to remind you that in what I am writing I am trying to describe this place as it appeared over 50 years ago.

When we arrive at the banks of the river a lovely scene is presented to our view, for there before us is the mill-race, the handiwork of Mr. Howell, which, assisted, as it is, by nature, makes a beautiful landscape. I only wish I could paint it, but since that is not possible, I must try and describe it.

We follow the winding road down the green sloping banks until we reach the mill-race, which leaves the river just above Williams' Falls, with a gentle curve, partly through excavation and partly embankment, shaded on either side by the river oak, sallies and other trees. The limpid water flows on until it reaches the mill, and after performing its duty there returns to the river below Woods' Falls.

The road, after descending to the level of the race, proceeds along side by side with the stream, the waters within the embankment being high above it. In fact, while seated in your vehicle, as you come near the mill, they appear to be on a level with your head. The road after passing the mill, crosses the mill-race and proceeds over the sandy flat between this stream and the Hawkesbury River, where you can ford Aston's Falls and thereby reach the high road to South Kurrajong.

The mill, to all appearances, was a most substantial structure, with great corner posts securely put in the ground. The base was formed with slabs of great thickness, and the whole space between each wall of slabs filled in with bed boulders, taken from the bed of the river and must have taken some hundreds of tons of the metal.

On the first floor, the principal part of the machinery was situated, being ponderous and substantial, and when wheat and corn (maize) was received for grinding, the flour and meal were delivered after going through the mill. And the most important and interesting of all was the great mill wheel, which must have been nearly 20 feet in diameter, solely and steadily revolving; also the flood gate and by-wash, and the fish passing over the falls, which we sometimes caught with our hands as they got fast in the tones.

I never hear the old song "Ben Bolt" but I am reminded of this old mill, as some of the lines in the second verse apply, for instance :

*Oh! don't you remember the wood. Ben Bolt,  
Near the green sunny slope of the hill.  
Where oft we have sung 'neath its cool  
spreading shade,  
And kept time to the CLICK of the mill.*

The word "click: may not come in, since I do not remember any clicking, but a low monotonous rumble, smooth and regular, such as is peculiar to wooden gear; for it was all wood—wooden wheels, wooden teeth, and I believe some of the journals and bearings were of wood.

But often while waiting for the bag of wheat which my brother and I have taken to the mill for old Harry the miller, or later, Tom Butler, to put through, have we laid 'neath the cool spreading shade of the wood that surrounded the mill; and otherwise amused ourselves by jumping the stream and swimming in its turbulent waters after it had left the wheel.

The mill has gone; not by decay, as the song would have it, but the agency of the treacherous waters which swept down at times like a roaring sea. And although it stood the floods of fifty years, it succumbed at last. Often and often after floods, had its plucky owner repaired some break and set it going again, until (I think) the year '68, when the banks of the river and acres and acres of the farms near by were swept away, the river deviated some half mile or more from its original course, and there being nothing for the mill to stand on it had to go. On one

occasion, I think it was in '64, the river rose without any warning. We had had no rain here, but the water rose so fast that there was no time to clear the mill. The result was that bags of flour were washed away and lay strewn along the banks. However, the most of it was collected again, and was only slightly damaged.



**A view over Richmond today [M. Nichols]**

I say the original course, I mean the course that was known to original residents, for I believe the river has had its course at different times on every part of the valley between North Richmond and Richmond, since the time when it was one sheet of water from hill to hill. As a proof of this it is recorded in the stones that lay on a level with the bed of the river, which may be seen by sinking on any portion of the land mentioned. I myself have seen boulders, similar to those that are in the river bed, in a well near Yarramundi Lagoon, and again near the lagoon at Richmond, which leaves no doubt that the river ran there at one time, and may at some future time be seen there again. It is evidently working its way there, for it is nearer Yarramundi than it was 40 years ago by at least half-a-mile.

I do not think I am a pessimist, nor do I pretend to pose as a geologist, but when one reads the Rev. Father Curran's "Geology of Sydney," and notes that changes of the earth's surface have been going on for many millions of years—in fact, he says "the time that has elapsed since life is known to have appeared in the earth is estimated at 704,235,000 years, and the age of the earth is vastly greater, and that Australia has a history far more ancient than any written by men"—it makes one think and expect changes, if slowly. Let us hope that whatever changes occur in our time, or for that matter, any future time, will be for the better.

But to return to the river. I often think it is a pity that so few of our older residents thought of writing down some of the events which



occurred in the early days. How much more interesting it is to listen to people telling you what they have seen than what they have heard. And how much more interesting still it would have been had we had Clarie Pitt or George Woodhill in those days with their cameras. Here they could have secured the picture of the most lovely spot on the Hawkesbury.

*"Where the tints of the earth and the hues of  
the sky,  
In colour though varied in beauty may vie."*

Every thing was on a scale of imposing grandeur, and they could have found on every side subjects of inexhaustible interest to adorn their landscapes.

They have taken some pretty views of the river in different places, and they have taken them well, equal to what any professional may do, but they have lost the best. It is gone, gone for ever, save only in the memory of those who have been spared to dream.

I think if they had seen it, they would have taken it from every point of the compass, and then would not have been content until they had taken it upside down even if they had to stand on their heads. George would at any rate. Strange things happen at the antipodes, and it would not appear more strange to see George on his head taking snapshots, than some of the things we see even here on the banks and in the river. We see trees shedding their bark instead of their leaves, fruit with the stone outside instead of the centre (as the native cherry for instance), animals with wings (the flying fox and platypus), which is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, but is a kin to all three; and we have a non-tidal river which sometimes runs the contrary way.

I remember spending a holiday on one occasion with some friends a few miles up the Nepean, and noticing the river becoming very much swollen, with logs and debris running upwards, I ran to acquaint my hostess of the fact. She told me that she had seen it before, but only once. She had a serving man, whose duty it was to haul water from the river, when on the occasion mentioned he came running up in a great state of fear, exclaiming, "Missus, missus, send for the priest, the whole world is coming to an end." He evidently was under the impression that the earth had taken a start down south, and there was no telling how soon it would collapse altogether. Whether he thought the priest would be able to stop it, or he wished to

obtain absolution before he died, my hostess did not inform me.

But she explained that this extraordinary freak was caused through heavy rain falling on the Grose water-shed, and little or none on the Nepean, and the banks near the mouth of the Grose being narrow the Nepean was backed up, an event which is not likely to occur again on account of the great washaway that I have mentioned above, leaving a greater channel for the Grose water to get away quickly.

***The Hawkesbury Herald***  
**Friday, December 25, 1903**  
**Reminiscences of Richmond - No. 39**  
**FROM THE FORTIES DOWN**  
**[By "Cooramill."]**

In the vicinity of, the mill there were good fishing grounds. Our variety, however, was limited. We had no trout or salmon, or the many other kinds of fish we read of as being in the old country. But we had the succulent perch—and what is more exciting to the angler than to have a 4lb perch tugging away at his line—and the not-so-be-despised mullet, which only an expert fisherman can strike. There was also the silver eel, which, when served up by an experienced chef, is pronounced (by these who can acquire a taste for it) as not too bad.

We had no dainty tackle or beautiful flies. Our tackle was sometimes very primitive. Our lines were manufactured out of horsehair, which had the advantage of being proof against the teeth of the eels. I often think it would have been interesting to have had the opinion of that gentle angler, Isaac Walton, on the subject of our tackle. However, with all our disadvantages we sometimes made a catch sufficient to appease the most voracious of fishy appetites. But we cannot do it now. I think the fish must have followed the mill. You may hear of an odd catch now and then—George Crowley, for instance. But I think he must have obtained a wrinkle from the gentleman named above. Denny Clemson cannot do it. He thinks it is on account of so much net fishing. A thing not so much known in the old days. And as for seines, I never saw one until Tom Griffiths introduced them.

In my last I made mention of Williams' Falls, Woods' Falls and Aston's Falls. It might be interesting to some of your young readers to know what changes have taken place in the river's course since the time of which I write. Originally the waters of the Nepean and Grose met at the corner of what is now Denny



Clemson's farm, and from that point the river was called the Hawkesbury.

A few yards higher up the Nepean a weir was formed of boulders—by the Howells, I presume—for the purpose of backing the water up to the mill race for the use of the mill. Immediately below this weir was what was called Williams' ford, or crossing.

Aston's Falls were a little below the junction of the Nepean and Grose, therefore across the Hawkesbury proper. Wood's Falls were still lower down. This place was not used by the public generally, except when the river had risen a few feet, when it would be fordable after Aston's was impassable.

Aston's Falls, being situated on the highway, was the ford mostly used by residents of South Kurrajong. They availed themselves of this route, not because the road was shorter or superior to that by the punt—which was at North Richmond, near where the bridge now stands—but in order, chiefly, to avoid the toll, which was as follows: —“For every foot passenger 2d; for every horse (drawing or not drawing), 6d; for every wheel, 6d.” This amounted to 1/6 for an ordinary cart drawn by one horse, 3/- for a carriage and pair, and 4/- for a wagon drawn by four horses.

This tariff was kept on the bridge for many years, so that we cannot wonder at people trying to evade it. I have known pedestrians walk round by the falls, and wade the ford to save the twopence. I knew one old lady who lived at North Richmond, and who used to pay periodical visits to Yarramundi. She owned no horse, but she possessed a serving man whom she took with her to carry her across the ford. After having delivered her safely on the Yarramundi side of the river, it was his duty to remain there until she returned to convoy her back again. Whether it was an accident or purposely done I know not, but on the last occasion he fell, and deposited her in mid-stream. She ever after went by the punt, and paid her twopence!

But I was forgetting there were exemptions. Persons going to church or following a funeral were exempt from paying toll. It is not necessary to say the funerals crossing by the punt were always largely attended, for those who followed were careful to arrange about their weekly shopping before they left the town to return home.

In fact a funeral was (as they sometimes said) “a bit of a throw in.” There were some who would have wished for one every week, or as

often as their business required their presence in town.

There was a limited time set down for their return. In the case of going to church, they were not supposed to stay and lunch with their friends and return in the evening. And the same with funerals. They were not allowed to stay and do business. But it was done all the same. They did not take live poultry or pigs. If they had done so, Alf. Smith would be sure to have seen it, and the game would be up. But as it was at the time when steel skirts were in fashion, the ladies had no difficulty in secreting a few dozen cabbage-tree hats or other merchandise. I can tell you the tradespeople of Richmond had a busy half-hour after such funerals.

You might think I am hard on these people in relating this, but it is a fact. And they had my sympathy, for their burden was great. I knew one working man who paid 9/- per week in tolls for several years. And there were others who resided on the North Richmond side of the river who paid even more. There are many persons now-a-days who will scarcely credit this. But, in addition to Alf. Smith, who worked the punt, there are Michael Waters and Tom Quinn, who were in charge of the bridge at different times, whilst the same tariff existed. These men, who have always had the reputation of being truthful, can testify to the above statements.

Before I leave the bridge I may mention that there has also been a great washing away of the banks here. In fact, the said wash extends from Agnes Banks above the falls and far down below the bridge on the Richmond side, causing the river to deviate and run by the end of the bridge. This necessitated the use of the punt, again, to convey passengers to and fro. However, under the skilful engineering of Mr. G. M. Pitt, of “Sunnyside,” this gap was filled in again with some 10,000 tons of stone, and the river was again turned to the original channel.

When the bridge was completed in 1860 the road from Richmond came into it at a right angle, the turn being on the deck. This, in wet weather, was the cause of many accidents, some of which are serious. It was here that Micky O'Brien had his leg broken through his horse falling. The late Richard Skuthorp had a nasty fall, and also Tiernan (the constable) and many others, some of which, to the onlooker, were very amusing.



# RESEARCHING ANCESTORS IN THE DAYS OF THE RAJ

by Sylvia Murphy [sylcec@ihug.com.au](mailto:sylcec@ihug.com.au)

## Notes from talk at Hawkesbury Family History Group - 14 April 2010

This talk focused on resources covering the Days of the Raj, which is the period starting after the British Government ousted the government of the East India Company, following the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and then ruled India over 100 years until independence was granted or taken in 1947. When researching Families in British India, you first need to be aware that there were three administrative areas which covered the whole of South Asia: Bengal; Madras and Bombay. Secondly, there are effectively **NO** certificates of registration of birth, death or marriage; but the records are of baptism, marriage and burial. I also tell you now that while it is the best set of records available, the India Office church records are reckoned to represent no more than 80% of events.

### WEBSITES:

**Family Search** [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

(Good place to start - use the advanced search function select International Genealogical Index, and under region enter 'Asia', and country 'India')

**India Family** <http://indiafamily.bl.uk> (this includes "Great Card Index")

**India Office Records, British Library** (Asia, Pacific & African Collection)

[www.bl.uk/reshelp/bldept/apac/index.html](http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/bldept/apac/index.html)

**Families in British India Society (FIBIS)** [www.fibis.org](http://www.fibis.org)

The FIBIS data base is constantly expanding, so check regularly see also their useful WIKI on newspapers [www.wiki.fibis.org/index.php?title=Newspapers\\_and\\_journals\\_online](http://www.wiki.fibis.org/index.php?title=Newspapers_and_journals_online)

**Google Books** <http://books.google.com.au/> and **Internet Archive** [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)

### LIBRARIES

**With relevant holdings and collections include:**

**National Library of Australia** [www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au)

Many books and other relevant material, check catalogue online for more details. Newspapers including Calcutta Newspaper "*The Statesman and Friend of India*" held. See also **South Asian Newspapers held in Australian libraries** (not current but very useful)

[www.nla.gov.au/asian/gen/sanews.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/asian/gen/sanews.html)

**Fisher Library, University of Sydney** [www.library.usyd.edu.au/](http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/)

Members of the public can use but not borrow. Holds many relevant titles including newspapers such as "*Times of India*" plus "*Bombay Gazette*" and many other papers.

**State Library of NSW, Sydney** [www.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)

State Library holds a wealth of resources in connection with British India, resources which have not been digitised or microfilmed and need consulting on site. It has an excellent collection of Military, Civil Service and Trade Directories for British India, outside of London. The library also has information about HM Commissioned Army Officers see the Harts Army Lists or the Indian Army & Civil Service List and its successors. The annual India List 1890-1940 is also available.

### **Family History Centre, North Parramatta**

Holds significant indexes and records pertaining to India including:

- a full set of ecclesiastical indexes to baptism, marriage and burial in India
- set of indexes to probate and estate records
- East India Company soldiers' records up to 1860
- India List from 1890 to 1940 (annual)

**Presenter Sylvia Murphy ~ email** [sylcec@ihug.com.au](mailto:sylcec@ihug.com.au)

## Enquiries - Can You Help?

If you have an enquiry about a family from the Hawkesbury or about a local history question relating to the Hawkesbury, please send details to Hawkesbury Family History Group, as per below. Enquiries are free.

### Griffith William Parry

Seeking any information on Griffith (William) Parry. He was born in London 24 March 1799 and he was sent to Australia in 1820 on the Speke after being found guilty of theft. He arrived in Australia May 1821. Little is known of Parry until he was assigned to Thomas Wood of Windsor in 1824. He was appointed a Constable in 1824 in the town of Windsor and remained there till 1828. He was given his Ticket of Leave in 1828 "in appreciation for his having apprehended 4 bushrangers" He was appointed constable in the lower Hawkesbury (Wisemans Ferry) in 1829. Particularly interested in the bushranger incident but any information about Parry's time in the Windsor district would be appreciated. Phillip Barrie [pgbbah@gmail.com](mailto:pgbbah@gmail.com)

### Phyllis Taylor nee Abbott

Janice Maurice is seeking information regarding her mother Phyllis Taylor nee Abbott. Phyllis Florence Abbott married Barrington Walter Taylor in Parramatta in 1936. Phyllis operated music classes during the 1930s and 1940s in the Hawkesbury. In December 1937, Phyllis Abbott was a successful candidate gaining the Licentiate & Associate Diplomas entitled to use the letters L Mus A & A Mus A respectively. [SMH 24.12.1937 p. 5] She was also very involved in the Ladies Auxiliary which raised money for the Hawkesbury Hospital. If anyone has any additional information please contact Phyllis Maurice [janicemaurice@bigpond.com](mailto:janicemaurice@bigpond.com)

## News, events & reunions

### 'The Port Macquarie-Hastings Pioneer Register 1821-1900'

The Pioneer Register has 223 pages, with 170 pages devoted to 379 separate family entries from 48 submitters. There are also 7 pages of photographs containing 26 images of settlers from the early Port Macquarie and Hastings district together with a 41 page index of every name mentioned in the Register. From the 1st June 2010, the Port Macquarie-Hastings Pioneer Register 1821-1900 will be available for sale for \$30.00 + \$12.00 P&H. Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society, PO Box 1359, Port Macquarie 2444 NSW E: [ezitree@tsn.cc](mailto:ezitree@tsn.cc)

New Zealand Family History Fair to be held 16 - 18 July 2010 <http://www.nzfamilyhistoryfair.org.nz/>

## Events

**Macquarie 2010 Bicentenary** see Calendar of Events located on the Hawkesbury City Council website at <http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/community/macquarie-2010-bicentenary>

## Some Websites to try

Australian Postal History & Social Philately [http://www.auspostalhistory.com/home\\_page.shtml](http://www.auspostalhistory.com/home_page.shtml)

Lithgow City Council cemeteries <http://www.council.lithgow.com/cemetery.html>

Robert Potts and family of Richmond NSW <http://www.pottaroo.com/rpotts34.html>

Joseph Wright & Ellen Gott website <http://home.pacific.net.au/~sails/wright.htm>

Historical Directories <http://www.historicaldirectories.org/>

Researching an Ancestor in France - author of The French Genealogy Blog <http://french-genealogy.typepad.com/>

## HAWKESBURY FAMILY HISTORY GROUP FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Hawkesbury Central Library, 300 George Street Windsor. All welcome - no charge.

14 July	MARK ST LEON History of the Circus
11 August	MEGAN MARTIN Beyond Mrs Beeton's
8 September	<i>To be advised</i>

Notices & enquiries are always welcome for the *Hawkesbury Crier*. Contact the Local Studies Librarian, Michelle Nichols, c/- Hawkesbury City Library Service, Deerubbin Centre, 300 George St, Windsor 2756 NSW Tel (02) 4560 4466 / Fax (02) 4560 4472 - Email [michelle.nichols@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michelle.nichols@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

# **HAWKESBURY FAMILY HISTORY FAIR**

**Saturday 7 August 2010 9am-5pm**



Presented by Hawkesbury City Library in conjunction with the Hawkesbury Family History Group as part of National Family History Week, the Hawkesbury Family History Fair will be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August from 9am to 5pm.

Opportunities to speak with experts from various organisations including State Records, Society of Australian Genealogists, Ancestry.com, Ryerson Indexing Group and NSW Transcription Agents. Other specialists include Jeremy Palmer, Teapot genies, Hawkesbury Cemetery Register as well as many family history groups and local history societies.

There will be displays and trade tables specialising in family history. There will also be the opportunity to purchase specialised publications and resources. The Library will be opened extended hours from 9am to 5pm, for the day.

- Tours of the Local Studies Collection at Hawkesbury Library
- Displays & resources
- Help with starting your family history
- Short talks will be held throughout the day
- Entry by gold coin donation with fantastic Lucky Door prizes



Hawkesbury Central Library  
Deerubbin Centre  
300 George Street  
Windsor NSW  
Enquiries T: 02 4560-4466  
E: [history@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:history@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)