

The Ryde Recorder

Journal & Newsletter of the Ryde District Historical Society Inc. and Family History Group



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The Ryde and Brush Farm Historical Societies shared a stall again at the Granny Smith Festival on Saturday 17 October. Sales were good and talk was in plentiful supply. Visitors to the stall covered a wide range of ages and there was a great deal of interest shown in the history of the district.

(Photo by Kevin Shaw)

All Ryde District Historical Society Inc's Local and General History meetings take place at 8 pm on the second Tuesday of each month (February to November) at historic "Willandra", 770 Victoria Road, cnr Devlin Street, Ryde. Enter by turning left at end of Willandra Street to street parking outside eastern gate of building. Entry door is at rear of building on Victoria Road side (East rear wing).

Most of the Ryde District Historical Society Inc's Family History Group meetings are held at the above address on the second Saturday of each month (Feb-Nov) at 10 am. Call Family History Group Secretary (below) to confirm if not at previous meeting. Society's **Phone Number: (02) 9807 7137** Fridays only (10-3pm) or leave a message at other times.

Editor: Kevin Shaw (0404-887-141)
President: Richard Wright (9804-6730)
Secretary: Betty Willis (9809-2212)
FHG Secretary: Tina Bean (9808-5604)

Ryde District Historical Society is willing to carry out research in its Archives. A fee of \$20 will be charged for reasonable research – if longer the applicant will be advised before the work is carried out. Please forward cheque for this amount with your inquiry. A fee of \$5 will be charged for researchers using the Society's Archives.

PLEASE NOTE: A \$2 donation will be accepted from visitors to the Ryde District Historical Society's meetings. Everyone welcome.

Please note that any conclusions or opinions expressed in the Ryde Recorder are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Ryde District Historical Society Inc

WHAT'S ON?

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Tuesday 10 Nov | Local History Group meeting at "Willandra", starting at 8:00 pm. Members meeting -- Speak to an historical subject of your choosing for about 5 minutes. |
| Saturday 14 Nov | Family History Group Meeting at "Willandra", starting at 10:00 am. Lyn Langtry will reprise the talk she gave to the Tuesday meeting in March. Her subject will be her visit to the WW1 Western Front Cemeteries in 2008. |
| Saturday 28 Nov | Ferry Cruise on Port Hacking. The cruise starts at 10.30 am and goes for 3hrs. It departs from the Public Wharf, Tonkin St Cronulla. Booking is essential with Tours Officer Lesa Harris: lesa@optusnet.com.au or 0400-588-854. |
| Saturday 12 Dec | Ryde District Historical Society Christmas party , held in conjunction with the National Trust After-Hours Group. This will be afternoon tea at Willandra between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. Please bring a plate of finger food. Wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee will be provided. The local politicians and City of Ryde councillors will be invited and Ryde District Historical Society members will be expected to show these visitors over the house and talk a little about Ryde history and heritage. |
| Tuesday 9 Feb. | Annual General Meeting of the Ryde District Historical Society at Willandra, starting 8:00 pm. If you would like to make a contribution to the work of the Society, now is the time to speak up. Much of the work of the society is carried out on Fridays between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm at Willandra. There are also sub-committees that could meet at other times. Please contact one of the committee members listed above. |
| Saturday 13 Feb. | Family History Group Meeting at Willandra, starting 10:00 am. As the first meeting of the year, there will be a large number of new journals and other genealogical "news" to discuss. |
| Tuesday 9 Mar. | Local History Group Meeting at "Willandra", starting at 8:00 pm. |
| Saturday 13 Mar. | Family History Group Meeting at Willandra, starting 10:00 am. |

The following article originally appeared on page 3 of *The Weekly Times* on Wednesday 28 October 2009:

Vale Mavis Benson

MAVIS KATHLEEN BENSON has passed away aged 90 and her funeral service was held at St Anne's church Ryde on Monday conducted by a former rector Rev Patrick Collins.

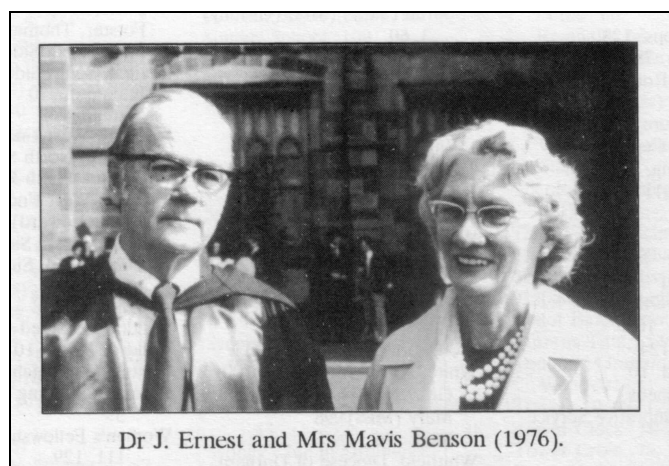
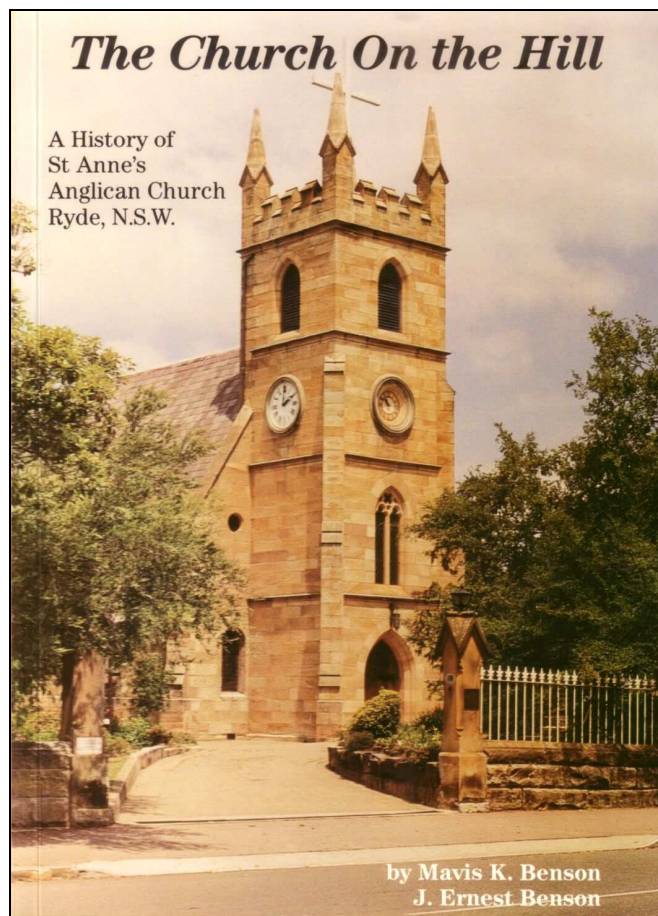
Mavis will long be remembered as the co-author with her late husband Dr J Ernest Benson of the history book of her beloved St Anne's "The Church on the Hill" pictured right.

She was born in Ryde November 26 1918 and attended Ryde Primary School and Hornsby High and married Ernest in St Anne's church in 1939.

Mavis was confirmed by Archbishop Howard Mowll and was active in the church choir most of her life and was the first woman elected to the Parish Council in 1978.

She was secretary of St Anne's Women's Fellowship and Ryde Eastwood District Music Club and also active organising Chesalon luncheons, She is survived by sons Ron and David and families.

Family members taking part in the service were Sue Benson, Katrina Benson, Katherine Benson and soloist Bronwyn Thompson.



There was a sequel to the above story. I recently worked in the cemetery office at the Field of Mars, starting on Monday 26 October. What was my surprise when my first funeral was that of Mavis Benson? I was also pleased to have a brief conversation with Rev. Patrick Collins. I told the cemetery grounds manager that I knew Mavis and he said that he had just spent a large amount of time beautifying the Benson plot, which was "obviously" not going to be used again, only to be told that he had to dig up the daisies for another burial. Murphy keeps an eye on things! – Ed.

REBADGING THE ANCESTORS

By Sabina Fielding-Smith

I just couldn't believe it! I had been walking around the old Mortuary Section in Rookwood Cemetery with my sister for an hour – it just had to be here. After much discussion and map reading we finally found what we thought was our ancestor's burial plots. But this couldn't be right – no headstone, no marker of any kind just a patch of grass at the end of a row of graves. How could this happen? For heaven's sake, my great grandfather was a stonemason so how could he depart this mortal coil without a monument to his life!

At this point in researching my mother's family history reality started to bite. Up until now I was under the assumption that all burial records were complete and everybody was buried with a headstone! How wrong was I! This situation appalled me and I decided there and then to rectify this matter once and for all. Never stand in the way of a determined family historian!

As I was to find out, the process of putting a headstone or marker on a relative's grave is not a simple matter. State Government regulations require that you must prove that you own or have a 'Right of Burial' to the plot on which you wish to erect a monument. This means that you must own or have inherited the burial space through a legal will or document. With long since deceased ancestors this can be a lengthy sometimes costly process but one that can be considered worthwhile. I shall explain the process I went through to stake a claim to my ancestors' plots.



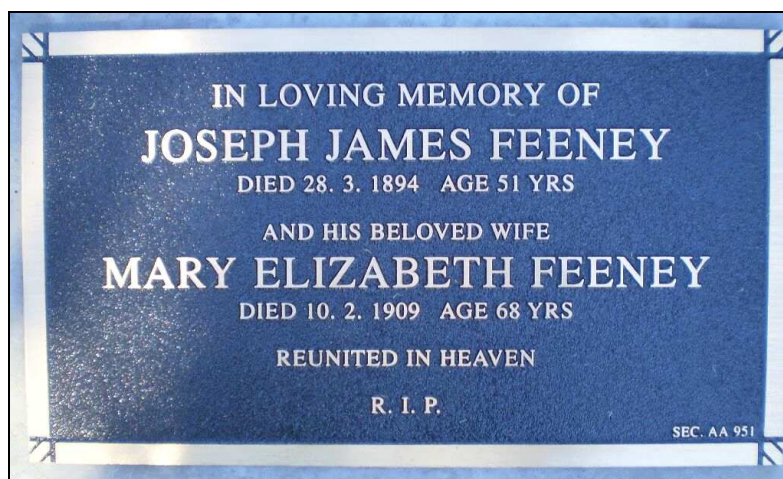
Sharon Fielding, Bridget Feeney and Sabina Fielding

My great grandfather Joseph James Feeney from the town of Athboy in County Meath Ireland died 28 March 1894 and was buried in Grave 950, Mortuary 1, Section AA, Rookwood Cemetery. Mary Elizabeth (nee Carpenter) Feeney (his wife) died 10 February 1909 and is buried in the same plot as Joseph. In the grave next to them (grave 951) lies one of their daughters, Bridget Mary Feeney, who died 16 March 1975.

In order to lay claim to these plots I had to produce to the Catholic Cemeteries Board death certificates or certified transcriptions for Joseph James and Mary Elizabeth Feeney (great grandparents) and all their six children (my great uncles and aunts) showing their relationship to Joseph and Mary Feeney.

Being a grandchild of one of the offspring of Joseph and Mary would show my direct relationship to them. Also I had to supply a Statutory Declaration (witnessed by a JP) stating my connection (i.e. my mother) through bloodline to all of these people. They also required a copy of my own birth certificate for this purpose.

Matters were complicated by the fact that my great aunt Bridget Mary Feeney (in grave 951) left her plot to her youngest sister Agnes, as Bridget never married and produced issue. I then had to prove that Agnes, even though she married, died without issue and was buried with her husband Geoffrey in Eastern Suburbs Cemetery. I was asked to produce a copy of my mother's death certificate stating the date of death and where she was interred. The Board required a copy of my mother's will showing that my sister and I had inherited her estate and therefore a direct right of application for Right of Burial.



Some people might say 'Why go to all this trouble and expense?' My reasons for going down this track are many. Firstly, the family plot stays in the family name and cannot be sold or used without our permission – it is part of a person's estate and should be stated as such in your will. Secondly, my sister and I now have the right to erect a monument on the family plot. Thirdly, the plot may be used again for a burial or interment of ashes with our permission. When you consider the costs of a funeral, purchasing a plot and interment, this makes financial sense to keep the plot in the family's name.



It took a number of months to organise and acquire my Right of Burial from the Catholic Cemeteries Board but I am very satisfied with what I have gained for the long term. Since reclaiming my ancestors' plots back into the family fold, I have successfully 'rebadged' them. The plaques may not be as grand as Joseph Feeney's wonderful stonework but I guarantee they probably will still be there in years to come to lay claim to their tenacity in starting a new life in a fledgling country.

Established For Their Comfort

By Richard Wright

The Australian Comforts Fund came into being in August 1916, from the amalgamation of similar organisations set up at a State level after the commencement of hostilities. The State organisations were:

- New South Wales – Citizens' War Chest Fund (August 1914),
- Queensland – Queensland Patriotic Fund (August 1914),
- South Australia – League of Loyal Women (September 1915),
- Tasmania – On Active Service Fund (August 1915),
- Victoria – The Lady Mayoress's Patriotic League (August 1914), and
- Western Australia – Victoria League of Western Australia (April 1915).

The Australian Comforts Fund was a voluntary civilian organisation which during The Great War (1914-1919) and, until the return of the Australian troops in 1920, provided and distributed free comforts to the Australian fit, fighting men; in other words, the men who were not wounded or ill. (The Red Cross took care of the wounded and ill men.) These men were from all the battle zones.

The establishment of these funds in each state followed a similar pattern; hence, New South Wales will be used as a yardstick. The Citizens War Chest Fund was established at a meeting on 17 August 1914 at the Hotel Australia in Sydney. The term "War Chest" came from a discussion about anonymous donations being made to the war effort and the idea of a "national war chest" was mentioned.

Hence small collection boxes were distributed to offices, factories, shops and other public places wherein could be placed pennies and small silver coins. The boxes would be collected and emptied regularly and the amount collected would be announced in the daily press from time to time. By October 1914, The War Chest had collected £3697/10/10; from this a large quantity of clothing and necessities had been distributed among the recruits, including 1800 shirts and 10,462 pairs of socks.

The distress of Belgium was taken into consideration by the committee of The War Chest Fund and for the fortnight from 14 to 27 October 1914, the entire income of the Fund (£1180/11/6) was donated to the Belgian Fund. (It was because of the invasion of Belgium that Britain and the Empire had entered the war.)

A depot was established at 321 Pitt Street, Sydney, for distribution of goods and material. Large quantities of clothing in the form of shirts, socks, balaclavas, knitted gloves, mittens and mufflers (scarves) were received there and immediately distributed to the centres most needing them. Nearly ten tons of warm clothing for the immediate use of the troops was consigned to the NSW Agent-General in London, with instructions for them to be forwarded to where they were most needed. As the Australian troops were initially in Egypt, the warm clothing was sent to the British troops already in the trenches in Europe. From reports received from London, the donated clothing was most appreciated. Three motor ambulances were ordered by the Fund at a cost of £1800 for the use of the Australian troops when they reached the front.

In its first year The War Chest Fund raised £23,982/11/4, of which £9353/11/3 was collected from the War Chest boxes. The following items were sent to the Australian troops in Egypt and Britain:

- 11,223 shirts,
- 19,008 pairs of socks,
- 4533 balaclavas,
- 891 cholera belts,
- 8815 woollen mufflers,
- 9521 horse bandages, and
- 8000 sandbags.

Six motor ambulances, valued at £3280/2/3 were also sent.

The War Chest Fund organised button day appeals throughout the war and large amounts of money were raised for the war effort. For example, on 30 June 1916, £42,000 was raised from one appeal alone. The Fund also organised other ventures to raise money. For example, a flower shop was set up in the city from December 1916 to April 1919, as was a cake shop from May 1918 to April 1919. All monies raised went to the war effort. One venture of particular interest was the “Our Flag” Fund, which operated from June 1916 to June 1920. Its purpose was to assure a permanent record of the men in the AIF in the fighting line. Their names were to be inscribed in a book on the payment of 1/-. (The person donating received a miniature copy of the inspiring “Our Flag” poster.) Two other books were also available: “The Honour Book” for those who gave their lives and “The War Workers’ Book” for those who did their “bit” at home.

The War Chest Fund” had branches in the suburbs and in country NSW; also formed independently of, but working with, The War Chest Fund were Battalion comfort funds that were formed early in the war for individual battalions; and working and sewing circles scattered all over the state, who dealt with urgent needs for socks and shirts with remarkable success.



*Two Pictures of the AIF and War Chest Club in 1917 (left) and 1919 (right)
(Australian War Memorial - <http://www.awm.gov.au/>)*

The Comforts Fund, in other ways, too, alleviated the distress inevitable in war. On 9 August 1916, The AIF and War Chest Club was officially opened at Horseferry Road, London, and remained open until 10 August 1919. The name of the club had its origin in the fact that, while the AIF was responsible for control and management, the capital was provided by The War Chest Fund in Sydney. The initial grant was £4000 and the Fund stood behind the club financially for the duration of the war. The Club was founded with the object of providing accommodation, entertainment and the promotion of the social welfare of the Australian troops passing through or on leave in London.

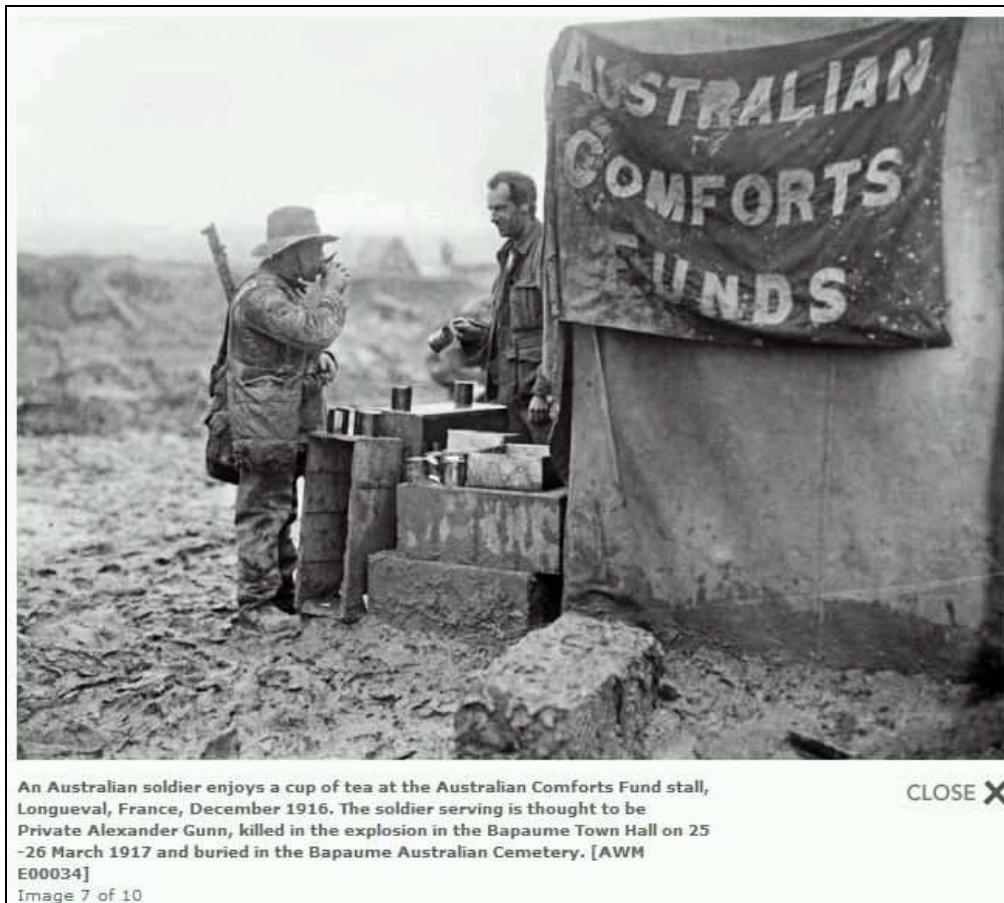
It was determined that there should be a place in London where the troops should be catered for at reasonable prices in an Australian atmosphere; hence, the establishment of the Club. It provided buffet meals, dormitory sleeping accommodation, baths, hairdressing, watch repairs, “dry” (non-alcoholic) and “wet” (alcoholic) canteens, a billiard saloon, kit store, boot parlour, post office, bank, cinema, writing area, and a social/hospitality/enquiries area.

As an example of the prices, one could go to the hairdressers and receive a haircut for 5d, a shave and brush-up for 3d, a shampoo for 6d, a hair singe for 3d and a vibro-massage for 9d. At the wet canteen one could obtain canteen bitter (2d for ½ pint), best pale ale (4d for ½ pint), stout (4d for ½ pint), port wine (6d a nip), whiskey (6d a nip), and cordials (ranging from 2d a bottle). The cost of meals at the club never exceeded 1/- and were typically:

Breakfast: Porridge; sausages, egg & potatoes; sausages, tomato & potatoes, Poached egg on toast & tomato; fried fish & potatoes; bacon & egg; cold meat & potatoes; pickles, beetroot; bread & butter; tea and coffee.

Lunch: Vegetable soup; rump steak pie; roast lamb & mint sauce; potatoes, cabbage & haricot beans; cold roast beef or mutton; beetroot, pickles; golden roll & honey sauce; jam tart; rice pudding; tea, coffee and bread.

Tea or Supper: Sausages, egg & potatoes; sausages, tomato & potatoes; poached egg on toast & tomato; fried fish & potatoes; entrée and potatoes; cold meat & potatoes; pickles, beetroot; stewed fruit & custard; jam tart; blanc mange; ice cream; bread & butter; tea and coffee.



(<http://www.westernfront.gov.au/bapaume/bapaume-mairie.html>)

After the armistice on 11 November 1918, it was not only the sick and wounded of the AIF that required to be repatriated to Australia but also the “fit” soldiers as well. The repatriation of these soldiers commenced in December 1918 and continued through 1919, the last Australian troops arriving home in early 1920. It was when the troops arrived home that the comfort funds came to the fore. When each troopship berthed in Sydney, a breakfast, known as “The Anzac Buffet” was provided by the comfort fund for the troops and their next of kin. For the troops from NSW, the Anzac Buffet was held in The Domain; any troops from Queensland were not forgotten – they were taken to Central Railway Station and provided with morning tea before boarding a special train for Brisbane.

At the height of the influenza epidemic in Sydney, March to July 1919, returning Australian troops were quarantined at North Head. They were quartered in 200 battery tents and the Australian Comforts Fund built two canteens there (with the help of the troops) – one was for the distribution of free comfort items; at the other the men could obtain items at cost price. The Fund also provided fishing lines to beguile the tedium of isolation while quarantined at North Head. Fishing parties would often fish throughout the night and prizes were given to the most successful anglers.

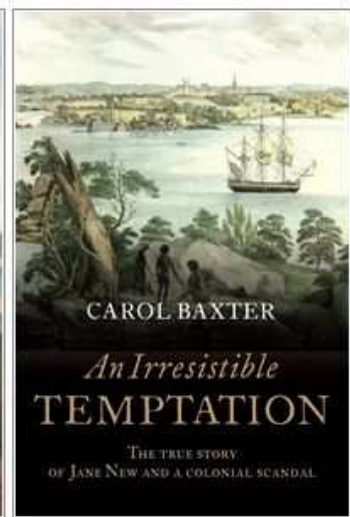
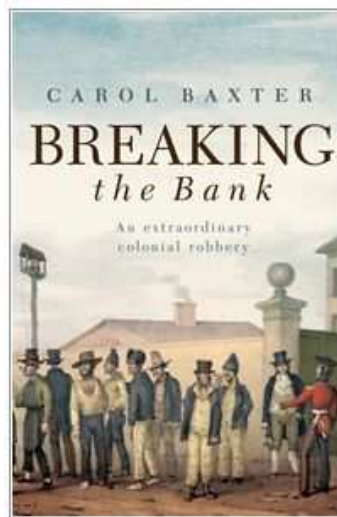
When all the Australian troops had returned from Europe, the comforts fund was wound up and there was the hope that it would never have to be established again.

Writing Interesting Family Histories

A Book Review by Tina Bean

So many family historians gather masses of research together and then one day find that they have a dilemma. They can either write their research up as a history or leave all those wonderful stories sitting in musty folders and dusty filing cabinets or in some database on the internet. Many family historians do decide to write a family history and as soon as they start they find more difficulties. Each family has lots of wonderful stories but what about the generations and individuals between these stories where there are only a few basic dates? How do you convert those bare facts into an interesting story? This is where Carol Baxter's book on 'Writing Interesting Family Histories' can help.

Family Tree Tips: Writing Interesting Family Histories covers the challenges of both researching and writing an interesting family history. Carol gives amusing anecdotes to illustrate many of the challenges that she and other family historians have uncovered, such as that person who has three potential birth dates, or those twins who were seemingly born three months apart. Carol explains why facts are not always as clear cut as they may seem and it is these seemingly irreconcilable differences in dates that can become a whole story in themselves.



Carol Baxter and her two books

Carol then goes on to explore different options for structuring a family history. By using a very basic structure, ideas can be put down and a flow can be created. Once a structure has been implemented it can be changed as the stories of the family take the writer in other directions, but having a basic structure means that nothing is left out and there is consistency to the history.

Carol next moves on to how to bring family stories to life. She does this by giving basic dates and then illustrating in her own words, how these dates can be enhanced through exploring the social events that families would have been swept up in. She gives the example of Sarah Adams whom she had birth and baptism dates for. Instead of giving the dates Carol writes about the threat of French invasion and the impact this would have had on the little town of Deal where Sarah was born. This sets a context and brings Sarah to life far more than a date and place.

As well as explaining how to make your stories interesting Carol Baxter explores language, research and Australian specifics such as finding a convict ancestor. All of these can add colour to your family history and Carol helps you to turn your interesting family histories into great family stories.

Baxter, C. 2009 'Family Tree Tips: Writing Interesting Family Histories' Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, NSW, Australia.

AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE PROBLEMS

Brian and Marilyn Tate have submitted a letter from the Sydney Morning Herald of April 19. A call to the Herald has informed me that the copyright for the letter remains with the writer, B.J.O. Rosenberg of Randwick. Directory enquiries were not able to help with a telephone number for this person, so we hereby acknowledge copyright.

The Tates tell me that the letter is a follow on from an earlier story in the SMH dealing with a former Rolling Stones member, Bill WYMAN. It was reported that Bill's son Stephen had married the mother of Mandy Smith, Bill Wyman's former wife. The letter follows.

"It is with interest and confusion that I learn of Bill Wyman's son Stephen marrying Mandy Smith's mother (Stay in Touch April 8).

My confusion surrounds Stephen because as Bill married his wife's daughter, she is now his mother. However, at the same time he is her father, being married to her mother. Furthermore, his father became his wife's father-in-law as he is his son. His father, at the same time, also became the son-in-law of his mother-in-law thus he is Bill's father-in-law as Stephen is married to his mother-in-law.

Imagine my further confusion if Stephen's wife gives birth to a son. In the first instance, Stephen's son is his son but also his mother's brother being his wife's daughter. At the same time, he would be the brother-in-law of Stephen's father. Stephen would be the cousin of his son and therefore also the cousin of his mother because she is his sister. Consequently, Stephen's mother would also be his aunt.

Phew! It could of course have been worse if Mandy Smith had had a son. Stephen's own son would become the uncle of his grandchild, because he is his daughter's brother. Stephen's wife would be his grandmother because the child would be her daughter.

As her husband, Stephen would be the child's grandfather, also his brother's grandfather and as the grandfather of his brother is also his, Stephen would be his own grandfather!

From *The Cedar Log*, journal of Richmond-Tweed Family History Society, June 1994 (supplied by Dorothy Brown).

A Brief Report on The Rocks Ghost Tour



Our Tours Officer Lesa Harris organised another great tour again on the night of Sunday 18 October. It was a ghost tour of the Rocks area of Sydney. Our guide had keys to all sorts of spooky areas and his stories enhanced the atmosphere. Everyone was given at least one character to play and everyone did their parts well. Unfortunately, we have not heard yet of any ghosts appearing in people's photographs. We were assured that there would be apparitions in some of the windows. The highlight was the archaeological site under the new block of flats in Windmill St. The blood-curdling scream we heard there was produced by none other than our own Tina Bean.

The Bartons in St Anne's Churchyard

By Julie Dawson and Kevin Shaw

This article is in continuation of the series of articles that Julie was writing at the time of her death. It will eventually be published in the book that she planned to write herself but which is now being finished by the second author.

BARTON, Emily Mary

Row 9, No 62

Died 24th August 1909, aged 91

BARTON, Sarah Kate

Row 9, No 64

“Wife of Henry Francis Barton”, Died 5th July 1885 (not in register)

Emily Mary Barton was born Emily Mary Darvall, the daughter of Major Edward Darvall (q.v.) and his first wife Emily Darvall née Johnson (q.v.). Most of the Darvall family arrived in the colony aboard the *Alfred* in January 1840 to join Emily's brother, John Bayley Darvall, who had arrived the previous year. In 1840 Emily married an East India Company officer and grazier named Robert Johnston Barton of Boree Nyrang in a double ceremony at St James Church in Sydney with her sister Eliza, who married Henry Kater.

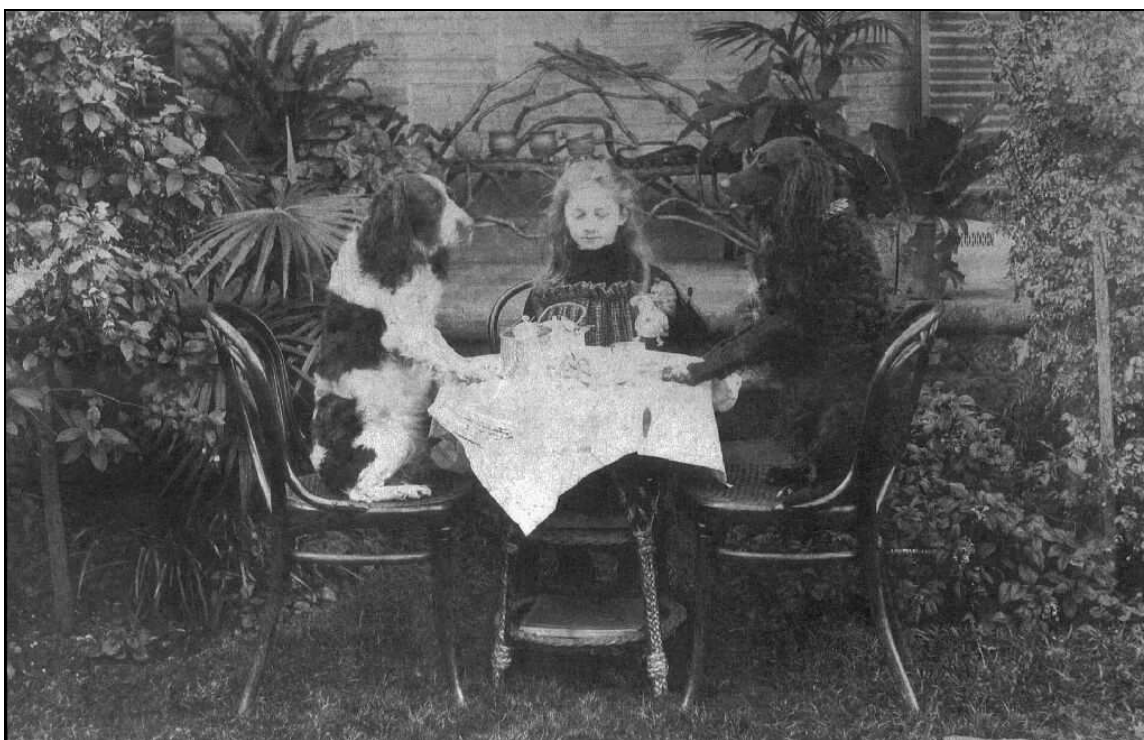
The Bartons had ten children, the third child being Andrew Barton “Banjo” Paterson's mother, Rose (q.v. as Rose Isabella Paterson). Emily's husband died on 4 October 1863 at the Australian Club in Sydney and he is also buried in St Anne's churchyard, though no headstone exists today. Some time after her husband died, Emily purchased a cottage on Punt Road, Gladesville, named *Rockend*. Andrew "Banjo" Paterson was amongst a number of Emily's grandchildren who came from the country to stay with their grandmother. In Andrew's case it was to attend school at Sydney Grammar.



*Rockend, home to Emily Barton from 1866, now the Banjo Paterson Cottage Restaurant
(Photo by Kevin Shaw)*

Sarah Kate Barton was the wife of Henry Francis Barton, Emily's and Robert's ninth child, and her maiden name was Macansh. The following marriage notice appeared in the *Brisbane Courier* of Tuesday 10 July 1883, page 1: *BARTON-MACANSH.- On the 8th July, at St. Mark's Church, Warwick, by the Venerable Archdeacon Matthews, H.F. Barton, Barrister-at-law, Sydney, to Sarah Kate, third daughter of J.D. Macansh, of Canning Downs.* John Donald Macansh arrived in NSW in 1838, was appointed to a position in the Bank of Australia and was a sheep farmer in the Hunter Valley, Yass and Moree districts. He purchased Canning Downs Station in 1870 and moved to Queensland. He was appointed to the Queensland Legislative Council in 1886.

Sarah Kate Macansh was born on 31 July 1856 at Raymond Terrace (RN 7518). Henry and Sarah Barton had two children. The first, an unnamed female born in Queensland, appears to have died in infancy (QLD RN 1884/C8345). The following notices appeared on page 1 of the *Brisbane Courier* on Friday 17 July 1885, one a birth: *On the 30th June, at Ashfield, near Sydney, the wife of H.F. Barton, of a daughter* and the other a death: *BARTON - On the 5th July, at Ashfield, near Sydney, Sarah Kate, the beloved wife of H.F. Barton, and daughter of J.D. Macansh.* According to the Sydney Morning Herald notice, she died at *Kalula* in Church Street, Ashfield. The child born on 30 June 1885 was called Sarah Kate Barton after her mother (RN 5832) and was known within the family as Kate or Kitty.



If this photo is anything to go by, Kitty Barton went on to have a happy childhood. Here she is having a "meal" with her dogs at "Nyrangie". (Ryde District Historical Society)

Henry Francis Barton re-married to Cecilia Flora Windeyer (QLD, RN C2313) and in the 1890s lived in *Nyrangie*, overlooking Glades Bay. Henry died in 1902 and is buried in the Field of Mars Cemetery. Cecilia died in 1943 and is memorialised on Henry's headstone but she is not in the Field of Mars register.

Long, J, "Strugglers and Settlers: Darvall family letters 1839-1849", 2nd Edition, Evolve Studios, 2005.

Roderick, C, "Banjo Paterson: poet by accident", Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1993.

Roderick, C, "Rose Paterson's Illalong Letters 1873-1888", Kangaroo Press, East Roseville, 2000.