



# THE FIG TREE

JOURNAL OF THE  
**MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY  
HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.**  
TAREE

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### MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Taree covers the whole Manning Region as shown in the above map and includes the following areas:

Manning Valley, Wingham, Taree, Kendall, Coopernook, Old Bar, Forster, Harrington, Manning Point, Nabiac, Bulahdelah, Kew, Krambach, Oxley Island, Mitchells Island, Tinonee, Moorland, Lansdowne, Killabakh, Failford, Rawdon Vale, Tuncurry, Coolongolook, Bungwahl, Smiths Lake, Wallis Lake.

### OFFICE BEARERS

President:	G Rose	
Vice Presidents:	G Toohey	L Kidd
Secretaries:	S Robinson	J Mitchell
Treasurer:	J Parslow	L Haynes
Publicity:	G Rose G Toohey	
Librarians	J Mitchell	C Troth
Research:	G. Toohey	N. Swan
Committee:	I Hardy	P Jarman L Kidd
Public Officer:	L Haynes	
Fig Tree:	I Hardy	J McGeachie

## Presidents Report for July 2014

Dear 107 Members,

Firstly I hope you find the short record of my Family History Trip informative. I was pleasantly surprised with the welcome I received at every location. It really did feel like they were delighted to have someone come back to their roots & be interested in what even they thought of as a backwater.



No surprise, there are a lot of voluntary organisations in the Manning looking to raise money by the Bunnings sausage sizzle. This has meant that our organisation has been offered the possibility of only 2 barbeques per year. To overcome this shortfall we are trialling one at Masters on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

I have been on a Sunday to see the set-up & hope that by getting 2 of each per year we can fund resources for our Society. If we find Masters not profitable we will not repeat

Once again I need to stress that most Society resources are paid for with the money raised by the Bunnings & now Masters BBQ. I find that attending, even only for 3 hours, gives me a feeling of "ownership" of anything that this money buys. A big thank you to all who attend and help make this fund raising so successful.

National Family History Month has learning opportunities running from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August. All bar one are free & will help researchers get through their "brick walls".

Open Days - Come along & ask hard questions.

School Records - Find which schools they went to.

Census Records - People married their neighbours.

Writing your Family History - get the blood & guts in there.

Skeletons in the Closet - more blood & guts.

Palaeography- Reading that horrible old writing.

Meet author Susan Boyer - who did all above.

Ongoing saga of New South Wales Births Deaths & Marriages website which I am eager to use is still in partial operation only. Patience is a virtue I do not possess. It will be working shortly hopefully being cheaper & faster than in the past.

Finally anyone who can spare some time to help the volunteers transcribe the old Council Rate books in the Council Chambers please contact the society. I will be visiting them on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> to see what goes on.

Regards

Graeme

**NEW MEMBERS:** Welcome to, Brian Mavin, Elsie Kennett, Wendy Campbell, Wendy Coghill, Valerie Gregory and Evelyn Sommerfield. Rejoin: David Parker.

**MASTERS BARBECUE:**



Next BBQ to be held at Masters on Sunday 24th August  
If you are able to spare an hour or two on any of our BBQ days, please add your name to the list at the Library or [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au)

**REGULAR EVENTS:**

**General Meeting:** Held at 1.30 pm every 3rd Saturday of the month.

**Workshop:** Held at 1.30 pm every 4th Saturday of the month.

**AGM:** 16th August, 1.30pm. Election of office bearers.

**NATIONAL FAMILY HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES**

**At Taree library, from 6 August to 5 September**

Wed 6 Aug. 1.30pm-3.30pm FREE—Come along and join us. No booking required.

Thur 14 Aug. 1.30pm-3.30pm FREE—Have you lost your census. Book in at library.

Sat 16 Aug. 10.30am-12.30pm Writing your Family History with author Geoff Bartlett. Cost \$15.00 per person. Book in at library.

Thur 21 Aug. 10.30am-3.30pm FREE—Getting started in family history research. Book in at library.

Wed 27 Aug. 10.30am-12.00pm FREE—Understanding old hand writing. Book in at library.

Fri 29 Aug. 1.00pm-2.00pm FREE—Meet author Susan Boyer, talks about her book, Across Great Divides. Book in at library.

Sat 30 Aug. 10.30am-1.30pm FREE—Open Day. No booking required.

**Fri 5 Sept. 1.30pm-3.30pm FREE—School records 1848-1939.**

Contact Taree library for bookings:

Email: [library.events@gtcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:library.events@gtcc.nsw.gov.au) Phone: 65925290

## SOCIAL NEWS

Some of our group with Anthony Sarks, of Ricardoes Tomatoes, a family owned business just north of Port Macquarie. We had a tour of the tomato greenhouses, picked strawberries, had a lovely meal and good company.

Tomatoes and strawberries are the same price all year - all greenhouse grown and not reliant on weather conditions.



Next social outing will be held on 14 September at Coopernook Pub for lunch. If attending, place name on list at library or contact:  
Pam Jarman on her email, [gjarman@optusnet.com.au](mailto:gjarman@optusnet.com.au) or  
Gloria Toohey on 65538083 [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au)

A river cruise has been suggested for the next outing prior to December. We need 30 people to book a cruise. Please contact the above members to express interest.

### HAROLD BOAN

Harold Hugh Boan, 34yrs, fell into Ropes Creek, Colyton, after an epileptic fit. He was the son of Mrs Agnes Hannah Stout. The deceased was born in Taree and had been a single invalid pensioner for 13 or 14 years.  
His body was found by his brother, Alan Boan and Mr Cooney.

Source: Nepean Times 2 Feb 1939, (member contribution)

## INTERVIEW WITH MR JOSEPH DAVIS

### Part 1

In 1928 Mr Joseph Davis gave an interview to the editor of the Wingham Chronicle (Mr F Fitzpatrick). Mr Davis was the first white child born in Wingham. His sister Ann(ie) was my great great grandmother (and was the first white girl born in the Manning District) by virtue of her marriage to James Kidd.

On Monday, 31st May, 1928 along with Mr G.S Hill of Bungay near Wingham, the writer motored to Chatham just beyond Taree on the Main North Coast Road, the object of such trip an interview with Mr Joseph Davis.

Travellers along the Taree-Coopernook road will have no doubt noted a quaint little two storied house by the roadside at Chatham. In that house, Mr Joseph Davis resided for many years and in its day, was considered to be one of the most up-to-date residences in the locality. However, Mr Davis now resides in premises at the rear of the of the old fashioned two-storey house.

On Monday, 31st May, we found the old gentleman at home and in quite a reminiscent mood. He extended a cordial welcome to Mr Hill and writer.

"Yes" Mr Davis incidentally remarked , I have resided in Chatham for the past 75 years. I was born at Wingham, known better in early times as Cedar Party Creek. I am now 85 years of age, on the 5th February next, (all going well), I will celebrate my 86th birthday.

"I was born in the year 1843. My father's name was John Davis and he was a native of Windsor, the historic old town on the Hawkesbury River, NSW. My father's mother and father were English people , and came to Australia in the very early times."

"Yes, I take a keen matters relating to the early days, and I might say that I more than once that I made up my mind to give to the District Press some of my recollections of the early life on the Manning River. In fact, I intended to start my reminiscences with the following verse:

Its seventy-five years ago,  
Since first I started farming;  
and many curious things I've seen-  
The change is quite alarming.

So, if the truth you'd understand -  
The wonders to discover  
Just listen to the oldest hand  
Upon the Manning River"

"I intended those two verses to be the introduction to my story", continued Mr Davis.

"My mother was born in London - Elizabeth Mary Dowling was her maiden name. My father and mother came to the Manning by bridle track in the very early days of settlement on Cedar Party Creek near Wingham. They settled down in the first instance at Burrell Creek where my father was engaged in cutting timber. There were a good many cedar cutters on Cedar Party Creek in those days and my father cut a lot of cedar. I still have a saw that my father used, it is now over 90 years old and I will show it to you later.

"My eldest sister, Annie was born at Burrell Creek.(Ann/ie) Davis is claimed to be the first white child born in the Manning River District, (March 1839) ) There were five of us in the family, including my brother John, who was buried at Wingham. I believe he was buried somewhere close to where the Wingham Courthouse now stands. My father lived in a house that used to stand where Mr T.H. Stone now has a butchers shop in Wingham (Corner of Bent and Farquhar Streets). I had another sister named Lizzie and another brother Peter, who is still alive and resides at Mitchells Island."

There were no schools in my early days on the Manning, no Policeman and no Magistrates, not for years after. A man named Burrows was the first Policeman that I remember being stationed at Wingham. He may have been stationed at Bungay, that was the first centre of importance so far as settlement and officials were concerned."

"The first blacksmith at Wingham was Tom Smith, commonly known as 'Tom the Blacksmith'. He was probably located at Bungay first, but afterwards opened a business in the blacksmithing line at Wingham proper."

"My father amongst many others, cut a lot of cedar at Wingham in the early times. The cedar cutters on Cedar Party Creek used to send their timber to Sydney by a small vessel that used to trade to the river at intervals. The vessel took the timber to Sydney and brought back goods for the cedar cutters and the few other settlers that may have been in the locality. There was a beautiful cedar brush near Wingham in those days."

"My father later shifted to Chatham and died there at the age of 47 years. My mother died over 47 years ago. I remember that my mother used to teach Mr John Newby's children for some time after we came to Chatham. When she discontinued to do so, the duties were taken up by Mrs Benjamin, wife of a Dr Benjamin who settled many years ago at Chatham.

To Continue in the next Fig Tree

# Graeme's Ancestor Holiday in Ireland, Scotland & England May 2014

## Part 1

### Ireland:

First we went to Dublin Botanic Gardens which were full of spring blooms. The peonies made me stare & wish for a moment that I lived in Tasmania.

Next day we headed off for Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin, where my ancestor James Maguire was held before transport to NSW in 1837. Small amount of the gaol was still original 1790 with the rest built in 1880 on a massive scale. Next went inland to County Laois (Leesh) staying at the capital Port Laois in a B&B.

All Irish have a thorough education in what the English have done to them since the Normans first invaded in the year 1169 & only ceased in 1922. There was a policy of extermination of the Irish from their land to be replaced by good English settlers.

I knew from James Maguire's convict Indent that he had been a "Dairyman from Glenall" in Queens County now Laois. Glenall was a farm estate near Borris-in-Ossory to the west of Port Laois so we drove there. B-i-O is a small village & when we turned down a side street there was Glenall Housing Estate to show where the original farm had been. It then began to rain so heavily that we were forced back to our B&B without much to show. The next day I went to the Port Laois council chambers to enquire what they knew, not much, so went to a newsagent to buy some postcards to show what it looked like not raining. There on the counter was a DVD of every gravestone in the County for €20. Not many graves from early 1800s are still legible.

### Scotland:

#### Edinburgh

We caught the bus down to the docks of Edinburgh called Leith as one of my male ancestors came from there. The main street Leith Street runs in a straight line from Edinburgh down the hill to the water. This street contains many old houses, however behind them & at the docks everything is new.

Scotland's People Archives is on the main street Princes Street. This is available via subscription on the net but by paying £15 I obtained a day pass & the use of the assistants there as I did not know where any of the small places were. In 3 hours I downloaded 20 documents (births & marriages) to my memory stick covering 2 male ancestors, both who came to Australia as sailors.

We went to Holyrood Palace first thing in the morning & Edinburgh Castle late in the afternoon & managed to avoid tour buses both times.

My ancestor Duncan Butters' father had been a manual weaver which paid a good wage but with mechanisation men were replaced by women & children on much lower wages. Becoming a sailor was an economic choice. Once in Australia he became a shipwright instead.

### Clackmannanshire

We then drove to Clackmannanshire over the Firth of Forth from Edinburgh where the other of those sailors came from. Clackmannanshire had been rich with coal & sea access on the Firth plus protected by mountains from the cold northerlies & good mountain water for whisky.

The impressive Town Hall was now a conference centre, they had sold the impressive current council chambers which they were vacating & when I was redirected to another impressive building, the new council chambers, it had a big "For Sale" sign in the car park. Need I say more.

### England:

#### Huddersfield Yorkshire

My ancestors who came from this area in the 1850s were carters ie horse drawn wagons. I wondered why they left. The local library staff were very knowledgeable. As the canals in 1820s were built & then railroads in 1840s there was a reduction in the need for horse carters. The railway finally reached their small town of Kirkburton in the 1860s. By moving to Australia their trade continued for several generations until railways arrived by which time the families had diversified into farmers or publicans in the central west of NSW.

#### Chester:

One of my ancestors was arrested in Chester for Highway Robbery in 1823 but then was part of a large number who escaped thru the sewers. They were all quickly re-arrested (perhaps by smell)

Chester is a very old Roman town still with its town wall. I imagine the medieval castle which was both court house & gaol had some very old sewers.

To continue in the next fig Tree

## WANTED: ARTICLES FOR THE FIG TREE

We are always looking for Articles, Things of Interest or upcoming events to be included in "The Fig Tree". If you have anything you would like included, please email them to [editor@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:editor@manningwallambafhs.com.au) OR [ihardy1@bigpond.com](mailto:ihardy1@bigpond.com)

### RESEARCH SERVICE

Research Form can be downloaded from Society website. Initial Research Enquiry \$20.00. Research enquiries will be published in our newsletter 'Fig Tree'. If you can help with any of these enquiries, please contact the Research Officer. All correspondence must be addressed to:

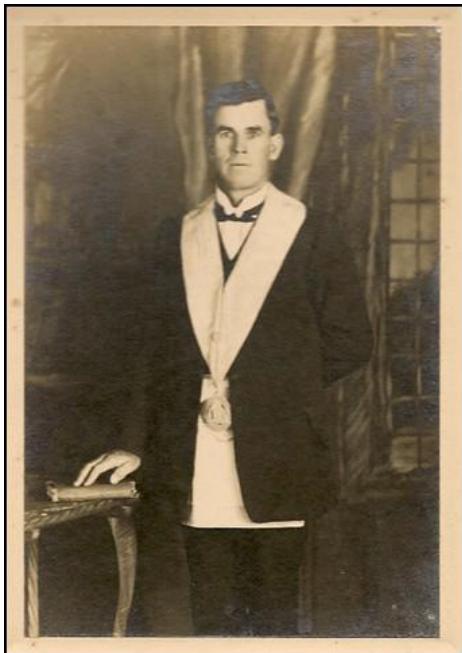
*Secretary, PO Box 48, Taree NSW 2430*

### RESEARCH ENQUIRIES:

- ◆ BUCHANAN—Archibald John married Amy Millicent SCHOFIELD
- ◆ OGDEN- Edward James died 1941 Wingham—any information of his ancestors
- ◆ NELSON- Herbert Arthur and Iris Veronica nee KERR
- ◆ WARD- John and William. LONGWORTH- Francis and Mary Anne—all children of Jane WATSON/LONGWORTH/WARD. Any information wanted on Mary Anne LONGWORTH.
- ◆ If you can help with any of these enquiries please contact the Research Officer at [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au) or PO Box 48 Taree 2430

## CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE PHOTOS?

Society member Denise Gemmell needs some help with these photos:



The lady with the child has on the back: To Cameron Clan from MacLeod Clan.

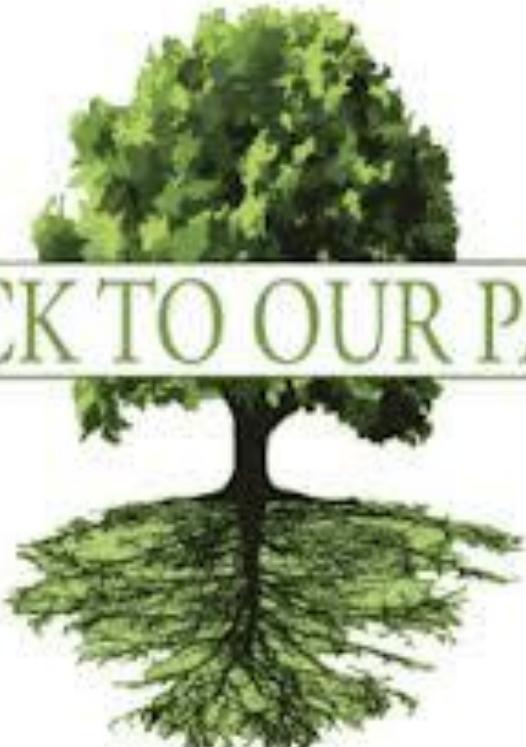
Sarah McLeod married Lachlan Cameron, brother of my great grandfather Duncan, but I do not know if the photo belongs to them or to another relative of the MacLeod's.

The gentleman's photo was taken by Hartwell Roberts, Taree.

If you can help Denise please contact [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au)

### ***AN AAAAGH! MOMENT***

*Your cousin neglects to mention that the date she gave you, which you have researched, and sent to other researchers, was just a guess with no foundation, and she guessed because she "didn't like leaving that line blank."*



# BACK TO OUR PAST

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