



# THE FIG TREE

JOURNAL OF THE  
MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY  
HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.  
TAREE

OPERATING SINCE 1985  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MANNING VALLEY LIBRARIES

**No 136**

**November 2015**

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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, Cooperbrook, 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	G Sawyer	
Secretaries:	J Mitchell	V Fletcher	
Treasurer:	S Robinson	L Haynes	
Publicity:	G Rose	G Toohey	
Librarians	J Mitchell	C Troth	
Research:	G Toohey	N Swan	
Committee:	P Jarman	L Walker	L Kidd
Newsletter:	G Toohey	P Jarman	G Rose
Public Officer:	L Haynes		

## President's Report for November 2015



Dear all 127 Members,

I am privileged to be president of the Manning Wallamba Family History Society Inc. for its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday on 31<sup>st</sup> August. Our society has survived when many others have struggled with a handful of members. You only have to compare what is offered by some societies to realise what a great level of service our volunteers provide 6 days per week in the Manning Valley Library Taree. The 3 principles of the founders recalled by Lyn McMartin have been the hallmarks of our success;

- Encouraging people to become members.
- Raising funds to obtain resources.
- A newsletter to keep everyone informed and encouraged.

At the Port Macquarie Family History Fair - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 11<sup>th</sup> September Panthers Port Macquarie the MWFHS had a table displaying our resources. Gloria & Nancy attended as delegates for the whole 3 days while Sue & I attended for part only.

I visited the table of the Parramatta Female Factory Society where Beth Mathews agreed that my ancestor Sisley Naughton was on her list. She has since sent me valuable information about Sisley travelling on the convict ship Whitby with 2 small daughters. If you have similar ancestors Beth can be contacted at [bethem4@bigpond.com](mailto:bethem4@bigpond.com).

Gloria & Nancy will relay their experiences elsewhere in the Figtree.

Our BBQ fundraiser on the Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September at Masters, started again with showers, but turned out to be profitable, meaning that the board can say "Yes" more often. Once again, enough people volunteered that we could have a complete shift change, which is good for all. The next fundraiser is Masters BBQ Sunday 27th March (Easter Sunday). Your help would be much appreciated.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> grant application to our State Member's Community Builders Grant for Radio Frequency Tags "RFIDs" was unsuccessful & the board has decided to leave this purchase in abeyance for the time being.

### Convict Love Tokens



I had a very surprising email from Paul Ware, a coin collector.

He has owned for some considerable time a convict love token without knowing any of the history behind it.

Courtesy of my Wiki page he now knows a lot more.

<http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Dowdle-30>

This "modified" coin was apparently given by 17 year old John Dowdell to his mother when he was in a Somerset Gaol about to be sent to the other side of the world, never to be seen by her again.

Presumably after his mother's death his half-brothers or their descendants sold the token in to the English coin market where clever traders knew that these were worth more in Australia.

The National Museum of Australia in Acton A.C.T. has a large collection bought from an English collector Timothy Millett. These can be seen at

<http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/highlights/convict-tokens>

Regards

Graeme

## CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August the Society gave itself a Birthday Party.

President Graeme welcomed the guests, founding members Lyn McMartin and Sue Robinson shared their memories on the history of the Society, Margie Kirkness (Senior Leader, Cultural Services) spoke on behalf of the Council.

It was a very pleasant surprise to see Jennifer and Stephen Benson all the way from Lancashire. Stephen is Chairman of the Federation of Family Histories which has a membership of over 180 societies throughout the UK. Jennifer is a long-time member of our Society with family history in the Manning.

Attached is a selection of photos from the 30<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.



**The Birthday Cake**



**The "Party Table"**



**Graeme welcoming the guests**



**Sue telling memories of early days**





**Lyn's memories**



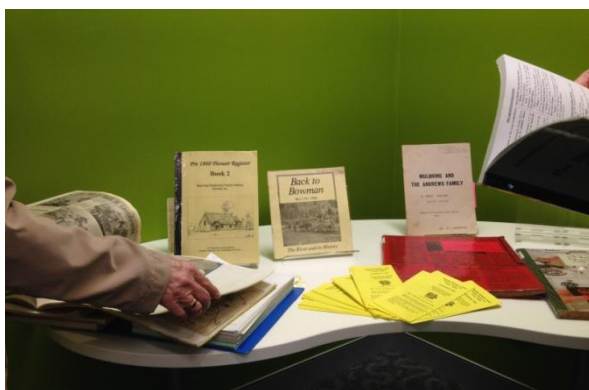
**Margie congratulating the Society**



**Cutting the cake by Life Members**



**Graeme slicing the cake**



**Display of memorabilia**



**Jennefer & Steve from Lancashire**



**Lyn, Jennifer, Graeme, Steve, Gloria**



**Life members Sue, Ida, Gloria, Lyn**

### **MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY TURNS 30**

A group of people interested in researching their family history got together during 1985 in Taree. The first group met a couple of times at different places including the Senior Citizens Hall. I was not at the inaugural get together which was to gauge the interest for forming a group, but I attended a couple of informal meetings during 1985 before we decided to form a committee, create a name and also take paying members.

A committee was formed in late 1985 and the first President was voted Mick Constable. Treasurer was Lyn McMartin and Secretary was Kaye Skinner. We named our group the "Manning Wallamba Family History Society" because the group consisted of people from Taree, Nambiar and Forster Tuncurry. It seemed fair to mention the rivers' names from the areas where our members came.

As our meetings became more regular we held meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the Manning Gardens Public School at 7.30pm and by the end of 1985 we were deliberating on creating a regular newsletter and also what to name this.

The first newsletter "The Fig Tree" was published in April 1986 and we were trying out pictures of figs and trees to adopt as our logo for the front of the newsletter and also for our stationery. During that month we had on our records a grand total of 57 members. The members were published in this first newsletter in alphabetical order, with the result my name was down the list at number "41" and John Allan was given the number "1".

We did not have any research library at that time, most of our resources were privately owned by members and shared at meetings and get togethers. We also made contact with a private researcher in Port Macquarie who made available to groups his microfiche and readers, but I do not remember the exact arrangements. I remember that I travelled at least a couple of times with other members of our group to spend the day at his home doing research. This is where I discovered, on microfiche, my first convict ancestor, Henry Deards.

I became interested in researching our family when John and I moved back to the mainland from Tasmania and settled in Cundletown at the beginning of 1985. I was born in Gloucester and my grandmother Deards still lived there, while my grandmother and grandfather Bailey had retired to Harrington. I had all three of these elderly relations urging me to find out bits and pieces of our family details, so I was hooked.

By September 1986 our resources had grown and we had also been granted use of the premises at the Taree Greater City Library for both storage, get togethers and also for our monthly meetings. We were very grateful to the Library for these privileges and also for the ONE cupboard to use to store our material. The symbol of the "Fig Tree" from the old Taree Council Insignia was adopted to use as our society logo.

This association with the Greater Taree City Library and its staff has continued to be one of the best benefits of being a member of our group. Our resources have grown immensely over the last 30 years and when the new library was built we had input in the planning for an area to house our group and resources. Our group donated financially to the building of the new library as well.

We have benefitted financially and resource-wise from our association with the Library over the years. This has been reciprocated when we have given money to the council to improve facilities for research and also when we have donated vital records for public use. You may know the term "ARK" which is the acronym for the NSW State Records "Archives Resource Kit". Quite a few years ago State Records decided to make available to many regional libraries the entire ARK for researchers to use as a public resource. Unfortunately, Taree was not on the list and the closest Library to receive this kit was at Port Macquarie. This brought about a few concerned meetings of our group which led to a general special meeting where we decided to offer to donate to Taree Library many of our resources collected over the years which were also to be found in the ARK. This was on the proviso that State Records would then make available to our Taree Library the remaining items from the ARK. ....Yay! This was successful and we now have drawers of films and fiche all for public use in our library.

Things have changed a lot since I first began to research. From taking a thermos out to cemeteries to write down details from graves, listening to speakers such as Janet Reakes, who was regarded as one of the best in the early days of my research, collecting interesting books and CD's from the many fairs attended over the years, to now being able to research without doing too much travel, using the internet and also our much increased library of resources. Our Vice President, and Research Lady, Gloria Toohey has collected a computer database of thousands of local names over her many years as our principal research person and has given her time to help new researchers at the many meetings and talks she has run here at the Taree Library and our surrounding libraries. President Graeme Rose is our resident expert in DNA and WIKITREE for family research. Our Librarians, Jan Mitchell and Christine Troth have excelled in organising all our huge resources in easy to read fashion in our room. They have also published on our computer a "look up" database of all our resources and this is so useful to members and visitors. Volunteers from our group are rostered on every morning of the week when the library is open to the public and while we help people using our own resources, we also help them to find things in the public library area of family history resources, which is also growing all the time.

Thanks to the Library for helping us to celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. Thanks to the many people who have been members of our group over the years and have had vital input into the success of the MWFHS. Lots of people have come and gone, lots of new people will find success when they start to look into their family history and yes.... **I'm still hooked!**

*Sue Robinson, August 2015*

## **BIRTHDAY WISHES AND A LITTLE HISTORY from Lyn McMartin**

**"The President, members of the Committee and all members of "The Manning Wallamba Family History Society"**

It is my greatest pleasure to congratulate you on celebrating the 30th Birthday of the society.

During the very early months of the Society, three things became very important to the then committee.

- **Firstly. ... .. Encouraging people to become members.**
- **Secondly .... Raisings funds to obtain resources.**
- **Thirdly .... A newsletter to keep everyone informed and encouraged.**

**Hence ..... The Fig Tree.**

*What to call it? What about a logo? These topics were more debated than "Who would be willing to take on the job of producing it?"*

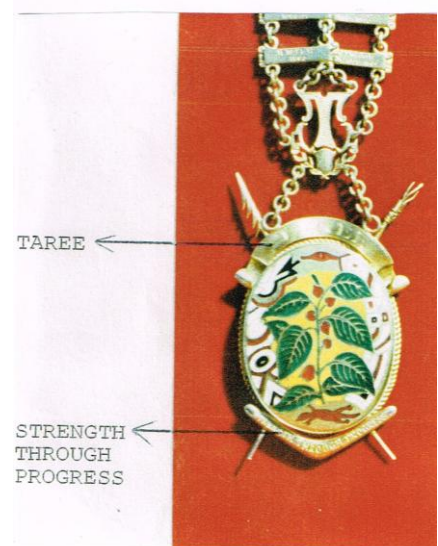
Tina McCarthy, one of the first members of the Society, came up with the name Fig Tree and the logo as we know it now.

Before the "City of Greater Taree" came into being there were three former councils in the district:

Taree Council, Manning River Shire Council and Wingham Council

On 13th July 1981 the now new combined Council adopted a design for a new "Mayoral Chain of Office" which would embrace the Mayoral Chains of the three past Councils. Tina greatly admired the emblem of the old Taree Council Mayoral Chain and as it was no longer being used, thought of adopting the main aspects of the emblem (the Figtree branch and leaves) as a logo for the society so then sought permission from Council (from whoever granted permission in 1985) to use it as a name and logo for our newsletter. After permission from Council was obtained Tina along with other members presented their ideas for the monthly meeting for consideration.

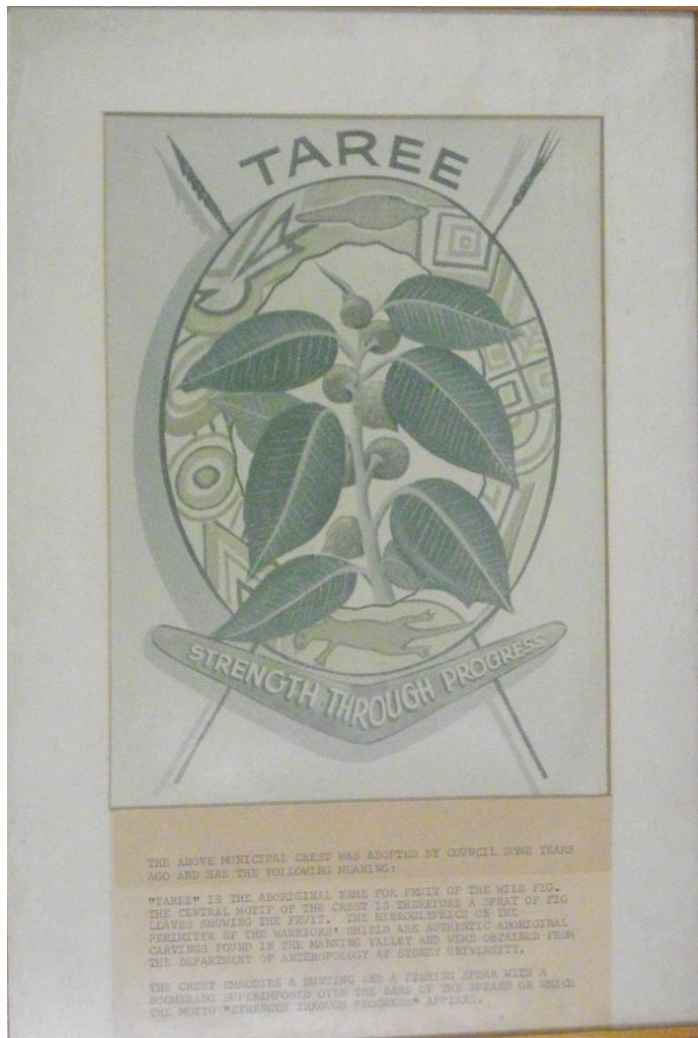
**And as they say, the rest is history!**





## **MORE HISTORY OF OUR LOGO**

The photograph below is held in the Council Archives. The typed explanation reads:



*'The above Municipal Crest was adopted by Council some years ago and has the following meaning:*

*"TAREE" is the Aboriginal name for the fruit of the wild fig.*

*The central motif of the crest is therefore a spray of fig leaves showing the fruit. The hieroglyphics on the perimeter of the Warriors' Shield are authentic Aboriginal carvings found in the Manning Valley and were obtained from the Department of Anthropology at the Sydney University.*

*The Crest embodies a hunting and a fishing spear with a boomerang superimposed over the base of the spears on which the motto "Strength Through Progress" appears.'*

One of the original settlers, William Wynter, named his property "Tarree". There are several versions of the derivation of the name but all agree that comes from the local Biripi Aboriginal word referring to the native fig. Some think it means the fruit of the fig tree, others think "tree by the water" or sandpaper fig.

### **New and Returning Members: Welcome to:**

NO.	MEMBER	RESEARCH INTEREST
16010	Patricia MCMAHON	McMahon, Forbes; Weston, Forbes; Jackson, England; Sanders, England; Kelly, England
16011	Stephen BILLINGHAM	Billingham; Gardener; Latimore; Rice & Carlyle
16012	Roma JONES	Ryan, Sydney, 7/12/1893; Bonney, Randwick
16013	Kerry MASON	Griffi(th)s, Paterson & Manning Valley from 1840 Tattersall, Paterson 1840s to 1860s & Manning Valley from 1870s; Tagg, Manning Valley; Toms
16014	Gillian KIRTON	Purnell, UK before 1900; Hellings, UK before 1900, Whicher, UK before 1900
16015	Jenny GARDINER	
16016	Elsie KOSKELA	
16017	Jill HARVEY	Elizabeth Pulley; Anthony Rope
16018	Glenda HUTCHINSON	Taree High School
16019	Synthia ELKS	Elks; Coughlin; Miller; Bowden; White; Livingston; Smith; Sweeney
16020	Anthony GOODWIN	
16021/2	David & Gabrielle ARCHER	
16023	Joan IRVINE	
16024	Janine ROBERTS	

### **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 any articles you would like included, please email them to  
**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.

## **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'

**Current Research** has mainly been trying to locate burial sites for the following families:  
**Dowsett (Woola Cemetery), Sullivan (Tinonee), Saville (Lansdowne)**  
Also researching **Aboriginal families** in the Dingo Creek area

If you can help with any of these enquiries, please contact the  
Research Officer or email [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au)



## **HISTORIC RATE BOOKS:**

For some time volunteers have been transcribing these Books which date from 1885. It is a mammoth undertaking and more volunteers are needed. Further details and some historic maps are available on <http://gtcc.nsw.gov.au/build-and-develop/planning-for-the-future/heritage-and-european-history/historic-rate-books/>  
Keep watching for more additions.  
They are also looking for more volunteers. If you would like to help, please contact the Society.

## **NSW & ACT AFHS CONFERENCE REPORT:** (Nancye Swan and Gloria Toohey)

### **Welcome & Opening**

Welcome to Country Uncle Bill O'Brien; opening by Peter Besseling Mayor of Port Macquarie Hastings Council

### **John Vincent Crowe Memorial Address (Dr David Roberts)**

The Rise and Fall of the Colonial Gulag  
Port Macquarie 1821-1826

### **Musters (Carol Baxter)**

Evidence Analysis

Primary= input (at the time)      Secondary= output (not at time of event)

EGO- "I could not possibly be wrong" and/or "cleaning up" the documents to remove unsavoury items

### **Mitchell Library (Wendy Holz)**

David Scott Mitchell bequeathed his private collection (and substantial funds) to the State Library.  
Most books, papers, letters, diaries and from private people- Government documents are at NSW SR  
120km of shelves

### **Ancestry (Ben Mercer)**

Ancestry- a starting point

Mission- to help everyone discover, preserve, share (75m searches a day; 70m families on line)

Website changing to reflect stories - cradle to grave

True meaning comes from people, place and context

### **From Banbury To Barraba and Broodseinde Ridge – 20 years on (Heather Garnsey & Martyn Killion)**

Story of William Bloxham

### **Journey of BDMs in NSW (Amanda Ianna)**

Wild cards \* =Any string of characters; ?=one character; @ = soundex  
.pdf files coming as people apply for them

### **NSW & ACT AFHS AGM**

### **NSW Land Records – a follow-up (Dr Carol Liston)**

Land of opportunity -Free grants regardless of status until 1831-Unlimited leasehold opportunity  
Time payment (conditional purchase) -Land can be inherited  
Women can own land and have it held in trust  
All land has Portion, Parish, County  
County names and Portion numbers are unique. Parish names are not.

### **A Ticket to Paradise: National Archives of Australia records relating to immigrants (Fiona Burn NAA)**

Immigration records in 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### **Leaving a Trail (Clive Smith)**

As an archivist, Clive argues that you must not only know how records were created in order to fully understand the information they contain, but you must accurately cite your sources (and whether you consulted those sources directly or through an intermediary), so that others can validate or rely on your interpretation of the information.

### **Close & Invitation to 2016 Conference to be held at Camden, September 2016**

Photos of the Conference are on the Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society website

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nswpmfhs/2015-conference.html>

### **ARE YOU A GOOD ANCESTOR?**

From **Cedar Log** (used with permission from Richmond-Tweed Family History Society Inc)

A good ancestor keeps certificates including birth and death certificates; records including health, military, naturalisation, and school; passports, newspaper and church notices, awards, photos, art and craft work, journals, Bibles, diaries, baby, school and wedding books; heirlooms.

He or she dates correspondence, cares for tombstones, keeps research organised, writes or tapes the family stories and supports family organisations.

A good ancestor dates everything, is sure that full names are included, records where material may be found and always sees that at least one other copy of important data is somewhere else.

***A hundred years from now, will they think you were a good ancestor?***

## **PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE**

### **Price List for Burial Books available through our Society**

Prices include postage & handling within Australia

MWFHS members receive 10% discount on all Burial Books

Oxley Island, Mitchells Island, Scotts Creek - 2007 edition Book or CD	\$20.00
Gilwarra, Taree Estate, Woola - 2008 edition Book or CD	\$20.00
Tinonee, Bo-Bo, Bight, Murray Hills, Easton, Dunvegan	\$19.00
Cooperbrook, Moorland, Harrington	\$19.00
Lansdowne	\$17.00
Wingham Anglican [Old Section]	\$17.00
Wingham - All other Denominations	\$17.00
Wingham Beams	\$10.00
Killabakh, Marlee, Woodside	\$17.00
Redbank 2008 edition Book or CD	\$20.00
Failford, Willow Point	\$15.00
Krambach	\$15.00
Dawson 1 - Methodist Section	\$18.00
Dawson 2 - Anglican A - L	\$18.00
Dawson 3 - Anglican M - Z	\$18.00
Dawson 4 - Roman Catholic Section	\$18.00
Dawson 5 - Presbyterian & other Sections	\$18.00
Dawson 6 - Columbarium, Rose Gardens & Burials from Undertakers Records & other sources. No Grave Numbers	\$18.00
Dawson 7 - Lawn Section A - L	\$15.00
Dawson 8 - Lawn Section M - Z	\$15.00
Columbariums in Church grounds, Graves on private property, Norwood	\$15.00
Index, includes Map showing locations of all Greater Taree Council Cemeteries and Name entries from all above books & their cemetery location	\$25.00
Forster & Bungwahl Cemetery Transcriptions	\$13.00
Tuncurry & Coolongolook Cemetery Transcriptions	\$15.00

***No members' discounts on these books***

***Pre 1860 Pioneer Register - Book 1 \$32.50 + \$10.00 p&p***

***Pre 1860 Pioneer Register - Book 2 \$32.50 + \$10.00 p&p***

***Orders to Secretary PO BOX 48 Taree NSW 2430***

***Website <http://www.manningwallambafhs.com.au>***

***Email: [secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au](mailto:secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au)***



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