

MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc TAREE

Issue 175 August 2025

THE FIG TREE



Inside this Issue

Committee members	2
Welcome by Secretary to the 40th Birthday Celebration	2
40 years of MWFHS— by Vicki Fletcher	3-5
Photos of 40th Anniversary Get-together	6-7
Sir Henry Browne Hayes	8-9
Marriage Locator	10
Useful Websites	10
Research Service	11
A Little bit of Humour	12-13
Publications for Sale Newspaper Article	14
Membership Details	15

Operating Since 1985 in Partnership with
Mid Coast Libraries
ISSN 2208-3243
Postal Address:
Manning Wallamba FHS,
Ground Floor, 242 Victoria Street, Taree, 2430.
Website: www.manningwallambafhs.com.au

Disclaimer: MWFHS Inc does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed by authors of articles published in The FigTree.

Every effort has been made to ensure that The FigTree is free from errors or omissions. Should these occur we apologise for any inconvenience caused.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2024-2025

President	Ken Beeton	Research Officer	Kay Brooke
Vice Presidents	Graeme Rose	Publicity Officer	Vicki Fletcher
	George Sawyer	Newsletter Editor	Joan Irvine
Secretary	Barbara Waters	Membership Secretary	Vicki Fletcher
Librarian & Publications	Sue Robinson	Treasurer	Graeme Jarman
Minutes Secretary	Joan Irvine	Social Committee	Graeme & Pam Jarman
Public Officer—Lyn Haynes			
Isolated & Unmarked Graves Graeme & Pam Jarman			

Thank you to all who helped make the Society's 40th Birthday celebration a success.

We welcomed back one of the ladies who was instrumental in calling the public meeting to form the group, foundation members and past presidents. It was exciting to share the history of the group with them.

Thank you to Fiona and the staff at Taree library for their help, it was greatly appreciated.

To all who attended I am sure you enjoyed it as much as I did. Over the years the Society has recognised eight very active members with Life Membership, for their valued contribution to the Society, in a variety of different roles. Today there is still a dedicated team leading the Society and contributing to the success of the Society. It hasn't always been a smooth ride, but the Society has persevered over the years and looks forward to continuing on for many more years in partnership with the library staff.

Barbara Waters, Secretary.



President Ken Beeton and
Mid-Coast Council Mayor—
Claire Pontin

Forty Years of The Manning Wallamba Family History Society

Article Sources:: The Manning Wallamba Family History Society Minutes Book August 1985 to August 1995
& various editions of The Fig Tree.

In 1985 a group of like-minded people arranged a public meeting to be held at Ormsby House, Taree on Tuesday 30th July 1985. An article was placed in the Chronicle Extra newspaper on 25th July 1985 to let people know of the meeting. The meeting was to start a Family History Society for research and support in the area.

Another article in the Chronicle Extra a few weeks later, on the 15th of August 1985, stated that 'A group of 32 enthusiastic people met at Ormsby House, Taree recently to form a Family History Society. The new organisation is to be known as the Manning Wallamba Family History Society.' Manning Wallamba because members of the new Society came from areas around the 2 rivers.

The first committee consisted of Mick Constable as President, along with Eric Richardson (Vice President), Lynn McMartin (Treasurer) and Kaye Skinner (Secretary). And so, our Society was born.

It was decided to hold monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of the month commencing from September 1985. Meetings were later held at the Manning Gardens School before moving to the Greater Taree City Council Library in September 1986. It was here that the Society acquired a research and archival cupboard as well as having the use of a microfiche reader.

Until the Society started acquiring resources for members to use, members would share their privately owned resources at meetings and workshops. As the Society grew and finances became available the Society started gathering their own resources.

Over the last 40 years those resources have grown into an extensive collection that can be used by members. It includes Pioneer Registers from quite a few areas around Australia, Cemetery Registers, and histories, military records, and schools just to name some of the categories available.

Another great achievement in 1986 was the advent of our Society's newsletter. The first edition of the newsletter was produced in April 1986. That first issue put out a call to find a suitable name for the new publication. The newsletter became known as '**The Fig Tree**' and by September 1986 the Society was granted the privilege of using the 'Fig Tree' symbol from the old Taree Council Insignia. In the September 2012 issue of 'The Fig Tree' the Fig Tree symbol was changed to the fig leaves with a green background. From 2016 the current logo was used for the newsletter.

Continued../

Forty Years of

The Manning Wallamba Family History Society (Continued)

The move to the Library has become an enduring and valuable partnership between the Library staff and the Society. When the Library moved around the corner into a new building, they included an area for the Society to operate from, which included a locked room for our growing resource collection. That's a long way from a research and archival cupboard. We work hand in hand with the library staff, enjoying a close working relationship with them and handle any family history enquiries that come their way. Members volunteer for duty in the Family History section 6 days per week from 10am to 12 noon weekdays and a little longer on a Saturday.

In the beginning most of the research would have to be done with paper records and microfiche, which required a microfiche reader, or going to repositories such as State Records office. In 40 years, there have been a lot of changes to how we can access records pertaining to our ancestors. There are an amazing number of records available online. Some are free and some are only available by subscription. Over the years the Society has helped the library buy some equipment and the library has organised subscriptions for Find My Past that members can use on the computers in our corner of the Library and Ancestry.com that can be accessed on any of the library computers. In 2013 the Society helped towards the purchase of the View Scan which makes viewing and saving microfilm records easier.

In addition to regular meetings, the Society has held many workshops and training sessions to help people learn how to research their own family history. There has also been many guest speakers and outdoor activities such as walks giving the history of different areas and several cemetery tours. Fundraising efforts for the Society included cake stalls, markets and later on progressing to numerous Bunnings BBQs.

Other activities of the Society have included the compilation of various publications such as the pre-1860 Pioneer Register (2 volumes) & many cemetery records. In 2010 for the 25th Anniversary it was said that the Society had published 24 books. The Society also has its own Website and Facebook page that the public can access.

Another longstanding project of the Society is our Unmarked and Isolated Graves Project. On Australia Day in 2018, Gloria Toohey, advised she had entered the 1500th entry for this project. Many more have been entered since this time. This database is very handy when people come looking for the resting place of ancestors.

Continued../

Forty Years of

The Manning Wallamba Family History Society (Continued)

It was at an event for the 25th anniversary that the then Mayor, Paul Hogan, presented the President of the day, George Sawyer, with a plaque from the Greater Taree City Council. When presenting the plaque the Mayor said, 'I am delighted to publicly acknowledge the tremendous work of the Manning Wallamba Family History Society and all its members over the past 25 years. Your research has contributed greatly to the core of knowledge about families of the Manning Valley and forms an important part of our local history.' This is still true today with the Society maintaining a very large database of families of this area which is regularly being added to. When presenting the plaque, the Mayor went on to say 'this plaque from Council is in recognition of the Society's contribution to the Manning Valley.' This plaque is prominently displayed in the Family History section of the Library.

For the 30th Anniversary of the Society, Lyn McMartin, who was at the very first meeting, said the following:

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

Firstly – Encouraging people to become members.

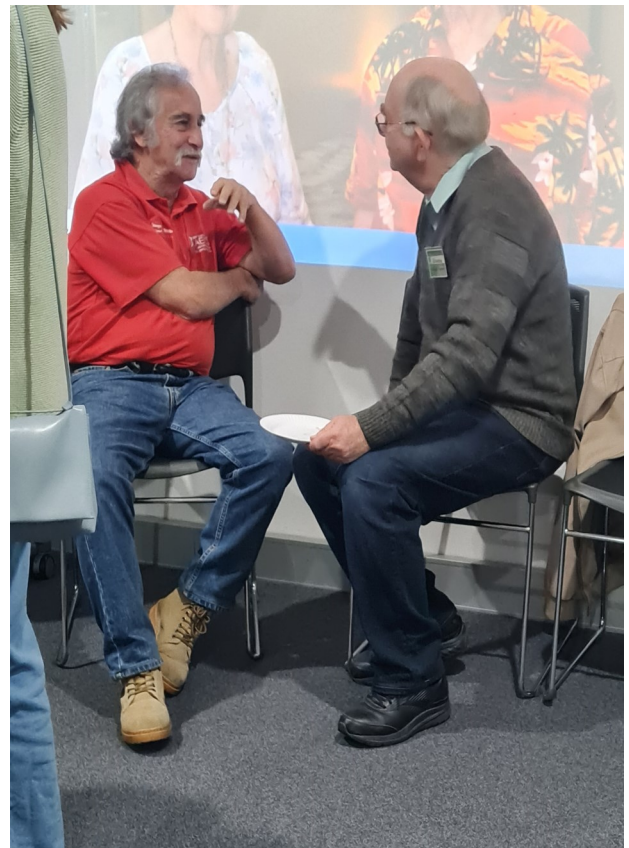
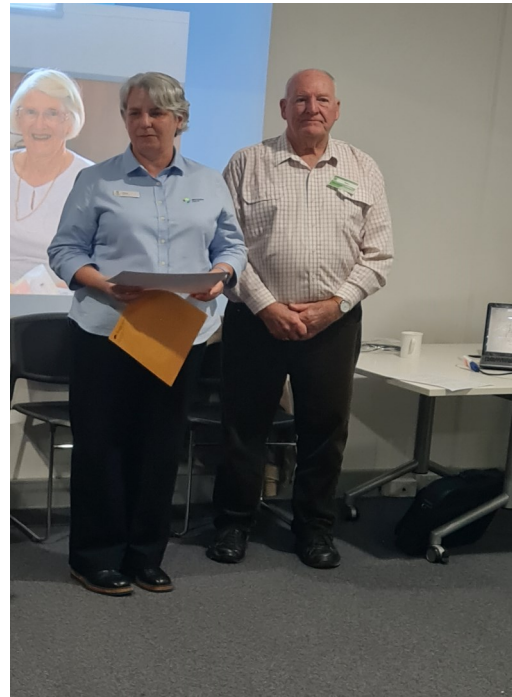
Secondly – Raising funds to obtain resources.

Thirdly – A newsletter to keep everyone informed and encouraged.



Early members: - George Sawyer, Barbara Waters, Ann Calvert, Tony Holland, Lyn McMartin, Sue Robinson & Kaye Wallace.

40TH ANNIVERSARY GET-TOGETHER



IT'S PARTY TIME!!!!!!



SIR HENRY BROWNE HAYES (1762-1832)

My 5th great-grandfather

Submitted by Joan Irvine



Sir Henry was born in Cork, Ireland in 1762 and was often described as a “convict adventurer”. He was the son of Attiwell Hayes a reputable citizen of Cork. Henry was a captain the South Cork militia, and on the 12th Nov 1782 at the age of 21, Henry was made a Freeman of Cork City because of his family connections.

By 1790, Henry was elected as a Sheriff of Cork City, again with his father's help and family connections. As one of the two Sheriffs, Henry was asked to welcome the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Westmorland who at that time was making a tour of Southern Ireland. The position of the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland was equivalent to that of a Viceroy, a position second only to the king in the country. (Maybe this is why he was knighted?)

However, in 1797 by which time he was a widower with a number of children (both legitimate and illegitimate); he kidnapped a Quaker, Mary Pike who was heiress to a fortune of £20,000, forcing her into a spurious marriage at his home at Mount Vernon. However, she was rescued shortly after the marriage. It is reported she never remarried and had a mental breakdown as a result of the kidnapping and subsequent shame. (Not sure if this is true or just a good story..) !

Sir Henry was outlawed and went into hiding and about two years later he handed himself in believing all would be forgiven. However, he was sent to trial and sentenced to death, this was later commuted to transportation for life and he arrived in NSW on 6 July 1802 aboard the Atlas. He paid for a privileged passage, which was apparently fortunate as this particular voyage was reputed to be one of the worst in history.

His time in NSW was noteworthy, particularly for his war against authority. He was suspected of an active part in the Castle Hill uprising in 1804 and this together with his association with various ‘intransigents’ earned him time in Van Diemen’s Land. After his return to Sydney it is reported that because of his sympathy with the deposed Governor William Bligh, he was sent to Newcastle coal mines for about eight months in 1809.

His first noted and perhaps positive contribution to the colony was his attempt in 1803 to found a Masonic Lodge for which he incurred the displeasure of Governor King and his meeting on the 14 May 1803 is regarded as the foundation day of Freemasonry in Australia.

Continued../

Sir Henry Browne Hayes continued

[Devotion Newsletter Content](#) [Masonic History and Things Historic](#)

Freemasonry Beginnings in Australia

...“1803 the earliest recorded Masonic meeting was held by 'several officers off his Majesty's Ships, together with some respectable inhabitants of Sydney'. This was against the orders of the Governor, Captain King, and some of the members were arrested, though subsequently released. The instigator, Bro Brown Hayes, was ordered to Van Diemen's Land..”

“Respectable inhabitants” Maybe not all

His second contribution was Vaucluse House, the home he built near South Head in Sydney. He lived there in between his “forced stays” away from Sydney and it is reputed he lived in a “style and freedom” not normal for a convict of that time. You can only presume that he paid for the privilege. The house passed to John Piper after Henry was granted a pardon and he returned to Ireland. Then in 1829 it passed onto William Charles Wentworth, who considerably extended it. The house was bought in 1910 by the NSW Government for preservation as a memorial to Wentworth. (Why couldn't Henry have kept it and passed it down to his descendants!!)

On his return to Ireland in December 1812 Sir Henry was shipwrecked at the Falkland Islands, survived and following his rescue returned Cork where he lived in retirement until his death in 1832.



Early Picture of Vaucluse House



Cracking the code of the GRO Marriage Index

This service enables you to interpret the Marriage Index created by the General Register Office for England and Wales. By using it you can determine where your ancestors were married – not just which Registration District, but which church!

<http://www.marriage-locator.co.uk/>

This is an initiative of the Guild of One-Name Studies (www.one-name.org) and it is run by volunteers as a free service.

The service allows you to use the data from FreeBMD at <https://freebmd.org.uk/> to determine where your ancestors were married in England and Wales. —not only which registration district, but also which church. You just need the General Register Office (GRO) marriage index data: year, quarter, volume number and page number provided by FreeBMD.

(This information was provided by the Botany Bay FHS Inc. in their September 2020 edition of The Endeavour)



I realise that those of us who have been involved with Family History for a while, also have a collection of web sites that have been building up over time - HOWEVER, not everyone is in that situation and therefore I have listed below some sites for the benefit of those members.

Genealogical Directories and lists - www.ukgdl.org.uk
Guild of One-Name Studies— www.one-name.org
Society of One-place studies—www.one-place-studies-org
FamilySearch wiki—www.familysearch.org/wiki
FreeBMD—www.freebmd.org.uk
UKBMD—www.ukbmd.org.uk
GRO indexes—www.gro.gov.uk

Don't forget that the computers in the Family History room at Taree Library also offer you FREE access to popular family history sites.

RESEARCH SERVICE

Research Forms can be downloaded from Society Website

<http://manningwallambafhs.com.au/>

Initial Research Enquiry

\$20.00 including up to 2 hours research and limited photocopying, to the value of \$5.00

Extra microfilm copying \$1.00 per page. Additional

Research \$10 per hour



HAVE YOU HIT A BRICKWALL?

The FigTree is issued 4 times a year, so please feel free to send in any query you may have and it will be included in the next issue.

Our Journal is not only distributed to you, our members, but to other Societies throughout Australia and Overseas.

We also receive exchange Journals from a very large number of Societies electronically, if you would like to receive any of these, please let our Secretary know and you will be added to the distribution list,



GENEALOGY VOLUNTEERS WANTED.

Being a volunteer with Manning Wallamba Family History Society Inc. is exciting. No two days are alike. No two enquiries are alike.

No one knows everything.

You will be rostered on with a more experienced volunteer who will help to familiarise you with the library resources.

Working hands on with someone else is the best way to learn, and instruction sessions are held on a regular basis.

A LITTLE BIT OF HUMOR



12 Jun 1869 The Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser

The 'Manning River News' says :-As Mrs. Hector M'Lean was preparing a fowl for the spit a few days ago, she found a brown snake eight inches long in its stomach. The reptile was quite dead, and had only recently been swallowed.-Whilst the Rev. John M'Leod was preaching in the Free Church at Red Bank, on last Sunday week, the congregation was thrown into a state of great excitement by the appearance of a large brown whip snake in the roof just above the pulpit. Before the creature could be killed another, of the same kind, was also seen raising its hateful head from the back of a seat on which an elderly gentleman was sitting in a state of blissful ignorance of his danger. The congregation was (as usual) very large; but fortunately very little stir was made, and the reptiles were despatched without delay.



**I sent that 'Ancestry' site
some information on my
Family Tree.**

**They sent me back a pack
of Seeds,
and suggested that I
just start Over.**

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	\$15.00
Gilwarra, Taree Estate, Woola - 2023 Edition Book	\$15.00
Tinonee, Bo-Bo, Bight, Murray Hills, Easton, Dunvegan	\$15.00
Cooperbrook, Moorland, Harrington	\$15.00
Lansdowne	\$15.00
Wingham Anglican [Old Section]	\$15.00
Wingham - All other Denominations	\$15.00
Wingham Beams	\$10.00
Killabakh, Marlee, Woodside	\$15.00
Redbank 2008 edition Book or CD	\$15.00
Failford, Willow Point	\$15.00
Krambach	\$15.00
Dawson 1 - Methodist Section	\$15.00
Dawson 2 - Anglican A - L	\$15.00
Dawson 3 - Anglican M - Z	\$15.00
Dawson 4 - Roman Catholic Section	\$15.00
Dawson 5 - Presbyterian & other Sections	\$15.00
Dawson 6 - Columbarium, Rose Gardens & Burials from Undertakers Records & other sources. No Grave Numbers	\$15.00
Dawson 7 - Lawn Section A - L	\$15.00
Dawson 8 - Lawn Section M - Z	\$15.00
Columbarium's 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	\$15.00
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 + \$12.50 p&p

Pre 1860 Pioneer Register – Book 2 \$32.50 + \$12.50 p&p

Orders to Secretary C/o MidCoast Library Taree, 242 Victoria Street, Taree, 2430.

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

Email: secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Renewal Form is following or is available from our room at Taree Library during our normal operating times -

Monday-Saturday 10.00am to 12 noon or alternatively can be downloaded from the Society's web page

<http://manningwallambafhs.com.au/>

Members are entitled to

Use the Society's Resources during opening hours

Attend meetings and workshops, and vote at meetings

Free copies of the Fig Tree by mail or download

Free Research Enquiries in "Fig Tree"

18 free entries per year each membership/family in Society's Members' Interest Directory

2 hours free research per membership year, for out-of-area members, on receipt of a business sized,

Renewal	New members	
1 July – 30 June	1 July – 30 June	1 Jan – 30 June
Single \$25.00	\$30.00	\$17.50
Family \$33.00	\$38.00	\$21.50

MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Ground Floor, 242 Victoria Street, Taree, 2430.

Phone 02 7955 7752 Between 10.00am-12 noon

Email: secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au

Web site: www.manningwallambafhs.com.au

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Single: \$25.00

Family \$33.00

Please print clearly

NAME: _____ Membership No: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Age range: 1) Under 18 yrs-50 yrs.: 51-70 yrs: 71-85 yrs+) (For Insurance Purposes only)

2) Under 18 yrs-50 yrs: 51-70 yrs: 71-85 yrs+)

Direct Deposit Details:

Banks: Regional Bank of Australia—BSB 932000 - Account No. 500029297

(If paying by direct debit please forward receipt number & details to Secretary)

To make a cash payment please contact our Treasurer via the above email.