

**Raffle** - The February/March raffle of the silver tray was drawn at the March meeting and May Watson was the lucky winner.

**Trade table** —Just a reminder to keep it in mind.

**Research Item:** Ian has forwarded this request from the Society's Facebook page in case one of our members can help.

**Surname - Wilkie:** Looking for relatives whose grandparents or great grandparents are called Teresa Cronin and Walter Wilkie of Ireland, emigrated to the area of the Blue Mountains and live or lived in a village with a steam train at the beginning of the village. Pauline Johann via BMFHS Facebook.

#### What's on:

**\*Colo Shire Family History Group** presents David Hill, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019, 10am at the Hawkesbury Regional Museum, 8 Baker Street, Windsor. Hear David Hill's experiences as the son of a poor single parent living in England, who reluctantly sent her sons to Fairbridge Farm School for a better life.

**\*Woodford Academy – Heritage Harvest Festival,** Easter Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2019, 10am-4pm.

**\*Katoomba Library Talk** – The Attack on Sydney Harbour WWII 1942. A Military History talk given by Lt. Colonel Peter Sweeney, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 2pm, free, bookings essential at any Blue Mountains Library or online.

**\*Hawkesbury Historical Society** – Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019, "Peek into the Past" Howe House, Windsor, Thompson Square, Windsor 5.30-7.30 for drinks and nibbles. Free event RSVP 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019 Ph. 4578 2443.

**\*Richmond Heritage Festival** – 27<sup>th</sup> April, 9.30am to 3.30pm at West Market and Windsor Streets, Richmond. Open buildings, tours, displays, stories – a rare chance to see Richmond's history.

#### Items of Interest:

Helpful information regarding abbreviations used in the U.K. Censuses. "Thank you" Alison.

Ag.Lab.	1841-81 Agricultural labourer
Ap.	1841-61 Apprentice
Army	1841 Members of HM land forces of whatever rank
Cl.	1841-61 Clerk
FS.	1841 Female servant
H.P.	1841 Members of HM armed forces on half-pay
Ind.	1841 Independent – people living on their own means
J.	1841 Journeyman
m.	1841 Maker – as in 'Shoe m.'
MS	1841 Male Servant
Navy	1841 Members of HM naval forces, including marines of whatever rank
P.	1841 Pensioners in HM armed forces
Rail Lab	1852 Railway labourer
Serv.	1861 Servant
Sh.	1841 Shopman

**Polling Day:** With one election down and one to go here is some historical and interesting information in relation to Polling Day, which you may or may not be aware of, as read in the Sydney Morning Herald recently and taken from Judith Brett's new history of Australian Voting – From Secret Ballot to Democracy Sausage:

"It was the South Australians who gave us the little pencils you find in the voting booths. In the 1860s the system of pen-and-inkwell was creating large queues. Some genius in Adelaide thought: 'Let's use pencils' and so it was. Like many features of Australian Voting, the tiny pencils were later taken up around the world. So impressive was our system – secret voting, smoothly conducted – it became known internationally as 'the Australian ballot'. It is still much copied today.

Another first, the cardboard stall where we record our votes, was thought up in the 1850s by a Melbournian, Charles Griffith. He was an opponent of secret voting but believed it was an eventuality, so suggested they install 5 or 6 stalls to speed things up. They were first used in the Victorian State election of 1856.

South Australian, William Boothby, invented the idea of ticking-the-box next to the preferred candidate, rather than ruling a line through the ones you didn't like...."

#### The journey of the first piano in Australia:

The First Fleet piano is an English square piano that was built in London in 1788. It was brought out to Australia by a surgeon, George Wogan on board the flagship of the First Fleet, the Sirius.

Smaller than a modern piano, its legs can be folded for storage and records show that it was brought up onto the deck for recitals on the journey to Australia.

When George Wogan completed his tour of duty in 1791 he gave the piano to Elizabeth Macarthur who kept it for about 17 years by then it was old and hard to sell.

It was eventually sold on and off until 1838 and that was the last that was heard of it until 1965 when a very eminent antiques dealer, William Bradshaw heard of a so-called spinet for sale in Windsor. He tracked down the home and found the piano being stored in the laundry. The family wanted to sell it to buy a washing machine. William kept the piano in his private collection for a number of years when it was eventually sold to Stewart Symonds.

Mr. Symonds who had been collecting pianos since the late 1960s had been looking for an institution to take them, neither Sydney nor Canberra wanted his collection of 130 historic pianos and they have now been donated to the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. The University plans to send the First Fleet piano, along with a number of others from the collection to master restorers in London so that the pianos, which are currently unplayable, can be used by students and researchers.





## Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

# Newsletter

DATE 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

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**WELCOME** to all our members and any visitors we might have at today's meeting. Our guest speaker today is Craig Schubert. Craig is a descendant of the famous Austrian composer Franz Schubert and he will be giving a talk about this very famous ancestor.

**March Guest Speaker:** Our member, Barbara Gow, presented a very interesting and well researched talk on her 3 x Great Grandfather, William Pashington Terry Gow which those members present, found very interesting. "Thank you Barbara".

**Next meeting:** The next meeting of the Family History Society will be held on **10<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 10am** in our usual meeting place, the small hall behind the Presbyterian Church. Guest speaker yet to be organised.

The Committee met on Friday, **22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019**.

**Seminar 2019:** Colin has managed to secure the Anglican Church Hall, Great Western Highway, Springwood for the Society's seminar which will be held on the **24<sup>th</sup> August 2019**.

As discussed at the last general meeting, as suggested by Ian, the topic will be "Old Ways and New Ways in Family History. The committee thought that this topic gave us a good scope for finding suitable and interesting guest speakers. Colin to make enquiries in this regard from a suggested list:

**Ancestry – DNA:** Jason Reeves or Brad Argent;

**NSW State Archives:** Gail Davis or John Cann;

**State Library:** Preserving your research collection from old to new technology;

**Ryerson Index:** Robert Atkins;

**National Library of Australia:** A speaker on Trove.

There will be four different speakers over the course of the day.

**Street Stall:** Our first street stall for the year is to be held on **Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019** the day after our general meeting and held in the grounds of the Presbyterian Church Springwood. As this is the day before Mothers' Day we are hoping to capitalise on this event by selling cakes, biscuits and plants as well as items we have left over from previous stalls. Perhaps our members with green thumbs may be able to provide us with some potted plants and those among you who are cooks might like to provide the culinary items.

We are also hoping to have a Mothers' Day raffle by putting together a basket of interesting goodies. This is rather short notice, but if members have any new unwanted items that would be suitable for a Mothers' Day raffle they would be gratefully accepted. If these could be brought to this month's meeting that would be good so that we can see what we can put together, otherwise they can be brought to the May meeting.

**Explorers' Tree:** Our first edition of the Explorers' Tree for 2019 was unfortunately not available at our March meeting. Since then Rhonda has received the Magazine and copies have been sent out to those members who get it posted and for those members not receiving it by mail, their copies have been placed in the concertina folder in Springwood Library. Rhonda will bring any uncollected copies to Friday's meeting.