



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE 10th November, 2017

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WELCOME to our November meeting which today is the Society's AGM.

AGM: All positions are available as always. Most of the current committee members have been long standing members of the Society so it is hoped this year some of our newer members will nominate to participate in the running of the Society. Our current President is standing again as are our current committee members with the exception that our Secretary will no longer be filling this position and neither will our current Vice President both these members wish to remain as committee members only. This leaves the positions of Secretary and Vice President open for any members wishing to nominate. Anyone wishing to become the President is also welcome to nominate with all nominations put to the floor. There is also a need for one or two extra committee members. New committee members bring new ideas which are always welcome. For anyone interested Nomination Forms can be found in the Society's corner of Springwood Library.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter being a committee member is not an onerous task. Committee meetings are held once a month, on the fourth Friday of each month. These meetings are held at the Presbyterian Church Springwood in whatever room is available on the day. It is not essential that you attend each meeting, so long as there is a quorum the meeting can proceed - half the committee members plus one.

Having said all this, it is essential to point out that there will be no pressure brought to bear on any members attending the AGM, your participation is purely voluntary.

Morning tea at this occasion will be catered for by the committee as a way of thanking all our members for all their help and support during the year.

Display table: To add to the occasion and to make our last meeting more than just the AGM, members might like to bring something of interest out of their family history to go on a display table for viewing during morning tea. It might be a photo of a relative, a newspaper article or a family heirloom, anything that you would like to share with other members.

Last month's meeting: Our October guest speaker was Leonard Janiszewski. who gave a talk on "Greek Cafes & Milk Bars of Australia". Leonard together with Effy Alexakis have written a book of this title. Leonard started his talk firstly with the Greeks emigrating from Greece to America with their ideas of family and community. How they learned much about running Milk Bars there and then again emigrating to Australia bringing with them fresh ideas on their experiences in America. Leonard was so engrossed in his talk that he ran well over time. Members who were there found the talk interesting and perhaps learned a lot they previously had not known about the Greek community, Soda Fountains and Milk Bars.

Committee Meeting: The Committee met on the 27th October 2017 with the following discussions held:

Seminar: Not having met since our recent Seminar this was reviewed and those present agreed that it was very good. Feedback from those who attended was very positive, not only for the speakers but the catering as well.

The amount made from our September Seminar amounted to **\$930.06** which amount includes the amount realized from the raffle of **\$160.00**. Once again thank you to all members for your support.

Christmas Party: The Society's Christmas Party will be held at the Grandview Hotel at Wentworth Falls on **8th December 2017**, our normal general meeting date. The time is **12noon** for a **12.30** start. Could those members wishing to attend who have not yet paid please pay Ian at today's meeting. The cost is \$45.00.

Christmas Raffle: This year's Christmas Raffle is a hamper, any member wishing to contribute to the hamper could you please bring your donation along to today's meeting. Thank you. Tickets will go on sale at the AGM and will be \$1.00.

Sandwich Board: The design and price for the Sandwich Board has now been accepted and will be ready for our first meeting in February 2018.

Library Volunteers: Our Library volunteers will finish at Springwood Library at the end of November and recommence their volunteering assistance on the first week in February. "Thank you" to all our Library volunteers for the help you offer those wishing to trace their family history.

Street Stall: Having another street stall was discussed and it was decided that, with what we have in storage and any items members may no longer want, March would be a good month to hold a street stall.

High Tea: With the huge success of the last High Tea both with regard to fund raising and a social event perhaps 2018 would be a good time to host another High Tea. Topics were discussed – An Important Woman in your Life, A Man who had an influence in your Life to Anyone who might have been influential in your Life. There will be more on this and discussions with our members in the New Year.

Sale Table: Reminder – Items can still be brought to today's meeting if there is something you no longer want or need.

The Explorers' Tree: The last issue of the Explorers' Tree for 2017 was available at the October meeting. If you missed the meeting your copy will be found in the concertina file at Springwood Library.

What's On:

Blue Mountains Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens **Sat 11-Sun 12th November**, Garden of Earthly Delights; **Sat 2nd-10th December**, Plants with Bite.

Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Historical Museum, Open Day Sundays **12 & 26th November - Sun. 9th December**, Open Day, Christmas Themed weekend, Santa arriving on train.

Snippets:

A recent review in the Sydney Morning Herald of a new book "Gypsies, Their Secret History" written by Mandy Sayer and reviewed by Christine Yeats caught my attention and I thought members might find this interesting:

Australian Gypsies: Gypsies originated from northern India migrating west toward Europe from around the 9th Century driven from their homeland by Islamic Invaders.

Gypsies reached Australia as early as 1788 when about 60 arrived with the convicts in 1788-1825 including James Squire, who arrived with the first fleet. He cultivated hops and founded Australia's first commercial brewery using hops in 1798. He also formed a deep friendship with Benelong whom he eventually buried on his property at Kissing Point on the bank of the Parramatta River. However the suggestion that he was a Gypsy is said to be debatable. Statistics show there are 12 million Romanies living in Europe, 2 million in the Americas and around 25,000 in Australia.

Australia and the end of Napoleonic Wars: With the end of the Napoleonic Wars Britain lost no time in casting off its army from 236,000 to 81,000 army and 147,000 to 23,000 navy. With no employment many of these men turned to crime with the hope of transportation to Australia. A study had shown that the life of a convict in Australia was better than that of a soldier. Many officers from the middle classes also came to Australia and it is from these that we drew our governors, explorers, surveyors, magistrates, doctors, police chiefs and prison commandants. These officers also left their mark on Australia by naming the new landscape after events and places in their war years. In all over 5,000 veteran of the war came to Australia either as free settlers or convicts. While much of the land in the Lake Bathurst area, 27kms south east of Goulburn was for the privileged, smaller blocks were made available to the north in Tarranville for veteran soldiers and becoming some of our first soldier settlements.

Interesting Websites Criminal and court records: New South Wales Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales 1788-1899 - http://www.law.mq.edu.au/research/colonial_case_law/nsw/site/scnsw_home/; Ancestry.com - New South Wales - Gaol Description and Entrance Books 1818-1930 <http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1783>; Mayberry Homepage <http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/>; Ancestry.com - Australia Convict Collection <http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/group/auconvicts>