



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE 10th May, 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 Heidi Brown. Heidi's talk will commence at **10am** instead of the usual 11am and will be on the Parramatta Female Factory. Heidi is a direct descendant of Matron Ann Gordon who was Matron at the Female Factory from October 1827-1836. Ann's time at the Female Factory started and ended in a riot. The first riot being a "food riot" the second was a few days after her departure. We can look forward to a very interesting talk.

April Guest Speaker: Craig Schubert gave us a very interesting talk at this meeting on his ancestor, Franz Schubert and his family who emigrated to Australia in the 1800s.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the Family History Society will be held on **14th June 2019 at 10am** in our usual meeting place, the small hall behind the Presbyterian Church. Guest speaker yet to be organised.

Committee Meeting: Due to Easter, Anzac Day and school holidays and there being no urgent matters to discuss, there was no committee meeting in April

Seminar 2019: Anglican Church Hall, Great Western Highway, Springwood on the **24th August 2019**.

Topic: "Old Ways and New Ways in Family History."

Speakers:

NSW State Archives: Suzanne Upton.

Ryerson Index: Robert Atkins;

Smits Art Restoration: Kristel Smits

We are hoping to get a speaker from **Ancestry** but to-date we have not heard whether anyone is available in which case we will need to find another fourth speaker.

Street Stall: Our first street stall for the year is to be held tomorrow **Saturday, 11th May 2019** 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. If you are a gardener and have any potted plants you would like to donate they will be welcome. For those members who are cooks, donations of cakes, slices, biscuits, jams, etc. will also be most welcome.

Tickets for our Mothers' Day raffle will also be sold on our stall and drawn at the closure of the stall.

Explorers' Tree: Rhonda is in need of articles for the June issue of our magazine. She would welcome any article, short or long. Perhaps you might have a family heirloom that you will be bringing to one of our meetings when there is no guest speaker, a short story about that would be welcome.

Raffle – Ongoing from last month's general meeting and drawn at the close of our Mothers' Day stall.

Reminder: Our trade table an ongoing source of income.

What's on:

***Glenbrook & District Historical Society:** History Walk Saturday 11th May 2019, Eastern Zig-Zag Railway, Knapsack Viaduct and Saturday 9th June, 2019, History Walk, Duck Hole - Glenbrook Creek. Contact Doug 4751 3275.

***Springwood Historical Society:** Meeting Friday 17th May 2019 - Speaker, Arthur Pearce (Maritime Museum) Murray Riverboats. Email rtmorony@gmail.com.

***Blue Mountains National Trust:** Historic Walk, Saturday 18th May, 2019, Springwood and Norman Lindsay Gallery. Email bmnt1814@aol.com.

***Friends of the Paragon:** Talk, Saturday, 18th May 2019, Speaker, Otto Steen. Email friendsoftheparagon@gmail.com

***Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum:** Sunday, 26th May and 9th June 2019, Open Days.

Items of Interest:

You will remember our March guest speaker was Barbara Gow and how she told us that her relative, Gordon Gow was the voice caller of the talking clock which you dialled for the time. A recent snippet in the Herald advised that when Gordon retired he was presented with a cuckoo clock. On the hour the cuckoo stuck its head out and shouted "Hey, what's the time?" Incidentally the service of the talking clock which has been telling the time for 66 years, will fall silent at the third stroke after midnight on October 1, 2019.

With Anzac Day just behind us here are some snippets of information you may or may not know:

***Banjo Patterson:** Australia's leading balladist and famous for writing "Waltzing Matilda", during WWI was a war correspondent, drove an ambulance in France and was later an officer in the remount service in the Middle East. On the outbreak of the First World War he left Australia with the first AIF convoy in October 1914 as a press representative. The troops stayed in Egypt while he continued on to Britain but he failed to get employment as a correspondent there. He went to France where he drove ambulances for the Australian Voluntary Hospital. In 1915 he returned home and was commissioned in the AIF and sent to the Middle East. Experienced with horses, he was promoted to Major and commanded the Australian Remount Squadron.

***Merchant Navy:** We all know the important role the Merchant Navy played during the War transporting food and supplies across the Atlantic Ocean. However, when one of their ships was sunk, the seamen, who may have been floating around in the ocean for some time, had their pay suspended until they were appointed to a new ship.

***Scrap Iron Flotilla:** The commencement of WWII saw the mobilization of the Australian Navy reservists and the conversion of civilian vessels to wartime use. In particular, five old World War I vintage destroyers were sent to the Mediterranean. They were HMAS Stuart, Vendetta, Vampire, Voyager and Waterhen. This flotilla had been described by the German propaganda minister, Goebbels, as the "scrap iron flotilla" because of the age of the vessels. They were old ships but they proved to be tough in action and have a very distinguished battle history. A banner for the Scrap Iron Flotilla being carried in the Sydney Anzac Day March caught my attention thus prompting my interest.

A useful article found by Ian in The British Newspaper Archive with his instructions on how to access the papers in the BMCC Libraries. "Thank you Ian."

The British Newspaper Article

The British Newspaper Archive is a partnership between the British Library and *findmypast* to digitise up to 40 million newspaper pages from the British Library's vast collection over a 10 year period.

What makes the project special?

The British Library's collection of historical newspapers is one of the wonders of the world: it contains newspapers from 1603 to the present day, from both Britain and further afield. There are over 600,000 bound volumes of newspapers (occupying 32 kilometres or 20 miles of shelving) and over 300,000 reels of microfilm (occupying a further 13 kilometres, or 8 miles of shelving). Until now, the only way to view these newspapers was to visit the British Library, and, of course, it was not possible to search them.

The British Newspaper Archive is a partnership with the British Library to begin digitising this huge collection and make it available on the internet so researchers from all over the world can access the treasures within it.

What have we done to date?

Launched in 2011, we have now scanned millions of pages of historical newspapers and made them available online for the first time ever. You can now **search hundreds of millions of stories** by keyword, name, location, date or title and watch your results appear in an instant.

How do I access these newspapers?

The British Newspaper Archive is available through the Family History Research Pages in all the Blue Mountains Libraries, listed directly under Ancestry. The BMCC Library has a licence, but you will need to establish a free sign on to use it (just like FamilySearch). The filters are easy to use with your search item allowing you to narrow down the date, newspaper title and/or Country (England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland) and County/Shire.

