



Relative Thoughts

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Quarterly Journal of the Fleurieu Peninsula Family History Group Inc.



Photos from the Biennial Seminar
on 17 August 2019— courtesy of
Kerry Edwards



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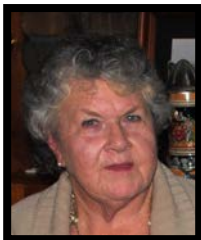


FPFHG Facebook
Group



View of Witton Bluff on Facebook and websites

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I would like to commence this report with greetings to all and I do hope you have managed to stay warm and dry during this cold and wet Winter, but I am assured that Spring has arrived as the daffodils are out there bobbing away to say “warmer weather is on the way”.

This had been a busy time for the Group and I thank all who helped to make it another successful year. Our speakers at the General Meetings have shared their stories and knowledge with us and the Seminar was also another very successful day with four interesting speakers and varied topics. Elizabeth Grocke has introduced us to some people who have researched or lived through some amazing times personally or why and how some things have been achieved.

Our calendar for the past three months has been busy and the regular groups of Aussie Group, DNA, UK Group, Computing, the Resource Room, the extra sessions organised by Sharon Green for DNA and FTM have been well attended and all positions filled by members eager to learn more. Once again I thank those people – Ros Dunstall, Sharon Green, Peter Tuck, David Boyce, Heather Boyce and the Resource Room workers, Sharon, Chris, Pauline, Kath Fisher and Judy Dowling who are compiling the Pioneer Register. If you haven't visited the Resource Room for some time, please pop in and have a look at the resources which may help you with your research.

We have also had enquiries via the website for members who have their family entered into the “Members Interest List” on the Website. These have been followed up and new connections made. Please check that your details are up-to-date. If you have done your DNA there may be more names to be included. If unsure please collect another form from the sign-in desk and return to Pam Hodges or Nola Clisby. There maybe someone who is looking for you.

The 19 October meeting topic is - “Irish Girl Migrants inter war period” with Margrette Kleinig. Look forward to seeing you there.

The final meeting for 2019 will be on 16 November and will be the Annual General Meeting and shared luncheon. This will include a “Show and Tell” for members to share some of their family trinkets and their story or something special from your childhood.

I would like to thank both Peter Tuck and Mary Sedgmen for their time as Vice-President and Secretary for the last two years. Thank you to your both for your time and support.

These positions are due for re-election this year and it is anticipated that both positions will be filled during the AGM. The terms for electing positions.

10. THE COMMITTEE

10.1 Management Committee

10.1.2 The Office Bearers -

The President and Treasurer are to retire in even years and the Vice President and Secretary are to retire in odd years.

10.2 Nomination and election of the Committee at the AGM.

10.2.1 At least twenty eight (28) days notice of the AGM & election shall be accompanied by a call for nominations.

10.2.2 Nominations must be submitted in writing and signed with a proposer and a seconder who must each be Financial Members of The Group. The Secretary must receive such nominations at least fourteen (14) days prior to the AGM with the names of nominees available to Members by post, electronic notice boards or from The Group's web site at least seven (7) days prior to the AGM. Late nominations will not be considered.

10.2.3 The nominee must be a financial member and agree to stand and sign the Nomination Form to that effect."

If you are interested in joining the Committee for 2019 -2021 and helping to keep the FPFHG going into next year please consider it. There are some exciting things ahead if you enjoy a challenge. If you have any questions please speak with any member of the current committee.

Nomination forms are available from the Secretary.

You should all have received your Membership renewal either at the last meeting or via the Post. If not please see Nola Clisby or myself to get yours for the coming year. **Please complete the information on the bottom of the form, this may be very handy for us all one day.** To the Members who have already paid, thank you and there will be opportunity to pay at the meetings or electronically (details are on the form) if you wish.

To all who help to get our Meeting 'set-up and put-away' a huge thank you and to all other Volunteers who keep the Group going and growing I thank you. To all Members who attend our activities thank you, you keep the friendly and welcoming group together, your purchases from the Trading Table and your raffle tickets also are part of the activities we all enjoy.

On behalf of the Committee and myself I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and may 2020 be a happy and healthy year and many more hours of searching for "that elusive relative"!

Joy Nieass

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Members are reminded that the financial year ends on 31 October. Members must be financial before the AGM, Saturday, 17 November. Non-financial members may not vote, nominate or stand for committee positions, **and are NOT covered by FPFHG Insurance.**

Please ensure your membership subscription is paid before the AGM.

Reminder: There is a \$5.00 rejoining fee payable for any membership not paid by 28 February.

Renewal membership forms were sent out in AUGUST.

THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR



The coffin of the Unknown Warrior in state in Westminster Abbey in 1920, before burial.

The idea of a Tomb of the Unknown Warrior was first conceived in 1916 by the Reverend David Railton, who, while serving as an army chaplain on the Western Front, had seen a grave marked by a rough cross, which bore the pencil-written legend 'An Unknown British Soldier'.

He wrote to the Dean of Westminster in 1920 proposing that an unidentified British soldier from the battlefields in France be buried with due ceremony in Westminster Abbey "amongst the kings" to represent the many hundreds of thousands of Empire dead. The idea was strongly supported by the Dean and the Prime Minister David Lloyd George.

Arrangements were placed in the hands of Lord Curzon of Kedleston who prepared in committee the service and location. Suitable remains were exhumed from various battlefields and brought to the chapel at Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise near Arras, France on the night of 7 November 1920. The bodies were received by the Reverend George Kendall OBE. Brigadier L.J. Wyatt and Lieutenant Colonel E.A.S. Gell of the Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries went into the chapel alone. The remains were then placed in four plain coffins each covered by Union Flags: the two officers did not know from which battlefield any individual soldier had come. Brigadier Wyatt with closed eyes rested his hand on one of the coffins. The other soldiers were then taken away for reburial by Kendall.

The coffin of the unknown warrior then stayed at the chapel overnight and on the afternoon of 8 November, it was transferred under guard and escorted by Kendall, with troops lining the route, from Ste Pol to the medieval castle within the ancient citadel at Boulogne. For the

occasion, the castle library was transformed into a *chapelle ardente*: a company from the French 8th Infantry Regiment, recently awarded the *Légion d'Honneur en masse*, stood vigil overnight.

The following morning, two undertakers entered the castle library and placed the coffin into a casket of the oak timbers of trees from Hampton Court Palace. The casket was banded with iron, and a medieval crusader's sword chosen by King George V personally from the Royal Collection was affixed to the top and surmounted by an iron shield bearing the inscription 'A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914–1918 for King and Country'.

The casket was then placed onto a French military wagon, drawn by six black horses. At 10.30 am, all the church bells of Boulogne tolled; the massed trumpets of the French cavalry and the bugles of the French infantry played *Aux Champs* (the French "Last Post"). Then, the mile-long procession—led by one thousand local school children and escorted by a division of French troops—made its way down to the harbour.

At the quayside, Marshal Foch saluted the casket before it was carried up the gangway of the destroyer, HMS *Verdun*, and piped aboard with an admiral's call. The *Verdun* slipped anchor just before noon and was joined by an escort of six battleships. As the flotilla carrying the casket closed on Dover Castle it received a 19-gun Field Marshal's salute. It was landed at Dover Marine Railway Station at the Western Docks on 10 November. The body of the Unknown Warrior was carried to London in South Eastern and Chatham Railway General Utility Van No.132, which had previously carried the bodies of Edith Cavell and Charles Fryatt. The van has been preserved by the Kent and East Sussex Railway. The train went to Victoria Station, where it arrived at platform 8 at 8.32 pm that evening and remained overnight. (A plaque at Victoria Station marks the site: every year on 10 November, a small Remembrance service, organised by The Western Front Association, takes place between platforms 8 and 9.)

On the morning of 11 November 1920, the casket was placed onto a gun carriage of the Royal Horse Artillery (N Battery RHA) and drawn by six horses through immense and silent crowds. As the cortege set off, a further Field Marshal's salute was fired in Hyde Park. The route followed was Hyde Park Corner, The Mall, and to Whitehall where the Cenotaph, a "symbolic empty tomb", was unveiled by King-Emperor George V. The cortège was then followed by The King, the Royal Family and ministers of state to Westminster Abbey, where the casket was borne into the West Nave of the Abbey flanked by a guard of honour of one hundred recipients of the Victoria Cross.



Burial of The Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey, with King George V in attendance, 1920

The guests of honour were a group of about one hundred women. They had been chosen because they had each lost their husband and all their sons in the war. "Every woman so bereft who applied for a place got it".

The coffin was then interred in the far western end of the Nave, only a few feet from the entrance, in soil brought from each of the main battlefields, and covered with a silk pall. Servicemen from the armed forces stood guard as tens of thousands of mourners filed silently past. The ceremony appears to have served as a form of catharsis for collective mourning on a scale not previously known.

The grave was then capped with a black Belgian marble stone (the only tombstone in the Abbey on which it is forbidden to walk) featuring this inscription, composed by Herbert Edward Ryle, Dean of Westminster, engraved with brass from melted down wartime ammunition.

BENEATH THIS STONE RESTS THE BODY
OF A BRITISH WARRIOR
UNKNOWN BY NAME OR RANK
BROUGHT FROM FRANCE TO LIE AMONG
THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THE LAND
AND BURIED HERE ON ARMISTICE DAY
11 NOV: 1920, IN THE PRESENCE OF
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V
HIS MINISTERS OF STATE
THE CHIEFS OF HIS FORCES
AND A VAST CONCOURSE OF THE NATION
THUS ARE COMMEMORATED THE MANY
MULTITUDES WHO DURING THE GREAT
WAR OF 1914 – 1918 GAVE THE MOST THAT
MAN CAN GIVE LIFE ITSELF
FOR GOD
FOR KING AND COUNTRY
FOR LOVED ONES HOME AND EMPIRE
FOR THE SACRED CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND
THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD
THEY BURIED HIM AMONG THE KINGS BECAUSE HE
HAD DONE GOOD TOWARD GOD AND TOWARD
HIS HOUSE

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Unknown_Warrior

EDITOR's NOTE: A different version of the story of *The Unknown Warrior* was submitted by one of our members—in the process of checking some of the spelling, I came across this more detailed explanation.

LOOK WHAT YOU MISSED!! by Elizabeth Grocke



July 2019 Val Oldfield OAM, Mungeranie Station—*Not Beating about the Bush*. For 10 years of Val's life was living on Mungeranie Station which included the dust, the flies, dingos, sometimes the only company for weeks on end, along with the crackle of the Flying Doctor wireless radio which was her contact to the other stations.

Val arrived into this dry dusty world as a newlywed, coming from a seaside suburb in Adelaide. *No Beating about the Bush* traces her life from the sands of Semaphore Beach, in the 1950's as a modern young girl around town, to the environment of 'The Track', and Val's years beyond.

This is a true story with great Australian characters, with insights into our outback lifestyle. *No Beating about the Bush* is a tribute to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and to all women who lived in the Australian Outback in times when modern conveniences and communications were few and far between. This is a story of an ordinary woman living an extraordinary life.



Her book is dedicated to the memory of her daughter Susan Joy Oldfield (1961-2009).

Elizabeth Grocke

SERENDIPITY by Cheryl Williss

Back in 2016 when I was writing the book, *Miss Marryat's Circle*, I attached potentially useful information to a pinboard that hangs above my desk. Apart from some photographs that kept me motivated, much of the board was taken up by the chronological list, 'Some significant dates in the history of women in South Australia'. One year mentioned is 1919, when Susan Grace Benny became the first Australian woman local government councillor, for Seacliff Ward, Brighton Council. In the April 2019 edition of *Relative Thoughts*, our editor Christine Keen included a piece on Mrs Benny. (In the same edition, Lynette Gibson told us how the Fleurieu Peninsula came to be named – and I will come back to that later.)

This year, I at last returned to my own family's history. The list stayed on my pinboard and Grace Benny remained of interest only, not relevant to my current writing. I continued with

the stories of my forebears, including Eugénie's Story, for July's *Relative Thoughts*. I also wrote an article on my great-great-great-grandfather, Andrew Harriot, for the Spring edition of *The Pioneer*, the journal of the Pioneers Association of South Australia.

Then, for some unknown reason I returned to April's *Relative Thoughts* – and that was when the penny dropped. Grace Benny was the granddaughter of Andrew Harriot. Grace's mother, Agnes, and my great-great-grandmother, Margaret, were sisters. Margaret married Eugénie Goldfinch's second son, William.

Having grown up in Brighton, I wasted no time in heading down to my old haunting ground, the Brighton Library, to view the bronze memorial to Grace at the library's entrance. But wait, there's more...

Just one week later, I agreed to attend a lunch function, to assist an elderly friend with mobility issues. On arriving at our allocated table, a gentleman stood up to greet us. My eyes were drawn to the surname on his name tag – BENNY. He was Grace Benny's grandson.

Back to Eugénie. Earlier this year, just as I returned to my Goldfinch family, I was contacted by author, Gillian Kelly, who had written the *Lacemakers of Calais* books. Gillian explained that an English journalist, Michael Delahaye, who now lives in France, was writing an article on the Lacemakers for *The Connexion*, a newspaper for English expats. He was coming to Adelaide in April, and Gillian was flying over from Sydney to meet him. Michael was interested in hearing about the Goldfinch family, advised Gillian. Would I care to join them? The result is a wonderful piece to appear in *The Connexion* this month, distributed across France in hard copy, and online at connexionfrance.com.

This wasn't the only article that Michael returned home to write. His story on the Baudin expedition appeared in *The Connexion's* August edition. He also included an explanation as to how Fleurieu Peninsula was named – adding that here one can find “some fine Cabernet Sauvignon”.

And, just when I turned my attention back to Andrew Harriot, I was contacted by Noarlunga local, Danny. Danny has held a life-long interest in Andrew and the so-called legend of Dalkeith Farm. Danny generously offered me the fruits of his own extensive research, including underwater photos he had taken of the wreck, *Nashwauk*, which in 1855 ran aground directly opposite what was then known as Harriott's Creek, now Pedler's Creek. One of these photos fronts the cover of *The Pioneer's* Spring edition, which can be found in our FPFHG library.

Footnote:

'Some significant dates in the history of women in South Australia' can be found at the State Library of South Australia: http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/sa1.htm

Cheryl Willis

BIENNIAL SEMINAR—WORDS AND PICTURES



Kristin Weidenbach, Growing up Moonta—The first guest speaker for our Seminar was Kristin Weidenbach talking about her book of memoirs *Growing up Moonta* which is an Australian story of the experiences and stories related to her by her late father Neil Weidenbach. In fact the book covers four generations of stories throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s and it begins with the saying *'If you haven't been to Moonta, you haven't travelled.* To illustrate the book Kristin showed slides of various family members and local residents going about their daily lives which related to the stories in the book. Kristin also narrated several passages from her book which were very entertaining. One story told how the

local butcher accepted a load of wood as payment from a customer who was unable to pay their bill. In fact the butcher was able to start a wood business with as this happened on such a regular basis. Times were tough in the depression. Another story was that at a picnic for 1/ you could buy a tray holding hot water and a teapot. Takeaway had come to Moonta. The book relates to various trials and tribulations that the various family members had to endure as well as a history of Moonta and the mines. In the front of the book Kristin has sketch maps of Moonta showing where the various people mentioned in her book lived and worked. This book won the TT Reed Award from the SA Genealogy and Heraldry Society for the best family history book published in 2017. I thoroughly recommend going to the library and borrowing this book.

Jeanette Bell

Helen Stagg, Harnessing the River Murray—Helen's talk was about the families and communities of the people who built the first nine locks and weirs on the Murray over a period of 20 years. Helen told of her history training and after hearing stories from her grandfather, Arthur Rains and her mother, Evelyn she finally started to record the history of the workforce and families.

Stories found in the *Murray Pioneer* newspaper in 1925 –26 led to the discovery of a total of 71 letters that the children penned for the 'Young Folks Column' while they were living at Lock 5. The children wrote so prolifically that the columnist 'Mopoke' stated in January 1926: *'I must congratulate the Rains children on their steady flow of letters.'*

These letters gave great insight into the lives of the people who had social and sporting events including regular dances and movie nights, gala balls, aquatic carnivals, horse races, football, cricket, tennis and soccer competitions.

As well as detailing the tough and dangerous working conditions and the many accidents which occurred, the community supported each other through the good and the bad times.



Over the 20-year construction period of Locks 1 to 9, the nature of the work and the long hours proved no deterrent to the seemingly constant cycle of social and sporting events.

Each camp consisted of a variety of dwellings, laid out in rough streets. The government provided some housing. They were very, very rough, just wood and iron, but at least they didn't leak, or not much anyhow ... they were very primitive in many ways.

Evelyn Smith (née Rains) described how the men built on extensions for their family: "Dad had to always build another room or two, usually from flour bags which had to be cut open, and then stitched together."

The corrugated iron houses formed an area referred to as 'Tin Town' while 'Bag Town' — a shanty-town on the riverbank — was where others built their homes from whatever materials were at hand.

The enterprising communities, in most cases far removed from established towns, depended largely on produce from their vegetable gardens. They also obtained supplies from visiting paddle steamers, the government 'store' and a small shop at each site. Some had cows, goats and chooks and they supplemented their food supplies with fish, ducks, rabbits, bush honey and mushrooms.

An enduring legacy

These lock workers married, raised families and bonded not only with each other but with the river, always a constant part of their lives. At the completion of Locks 7 and 8, many of them moved on to build the barrages at Goolwa near the Murray Mouth.

Ros Dunstall



Nick Cleghorn, Director of NAA South Australia – Nick Cleghorn moved to South Australia to become the Director of the National Archives of Australia South Australia branch and he gave an overview of their contents and collection. They are a Commonwealth Government archive and have branches in each state. Nationally they have 350km of records of which 4km is in South Australia. You can view original items in each state but they don't move them to other states. Many items are already digitised but if not you can pay for this to be done. However the records are then open to the public.

They hold records judged to be of permanent value. For a long time this didn't include World War One records but this isn't the case today. A recent political decision means they may soon start to digitise World War Two records. Special items of interest include Harold Holt's brief case from when he went missing and the letter of dismissal by John Kerry to Gough Whitlam. They don't accept donations other than from government ministers or the governor general. They work under the 1983 Archives Act and items can be open to the public after only 20 years. Family historians may be particularly interested in their immigration records from 1941. Prior to this date the records are with the State Records office. Immigration records of interest include those of Julia Gillard's family. Passenger records of interest include Ringo Starr when he arrived to join other members of the Beatles in 1964. They don't

offer a research service but are happy to answer queries about where to find records on their website <http://www.naa.gov.au>.

Kerry Edwards



Bob Byrne, Baby Boomer—Bob Byrne gave a wonderful presentation on the old buildings and local icons of Adelaide - many of which do not exist anymore. The wonderful array of photos of such buildings and some of the fascinating stories recalled by Bob was intriguing and he encouraged and welcomed audience participation and interaction.

Having worked in the Adelaide City Business District for 30 years it was enlightening and so interesting to discover what amazing and interesting buildings once existed in the streets that you walk along every day.

The photos displayed included such buildings as the Grand Central Hotel on the corner of Pulteney and Rundle Streets, The Regent Theatre in Rundle Mall and other theatres such as the West, Metro, York, Sturt as well as the Savoy Theatre. The scenes of the wonderful interiors and décor of our lost buildings of the past brought back wonderful memories to many.

The Birks Building that preceded the first David Jones Building and Cox Foy's Building with the Ferris wheel on the roof-top and scenes of Rundle Mall when it was Rundle Street gave an insight to how much the city shopping precinct has changed. Bob recalled another interesting story of how the Burger King establishment came into existence on Anzac Highway and the photo brought back memories for many in the audience.

One of the most fascinating photos of the day was of the truly amazing Exhibition Building that once stood on North Terrace which makes one ponder on how the building would have looked on the very changed face of North Terrace in the 21st Century. Other photos of some of the wonderful buildings on North Terrace such as the South Australian Hotel and the buildings opposite the old Parliament House conveyed an almost classic impression of how North Terrace once looked.

Bob finished off the presentation with a photo which is so familiar to those of us in the South of the iconic King Neptune at Darlington. This brought back fond memories for me as a child on those few occasions when we went to Adelaide that when on the return trip to Victor we always looked out for King Neptune at Darlington and once he came into sight we knew it was time to settle down with a book in the back seat of the old HR Holden and that we were on our way home. It was reassuring to know he's still in existence at Port Adelaide. Well done Bob. Great speaker.

Ian Blatchford

All photos courtesy of Kerry Edwards.

NEW RESOURCES

The following new resources are available in the Resource Room.

Books

Skelmorlie to South Australia, Jean Wilson & Robert Martin

Growing up Moonta, Kristen Weidenbach

Harnessing the River Murray, Helen Stagg

South Australian Newspaper Obituaries – 1836-1900, Graham Jaunay

South Australian Land Owners—1835-1841, Graham Jaunay

Sources for Shipping records—1836-1842, Graham Jaunay

Old Myponga, Margaret Morgan

Introduction to German Family History Research for Australians, Eric Kopittke

High on the Hill, Kelly Dyer

Journals/Magazines

The Greenwood Tree, Somerset & Dorset FHS

The SA Genealogist

Ancestor

Newcastle Family History Society

York Peninsula Family History Society

Ancestry

Descent

The Gazette

The Pioneer

Pauline Redman

BOOK REVIEWS by Pauline Redman

Researching in German Civil and Church Records, Eric Kopittke

Eric Kopittke makes the point that to get the maximum benefit from this guide book you must know the exact place of origin of your German ancestor.

This booklet gives a brief background to the history of Germany or more correctly the Holy Roman Empire as it was known for the last more than a thousand years. I found this interesting as it sets the scene as it were.

Referring to the Civil and Church records again he sets the scene by discussing the background as to the recording of baptisms etc and also the change from Church to Civil records. And why this happened. He talks about the different certificates that you might need and more importantly there are a lot of illustrations of these and extracts etc.

Then he tells you how to access the records and recommends three or four relevant sites. And the bibliography is very impressive! A very good guide book I think and easy to read into the bargain, with a lot of useful information.

Locating your German ancestor's place of origin, Eric Kopittke

This booklet is very informative and after the background blurb discusses Shipping, Birth, Death and Marriage certificates, Emigration records, including Emigration Indexes; he talks about the Danish Emigration Database with the website address, the Swiss Overseas Emigration 1910 – 1953; then Immigration records, Naturalisation records etc. Obituaries, and an extensive section of Maps and Gazetteers with again many illustrations. He also briefly talks about **Resolving difficulties**. The bibliography this time is 2.5 pages listing all sorts of fun stuff that you can look up at your leisure!

This booklet is easy to read and has a comprehensive amount of information. I would recommend purchasing your own copy if you find it useful. There is lot to take in!

Pauline Redman

IRISH SUPERSTITIONS SURROUNDING DEATH

For those of us with Irish ancestors:

"When someone dies you should close the curtains because should a moonbeam shine through the window onto the corpse then the devil sends his demons down it to steal the soul".

"You must stop all the clocks at the time of death to confuse the devil and give the soul time to reach heaven".

"In Ireland the dead are carried out of the house feet first in order to prevent the spirit from looking back into the house and beckoning another member of the family to follow him/her".

"Family photographs were turned faced down to prevent any of the close relatives and friends of the deceased from being possessed by the spirit of the dead".

"Cover all the mirrors in the house at the time of death or the soul will be trapped within the mirror".

"If you smell roses when none are around then someone is going to die".

"The souls of the dead who happen to die abroad greatly desire to rest in Ireland. The relations consider it their duty to bring back the body to be laid to rest in Irish earth. However, even then the dead will not rest in peace unless laid with their forefathers and their own people and not among strangers".

"The custom of placing candles on or around the coffin comes from the belief that you were lighting the way to paradise for the corpse. This continued as you walked the coffin to its final resting place. The tradition of walking slowly behind or on either side of the coffin came about because you walked slowly so the candles wouldn't blow out".

"In Ireland we hold a wake for someone who has died and one suggestion for this was said to be because of the after effects of poteen. It was said that people didn't know if those who were layed as if dead were just unconscious or were actually dead so they used to wait up at night for them to wake up, hence the name'.

"Also it was called a wake because of the frequent lead poisoning suffered by people drinking from pewter tankards". "One of the symptoms of lead poisoning is that of a catatonic state that resembles death from which you would hopefully recover in anything from a few hours to a couple of days. It was for this reason that a burial was delayed to give the poor unfortunate a chance to wake up".

And never ever put "new" shoes on the kitchen table!! It was said that would bring bad luck. The explanation - when someone passed away their shoes were placed on the table for someone who needed a "new" pair.

Submitted by Ros Dunstall. Printed with permission from Carolyn Ann Dunn, *Genealogy My Ancestors Came to Australia* FaceBook page.

THE IRISH WAKE

Customs and traditions

Certain customs and traditions surround death in Ireland. Here you can read about Irish Wakes.

The Irish Wake is perhaps one of the best known funeral traditions associated with Ireland. The Wake, the glorious send-off of departed loved ones, is a prominent feature of Irish funeral traditions, but is seen less and less often in modern Ireland and is now almost unknown in the cities. But in many country areas the practice of watching over the recently deceased from the time of death to burial is still followed and is an important part of the grieving process, which is why many Irish funerals, outside of the cities, are still preceded by a wake.

The origin of the wake probably dates back to the ancient Jewish custom of leaving the sepulchre, or burial chamber, of a recently departed relative unsealed for three days before finally closing it up, during which time family members would visit frequently in the hope of seeing signs of a return to life.

A more recent story, which is almost certainly a myth, is that the tradition of the wake in Ireland came about as a result of the frequent lead poisoning suffered by drinkers of stout from pewter tankards. A symptom of this malaise is a catatonic state resembling death, from which the sufferer may recover after a period of a few hours to a day or so, to the relief of those watching for signs of such an awakening.

Whatever the origins, there is no doubt that the ceremony of the wake has provided comfort to those who have nursed a loved one through a terminal illness or have had them snatched away by disaster without the chance to say goodbye. It is an opportunity to celebrate the departed person's life in the company of his or her family and friends and to mark their departure from their home for the last time. A wake is a scene of both sadness and joy as the end of that life is marked but the life itself is remembered and treasured.

Where is a wake held?

- A wake is usually held in the deceased's home, or the home of a close relative. It is becoming more common, especially in cities, for the traditional wake to be replaced by a 'viewing' at a funeral home. The immediate family of the deceased will be at the funeral parlour and the protocols are similar to those followed at a wake held in the home.
- If a wake or a viewing is taking place, the death notice will normally say 'reposing at' and then give the address. During a wake, the location is usually evident as there will be lots of cars outside and quite often people gathered chatting in front of the house.
- Typically, the body is waked for at least one night, during which time family, neighbours, friends, work colleagues and acquaintances visit the house to pay their respects.

Who attends a wake?

- If you knew the deceased, or know any member of the deceased's family, then you could attend the wake. You do not have to wait to be invited. Typically, a wake is attended by family, relatives, neighbours, friends, work colleagues, school and college friends, and acquaintances. However, if the death notice states 'house private', then the wake is restricted to the immediate family and invited guests.
- It is not usual for children to attend a wake, unless they are close relatives of the deceased.
- Men often visit the wake house late at night and sit with the body during the night. Close male neighbours and friends often volunteer to do this so that the family can get some rest.

What is the atmosphere like and how should I dress?

- The atmosphere is respectful and you may hear both laughing and crying as people recall stories about the deceased.
- Dress respectfully and avoid flamboyant colours.

What to do when you enter the "wake house"

- Typically, when you enter the wake house you will be greeted by a member of the deceased's family, who will guide you to where the body is laid out. If not, someone close to the family will show you the way. Shake the hand of the person who meets you and offer your condolences.
- Expect to see lots of people sitting around drinking tea, eating sandwiches, biscuits and cakes and chatting – even in the room where the body is laid out.
- The closest family members will usually be beside the body, which is typically laid out in a coffin. You should make your way to them, shake hands and offer your condolences. It's sometimes hard to know what to say, and people will understand this as it is an awkward situation.
- Take a moment to stand and look at the body, during which time you may say a prayer. Some people touch the hands or head of the corpse for a few seconds or sprinkle some holy water (which is often on a nearby table), on the body. The best advice is to watch what others are doing and follow suit.
- Once you have met the family, shaken hands and viewed the body, it is customary to take a seat and chat for a while with those who are present. Expect to be offered a cup of tea. It is less common nowadays to be offered alcohol.
- An acceptable time to remain at the wake is anything from 10 minutes to several hours, depending on how well you know the family.
- Close neighbours and friends often volunteer to help in the kitchen (making and serving tea and sandwiches) or undertake other chores such as minding children, running errands etc.

What to take with you to a wake

- Nothing is required, but many people take along a condolence card and place it on the table beside the coffin or on the coffin.
- Only if you know the family very well do you take something to a wake, although if you do, it is always appreciated by the family, as it is such a tiring and stressful time. Typical things close relatives, neighbours and friends might take along include sandwiches, cakes and biscuits.
- Close neighbours may offer chairs, crockery and tea pots, for the duration of the wake.

When to attend a wake

- If you are not a close relative or friend of the deceased or the family the most usual time to attend is between 5pm and 8pm.
- The latest time to attend varies from county to county, but often a wake continues throughout the night and it is customary for close neighbours, relatives and friends to “sit with the body” during the night, so that the family can get some rest. If you are at the house near the time the body is due to be removed, you should leave early enough to give the immediate family time to pay their last respects to the deceased.
- Often you will see a Guest Book in the hallway of the wake house. You should sign this so that the family knows who has visited and can thank everybody.

What will I see at a wake or a viewing?

- You can expect the body of the deceased to be visible in an open coffin in the house or the funeral home.
- Usually, the body is dressed in their best clothes, but covered with a shroud from the chest down. The head and hands will be visible.
- If the upper body has been disfigured in death, the coffin will be closed.
- It is usual for all the curtains in the wake house to be drawn, but for one window to be left open in the room where the deceased is lying.
- Mirrors in the house, especially those in the room where the body is lying, may be covered or turned to the wall.

Source: <https://rip.ie/article.php?AID=32>. Article supplied to *Relative Thoughts* by member Ros Dunstall

UPCOMING SPEAKERS & EVENTS



All meetings are held at 1.15pm, Uniting Church Hall, 23 William Road, Christies Beach. If you have a suggestion for a suitable speaker please contact Elizabeth Grocke with details.

19 October —Margrette Kleinig, Irish Girl Migrants inter war period

16 November—AGM and “Members Show and Tell”

18 January—Resource Room “Show and Tell”

RESOURCE ROOM OPENING TIMES



The Resource Room is available to members for research. During the opening time before the Saturday general meetings, Resource Room volunteers will not be available to give assistance with ‘Family Research’, but books, newsletters and magazines can be borrowed from 12.00pm to 1.15pm, and during the afternoon tea break.

Other opening times for the Resource Room will be the 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons during February to October, and the 1st Wednesday in November, from 1.00pm—3.30pm.

Members wishing to access *findmypast* during resource room openings, are now requested to contact Chris Grivell and book a specific time. Chris’s contact details may be found at the front of the journal.

Opening dates for this quarter are: 2 October, 16 October, 19 October, 6 November, 16 November.

EVENING COMPUTER GROUP



The evening computer class is held in the Uniting Church Hall, 23 William Street, Christies Beach. A gold coin donation is requested to help cover the cost of the hire of the hall. The Group meet monthly on the second Monday night of the month at 7.30pm.

The program consists of a presentation on a specific topic followed by a question and answer session. Bring a tagged laptop from home but if you cannot you will be seated with someone

who has a similar operating system to you.

Contact David Boyce if you are interested.

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome new member:

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Nola Clisby

allBIZ Supplies Pty Ltd

125 O'Sullivan Beach Road

Lonsdale SA 5160

Phone: (08) 8326 2899

Fax: (08) 8382 5532

Email: print@allbizsupplies.biz

Website: www.allbizsupplies.biz

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We are pleased to acknowledge allBIZ Supplies as the printers of our Journal and can thoroughly recommend their excellent service.

VOLUNTEER RESEARCH

Research can be undertaken for anyone seeking information on ancestors in our local area. Please forward requests to Volunteer Research, PO Box 1078, Christies Beach North SA 5165.

EDITOR'S NOTE by Christine Keen



This is the final edition of *Relative Thoughts* for 2019, and it's been a very interesting year with so many contributions from the members. The variety of stories submitted has certainly made compiling the journal each quarter a pleasure.

This edition is a little shorter than normal, due in part to the shorter timeframe for submission of articles.

The January edition will contain all the reports and awards from the AGM in November, as well as some contributions from members. If you have an article to submit, please send it before the end of November.

A huge thank you to all the proof readers for your efforts this year, and to Jeannette Bell for labelling and mailing the journals out.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the members a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Christine Keen

WHEN & WHERE

MEETINGS

The monthly Meetings are held on the 3rd Saturday of each month from January—October at 1.15pm, Uniting Church Hall, 23 William Street, Christies Beach. The Resource Room is open from 12.00pm each meeting day.

Annual General Meeting is held on the 3rd Saturday in November commencing at 1.30pm. Committee elections are held at this time.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Aussie Interest Group—meets at 1.00pm on the 2nd Saturday of each month. For information contact Ros Dunstall.

United Kingdom Interest Group—meets at 7.30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month. For information contact Sharon Green.

Evening Computer Group—meets at 7.30pm on the 2nd Monday of each month. For information contact Dave Boyce.

DNA Evening Group—meets at 7.30pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month. For information contact Sharon Green.

DNA Day Group—meets at 1.00pm on the 1st Monday of each month. For information contact Peter Tuck or Sharon Green.

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Family (2 people) - \$30.00

Single—\$25.00

Membership with Printed Journal:

Family (2 people) - \$35.00

Single—\$30.00

A \$5.00 joining fee applies to all new and lapsed memberships.

Fees should be paid to the Treasurer prior to the November AGM each year.

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