Nibbles: In this issue of Nibbles we're focussing on the "National Census" and we've included a couple of extra pages for your entertainment. As you may know Australia's next National Census will be held on Tuesday 10th August 2021. Census day occurs every five years and everyone (except foreign diplomats and their families) must complete or be included on a census form. Susan, Secretary of the Family History Group, has some interesting facts and historic illustrations to present to you on this theme, and our blast from the past is a collection of interesting census facts from over the years. But first of all the quiz …

Quiz: Try your luck at these questions. The answers are towards the end of this issue (no peeking).
Q.1. In what year was our first national census?
Q.2. What was the population of Australia in that year?
Q.3. On how many occasions has there been a national census (not counting the 2021 census)?
Q.4. Which decade since the first national census, had the greatest percentage population growth?
Q.5. Which Australian state had the smallest percentage population growth during the period 2019-2020?

A Census History - Some facts and figures:

Thanks to the State Library of Victoria, the ABS, and Wikipedia for some of this information.

The first population counts of Australia were known as musters and were made as early as 1788. Members of the community would gather at a specific location to be counted. It helped to match food and other supplies against the people needing them.

The first official census was held in the Crown Colony of New South Wales in November 1828. There were **36,598** people in the Colony. 17,728 were convicts and 20,870 free settlers. 25,248 were Protestants and 11,236 Catholics. 6,287 returns did not record a religion. The indigenous population was not counted. 2.9 million acres were located (ie. earmarked by the British Government for settlement), 231,573 acres were cleared, and 71,523 acres were cultivated. There were 12,479 horses, 262,868 horned cattle and 536,391 sheep. Sydney had 1,409 houses, 176 cottages, 121 skeelings (ie. a lean-to of simple structure), and 67 wooden tenements.

The first Victorian Census took place in 1854 There were **236,798** people in the colony. The largest community was English-born, with 97,943 people, followed by the Irish and Scottish communities. You can read the official census document at the following web address https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL1856-57No14.pdf. Listed in the report is the "County of Anglesey" and you might be forgiven for thinking that it was a misspelling of our own coastal town. But no, the County of Anglesey proclaimed in 1849, was located east of Seymour on both sides of the Goulburn River. It included 36 parishes. Our Anglesea was part of the "County of Polwarth" which had a population of 981 (551 males and 430 females), the majority of whom were engaged in agriculture. The were 181 boys and 191 girls under the age of 15. The Colony of Victoria became a State on January 1st 1901.
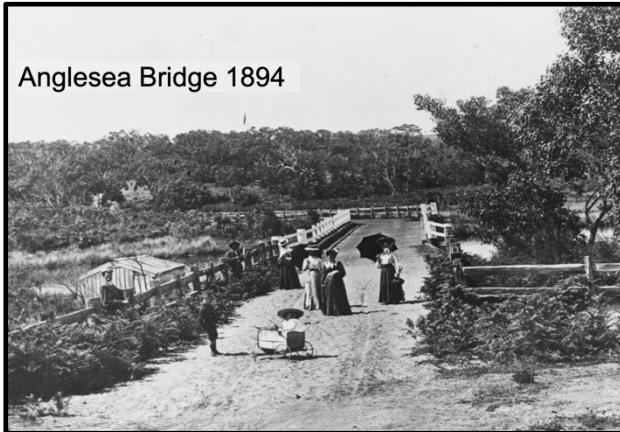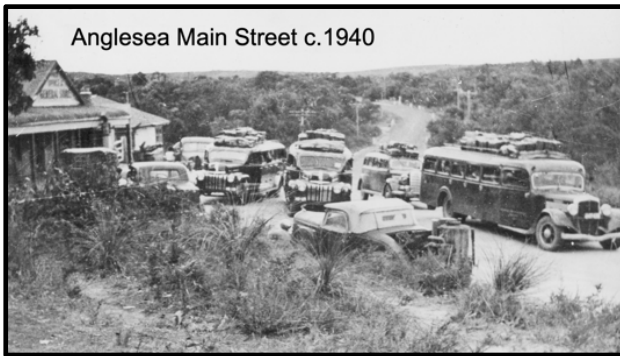
By 1891 the population of Victoria (not yet a State) was **1,140,405** of whom 598,414 were males and 541,991 females. 417,182 identified as Church of England, and 248,591 as Catholic. See Census document at https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL1892-93No28.pdf. The population of the County of Polwarth had grown significantly to **8,361** (4,572 males and 3,789 females). Only four towns or boroughs in the County of Polwarth are listed in the 1891 Census (Birregurra, Krambruk, Lorne and Pirron Yaloak). There is no listing for Anglesea River as it was known then, nor Aireys Inlet or Torquay.

In the 2016 census the population of Victoria was 5.93 million of which **2,545** people were permanent residents of Anglesea. 49.9% were males and 50.1% females. Aborigines and/or Torres Strait islander people made up about 0.4% of the population. The median age of people in Anglesea was 51 years. There were 2,929 dwellings of which 1,095 were occupied private dwellings. The average household size per dwelling was 2.17, a fall of 0.05 from 2011, roughly matching the regional trend for Victoria over the period. The average number of children per family for those with children was 1.8. The median weekly household income was $1,284 and the median monthly mortgage repayments were $1,624. Median weekly rent was $316. The average number of motor vehicles per dwelling was 1.8. An excellent summary of the 2016 census can be found at: https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20045

By 2020 the estimated population of Anglesea had grown to 2,867, a 16% increase in the decade. It will be interesting to see what changes are highlighted in the 2021 census. The last census is reputed to have cost around $300 million.

Then and Now: Early censuses were looking at an Anglesea very different from the one we see today.

Anglesea Main Street c.1940

Anglesea Main Street 2020

Anglesea Bridge 1894

Anglesea Bridge 2020

What did we learn from the last census?

Well if you have a computer and access to the internet, you might like to visit these URLs. In fact, the internet is full of interesting census stories. It'll give you something to talk about other than COVID at your next social get-together.

For example, if you want a description of the typical Australian, click on this web address.
https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/2016+Census+National

If you like your information in a graphical or tabular form, go to this web address
https://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/CensusOutput/copsub2016.nsf/All%20docs%20by%20catNo/Data-in-pictures/$FILE/australiaER.html

If you want to find out seven interesting things we learned from the last census, visit this web site
https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/jun/28/seven-interesting-things-we-learned-from-the-australian-census

Census records for family historians (Susan Clarke)

The State Library of Victoria provides an excellent research guide on Early Australian census records:
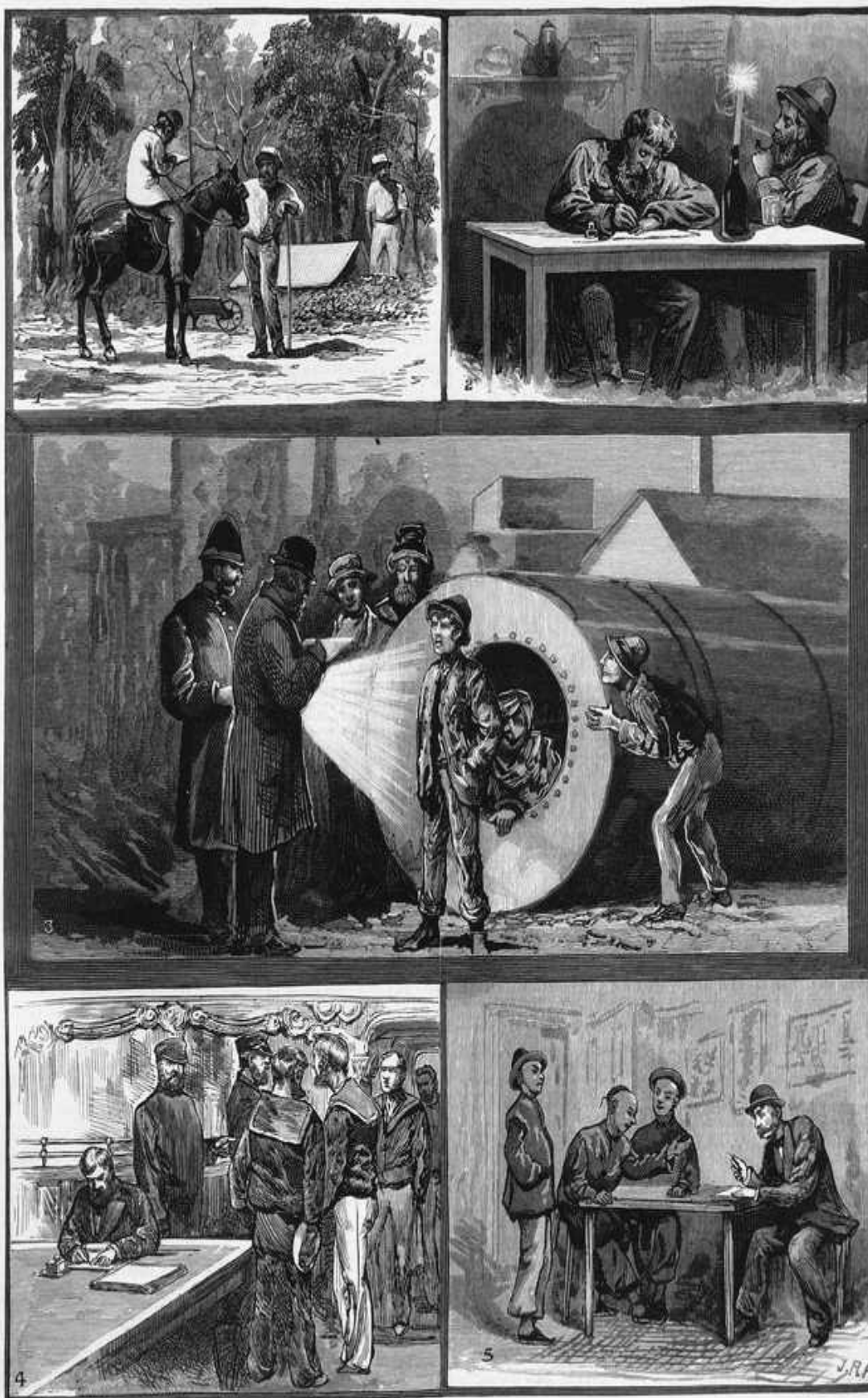https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/c.php?g=245255&p=1633123

The guide explains how to find and use information collected in censuses from 1788 to 1901, including records of people, and records of population statistics. It also includes tips on finding more census data from 1901 to today, and information about the history of censuses in Australia. The guide starts by explaining the difference between a census and a muster: musters involved all members of the community gathering at specified locations to be counted, and were made as early as 1788.

As regards records of people, the guide states that using census records you can answer questions like:

- My ancestor farmed in Victoria in 1852 – how many head of livestock did he own?
- My ancestor lived in New South Wales in 1828 – in what kind of house did he live?
- My ancestor migrated to Tasmania in the 1850s – where did she settle?
- In 1806, how many children did my female convict ancestor have?
- My ancestor lived in Moonee Ponds, Victoria in 1841 – who else lived in the area?

As regards the history of censuses in Australia, the Australian Bureau of Statistics states: "The first census in Australia as we now know them was held in New South Wales in November 1828. Each of the colonies conducted its own censuses until 1886. On 3 April 1881, the first simultaneous census of the British Empire covering the United Kingdom, India and the Crown Settlements (including Australia) was taken. This census produced the first set of colony population figures for the same day."

The SLV guide includes detailed information on how to access census records for each state and territory. For example, the 1841 New South Wales census is online on the Ancestry Library Edition database (available at Geelong Regional Libraries). Indexed, digitised copies of householders' returns from the 1841 census of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales. Includes names (heads of households only).

Source: Ashton, J. R. (1881). Taking the census. [picture]. Melbourne: Alfred May and Alfred Martin Ebsworth. State Library of Victoria

What's coming up: Please note the change of speaker and topic for the August SCFHG meeting.

The photo shows Karl Jacklin thanking Cheryl Timbury and Phillip Locke on behalf of the group
[photo: Marilyn Wendt]

Answers to the Quiz: **Q.1** 1911 **Q.2** 4.5 million **Q.3** 17 **Q.4** Australia during the 1950s had a population growth of 25.09% however the period 2000 to 2010 had the greatest population growth in absolute terms of 3.2 million (16.62%). I'm in my late 70s and I often ask my similarly aged friends which decade they've enjoyed the most. Surprising how many say the nineteen-fifties. **Q.5** Victoria with 0.7%. It also had the smallest population growth in absolute terms of approximately 700, although surprisingly Melbourne according to the ABS, was estimated to have had the largest population growth of the major cities. An interesting conundrum.

Population Jokes: You'd be amazed at how many population jokes there are on the internet.
- Which country's capital has the fastest growing population? Answer: Ireland, it's Dublin every year.
- I didn't think I'd ever be turned on by population statistics, then I came to my census.
- Did you know that the cattle population is also being affected by the pandemic. It's called cowronavirus.
- If the human population held hands around the equator - a significant proportion of them would drown.
- I recently read that 70% of the world's population are unintelligent. Thank goodness I'm part of the other 40%.