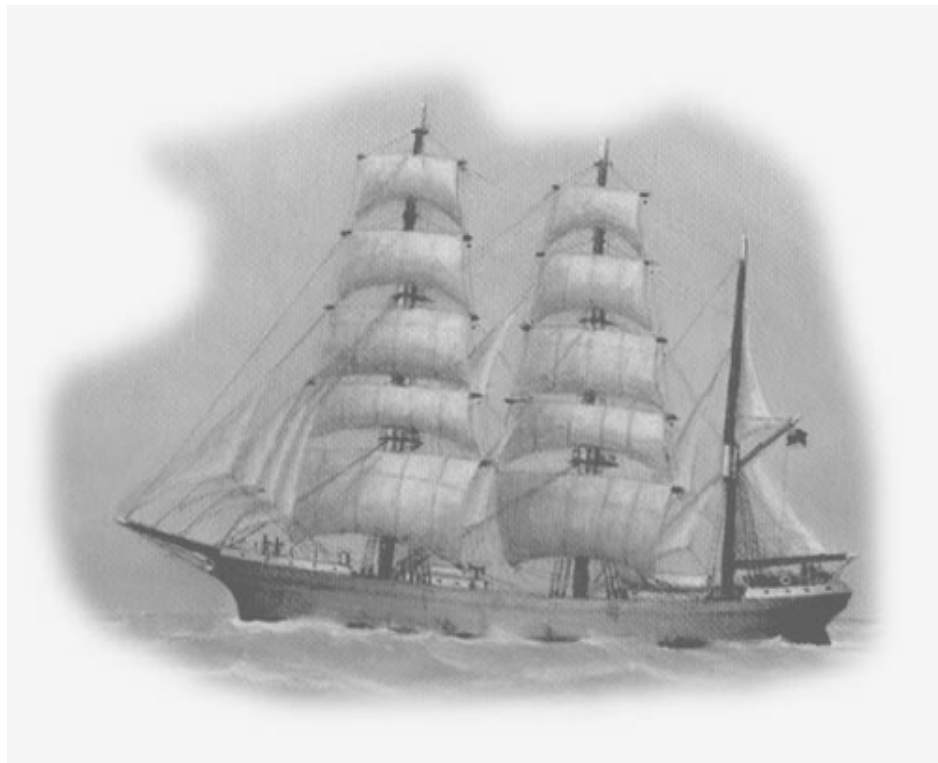


# The Surf Coast Family History Group

Vol. 52 Winter June 2014 Edition

(Sub group of the Anglesea and District Historical Society Inc.)

## Inverlochy Log



In this issue....

- Members story
- What's New in Family History
- First Australian to Die in WW1

Quarterly Journal of The Surf Coast Family History Group

Proudly supported by

Anglesea & District  
**Community Bank<sup>®</sup> Branch**

  
**Bendigo Bank**

## The Surf Coast Family History Group

c/o P. O. Box 98 Anglesea 3230

The Society is housed in the Anglesea Historical Society Museum

McMillan Street Anglesea 3230

Library and Research Facilities

Tuesday 10.30am - 1.00pm

Wednesday by appointment

Saturday 10.30am - 1.00pm

Meetings held on

The 2nd Thursday of the month

commencing at 10am at the

Historical Society Museum

McMillan Street Anglesea 3230

Visitors Welcome

Enquiries:

Pat Hughes email [pathugs@bigpond.com](mailto:pathugs@bigpond.com)

Peter Matthews Phone 5263 1686

Meeting: 12 Jun 2014

**Pam Jennings:**

"History of Mt. Moriac"

Meeting: 10 Jul 2014 11:00am

Combined meeting with the Historical Society

**Stewart McConachy:**

"Finding Your Family Worldwide"

This will be followed by our Winter Feast Lunch.

\$5. Please note the later starting

time for this meeting.

Meeting: 14 Aug 2014

**Mick Robinson:**

"The Geelong Heritage Centre"

**We always aim to have  
Interesting guest speakers**

**to talk on all matters of research**

**Please submit topics of interest**

-----

**Newsletter by email**

**Please forward your address if interested**

### Committee Members 2013 - 2014

Chairperson

Vice Chairperson

Secretary

Treasurer

Librarian

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Pat Hughes: [pathugs@bigpond.com](mailto:pathugs@bigpond.com)

Peter Matthews: [matthews@melbpc.org.au](mailto:matthews@melbpc.org.au)

Kathryn Feather: [etame@ozemail.com.au](mailto:etame@ozemail.com.au)

Thelma Western [thelwestern@gmail.com](mailto:thelwestern@gmail.com)

Rose Johnson: [justrose3226@hotmail.com](mailto:justrose3226@hotmail.com)

Chris Guerow [chrisguerow@gmail.com](mailto:chrisguerow@gmail.com)

John Morrison: [rj@rjmorrison.com.au](mailto:rj@rjmorrison.com.au)

Gwen Morgan: 0352 631865

The Anglesea Family History Group does not hold itself responsible for the accuracy of the statements or opinions expressed by authors of articles published in this magazine



## Playing Musical Chairs with Great, Great Grandfather



Thomas Thompson Laing.

'Guess what your great, great grandfather had as an occupation?' I said to my husband who was not overly enthralled with my interest in the past. Probably fearing the worst he replied,

'I don't know why you go looking back into the past; you should stick to the present.' Ignoring him, I replied 'He is named on this death certificate as a musician.'

Forgetting his opinion of the past, he was chuffed he had someone to whom he could relate. His response was to answer. 'So that's where I get my musical talent!' It was true; there was this talent in the family.

Once I knew of his occupation as a musician, later on clarified as a bandmaster, my interest in great, great grandfather Thomas was fully aroused. In the interests of the musical background, I likened the search to a game of musical chairs and each time I had success in finding information I felt I'd gained a chair in the game. I had my first discovery in the game of musical chairs, indicated by a chair.

Thomas's surname was said to be Thompson Laing. His death certificate said he was born in London in 1830, with a father also Thomas Thompson Laing and mother Rosannah. No trace of this birth under the name of Laing can be found. Although no proof can be found of his entry to Australia, this certificate secures a second chair. A ground-breaking discovery which could be celebrated by a drum roll and the third chair scored was found by researcher, Barry Baldwin in Gulgong. An article found in TROVE, in the Queanbeyan Age – 12th June, 1878 related where Thomas Thompson Laing had been in the years after his birth.

In listing the new bandmaster's accomplishments it mentions Thomas had been in the 58th Regiment's band in Auckland, New Zealand where the 58th Regiment had been sent as part of the backup for the Maori Wars (1845 – 1858). No trace of Thomas under the name Laing can be found. At one time each regiment in the British Army maintained its own military band. The custom, at this time, was for regiments to hire civilian bandmasters for their bands. This means if Thomas was hired as a civilian by the regiment, a common practice, he would not be on army records.

He could have joined the regiment at any time between the dates 1845 and 1858. Similarly he could have left at any time between 1845 and 1858 when the regiment was disbanded. It would open a Pandora's Box to reveal there is a record for Thomas Thompson. Regimental Number 2046. A whole new line of investigation with the surname Thompson would be in the offing. This is the first time the possibility of Thompson as a surname has risen. He could have been known by the name from birth. This would explain why no record of his birth could be found. Either way, the fact he was in 58th Regiment, is worthy of a chair

The fact the 58th regiment with Thomas was sent to New Zealand was a real eye-opener for me. Like most Australians, I thought the first connection in a military way with New Zealand was as an ANZAC. Jeff Hopkins – Weise recounts the war in detail and says in his book 'Blood Brothers: the ANZAC Genesis' the "impact of this ANZAC legend" was responsible for a discounting of the colonial experience of wars. They had participated, not in a skirmish, but a serious war. He further reports as early as 1834 there were reports of hostilities towards the shipping fraternity such as the whaler Harriet. Twelve shipwrecked sailors were murdered by 'these cannibals.' Tension over disputed land purchases combined with settler pressure for land erupted in war.

Of course Thomas's involvement would have to have ceased, of necessity, when the 58th Regiment was discharged in 1858. He had participated in a 'real war' which had not featured in military histories as important.

Thomas Thompson Laing's marriage was noted as being in Melbourne, Victoria to Elizabeth Dawe who was born in Cornwall. Oops, according to Elizabeth, make that Devonshire. She says the marriage occurred on 8th February, 1859 in Ballarat. By the time of her daughter Rosannah's birth in 1800, she notes the death of another daughter Elizabeth's name is Dawe, Daws and even Law depending to which certificate you refer. When she came to Australia is unclear. What is clear is these facts have missing and conflicting information; Elizabeth herself is an enigma.

Cont...

She will not be of help in untangling her husband's mystery. I had discovered when three of Elizabeth and Thomas's children were born - Thomas b.1876 known as Young Tom, Robert b.1878 and Rosannah b.1800. They had all been born in Queanbeyan, New South Wales. This means Thomas would have been 46 years old with the birth of his first son. This discovery certainly merited another chair.

Where was Thomas between the years of his marriage in 1859 and the birth of his children in 1870's? Unexplained disappearances can have a variety of solutions, not all of them good. Name changing could cover up the traces of a dubious past. One more positive solution is found in a magazine article which mentions Thomas's father migrated to Australia in 1865 and his father was one of the early bandmasters in Parramatta in 1870. Perhaps in 1865, after marrying in Victoria, Thomas went to Parramatta to assist his father as bandmaster. His own son, young Tom, was to do this 'apprenticeship' when Thomas ended up in Mudgee. Up until then he seems to have led a charmed life surviving the Maori War without injury. An injury could have meant the end of his musical career and settling with his wife and children in Gulgong as their bandmaster. But the dirge was approaching. A TROVE report in the Sydney Herald on 2nd January, 1886 Thomas was in Gulgong, and lately the bandmaster of Mudgee. A chair is gained!

It was here Thomas lamented his son Robert's death. Tragedy struck, in the form of a drowning accident in a dam near the house in his new town of Gulgong. Robert was seven years old. Robert's sister, five years old, Rosannah raised the alarm, but it was too late. Soon she would be faced with another death within the family. It was her father Thomas, who died, in the following year, on 18th April, 1887, no doubt, some would say, of a broken heart.

He had left a fine musical legacy behind him; both in his descendants and the people he taught. He had fitted a lot into his comparatively short fifty seven years. His contribution was great to bandmasters and musicians and especially within his immediate family who had carried on the bandmaster tradition for future generations.

The death certificate says cause of death was Bright's disease (a degenerative kidney disease). Thomas Thompson Laing is buried in the same grave as his son in Gulgong. As a former soldier the sounds of the last post, played by his own band would have echoed over their resting place.

Finally, a family member had found an article in the 'The Australian Bandsman' dated September 1956 titled 'Three Generations of Bandmasters.' It covered the history of the family and mentions Thomas Thompson Laing's father, Lieutenant Thomas Thompson Laing. He was the first, of three, to bear the name of Thomas Thompson Laing (a genealogist nightmare). The Lieutenant had an even more distinguished career than his son as a bandmaster in England and Australia. The article stated the Lieutenant 'was considered at that period, as the greatest clarinet player in the British Isles and was also a brilliant pianist.'

Cont.....



Gulgong Band 1890  
(date possibly incorrect).  
Leader at left of photo has strong  
resemblance to my husband.  
Enhanced - original available.

Cont.....



This was a ground breaking discovery, surely be accompanied by the clash of cymbals and a new chair. Thomas Thompson Laing, who surely inherited some of his father's musical talent, has led me on a merry dance, as I have whirled and twirled round and around, sometimes gaining the safety of a chair, but always with answers just out of reach. In arriving at the end of Thomas's life have I finally gained the last chair in the game? I have an outline of Thomas's life. This will satisfy a family tree, but there are many unanswered questions. Would you like to join in the game? The only requirement you need is to find some information about the topic. Then you can add your chair to the circle. Please contact me. Meanwhile my search and the game continue to step forward, a work in progress!

© Marie Dallman <mariejdallman@hotmail.com>

### **Museum renamed to History House**

At a combined meeting of the Historical Society and our Family History Group it was decided that we would rename the museum to "History House" to better reflect our combined activities taking place there.

### **We have moved back into History House**

The repainting of History House by the Shire is now complete, we have had it recarpeted, and have moved back in. All computers are operational again, including a new touch-screen computer installed by Broadband for Seniors.

## **What's New in Family History?**

Armagh Ancestry have completed the computerization of new Presbyterian Church baptisms, marriages and deaths for county Armagh.

These have been added to the online research database and are available to research.

The new records added are for the following Churches; Ahorey Presbyterian (Baptisms 1832-1843) Armagh 2nd Presbyterian (Baptisms 1825-1864) Armagh 3rd Presbyterian (Baptisms 1837-1864) Clare Presbyterian (Baptisms 1824-1837 + Marriages 1828) Creggan Presbyterian (Baptisms 1835-1871 + Marriages 1837-1844 + Deaths 1860-1926) Eglisk Presbyterian (Baptisms 1854-1866 + Deaths 1858-1893) Portadown 1st Presbyterian (Marriages 1838-1859) Lislooney Presbyterian (Baptisms 1835-1865) Loughgall (Cloveneden) Presbyterian (Baptisms 1840-1872) Middletown Presbyterian (Baptisms 1829-1873) Richhill Presbyterian (Baptisms 1854-1869) Tandragee Presbyterian (Baptisms 1835-1865 + Marriages 1835-1845) Ballenon Reformed Presbyterian (Baptisms 1810-1877 + Marriages 1859 + Deaths 1849-1889). Armagh Ancestry will continue to computerize the remaining Church records which have not as yet been computerized. We hope to add more new records in the coming months and these will include records from the Church of Ireland (Anglican), Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist and Society of Friends (Quaker).

Please find a list of all Armagh records that are currently online at Armagh Genealogy Sources List.

Irish Family History Foundation

FRENCH authorities believe they have identified the first Australian to have died during World War I as they prepare to honour the sacrifice made by the then “young nation” from the other side of the world.

The Australian War Memorial has long listed the first Australian fatalities of the Great War as being sailors from the Australian Navy and Military Expeditionary Force during the landing on German New Guinea in September 1914.

But officials in France tasked with WWI commemorations say the first Australian to die in the Great War was Sydney man Lieutenant William Malcolm Chisholm who died some weeks

earlier in the Battle of Le Cateau – the first clash of Allied soldiers on French soil.

The finding of his name and grave in a civilian cemetery came after researching the battle and found a street in the northern French town of Ligny en Cambresis named “Chisholm” which piqued their interest. They found it was named after the family including the soldier’s mother Emma Isabel Chisholm Mitchell who died in Sydney in 1928 but whose ashes were reinterred by her husband, respected Macquarie Street doctor William Chisholm, so she could rest next to their son.

“We are pretty sure this is now the first Australia to die in World War I, certainly the first to die in the campaign here in France,” said Delphine Bartier from France’s northern district tasked with WWI commemoration promotion. “We were quite excited when we put it altogether and realised he was possibly the first.

We were interested in the Le Cateau battle of 1914 and we popped into a small cemetery and realised this was the first battle of the war that an Australian took part we thought he must be the first Australian to die in the Great War. So for us it was exciting to find that some Australians were here in France before 1916.”

**Forever young ...**

**Lt William Chisholm**

**is buried in France.**

**Source: News Corp Australia**

