

# ON TRACK JUNE 97 NO. 90

#### OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1996-1997

PRESIDENT: VICE-PRESIDENT: SECRETARY: TREASURER: FUND RAISING: LIBRARIAN: LIBRARY ASSISTANTS:

PUBLICITY: HOSTESS: RESEARCH: CEMETERY RECORDS SCHOOL RECORDS: NEWSLETTER: SPECIAL PROJECTS: SEMINAR CO-ORINATORS

Elaine Johnston vacant Pam Pratt Don Tylee Leonie Robinson vacant Jenny Draper Lori O'Connor vacant vacant Claire Wood Florence Butcher Anne Pawley Claire Wood vacant vacant

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Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month, except December, at the Meeting Room, entrance at the rear of the Moe Library, Kirk St, Moe. Our Library will open at 7:00 pm, with meetings starting at approxiamately 7:30pm.

Fees 96/97 : Membership Single \$16; Family \$22 Library \$2:00 per visit for non-members

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There is a research fee of \$10 plus SAE for any enquiries requiring research, with additional charges for large amounts of photocopying and\or postage. Enquires should be clear and concise.

Please direct all enquiries to The Secretary, PO Box 767, Morwell, 3840, and mark the envelope "Research Query".

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Articles for this newsletter are accepted in good faith and, while every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the editor takes no responsibility for submitted items.

## SHOCKING SUICIDE AT GEELONG

This was a heading in the Ballarat newspaper "The Star" on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 1862. It signalled the end of a short but rewarding life in Victoria for one John Biggs. What motivated his suicide is unknown for sure although the verdict from the inquest was that the deceased "whilst in a state of temporary insanity induced by drinking to excess did with a knife ... on his own throat ... inflict such as to cause the death of him".

John was born in St Andrews Scotland c. 1828, son of shoemaker William Begg and Mary Elder. On 10<sup>th</sup> December 1854, John Biggs (sailor) married Elizabeth Potter in Collingwood Victoria. Elizabeth was born in 1831 in Edinburgh and arrived in Melbourne in September 1854 with her uncle and family. She too was to have a less than perfect life.

The happy couple must have shifted to Ballarat soon after their marriage as they registered five children there between 1855 and 1861: John Robert, Mary, William and Elizabeth, However, soon after the birth of their last child. Elizabeth was admitted to the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum suffering from mania and delusions, but not tending to violence. Evidence indicates that she received little support from her family, and she died in the Ararat Lunatic Asylum in 1899. having spent about 40 years in asylums.

Evidence given at the inquest and reported in "The Geelong Advertiser" indicates that the family had lived in a tent on the Ballarat goldfields for several years. As a miner, John must have been fairly successful because at the time of his death, he owned land and a house, and a share in the Cosmopolitan mine.

Soon after his wife was placed in the asylum. John left the children in the care of his house keeper. He also started living with his servant Margaret Malone as "man and wife". When she became pregnant, she moved to a boarding house in Chilwell, Geelong, which was where John committed suicide after first attempting to murder Margaret. Margaret survived to register the birth of a girl child in 1862 and although the father is not named, it seems John got some recognition as the child was named Jane Biggs Malone.

Researchers should note that the newspapers of Geelong and Ballarat, with their reports on both the suicide and inquest, gave much more detail the inquest records. The than Geelong newspapers gave a fairly straight forward report of the happenings in their town. However, the Ballarat Star seemed to delight in giving all the gossip as well. lt described John as "formerly mate of a ship from which he is said to have absconded", and resident of Ballarat for several years, although he had been to the New Zealand gold rushes several times. As such, the Star was also more colorful with its comments. such as describing the owner of the boarding house as "very deaf and apparently very stupid and the coroner had some difficulty in eliciting evidence"

Inquiries to Don Tylee

## NET ADDRESSES

http://www.inlink.com/~nomi/vitalrec/ United States Vital Records Information. This has essential up-to-date information about the state and county vital records offices in the U.S., including fees, addresses, phone numbers, and records available at each office. The site also includes Related Links (leading to other locality and vital records information), a Guidelines page (with tips on ordering vital records), carefully chosen Genealogy Links, as well as a where you can leave comments and suggestions.br

http://www.slnsw.gov.au/plb/ml/mlhome.htm Mitchell Library Bookmark SHIPS. This page, which is compiled by the Staff at the Mitchell Library (Sydney's version of the La Trobe Library), has links to the Australian National Shipwreck database, First Fleet and information about individual ships. 1

http://springboard.telstra.com.au/direct/white.htm A Telstra page with links to International, Telephone books and Email addresses. (Usefully, the Telstra page does show whether the link will be in English)

http://www.cohsoft.com.au/afhc/

Australian Family History Compendium Contains information on a wide variety of categories related to genealogy, with a strong emphasis on Australian material

http://www.asap.unimclb.cdu.au/asa/

Directory of Archives in Australia. Contains links to archival/local council/museum/historical society organisations in Australia which contain address details, access conditions, major holdings, acquisition focus, hours and facilities.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/department/hi/roberts/convict2.htm

The Wellington Valley Convict Station, 1823-31. Contains a brief history and an extract from a database in progress of 100 convicts by name. The details given include the convict's place of origin, trade, age at time of conviction, details of conviction, and the name of the ship they were transported on

http://www.pcug.org.au/~mpahlow/welcome.html

Genealogy in Australia. Contains links to genealogy help guides, libraries and archives, Australian genealogy societies, addresses

http://www.kst.dit.ic/nat-arch/scarch01.html/ National Archives of Ireland -Transportation Records. Contains an online index to records relating to transportation to Australia covering the period 1788 to 1868. Results of searches contain details such as the name, age, crime, sentence, and ship the convict was sent out on

Genealogists never die - they LIVE in cemeteries!

http://www.fgsorg/~fgs/ Federation of Genealogical Societies. Founded in 1976, the society has three major purposes: serving the needs of its member societies, providing products and services needed by member societies, and marshaling the resources of its member organizations. These purposes are accomplished through an annual conference, a periodical called the FGS Forum. numerous publications, and FGS sponsored projects

http://www.ismi.net/lcmigw/1895.htm 1895 Atlas Title Page How do you find out where your ancestor came from if the town can't be found on a modern map? What was the town like at the turn of the century? Use a gazetteer! including this list of place names being made available on the Web. You can learn that Pearson's Corner, Delaware was in Kent County, and had a population of 43 in 1895. And that Gold Hill, Nevada (Storey County) had a post office and railroad at that time. As part of the Livingston County, Michigan, site, Pamela Rietsch is xtracting towns from an 1895 atlas, with 19 states completed so far.

http://icg.harvard.edu/census/ Historical Demographic, Economic and Social Data of the US (March 1997) This interactive site at Harvard provides a easy new way for genealogists to obtain demographic census data. You will be able to get information like the following: In 1820, Delaware had the highest percentage of free colored population (over 53 percent). In 1860, there were 24 Lutheran Churches in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, out of a total of 220 churches. In 1830, Hamilton County had more foreigners than any other county in Ohio. The data at this site was developed by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/collections/civil-war-women.html Civil War Women Collection, and see the actual bills of sale and other documents involving slaves in the http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/slavery/ Slave Voices exhibit.<br>

http://imabbs.army.mil/cmh-pg/ Center of Military History (January 1997) This site provides information about the historical records of the U.S. Army. Of special interest to genealogists is the "Mcdal of Honor" page, which gives the complete citation for all 3,401 Medal recipients from the Civil War to the present. You will also find a "Master Index of Army Records" (telling where to get records for various periods), & Lineages of the Units of the Continental Army, plus searchable Unit History Bibliographics and American Civil War Biographical Bibliographics.

## http://www-mugc.cc.monash.cdu.au/~mcrcdith/gipps\_studies/

Centre for Gippsland Studies. Well worth a look if you're into Gippsland history. I heard a whisper that Gippsdoc and the Centres Index to photographs will be accessible through the Internet sometime in the future.

Don't be a fraid, cemetery ghosts are only genealogists with lanterns.

This clipping was supplied by Leonie Robinson from the Gippsland Farmer's Journal. Unfortunately the clipping was undated, but I believe it was part of a series published in the May-June 1887. There was a similar series published around the same time in one of the Morwell papers (some of these have been reprinted in the Morwell Historical Society News in recent years)

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## no. 11.

## "UP THE NARRACAN

Will Moe ever be a busy commercial centre! Appearances did no point to that conclusion as I walked its dreary streets one warm March morning, and noted its outward and visible signs. The little township looked as if the only throb of life it possessed was galvanised into it by the periodic visits of the railway trains, between which intervals it lapses into a dreary state of helpless lethargy, to be awakened only again and again by the snort-and-puff of the locomotives. What a hungry, God-forsaken waste of country stretches around! The soil is so poor that grass will not grow, and the stunted and gnarled trees appear as if they had twisted themselves into endless shapes in trying to wriggle out a precarious living amidst the coarse scrub, which environs everything up to the edge of the roadways. In the immediate rear the Grange Hills arise jagged and gloomy, with their black coat of virgin bush, and the only picturesque caste which relieves the view is to the northward, where the long slope to the Moe is brought up by the Tanjil range, backed up by the broad shoulders of huge Baw Baw, which stood out boldly in the dim gossamer of a morning haze.

But talk to Host Attwood, and he is complacent with the positive knowledge that "the wealth is underneath, sir." "You may depend upon it," he adds with the light of faith beaming in his eye, and lighting up his ruddy countenance,"you may depend upon it, there is coal, and gold too, under our very feet, and if you have any coal shares (he adds, in a confidential side glance) take my advice and stick to them." (By way of free advertisement.

I might interject that our worthy boniface is secretary of a coal project somewhere up Boolarra way, and has shares to dispose of if the reader should desire to invest.) To resume, - the assurance of Mr Attwood was somewhat consoling, and helped the son to that the chill which the mere look of the place had entrusted upon my spirits, and made one wishful to be on his way up the Narracan.

At length the train comes in, and the Rip Van Winkles turn out of the station houses, the

hotels and the stores, for transportation to the "Four-Mile Camp." It is an old adage, and a proper one, that we "should not look gifthorses in the mouth," -but, zounds what a train! though the novelty of riding upon it is a charm that helps drive away the Moe blues. The contractor's engine, it transpired, comes down the branch now in the course of construction, to take the mails, paper, and provisions up the valley, for the intellectual and physical refreshment of the workers and dwellers in this opening part of our local world. By the kindness of Mr. Robb, the general public arc permitted the free use of this mode of conveyance, if they choose to take the accommodation as they find it. I take it as I find it, and mentally pronounce it jolly. The tender of the locomotive is full - There is the engine driver's wife returning from marketing, and up and down men are squatted on the fuel reading the morning's news or enjoying the weed. I take my stand in a gang wagon, the low sides of which demand vigilant attention lest a sudden jolt should pitch one to terra firma; several weather stained youths on their way to seek work at the camps, rest upon their swags, and sundry navvies occupy two or three boxes of goods. Otherwise, there was no sitting accommodation except the floor, but as that was carpeted with a thick layer of clay and pitch, the latter of which was oozing beneath the warmth of the sun's rays, the only rest was to be found on a set of rough logs which occupied two other trollies, and brought up the rear. Enthroned upon one of these I while away the time by again drinking in the beauties of Moe, and note the bright brilliance of its really nice Shire Hall and magistrate's court. Just beyond amidst a bower of trees, my cagle eye detects a little church going up, belonging to that everaggressive body, the Wesleyans, as I afterwards learn, then there is the police station, which looks as if the constable in charge has not much more to do than to groom his horse and draw his pay, next is a clean-looking coffee palace, with an owner wishful to clear out; coming on, Attwood's Hotel holds the premier position, lower down there is a branch, which would apparently not be worth the risk of an attempt

to "stick up," -then there was a store which had evidently been got together in odd sections, - a house or two afforded illustration of the foolishness of commencing to build without counting the cost, for which they were left solitary and unfinished, - crossing the line stood another business place, edging out to the Tanjil, as if it would fly thither, had it the ability, - one of Cobbs' scarlet coaches leaned with its nose Walhalla-wards, but no sign of life about it or the hotel which it adorned, - a shoemaker declaring his avocation with a large Wellington, but that is the only boot to be observed, for none graced the window, - the facade of the Mechanics' was illustrated with a dilapidated Marian Willis placard (I mean the poster was dilapidated, not the actress), then there was a double-gabled store, which had anything but a gay air, - in and amongst the scrub were a few huts, whose curls of blue smoke matched the ether above, - and so taking the railway station as the centre and filling in the background with stumpy desolate bush, you have a pretty complete panorama of Moc. I had just finished the cycle of my survey, and was building up an airy sketch of what the township might be in years hence as the coal and gold it COVERS ......

We take up a couple of plate-layers, who have struck their tent and come abroad with all their belongings- tools, cooking utensils, bedding, a veritable nondescript assortment, in which the ornamental and uscless have no place. A few chains more twisting and turning, and we halt again at a sharp bend at the foot of a precipitous hill, where Mr. and Mrs. Driver alight and dive beneath a puny tent which stands by the side of the fence; This, I am given to understand is their home, and the pair have gone into dinner, leaving their passengers to discuss anything thought of while they discuss their meal> The contractor's foreman alights from the engine, walks into the shade of the bush, lolls across the shade of a giant eucalypti, and is soon deep in the pages of his newspaper, oblivious to snakes or aught else. I soon find that my bibulous friend has kindred spirits not far off, for they exchange various slangy comments, and two of them fling their legs across the side of the wagon, produce a lump of dry bread from the mysterious recesses of some pocket, and as hey force down the repast, mumble out sundry

oaths that they have nothing better. From their maudlin condition they must have spent more than morning than would have furnished them than would have furnished them good meals for a week, and yet they cursed anything but there own folly. There would seem to be exponents hereabouts of the truth of the assertion I have heard in the old country- that "some men work for their money like horses, and spend it like asses." While the driver is despatching his meal, my neighbour strikes up a conversation and declares that the country is going to the dogs because a navvy can now only get his 7s. a day, he want to know with a growl what becomes of—

Eight hours work, eight hour play Eight hours rest and eight bob a day He has been all about Queensland and New South Wales, engaged on various lines, and has a brother in a good position on the Victoria Railways; but as for himself he is a roving waif, a child of dissipation, his money goes as fast as he gets it, doing him more harm than good, and so he lives on - a type, alas, of too many of these hard-working, good-hearted reckless sons of toll.

While I feasted on the novelty of the scene and the beauty of the surroundings -dense wood, tangled brake, mingled tints of luxuriant vegetation, rugged hills sharply defined against a cloudless sky, the air glowing with sunshine and vocal with mingled chatter of gay parrots and crested cockatoos, amidst it all the works of man forging ahead in the quest of hidden treasure and national wealth, -while I was feasting my soul thus, the driver had well lined his stomach with beefsteak and onions, so he condescends to take us in hand again; the stoker removes the damper from the chimney, piles logs on the fire, blows the whistle and we glide away. The route is still sinuous, and upwards, and we continually cross the Narracan Creek, to and fro, as it dodges beneath the track like the wriggling of a serpent. I was not sorry when I reached the terminus at the Four-Mile, for the sparks from the engine were not only giving an unplea.sant side to the adventure, but were actually becoming dangerous, and one man actually found himself on fire, a wood ember having lodged on his trouser leg, and burnt such a hole down the side, that it is a certain pract for the clothier.

## LAST MEETING

#### submitted by Elaine J.

At the May monthly meeting, members were asked to bring "something old". Presentation silver was very elaborate and valuable by today's standards. Old letters, and copies of same, had much detail for the family historian. An Army pay-book revealed that 9 months after every leave, there was a new baby in that family. Family photographs showed fashions of the day and size of families. Elaborate inscriptions a bible dated 1899, indicated its value to the original owner.

A collection of medals was in itself history in a nutshell. A tiny one was issued for the wedding of Alexandra and Edward, who became Edward VII of Britain.

A scimitar from India was the most dangerous contribution. An early mass produced typewriter dated 1894 was the only tool on display.

From under somebody's house, newspapers dated 1928 (The Sun and The Argus) provided popular reading for all. The Gippsland Mail of 1952 was even more popular for those who had lived in Latrobe Valley in that time. Early records of the Walhalla Lodge were eagerly perused as well.

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The introduction to an autobiography by Percy McQuilton reads :

" I write these notes about things that I remember in my life, in the belief that if I don't some grandchild or great-grandchild may say, at some time in the future, why the hell didn't the lazy old bugger leave up some sort of a history from the family."

from 'The Boy from Sailor Bills'' by Percy McQuilten. Brighton East : Histec Publications, 1993 - the story of his childhood and youth at the Ten Mile, available through your local public Library submitted by Dawn C.

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## GIPPSLAND HISTORY CONFERENCE

No place like home : Gippsland History and Housing - Monash University, Gippsland Campus on Saturday 11th October. This conference will focus on the history of housing in Gippsland. Topics covered will be researching and writing the history of a house, renovation experiences, building materials, house biographies, Yallourn houses and changing interiors. Contact Meredith Fletcher, Centre for Gippsland Studies ph 03) 5122 6356 (Mon-Wed).

The latest edition of the Gippsland Heritage Journal (no. 21) includes articles covering Moe in the 1950s; Brown Coal Mine School, 1918-1939; building materials around the Gippsland Lakes; plus lots more. Interesting regular items to look out for are "Abstracts from Historical Society Journals", Help Needed, Book Notes; and of course, the marvellous photographs, illustrations which are a feature of each issue.



IN Order to prevent the false Reports maliciously circulated, setting forth that the Poor in the Work-House are STARVING, the following is a true Statement of the Provision allowed to Ninety Four Paupers, Thirty-Five and upwards of whom are Children under Ten years of age.

The Breakfasts are Rice-Milk and Milk-Porridge, alternately; the first is made with 32 pints of Milk, the same quantity of Water, 14 pounds of Rice, and one pound and half of Treakle, well seasoned. The Milk-Porridge consists of 32 pints of Milk, the same quantity of Water, seven pints of Oatmeal, and 20 pounds of Bread boiled together and seasoned with Salt, Pepper, &c.

The Dinners on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, are 40 pounds of Meat, and 84 pounds of Potatoes; the Broth of which is boiled on the same nights for Supper, with 36 pounds and a quarter of Bread, two pints of Oatmeal, with Onions, Salt, and Pepper.

On the other Four days, 24 pounds of Meat is cut in pieces and boiled with 30 pounds of Pease, made into Soup with Onions, &c. The Suppers on each of these nights are 36 pounds and a quarter of Bread, nine pounds and a quarter of Cheese, with good Table Beer.

Eight Paupers who do hard work, have an allowance of a quarter of a pound of Bread each, with Cheese and Beer, every working day at four o'clock; and Washer-Women have the same at eleven.

In order that the Poor may receive their due Portion of Diet, the Paupers choose from themselves weekly, an Inspector to see the Mistress weigh every Meal.

> T. SAUNDERS. JOHN PAUL PAUL.

Circular issued from Tetbury, Gloucestershire, about the Workhouse Diet dated 1799

Reprinted in Tracing your family Tree by Jean Cole and Michael Armstrong. Wellingborough, Northamptshire : Equation, 1988

# ORANGE BLOSSOM.

## BINDT-MITCHELL.

A quiet wedding was celebrated at Tyers on Wednesday, when Mr Christopher Adolphus Bindt was united in the bonds of matrimony to Miss A. Mitchell, daughter of Mr J. Mitchell. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. R. Elliott at the residence of the bride's parents. The bride, who was given away by her father, looked charming in a dress of biscuit colored voile, trimmed with cream satin and guipure lace, and wore the orthodox veil and wreath of orange blossoms. She also catried a handsome bouquet. The bridesmaids were Misses Bindt (sister of the bridegroom) and C. and V. Mitchell (sisters of the bride). Miss Bindt wore a grey poplin dress, trim med with satin and lace, and the Misses Mitchell blue delaine costumes, trimmed with lace and ribbon; hats to match. They also wore opal and gold brooches, the gift of the bridegroom. and carried bouquets of white flowers. Mr H. Mitchell acted as groomsman. After the ceremony the bridal party sat down to a sumptuous wedding breakfat, The Rev. R. Elliott proposed the toast of the newly married couple in a neat speech, which was responded to by the bridegroom. Mr Christensen gave the toast of the patents of the bride, to which Mr 1. Mitchell responded; Mr Gilmour "The

Bridegroom's Parents," responded to by Miss Bindt; Mr A. E. Paulett "The Bridesmaids," responded to by Mr H. Mitchell. The toast of Mr and Mrs. Elliott was proposed by Mr Mitchell, to which the Rev. R. Elliott duly res-The happy couple left by the ponded. evening train for the metropolis, amidst showers of rice and good wishes. The bride's travelling dress was navy blue voile, Eton coat and skirt, with hat to match.

In the crening a select party was giren when dancing, sicging, etc., were kept merrily going until after midnight. chen all loined hande and eang "Auld Lang Sync." The adding presents were both numerous and handsome, including the following :-

1 Brido's father, choque.

- Bridegroom to bride, curb gold chain bracelet
- ' Bride to bridegroom, gold sleeve-links. liride to Bridesmaids, opal brooches set In pold.

Congregation of Tyers Church, Holy Diblo.

Mr H. Mitchell, silver tespot.

Mrs McDonald, lamp.

Mr RAY, silver mounted biscuit barrel.

Miss Mitchell, Glongarry, silver mounted pickle jar.

Mis Alice Mitchell, pair of vasce.

Miss Baylys, glass jug and glasses. Mr and Mrs Christensen, album.

Mr Davis, carving knife and fork.

Mr A. Milligan, clock. Mr and Mrs R. May, cheese dish.

Mr and Mrs Gilmour, cruct.

Mr T. Lamb, ladies companion.

Mas Brien, cushion.

Mis and Miss Summers, tray. cloth, sauen bottle and jelly dishes. 1 43 Mr A. E. Paulot, aluminium pen and ink 'stand. Mr F. Mitchell, bedroom-set. Mr and Mrs Rodgers, candlestick. Mr J. Mitchell, cuke dish and album. Mrs Mason, silver spoons. Mrs R. Mitchell, junr., thinble and orks. Mrs Nippe, ica set. Mr and Mrs J. Mitchell, jnr., dinner 101. Miss Leslie, glass dishes Mrs Cochrane, silver-mounted smelling salts. Mrs Dunford, biscuit barrel

MID-GIPPSLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY									
PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE									
	\$								
BOOKS (postage cost on application) (+ I	oostage)								
Hazelwood Cemetery Transcriptions (2 vol) Gippsland Cremetorium Transcriptions Gippsland Cremetorium Register Traralgon Transcriptions (2 vol) Walhalla Transcriptions Toongabbie Register & Transcriptions Trafalgar Register & Transcriptions Willow Grove Register & Transcriptions Childers Register & Transcriptions	30 (set) 15 15 40 (set) 15 20 20 15 5								
NV FICHE (postage included)	\$								
Traradgon Transcriptions (6)	25								
Toongabbie Register & Transcriptions (2)	7								
Trafalgar Register & Transcriptions (2)	7								
Willow Grove Register & Transcriptions (1)	5								
Childers Register & Transcriptions (1)	4								
Inquiries/Orders (etc) should be directed to The Publications Officer Mid-Gippsland Family History Society PO Box 767 Morvell 3840									

The Annual Meeting of the Mid Gippsland Family History Society Inc. will be held on Thursday 24th July 1997 at 7:30 pm in the Moe Library.

Business- Receiving of Annual Reports

Setting annual subscription for the coming year

Election of Office-bearers

Election of Committee

Any business notified in writing to Secretary by 10 July 1997

As several present office-bearers are not standing for re-election it is ESSENTIAL that all members give serious thought to either offering themselves for election or approaching others they consider suitable.

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## NOMINATION FORM

I, a financial member of Mid Gippsland Family History Society Inc., nominate

(Namc)of	
(address)	
for the position of	997/98
Signature of Nominee	
Signature of Proposer	
Please post or hand to the Secretary by / /	

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## PROXY FORM

I,			, a	fina	ncial	membe	r of	Mid	Gippsland	Family
History	Society Inc.,	hereby	appoint	(Nar	nc)					
as my p	proxy for the	Annual M	Accting	on	24th	July 19	97			

Voting Instructions.