

Moama Cemetery

The Moama Cemetery Working Group is still looking for information about burials at the Moama Cemetery. Of special interest is any information about those who are buried in unmarked graves in the Cemetery. If you can provide any help about anyone who is buried at Moama, please contact:-

Anita Bartlett, PO Box 1343 Echuca 3564. or 0439992767

Research list for September 2019 to November 2019

SMITH Dorothea Chil Mrs

EVANS Henry Tudor	Farmer in Echuca-Moama	Philip Parsons
OWEN John Hugh	GRO Certificates	Diane Owen
MANGAR Agnes	ERH records 1921	Laurie Power
BERRY Leonard	Born Echuca Hospital 1938	Judy Berry
GUNN/ McINYYRE	Info Echuca & Moama	Margaret Picking
WEDLOCK Jack Seaton	Info born c 1938	Barry Schultz
KENNEDY James Aitchison	Criminal History	Barry Schultz
CAMPARA Family	Koyuga area	Donna Chapman
THIERMANN Family	Shoemaker in Echuca	Maureen Robertson

HON PETER WALSH MP

Member for Murray Plains

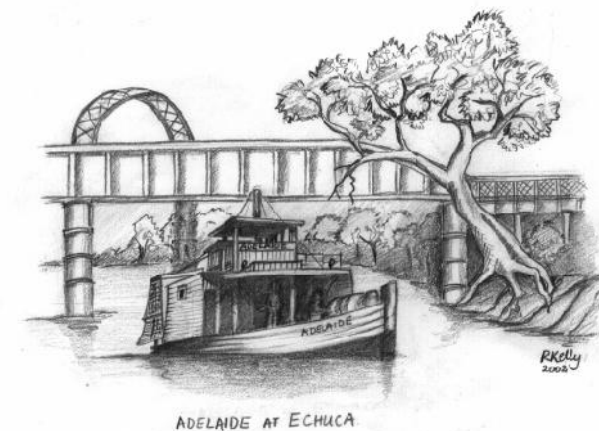
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Bridges & Branches

Number 116 December 2019



ADELAIDE AT ECHUCA

Quarterly Newsletter
of the
ECHUCA-MOAMA FAMILY HISTORY
GROUP INC.

Echuca-Moama Family History Group Inc

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The Monthly Group Meeting is held in the Research Room, in Murray Esplanade - the second Tuesday of each month, except January, at 1.30pm. **The Monthly Group Activity Session** is held from October to March, on the third Thursday at 7.30 pm, and April to September on the third Saturday at 1.30 pm. **At St James Parish Centre, Maiden St. Moama.**

Excursions can replace the Group Activity Sessions.

The **Research Room** at 9 Murray Esplanade, Echuca, is open and manned every Monday and Friday between 11.00am -3.00pm, except on Public Holidays. At other times contact Barbara (03) 5480 1501

Towns /areas covered by the EMFHG Inc

In Victoria: Ballendella, Bamawm, Barmah, Echuca, Echuca Village, Kanyapella, Kotta, Koyuga, Lockington, McEvoy's, Millewa, Nanneella, Patho, Piavella, Pine Grove, Restdown, Rochester, Roslynmede, Strathallan, Tennyson, Tongala, Torrumbarry and Wyuna

In NSW Bunnaloo, Caldwell, Mathoura, Moama, Thyra and Womboota

The Editors welcome articles, notes, queries, book reviews, comments and any items of interest. Contributions to Bridges & Branches are accepted in good faith but the Echuca-Moama Family History Group Inc. or the Editors, do not accept responsibility for the accuracy of information nor for the opinions expressed. Items can be emailed to:-
ksdurrant1@bigpond.com or judysupercool@gmail.com

survive; they were James Beryl Gore (1879 – 1882), and Nellie Candler Gore (1880 – 1882). In order to survive May made crochet hoods and embroidery as well as teaching painting to support her children.

May started working at a picture theatre as a translator because most of silent films were from Germany. She started her acting career on September 17th 1883 when she became an actress in Hoop of Gold at the Brooklyn Grand Opera House Stage. The billboard had misspelt her name as Robson so she kept it, for luck. May's career flourished over the years as a character actress and a comedian. Six years after her acting career began she met and married Augustus Homer Brown, a police surgeon, on the 29th of May 1889. They stayed together until his death in 1920. May had her own touring theatre group by 1911. She also had a close affiliation with her powerful manager and producer Charles Frohman, which would explain her success.

May appeared in two silent movies, 'How Molly Made Good' in 1915, and later 'A Night Out' in 1916. Previously she co-wrote an adaptation of the play, 'The Three Lights' for Broadway in 1911.

May went to Hollywood in 1927 when she was 69, and starred in 'The She – Wolf' as an old woman in 1931. She played the Queen of Hearts in 'Alice in Wonderland' in 1933. For her role in 'Lady for a Day', she was nominated for an Academy Award, but the award was won by Katherine Hepburn. In 'Anna Karenina', (1935) she played Countess Vronsky. In 1938 May played Aunt Elizabeth, with Katherine Hepburn and Cary Grant in 'Bringing up Baby'.

At the time May was nominated for the Academy Award in 1933, she was the first Australian born actress to be nominated for an Academy Award. She was also the oldest woman to be nominated at the age of 75, and her nickname was the Grand Old Lady of the American stage. While May appeared in a number of major films, she didn't win an Oscar and wasn't inducted into the Hollywood walk of fame, but she was a very successful actress.

Her son Edward Gore was her business manager.

May Robson died on the 20th of October 1942 aged 84 in Los Angeles California, and is buried at Flushing Cemetery, Queens, New York, next to her second husband Augustus Brown. Her acting career spanned 59 years, and her last movie was Joan of Paris, which was shot only a few months before her death.

I have confirmed that Henry Robison died in Moama in 1860. The death registration number is 4609/1860, and his father's name was John. I have also confirmed that Henry Robison is in the Moama Cemetery in an unmarked grave in the Church of England section.

I have also confirmed that Mary Jeanette Robison was born in Moama in 1858. Her registration number is 9258/1858, and it is listed under the name of Mary J Robison. Her father is Henry and her mother is Julia.

Recently May Robson's autograph appeared on an original script of Alice in Wonderland (1933) in which she played the Queen of Hearts. This script was brought in to the Antiques TV Roadshow in England for evaluation.

Sue Shaw

May Robson

May was born Mary Jeanette Robison in Moama, New South Wales, Australia, on the 19th of April 1858, to her parents, Captain Henry Robison (Robinson) and his wife Julia (nee Schlesinger). Julia was born in 1824 in London, England and Henry was born at Penrith Cumberland, England, in 1810. May was the fourth child. Her siblings were William Henry Robison (1848 -), James Leman Robison (1850 – 1920), and Adelaide Fanny Julia Robison (1852 - 1930).

Henry Robison was a retired Captain of the British Merchant Navy. The family travelled to Melbourne, Victoria, Australia on board the SS Great Britain, arriving in October 1853. Henry became a Jeweler, silversmith and watchmaker, at number 7 Bourke Street in Melbourne. The family shifted to live in Moama, (Maidens Punt) New South Wales, for the good of his and his wife's health as they both had tuberculosis. Henry bought a large big brick house in Moama in 1857 from James Maiden, and opened it as the Prince of Wales Hotel. He also bought Maiden's Punt, in partnership with Stivens. They also had a coaching business that ran between Bendigo, Moama and Deniliquin. Henry advertised the hotel for sale in the Sydney Morning Herald on Saturday the 9th of July 1859, as his health was failing. He died there on the 27th of January in 1860.

The Prince of Wales Hotel was a large brick house adjacent to Maiden's Junction Inn, on the corner of Chanter and Victoria streets in Moama. It was formally James Maiden's house and had 21 rooms. The house was set on 2 1/2 acres of ground, along with a large stable containing twelve horse stalls, as well as a coach house with a saddlers shop

attached. There was also a small piggery, that was still operating in 1871, as a saddle was stolen from there. This was mentioned in the NSW Police Gazette weekly record of a crime, on Wednesday the 18th of January 1871.

After Henry died, Julia Robison was granted a License for the Prince of Wales Hotel, on the 23rd of April 1860.

Julia remarried on the 19th of November 1862 to Walter Moore Miller at St. Paul's Cathedral, in Melbourne. He was a solicitor from Albury at the time of the marriage. The family moved back to England in 1870.

May went to school in Australia and later at the Sacred Heart Convent, Highgate in North London. Later she studied languages in Brussels and took her final exams in Paris, France.

May eloped in order to marry her first husband Charles Leveson Gore when she was 18 years old on the 1st of November 1875 at Camden Town, London. They then travelled to New York on the 17th of May 1877 on the steamer SS Vaderland. After they bought 380 acres of land at Fort Worth Texas, they established a cattle ranch and built a house there. When they moved back to New York they had very little money, and Charles Leveson Gore died shortly after.

May had one surviving child Edward Hyde Leveson Gore, (1876 – 1954) but she also had two others that didn't



May Robson

President's Report

Once again it is December and Christmas is almost with us. It is a special time that we spend with our families, but it gives us the opportunity to tap into family knowledge, as family members might have some information that might be helpful in your family history research.

This year has been relatively quiet for our group. We generally don't have as many people dropping into the research rooms for information, when we are open on Mondays and Fridays. It is probably a reflection of people doing their research on line, although our membership is healthy. While the rooms have been down on attendance, a core group of members have been busy continuing with record preservation. Our local Cemetery data base is a massive resource now with all of the cemeteries in one data base. The stray certificates are still being named and collated, along with local hospital records, and births, deaths and marriages from The Riverine Herald, on line through Trove.

The major talking point this year has been the Port Precinct proposal that has been endorsed by the Shire. The master plan is to be drawn up with detailed costings and a time frame for the project.

The shire approached us over two years ago to discuss drawing up a lease in relation to our tenancy in the Murray Hotel, but after this initial meeting we heard nothing until October this year, when we were told that a lease was imminent. Last month we were presented with a 24 page License document not a lease, that contained a number commitments and

responsibilities that we previously did not have. We have responded that we would prefer a less formal agreement such as the one we have had for the last twelve years. We are awaiting a response.

Fund raising since June has been through Bunnings sausage sizzles. The one we had in August was on a freezing winter's day and we have another in December. These sausage sizzles have been the main source of our fund raising in the last few years, so I would encourage members who wish to contribute, that a few hours at a sizzle is a very easy way to do this. It also provides a respite for those who are there all day.

In June some members of our group travelled to Castlemaine to visit the historic home, Buda, owned originally by the Leviny family. Ernest Leviny was a jeweller and watch maker, who established a business in Castlemaine around 1854. He made many items of jewellery and also silverware. He used gold from the local diggings to make many of his ornamental master pieces. His pieces reflected the European artistic influences he experienced before he emigrated from Hungary. "He combined traditional allegorical figures with uniquely Australian figures such as aboriginal people, the emu, kangaroo and gold diggers".

Ernest married twice as his first wife, Mary Isaacs and their son, died six months after the boy was born in 1860. In 1864 Ernest married Bertha Hudson. They had ten children between 1866 and 1881. Six were daughters and five of the daughters never married, but were talented artists who lived at Buda

for most of their lives; their painting sewing, embroidery and exquisite needlework, photography, wood carving, and art metal work are on display in the house along with their father's fine work. Kate Leviny established the Castlemaine Art Gallery in 1913. Hilda, the youngest daughter, sold the property to the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum in 1970. She lived there until she died in 1981 at the age of 98. The garden is also of Heritage interest with magnificent trees and plants established by the Leviny's. The house was developed by Ernest from a modest Indian Bungalow, into a very fine house with its artistic treasures, but it also has a homely atmosphere. It was definitely worth the trip to Castlemaine.

These excursions provide such an insight into the past and also allows

the members who participate the opportunity to socialize with others in our group. Do take advantage of the opportunity next year.

Finally a special thanks to the people who are rostered on in the research rooms every week, and those who attend the working bees every month. Your support is invaluable. We would encourage other members to volunteer for these activities.

Finally more family history trivia for your amusement; some unusual occupations from the 1881 British Census: 'Disinfectors of railways', 'Cow Banger' and 'Fatuous Pauper'

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all May you enjoy the festive season.

Judy McCleary

Coming Activities

FEBRUARY 2020

Thursday 20 @ 7 30 pm GUEST SPEAKERS – Moama History - Shirley, Brian & Anita

MARCH

Thursday 19 @ 7 30 pm EXCURSION – John Forbes Sports Museum Rochester

APRIL

Saturday 18 @ 1 30 pm GUEST SPEAKER – Hue Hoang – life story from Vietnam to Australia

MAY

Saturday 16 @ 1 30 pm EXCURSION – Robert Symons – Etona Cruise

JUNE

Saturday 20 40th ANNIVERSARY – G/S Vicki Montgomery

JULY

Saturday 18 @ 1 30 pm LUNCHEON AGM

for the Victorian Education Department, he was declared to be professional and was barred from the Olympic Games in 1912. After the war, having resigned his position as instructor, Sir Frank was reinstated and competed in the Antwerp Games in 1920 and the Paris Games in 1924.

With his brother-in-law, Oscar McKay, Sir Frank founded the Olympic Tyre and Rubber Company. He was one of the chief sponsors for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, but died just six months before the opening of the games.

Clearly the swimming lessons had progressed because in December 1912,

Mr Howlett, chief assistant to the organiser of swimming under the Education Department, arrived in Echuca to examine candidates for junior certificates. The following day 34 boys from the State and High Schools were successful in passing the test, and it was expected that a similar number of girls were would pass the next day.

While the swimming lessons were a step in the right direction, drowning continued to be a frequent cause of death in the district, and for many years continued to regularly feature, in reports in the Riverine Herald.

Shirley Durrant

Does anyone know where the following were buried ?

Firebrace	Alfred	0	1910
Hammond	Andrew Albert	5	1908
Firebrace	Annie		1919
Horsnell	Charles Arthur	4	1875
Pearce	Edgar Louis	71	1949
Gregory	Florence Eliza	4mths	1875
Leonard	Henry	1 day	1883
Harrington	John Joseph	62	1923
Goodridge	Joseph	1 mth	1879
Hill	Joseph Arthur	23	1908
Tupholme	Lydia Eva	4	1860
Bacon	Marian	7 mths	1859
Henry	Walter James	9.5	1890
Crump	Amy	1	1885
Milgate	Alice Mary	79	1945
Gavel	William Stillman		1886
MacIntosh	John J R (aka Jackie)	2	1922
MacIntosh	Lillian R A	1	1918
MacIntosh	Roger James		1955

Drowning, a major cause of death in the area

While endeavouring on discovering the names of people buried at the Moama Cemetery, and using Trove, to research death notices in the Riverine Herald, we have found a grim statistic of the number of drownings that have occurred over the years. The highest number of drownings seem to have been children, and this is followed by the number of young men. The following article in the Riverine Herald in 1910 show that even at that time there was concern about the problem, and the need to take some action.

Bathing Season - The record of deaths by drowning which appeared in the metropolitan newspapers show a lamentable neglect on the part of Australians to insist upon all boys and girls being taught to swim, or at least if not all, nearly all. Every place where there are natural facilities for bathing, such as we have here in Echuca, should surely be able to organise some systematic teaching of swimming, and the local authorities with but a small expenditure should surely be able to construct places where the little ones could safely take to the water. The State schools have to some extent taken up this matter, but not in any way to the extent desirable. Perhaps a meeting of swimming enthusiasts might well be held to stir this movement into life. Many valuable lives could thus be saved.

Riverine Herald 29th December 1910

About this time the Echuca Swimming Club was formed but it is not known if this was in response to the report in the paper. Three months later there was a report that the Progress Association had

taken up the cause, with the following story appearing in the Riverine Herald. Ironically, in the same edition of the paper appeared the story that the ten year old son of Mr Ferrari, had been drowned in the Murray River in the Barmah Forest.

Swimming Instructions. - The Progress Association has taken up the popular idea that swimming should be properly taught to the scholars in the State and other schools, and the Education department was consequently requested to allow the newly appointed instructor in the natatory art to visit Echuca and give a demonstration and give advice as to the best methods of teaching and practising. Mr F. Beaurepaire, whose career as a champion swimmer, won him so much fame in Europe last summer, having been appointed swimming instructor to the department, will probably visit Echuca shortly, as the association has been informed that their request has been favourably considered.

Echuca swimmers will then have an opportunity of seeing whether they are adopting the proper style of crawling. It is hoped that the interest aroused will lead to a proper swimming place for learners being fitted up for next summer.

Riverine Herald 9th March 1911

Mr Beaurepaire, later Sir Frank had competed in the Olympic Games in 1908, and in 1910 he competed in Europe. There he was undefeated in 41 Championship and First Class events, and was voted the Helms Athlete Foundation's Best Athlete of the year. Following his appointment as instructor

The Leviny's of Buda

Extracts from "At Home with the Levins of Budda Castlemaine"
compiled by Laretta Zilles, Buda Curator

Although the Leviny's were typical of most middle class families, their talents were well above the average. The treasures around the house is proof of that. Their letters and diaries give an insight into their every day life.

Although the family had staff, the children were expected to help with the daily chores.

Dorothy tells in her diary;

"I earned a shilling yesterday plucking a pair of ducks it took me nearly all morning,. I think I would rather go without the shilling next time..."

5th March 1900

"It was my week for cooking last week. I made some rather nice ginger bread."

24th July 1901

"Last week I made my first jam role (sic), it was beautifully light though I'm not specially fond of them, I have just had a bath and an apple so I must jump into bed as it was about two before we were in bed last night, we didn't get home till nearly one o'clock."

31st August 1901

The family enjoyed a very active social life, visiting and entertaining friends, Fancy Dress functions Balls and other social functions. Trip to Melbourne for concerts exhibitions and shopping.

Mary Leviny wrote;

"Ilma and I went to Melbourne with Miss Binns and Charlotte Gilfillan to hear a concert conducted by Marshall Hall, Mr King asked Charlotte to ask us and we actually stayed at the Hollies [friends] from Saturday 26th until Wednesday. Met Ingle B. for the first time. Concert in the Town Hall, enjoyed it very much indeed, after the concert Mr K. took us to Gunslers to have afternoon tea.. Very tame afternoon tea. Mr King also introduced a Mr Forsyth to us who went with us to the concert. In the evening Miss Rigall took me to another concert at the town hall accompanied by Arthur Ingle and Ingle Browne."

26th August 1893.

Mary wrote:-

"Batchelor's Ball the best that they have had, I reconstructed my white dress, by putting pale blue velveteen sleeves and trimming lace and two bands of net around the skirt, it looks quite like a new one "

14th July 1893

Parlour games were a popular pastime of evening when visiting friends. In her diary Dorothy wrote:-

"Last night Mary and I went to the Fether's for the evening, we played Ping Pong and today I am stiff... some of us may go to Jo's tonight, so I hope we don't play it there. We didn't see the ghost as we came home, Fred brought us to the gate, we were rather late, it was nearly twelve."

13th August 1902

A glimpse onto the fascinating life of a talented family.

Great Great Uncle George Cole

Great Great Uncle George Cole was born to George Cole and Mary McMahon at Daylesford on the 27th December 1866. He was their sixth child and elder brother of my great grandfather Denis Cole. He wasn't a very nice man by all accounts.

On the 21st November 1888 he married Annie Ellen Mahoney at Deniliquin and they had two daughters, both born in Deniliquin in 1889 and 1891 (Annie's family lived there). It seems that after they married they came to Echuca, and went on the steamer that George was the skipper of, and lived on it for seven weeks, before returning to Echuca. But things did not go well after that and Annie was forced to leave him in 1891. Because she had no home, her mother came for her and took her back to Deniliquin. Annie had their second child but did not go back to George. He followed her, and on the 27th July 1891 George bought a gun, and attempted to shoot his wife in End Street, Deniliquin. (There were lots of articles in the newspaper about it). During the court case George stated he'd bought the gun for protection when he went shearing. I think from reading the transcript of the trial he just lost it when he saw his wife and her brother in the street. George was sentenced to seven years jail and sent to Goulburn jail. Whilst he was in jail Annie divorced him in 1896. I have not been able to find out what happened to her.

George was released in February 1897 and in 1898 supposedly married Sarah Mary Josephine O'Dennessy, although I have been unable to find any record of this. Two more daughters were born in

1899 and 1901.

On the 24th November 1905 at the home of George's sister, Annie Ellen Grace of Campbell Street Glebe, George had an argument with his eldest daughter, Ida Joanna, who was living with her Aunt Annie and was 16 at the time. They were in the back yard and there was a pile of bricks, and the following account was reported in the newspapers of the day, George hit Ida on the head with one, so that she received four wounds and needed 13 stitches altogether.

George was tried in February 1906, but the jury let him off which the judge could not understand. He said to them "you then think gentlemen, that a brick is a proper thing to chastise a daughter with?" to which the foreman replied "If you had seen the bricks you would have come to the same conclusion." To which the judge replied "I don't think so gentlemen. He has already served a sentence of seven years for shooting at someone".

George was then discharged.

In 1914 at the courthouse in Newtown, NSW George marries, (because he was not married to Sarah), Mary Ellen Dunleavy. She had a son born in 1909 and a daughter who was born in 1913, and these two children take the name Cole. They could be his. They have another daughter in 1914. George and Mary were married again on the 8th April 1916 at the Catholic Church in Mascot.

George Cole died in 1932 at Redfern, NSW

Janice Smith

My Maternal Grandparents

Lou (Alois Louis) Eberle and Nellie (Ellen) Burley

Lou aged 15 came to Australia from Lausanne, Switzerland with his parents and older brother and sister in 1887/88. His father settled in Warragul and opened a bakery and pastry cook shop, as the family had been bakers in Lausanne for a couple of generations. After their mother died in 1891 and their father in 1896, the two boys went their separate ways, eventually to Melbourne 1899/1900, and sister Emma went back to Switzerland.

Nellie, my Grandmother came to Australia from Kensington, England when she was 4 years in 1882 with her parents, two sisters and a brother. Two children had died in England. Two girls were born in Adelaide one of whom died. They were in Adelaide for three years and then moved on to Melbourne, where twin boys were born there in 1886, one of whom died. They lived in Whitehorse Road, Balwyn for a number of years. I guess that my Grandparents met in Melbourne during 1899/1900, although I never thought to ask my grandmother.

My grandparents were married on the 26th January 1901, at the house in Balwyn. Lou and his brother Charles had been to Western Australia before Lou married and had bought land to clear in order to plant an orchard at Gooseberry Hill, near Waroona. They had to live in very primitive conditions back then. Charles followed Lou and helped where ever he went, as he never married. The three older children Harry, Elsie and Arnold were born in Western Australia, before Lou and Nellie returned to Victoria. They spent a year at Montrose with Nellie's parents while Lou and Charlie took up land at Bamawm. This was where my mother Val was born in 1913, but the water wasn't viable. They then took up land in Stratton Road, on the west side, near a channel, where Lou planted an orchard, with many types of fruit trees and almonds. They called the property "Sunnyside". The boys built a cool store and apples and oranges were exported overseas as well as being sold in the Echuca Moama area.

Lou and Nellie retired into Echuca in the early 1940's. Lou died in 1950 and Nellie in 1962.

Judy McCartney

New to the Library

7 September 2019 to 2 December 2019

Book

2170 Golden Threads

W.A

Terrific Storm, at Moama. An extraordinary storm, accompanied by terrific thunder and lightning, and phenomenal rainfall, commenced at Moama at 6 p.m. On the 6th instant. The old post-office was completely wrecked. The roof was blown off the Church of England parsonage, and other buildings were badly damaged. The rain will do an immense amount of good. There is every appearance of more. The telegraph line to Deniliquin is down.
The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser Sat 14 Apr 1888

The Burning of the Loo

Everyone has turned out
For the burning of the “loo”
Tonni’s on the pipeline,
And we’re celebrating too.

We’re brought a brand-new toilet,
With a button you can press.
The water falls in torrents,
And it sparkles—more or less.

All chromium and tiled out,
(Inside the house at last!),
But the old folk feel nostalgia,
And think of days gone past.

We’ll miss our outside “dunny”
With the splintery seat so hard,
That “little house” we knew so well,
Down the bottom of the yard.

It had a sort of lean on,
And was propped to keep it right,
Dad laughed and said “It’s caused by
The wind that blows at night”.

The door it had a patent lock
That was never known to fail.
It had a strap of leather,
Which hooked up on a nail.

There were little squares of paper,
All hanging on a string
Hours of top class reading,
If you like that sort of thing.

It used to have a knot-hole,
In the side wall by the seat.
If you turned your head and shut one eye
You’d see right up the street.

You’d walk down in the darkest night
A kero lamp as guide,
And inspect the “dyke” for danger
Cracks where snakes and spiders hide.

Then deep in meditation
Your thoughts would be up-set
For a voice would interrupt you -
“Have you finished down there yet?”

Now we’ve lost our dear old night-man,
And his story’s hard to tell,
He’s really out of business -
Things haven’t turned out well!

So spare a thought for that “little house”
As you flush your pan so new.
And shed a tear for good times gone’
With the “Burning of the Loo”.

Tongala Playwright & Actor

by Graham Watt



The Monster Petition

Women’s Suffrage Petition of 1891 was a very significant document in the history of Victoria. It was compiled by a very small number of women who embarked on a door knocking campaign across Victoria, collecting signatures for a petition to present to the Victorian Government, requesting that “Women should vote on Equal terms with Men”. These women collected almost 30,000 signatures over a period of six to ten weeks. They were able to do this by using the rail way lines to access the women of Victoria. Before these signatures were presented to parliament they were collated and pasted onto cotton or linen and these were sewn together to make one enormous petition 260 metres long- the “Monster Petition”.



This effort was inspired by a statement made by the Premier of Victoria James Munro in 1891, who said he would introduce a bill into Parliament granting women the right to vote, if ordinary women demonstrated that they wanted this right.

The Victorian Women’s Suffrage Society, the first Australian Suffrage Society, (founded in 1884) and the Victorian Woman’s Temperance League, (founded in 1887) took on the challenge to organize a petition.

Consequently in 1902 the Commonwealth Parliament passed the uniform Commonwealth Franchise Act which allowed women over 21 to vote for the federal Parliament. It also allowed women stand for the federal parliament. By 1908 voting for parliament in State government elections was legislated in all

states, but the right to stand for parliament took much longer with Victoria being the last in 1923.

These women, who became known as suffragettes, developed from a movement of feminism that began in the 1880’s, when women began to fight for women’s rights and equality in public life. These suffragettes in Australia were publishing leaflets, running debates and public meetings and engaging with men in parliament to push for women’s suffrage. Prior to this it was considered ridiculous to give women the vote, as their role in society was confined to the home with domestic and family duties. Women were seen as weak, emotional and incapable of doing little more than caring for children, and their husbands. Men believed

that allowing women to enter politics would “introduce feminine attitudes and weakness to public life”.

Two of my great grandmothers were to sign this petition, one in Richmond and one in Brunswick.

My great grandmother Annie Scott Rattray signed the “Monster Petition” when she was living at 80 Abinger Street Richmond with her husband David Jones and her four children, David (13), Annie (11), Margaret (10) and Evan (9). The family did not have a lot of money as David, who was a stonemason by trade, had been declared insolvent in Sydney in 1886 due to gambling debts, according to his daughter Annie.

The family moved to Melbourne and was living in Richmond which was a working class suburb. The little single fronted cottage where they lived was small and

was still there on Google maps in 2017. In 1893 Annie's husband David died from Phthisis, (silicosis) which he had for a year before he died. We can assume that he was unwell in 1891 Annie was now a widow with three children still at school and the family was very poor, so Annie sought an exemption from school for her girls, Annie and Margaret, and they were put into domestic service. Their wages assisted the family to survive. I have a photograph of Annie with her family in Melbourne and her face is thinner, her hair is parted and drawn back from her face. Her clothing is dark and plain, and her face is drawn. This photograph is a stark contrast to earlier ones and indicates that she was living in tough times.

The Melbourne Age published graphic descriptions of life in the working class suburbs of Melbourne. The conditions endured by the families of the unemployed were dire. "You look round the rooms, the kitchen with its empty shelves, the fireless grate, the solitary crust on a plate placed high up on the dresser to be out of the reach of the children till the time comes for its use, and you wonder with curious and unpleasant wonder how long you yourself could endure such a condition of affairs," *The Age* reported in 1893.

Richmond became a fully working-class community in the 1890s depression. Subdivisions of larger blocks served by lanes and rights-of-way produced instant slums, which were to be a refuge of the very poor until the mid-20th Century. It appears that all the signatories on the petition page my great grandmother signed were women who lived in Abinger Street Richmond, which was a

one of those working class suburbs mentioned in the newspapers. In January 1895 Annie married Samuel Bates, who was a widower with three children. He too, was a mason from Port Melbourne. It does seem that it may have been a marriage of convenience. Annie ended up living in Sydney for the rest of her life. She, Samuel and the children moved there after the marriage as Samuel was to die there on April 26th 1898. He is buried in Rookwood Cemetery.

When Annie married David Jones in Doune, in the Parish of Kilmadock in Perthshire Scotland on July 2nd 1877 she was four months pregnant. Three days after the marriage the couple boarded the 'Roxburghshire', a ship of the Clyde Line, and sailed from Glasgow bound for Brisbane. What was she thinking as she went on board? Was this the new life that she had been hoping for? Annie Rattray had learned to look after herself from an early age, so at the age of twenty-four this adventure with her new husband was one of challenge and excitement, rather than one of hesitation and fear. She was to live a long and at times challenging life. Annie was born in Edinburgh on 23rd September 1853 and she was left with her grandparents when her parents sailed for the United States, probably in search of a better life. They were involved in a shipwreck on route and only her mother survived. Her mother married again and lived in Chicago. She corresponded with Annie until the time of the great fire there in 1871 and was not heard of after this disaster. Annie died on her 85th birthday, September 23 1938.

The act of signing the petition is a reflection of her characteristic

independence.

My Brunswick great grandmother, Rebecca Sarah Jarvis is another story for a later edition.

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<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/womens-petition>

Judy McCleary

GEORGE HENRY BERRYMAN

My Great Grandfather, George Henry Berryman, was born in Cornwall in 1849. In 1870 at age 21 he travelled to California in search of a more promising future than was offered in tin mining in Cornwall. However he returned to Cornwall and in 1872 married Catherine Penberthy. The following year they sailed to Australia on the Lincolnshire, encouraged by the success of George's five brothers and sister, and Catherine's four brothers in the new country.

George and Catherine settled in Sandhurst (Bendigo) with Catherine's brother James Penberthy. However their stay was short, because following the birth of their first son the family travelled to Tatalia to a small farm next to his brother James at Hillside. Here their second son and two daughters were born, before they left the farm and moved to Long Gully. Two more sons arrived, but in 1885 James Penberthy was killed in a mining accident resulting in the decision to return by covered wagon to farming at Tatalia.

George was a Lay Preacher in the Methodist Church, Superintendent of the Tatalia Sunday School, Echuca Circuit Steward, Justice of the Peace and a Foundation Alderman of the first Moama Municipality in 1891 and later Mayor.

Prior to 1901 Australia was a group of six separate colonies, each governed by its own Parliament, but with no Federal Parliament joining together and dealing with matters of common interest, causing much confusion, especially in border areas. In 1891 a draft constitution was drawn up when the first National Australasian Convention met in Sydney, with the belief the colonies would be stronger if united.

The Corowa Federation League organised a Conference in July and August in 1893. Dr John Quick (later Sir John) proposed a motion that was to change the direction and place of Federation. George Berryman seconded the motion. As a result of a referendum the responsibility was removed from the Politicians and placed in the hands of the People. On 17th September 1900 Queen Victoria signed the proclamation resulting in Federation on 1st January, 1901.

George and Catherine were invited by the Government of Victoria to attend a celebration at the Exhibition Building in 1901, in recognition of George's contribution towards Federation.

In 1902 George and Catherine moved to Britannia House Echuca where they set up a boarding house. George died in 1914, and is buried at Moama

Wilma Gamble