

Newsletter:

The Genealogical Society of Victoria, Mid-Gippsland Group.
Secretary: Dawn Cowley (Mrs.) 051 271780, Newborough Vic.
Chairman: John Pattison, Traralgon Vic.

No. 14 - February, 1984

Did you ever stop to consider that we are here as a result of a series of events in the lives of a line of ancestors reaching back to the dawn of the human race? We are the product of a chain of hereditary factors and biological combinations too numerous to contemplate. It would have required a break in only one of the millions of links in that chain, or a mismatch in one of those countless combinations, and we would never have been born.

GUEST SPEAKER

Our guest speaker for the January meeting was Mr. Colin Holt who completely enthralled his audience with an account of his research into the effect of family life on immigration to Victoria 1840-1870. Although all of his subjects came from Cambridgeshire his research resources were relevant to research in all Shires of England. Many had overlooked such things as :

- Local newspapers for letters published from emigrants, B,D & M notices for even the lowliest inhabitant and interesting reports of locals who emigrated.
- The relevance of the Poor Law Union to emigration
- Local university libraries which collect various pertinent records.

He also disillusioned our preconceived ideas of the "beautiful English rural countryside" living conditions with sobering reports from early newspapers.

WALHALLA CEMETERY

Mrs. Y. Reynolds is the Secretary/Treasurer for the Walhalla Cemetery Trust and is compiling a list of burials at the Walhalla Cemetery, for the period prior to 1882. These burials during Walhalla's early days are not recorded with the current cemetery registers as the original volume has been lost. If you have any ancestors buried there during this era, please inform Yolanda. Once confirmed, these names will be an appendix to the present register.

50 Summerlea Street,
TRAFALGAR 3824
(056) 332 051

THE LATROBE LIBRARY

A recent letter from the La Trobe Library informs us that " Limitations currently placed on the Library's staffing resources together with increasing public demands on our services have resulted in considerable delays in the answering of correspondence enquiries. Such enquiries are answered in order of receipt and, at present, there is a delay of approximately six months before a reply can be expected."

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CERTIFICATES

A certified copy of a South Australian certificate now costs \$10.00.

BOER WAR VETERANS

If you had a forebear who enlisted in Victoria for the Boer War, you might find page 38 of "The Leader", 4th November, 1899 of interest. It contains a full page of small photographs of members of "The Victorian Contingent (Infantry Unit)". I was directed to it by La Trobe Library's Biographical Index.

Not satisfied with the poor quality of the microfilm printout, I was quite happy to pay a small sum for a photographic enlargement from the hard copy. No doubt readers will be aware of similar pages from other sources.

Trevor Williams.

ITALIAN BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES

Civil registration of births, deaths and marriages was introduced in Italy on 1st December, 1864. However, many Australians wishing to trace Italian ancestry are surprised to learn that there is no central registry of these records and the records are held locally by the Councils of the towns in the region where the events took place. It is also a pleasant surprise to many that certificates are supplied without charge to applicants. We understand the procedure to obtain copies of certificates is to write to the Mayor of the town in question and request a "Stato di Famiglia".

NEW EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL GENEALOGICAL INDEX.

The Genealogical Society of Utah is planning to publish an updated edition of the International Genealogical Index on microfiche in December of this year. It will contain 90 million entries as against the 68 million names in the present index.

CONVICTSTransportation to Van Diemen's Land.

The practice of banishing undesirables had a long history in England, but it was not organized as a definite system until the Transportations Act of 1717 (4 Geo. 1c. XI). Prisoners transported under this system were sent to the Americas until the Revolution of 1775 ended this traffic. The British Government was then forced to look for alternative ways of handling the thousands of felons awaiting disposal in the hulks in Britain. Successive governments regarded the building of penitentiaries as prohibitively expensive whereas transportation seemed to offer many advantages; it was cheap and was regarded as a deterrent to potential criminals; it removed those criminals it failed to deter and, at the same time, assisted their reformation by providing them with opportunities in a new environment away from their criminal connections; and it also provided a labour force to assist the economic development of new settlements.

Botany Bay was the site chosen for the first penal settlement in Australia in 1788 and in 1803 convicts were among the colonizers in Van Diemen's Land, first at Risdon and the following year at Sullivan's Cove and Port Dalrymple. Transportation to Tasmania continued until 1853 by which time more than 74,000 convicts had been sent to the colony, of whom between 12,000 and 13,000 were women.

If a convict was well behaved, he was usually assigned to a private settler as a farm labourer. Female convicts were usually employed as house servants. A convict's family could be brought out to join him at government expense if he was thought worthy of this indulgence, and the family given a small grant of land. However, minor misdemeanours were frequently punished by flogging, time on the treadmill, or for

slightly worse offenses, assignment to a road gang. For serious or frequent offences, the most severe punishment, short of execution, was to be transported to a penal settlement. The most important of these was at first Macquarie Harbour and later Port Arthur and Norfolk Island.

The Archives Office of Tasmania holds many of the basic legal records of the Convict Department. These contain invaluable information on the main aspects of a convict's life - on his conviction and arrival, assignment, petitions for mitigation of sentence, receipt of ticket of leave or pardon, arrival of family or marriage, release and death.

Courtesy of The Archives Office, Tasmania.

Penal Colonies

NAME OF PENAL COLONY	YEARS IT WAS USED AS A PENAL COLONY
Sydney - Newcastle - Port Macquarie	1788-1840
Moreton Bay (at this time the whole east coast of Australia was called NSW)	1824-1839
Perth	1850-1868
Van Diemen's Land	1803-1853
Norfolk Island	1788-1813 and 1825-1856.

Five Classes Of Convicts in NSW

1. The worst type of convict, who worked for the government in CHAIN GANGS, building roads.
2. ASSIGNED CONVICTS, who worked for free settlers "on loan" from the government. Their treatment varied with their masters.
3. TICKET-OF-LEAVE convicts, who were given government permission to set up businesses themselves or to work for wages.
4. EMANCIPISTS, who had been freed before the end of their sentence because of good behaviour.
5. EXPIREES, who were convicts who had served their sentences in full.

Convicts Tried in Middlesex

Information is often sought about the location of trial records of persons convicted in England, prior to transportation to Australia. In the case of the County of Middlesex there were three courts in which prisoners were sentenced during the Australian convict era from 1787 to 1868. The courts were the:

- (1) Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the County of Middlesex.
- (2) Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the City and Liberty of Westminster.
- (3) Sessions of Delivery of the Gaol of Newgate for the County of Middlesex (ie. the Old Bailey).

the County of Middlesex included within its bounds the City and Liberty of London and the densely populated metropolitan parishes north of the River Thames including the City of London, but not including the city itself.

Records from the above three courts are held by the Greater London Record Office, 60 Abchurch Lane, London, SE1 7PB, England. Information usually recorded in the records includes name, domicile, status or occupation, and details of the offence and sentence. Sometimes ages are given. The domicile stated is usually where the crime was committed, and not necessarily the birth place. The staff of the Greater London Record Office are unable to undertake research by correspondence, the office can supply a list of record agents on request and a reply-paid, self-addressed envelope.

REFERENCES TO THE LIBRARY

Austral Searcher - a magazine of the Heraldry and Genealogical Society of Australia Canberra which contains information on Canadian Genealogical sources held at the National Library of Australia plus transcriptions from New Zealand cemeteries, Kawan Island and Fox Glacier.

Genealogical Interest Register

- from the Heraldry and Genealogical Society of Canberra.
don. Mrs. Jean Simpson

Letters

at - article on genealogical holdings at Tasmanian Archives.

Gippsland - Lang Lang and Nyora cemetery headstones have been transcribed.

Genealogist - articles on Dunolly Pioneers, Williamstown Cemetery, English Parish Register Transcripts.

at Vol 13 Pt 4. - articles on Irish Convict Records, American Census Records, using newspapers as a genealogical source and English Wills.

ator Vol 14/No 9 - Group reports, queries, Index to B,D & M in Argus 1851,
December 1983 article on the Voyage to Australia in the 1850's and an immigrant's letter home.

ng Your Ancestors - Sources in the Mitchell Library (Glasgow) - pamphlet.

otland - don. by South Gippsland Group.

ng & Dedications

ce of the Newborough

ng Church - pamphlet

South Gippsland group now subscribes to the magazines of some other genealogical societies in Australia, in addition to our own "Ancestor". These magazines contain very interesting articles as well as a wealth of information on all aspects of genealogical research as well as members' queries. I would recommend these magazines to anyone interested in family history as you are assured of learning some valuable bits of information. Borrow some from our library and I'm sure it will be worthwhile reading.

or - Journal of The G.S.V.

Journal of the Society of Australian Genealogists

Genealogist - Journal of the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies.

Lyn Gorman (Librarian).

Editorial - Gay Rogers,
Julie Stevens,
Frank Robinson.