



# Reflections

Newsletter of the  
Phillip Island and District  
Genealogical Society Inc.

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## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

All meetings are held at our rooms, 56 Chapel St., Cowes

### **Saturday 6 June Family Tree Maker User Group**

**Doug Elms**, President of VicGUM, will be joining **Suzanne Hayes** at the June Family Tree Maker user group meeting.

To maximise on this opportunity there will be two sessions.

11am - 1pm : "People, Places and Media"

2pm - 4pm : "Web Clipping, Reports and Charting"

A light lunch of home-made soup and rolls, and afternoon tea, will be provided.

Time: 11 am

RSVP: [piadgs@gmail.com](mailto:piadgs@gmail.com) by Wednesday 3 June using 'FTM User Group - RSVP' in the subject line

Cost: \$4 for members and \$8 for non-members

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## **Bass Coast Shire Grants**

We have been advised that our application for two grants have been successful. These are for:

The digitization of ten of the first eleven volumes of the Phillip Island rate books. These cover the years 1874 -1900. Unfortunately volume two (1875-1881) is closed for conservation, and not available.

A two year diamond subscription to 'The Genealogist'. This site has a number of databases not available elsewhere.

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### **Anonymous, Wales:**

*This spot is the sweetest I've seen in my life,  
For it raises my flowers and covers my wife,*

### **John, Pennsylvania:**

*Eliza, sorrowing, rears this marble slab  
To her dear John, who died of eating crab.*

<http://shadowsoftime.co.nz>

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## REMEMBERING THE ANZACS



The books, information boards and video which were our contribution to the 'Spirit of Anzac' display organised by the R.S.L. at the Cultural Centre attracted quite a lot of interest.

We had decided to 'profile' an Anzac - to demonstrate how to research both the man himself and his ancestors.

We knew that Albert Nurton had been born in Montacute, Somerset; that he had served in the Australia army, and that he had lived on Phillip Island.

We had eight weeks to see what information we could find about him and his ancestors. It turned out to be an interesting exercise, and Nurton a very interesting man.

Our research resulted in two binders – one on Nurton himself (184 pages), and one on his ancestors (156 pages).

The display boards covered his ancestors (5 generations), his early life, army service, and the time he spent in New Guinea, as well as his last years on Phillip Island.



Then there was the DVD! The younger school children rushed to watch the TV, (though I very much doubt they could hear anything above the noise they were making) and other visitors sat and listened to Sue's interview with Cherry, Una and Jack, who knew Albert Nurton, and watched as Liz explained how we carried out the research.

'Behind the scenes' is often more interesting than what the public sees or hears. Our 'horror story' happened when Pat and Liz were filming their commentary for the DVD. One of the smoke alarms in the room decided to malfunction – continuously – for an hour – until a shire maintenance person arrived. Then it only shrieked every ten to fifteen minutes, which gave Pat plenty of time to perfect his 'Statue of Liberty' impersonation.



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## AN UNEXPECTED SURPRISE AT A FUNERAL or how family history research can be useful!

Recently we attended the funeral of my 2nd cousin Patricia Coolahan aged 91, a Catholic nun known as Sr. Leonard, up at the Mary MacKillop Centre in Hawthorn East, whom I had only met a couple of times when I was a young child in Sydney. An older cousin of mine in NSW had rung me to ask if I would go to the funeral to represent the family as he was unable to attend.

As the Eulogy was being read by the head nun in the church I started to think that what she was saying about Patricia's early life before she became a nun all sounded very familiar to me. There were quite a lot of details about her parents' marriage, residences, her mother's death and her father's WW1 record. Then I realized why it all sounded familiar! I had written it all and sent it to the Convent several years ago and I'd forgotten all about it. During my research into my family history I wrote to another Coolahan family in Victoria to find out if we were related, which we weren't, but we kept in contact anyway. Shortly after I had made contact with them they were approached by the head nun of the religious order and asked if they were related to Patricia or knew anyone who was as Patricia had developed dementia and they had no idea about her early life, parents etc.

At that time I had done a lot of research and I was in the process of writing up a story of my (Coolahan) family from the arrival of my great, great grandfather, an Irish convict in 1833 and I had written a section on Patricia and her parents. I emailed that section to the convent and that was incorporated into the Eulogy at her funeral!

In return I was given Patricia's photos of each of her parents, which she valued so much and had kept all her life. I'd never seen photos of her parents. Her mother died before Patricia was a year old.

Gail Bridgeman (Wade)

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### NEW IN THE LIBRARY

Uren, Malcolm	A Thousand men at war
Cleary, Colin	Carwarp, community, politicians and the wanderers
Gee, Margaret	A long way from Silver Creek : a family memoir
Bowden, Tim	Changi photographer
Mendham, Dawn	Anzac tradition. Between the lines
Venters, Sarah	Early Murgheboluc
Dutton, Geoffrey	Country life in old Australia
Nelson, Hank	P.O.W. Prisoners of war. Australians under Nipon
D'Alten, J.R.	Moora savage and other tales of the Grampian Mountains
Bevan, George	Jum's war (WW2)
Larkins, John	As time goes by
Marshall, Norman J.	St. George's Hospital, Kew, 1912-1980
McLaughlin, Trevor	Barefoot and pregnant? : Irish famine orphans in Australia
Forrest, Peter	Spirit of the Daly
Watson, Don	Caledonia Australis. Scottish highlanders on the frontier of Australia
Clark, Rosemary	Home front. Life in Australia during World War 11
Christie, Rob	Dargo Crooked River 2nd ed.
Cuppleditch, David	Lincoln in old photos
Howard, Jean	All things Lincolnshire
A Place in history (City of Stonnington)	
Active service with Australia in the Middle East (WW2)	

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## LETTERS FROM THE TROOPS

Blank lines appearing indicate that the censor's red pencil has been active

Cr. McFee, of Phillip Island, has received a letter from his son, Private Fred A. McFee, who is a member of the Australian Expeditionary Force, which is now in training in Egypt.

Private McFee states it was a grand sight to see the transports steaming out of — On Tuesday, — it was rough and most of the men were sick. We were vaccinated and a lot had very bad arms. There was great excitement on the —. The Sydney was in action —, having picked up the signal for assistance from Cocos Island. The German warship Emden had been coaling from a collier. The "Sydney," who was one of our escort, made off at full speed at 7 a.m., sighted the enemy at 9 and got into action. She blew the "Emden's" funnels and masts out of her, and put holes in her. The German commander had to run her ashore, then she caught fire. The Sydney caught the collier, took the crew off and sunk her in mid ocean. . . . It was very hot coming across the tropics. We crossed the equator on Tuesday morning, and on —, sighted land at daylight. — from the ship. There were hundreds of fishing boats, with five or six nations on each. — We anchored about two miles from the shore, which looked very pretty with all kinds of trees, palms, etc. We were not allowed on shore. On Tuesday we had fine fun with the niggers. they were diving from the top of the — for money our chaps were throwing into the water. The natives would call out "Come on, come on, sixpence or a bob. Plenty money Australians, me want to go there but they won't let me." One could not help laughing at them. We left — on Tuesday —. We passed the Island of — and anchored off Aden

on —. Aden looks only a small place, a coaling port. . . . The water was like a sheet of glass all the way from —. It was very hot; the poor horses suffered. My horse is looking grand now, but I thought I was going to lose her. She knocked her eye against a spike in her stall and punctured it. She was very bad and we thought she would lose her sight, but she is grand now. We lost 12 horses on the trip, and that is not so bad considering we had 600 on board. We have been inoculated against fever twice. You feel an aching pain for about 24 hours, but afterwards its all right. On — we anchored at Suez. There are high mountains on either side before you come to the canal. The natives came alongside with dates and fruit, and did a great business, but you got very little fruit for a couple of shillings. Being night time we did not see much of the canal. It is 80 miles long and took 13 hours. The street in Port Said running alongside the canal has some fine buildings, mostly cafes and hotels. As soon as we were anchored the canal swarmed with native boats and we could buy all kinds of fruits, dates, figs, oranges, cigarettes, and clothing. The oranges were beauties, 14 for 1s. We were not allowed ashore, — We watched a milkman going his round; he drives a cow along, which he milks in front of the customer's door, and then goes on to the next one. Many of the troopships passed us while we were anchored and there was great cheering. . . . We will all be glad to get on land again as it seems weeks since we left Port Melbourne. . . . I will try to write every week. . . . Remember me to all friends.

The Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser. Friday 5 March 1915

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

Frederick Aspinall McFEE enlisted on 18 August 1914 (service number 150) as a private in the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment. The regiment sailed from Melbourne on A18 HMAT Wiltshire on 19 October 1914.

## PHILLIP ISLAND IN THE NEWS – 100 years ago

### POLICE STATION AT BASS.

There is a report that the police stations at Phillip Island (except for three months at the tourist season each year) San Remo and Grantville are to be discontinued, and all the work to be left to a new station to be established at Bass, the object being economy. This proposal is likely to be opposed by the localities interested,

Lang Lang Guardian  
Wednesday 5 May 1915

### San Remo.

The rainfall registered in San Remo for the first three weeks of May was five inches.

The proposed withdrawal of police protection from San Remo is strongly resented locally. Though the record of local crime is practically nil, no one can say what will happen when it becomes known for miles around and even in Melbourne, that malefactors may find a haven of rest for three parts of the year in San Remo. A petition to the Chief Secretary against the removal of the police station has been extensively signed by residents of the shire. It is pointed out that San Remo is the only place in the shire on the mainland that has two hotels; that the local constable has always been employed as clerk of courts, wharf manager and inspector of fisheries; that there are 2,000 visitors in the tourist season and a large number of fishing boats constantly calling; that San Remo has daily communication with Melbourne by steamer and railway by two separate routes; that the township is the terminus of the main San Remo-Grantville road, now being constructed by the Country Roads Board, and that a large motor traffic is expected with the city, the trip only occupying three hours.

A Woolamai correspondent of the "Powlett Express" suggests that an old time Australian explorer should be honored by changing the name of San Remo to Hovell, as Captain Hovell's visit to Westernport in 1824 did something towards bringing the place into notice. There are various methods by which that good explorer's name could be held in remembrance, but why alter the euphonious appellation "San Remo" in the way proposed? If a Mr Mug had performed distinguished services for Woolamai that would be no justification for changing the euphonious "Woolamai" to Mugs-ville. This correspondent's proposition is not likely to catch on. The people of San Remo do not want to be popularly known, after the derivation of the proposed name has been forgotten, as residents of the hovel. The town took its name from one of the best known watering places in Europe and has no desire to part with it.

The Powlett Express and Victorian  
State Coalfields Advertiser  
Friday 9 July 1915

The secretary of the San Remo Progress Association having written to the Chief Commission of Police asking if there is any truth in the rumor that San Remo is to be deprived of police protection and that its police court business is to be dealt with at Wonthaggi, has received a reply to the effect that the presence of a constable in San Remo will be limited to the three months of the tourist season and that the question of the discontinuance of the sittings of the police court is a matter for the consideration of the Crown Law department. Steps are being taken in San Remo to prepare a petition in opposition to the proposed removal of police protection.

The Powlett Express and Victorian  
State Coalfields Advertiser  
Friday 28 May 1915

**COWEN.**—A recruiting meeting was held here on Monday night. Addresses were delivered by Mr. R. S. Walpole, Rev. W. Burvill, Messrs. A. Mellwraith, and P. G. Dixon. Nine men volunteered, making a total of 36 from Phillip Island out of a population of 450.

The Argus. Thursday 15 July 1915

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## MORE FREE INTERNET SITES

Search for the will or probate of any person in the UK who died between 1858 and 1996.

<https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/Calendar#calendar>

Ancestors from Londonderry?

The Great Parchment Book of the Honourable The Irish Society is a major survey, compiled in 1639 by a Commission instituted under the Great Seal by Charles I, of all those estates in Derry managed by the City of London through the Irish Society and the City of London livery companies. It can be searched by 'people', 'places' or 'companies'.

<http://www.greatparchmentbook.org/>

The Norwegian Historical Data Centre website allows you to search in parish registers and the 1865, 1875, 1900 & 1910 censuses.

<http://www.rhd.uit.no/sources.html>

South Australian Genealogy Directory <http://www.familyhistorysa.info/genealogysa.html#occ>

Men & women who left Poland to fight against the Nazis & Russian Communism

<http://www.polandinexile.com/index.html>

National Library Dublin digitised collection

<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Search/Results?lookfor=&type=AllFields&submit=FINN&filter%5B%5D=digitised%3A%22Digitised%22>

Maps of Scotland 1580-1928

<http://maps.nls.uk/index.html>

Sands NSW Directories 1858 – 1933

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/search-our-collections/sands-directory>

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## ANZAC 1915 - 2015 Commemorative Bookmarks

The West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation will be releasing a series of 12 commemorative bookmarks during 2015 and 2016 as part of our efforts to acknowledge the contributions of our local communities during World War I. The bookmarks will be released monthly and distributed through our 14 libraries.

They are asking members of the communities of Bass Coast, Baw Baw and South Gippsland to submit photographs of your family members who participated in WWI and who were residents of the local area at the time. You must have the approval of the family to submit the photo.

A selection panel will choose 12 photos (4 from each Council region) to be featured on the suite of bookmarks. Photos will be digitally copied and returned to the person who submitted them. The Corporation will use the winning photos on a bookmark, and will also have a copy printed and framed to use in an exhibition that will travel around the West Gippsland libraries until 2018.

Please ask for an ENTRY FORM at the library or download it from the West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation website <http://www.wgrlc.vic.gov.au/>. (go to 'What's On' then to 'Programs for Adults'). The entry form is to be submitted with all photographs. **Closing date for entries is 30 May 2015.**

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## IGA COWES

Anyone shopping at the IGA Grocery store in Cowes, please give our **Shopper Number 595** and all credits will go to the Phillip Island and District Genealogical Society Inc. It would be most appreciated by the Committee if you could spare a few points.

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Contributions are accepted in good faith and the Newsletter Committee do not accept responsibility for accuracy of information or opinions expressed.

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