



# Spreading Branches

*Narre Warren & District Family History Group Inc.*

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*Issue 130 – November 2021*

## Georg Caspar von Rüti

A lovely sunny day in winter during the Covid lockdown. We are only allowed to travel within five kilometres of our homes. Well, Harkaway Cemetery just scrapes in for me. While walking in the cemetery looking at the old graves I saw many familiar names – my parents, grandparents and great great grandparents are all interred here. I have heard about these German families since I was young and learned a bit about their lives through the Narre Warren & District Family History Group and my own research. I don't know why I had never noticed the lovely old grave near the entrance to the cemetery before. Georg Caspar von Rüti was buried in 1893. Why had I never heard of this man? He had died in Prahran. Why was he buried in Harkaway?

I went home and started looking for answers. Georg was born in 1863 in Rastatt, Baden-Württemberg, Germany and had died on 5 May 1893 making him just thirty years old.

On the 3 November 1886 Georg travelled from Bremen to Australia aboard the steamship *Preussen* on her maiden voyage where he is listed as part of the crew or assistant. In other newspaper articles

he is referred to as an assistant engineer. On the journey here the *Preussen* had stopped at Port Said to replenish its stock and at least one of the passengers went ashore. A few days later while at sea a passenger had a fever and a rash and smallpox was diagnosed. The patient was isolated on this diagnosis but the damage had been done.

The ship reached Albany on the 15 December 1887.<sup>1</sup> Because of the smallpox case on board and no provision for quarantine prepared, the *Preussen*, loaded more coal onboard and left that night. A telegraph message was sent to advise the port of Adelaide and preparations were in place when the ship reached Adelaide on 20 December.<sup>2</sup>

Hurriedly the Health Department readied the Torrens Island Quarantine Station. The accommodation ranged from first class three bedroomed cottages for the steerage passengers, some other third rate cottages, and a dormitory with twenty seven beds for the single men. A large dining room and kitchen were made ready with a cook employed.<sup>3</sup>

Two doctors boarded the ship from a launch to check on the conditions aboard. The sick man died during the night and the ship was instructed by the doctors to sail out to sea away from the port and bury the body at sea. On return twenty-seven of the passengers who were disembarking for Adelaide were taken to Torrens Island Quarantine Station as a precaution against infection. The rest of the passengers were vaccinated against smallpox except for those who objected. Although the authorities in Adelaide wanted the ship to be disinfected, they had no power over the captain who set sail for Melbourne.<sup>4</sup>



- 1 The Sydney Mail 8 January 1887 pg. 94
- 2 The South Australian Advertiser 21 December 1886 pg. 7
- 3 Evening Journal 21 December 1886 pg. 2
- 4 The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser 8 January 1887 pg. 94

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# Narre Warren & District Family History Group Inc.

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## Family History Research Room

We have a large collection of books, maps, microfiche, CDs and journals from all over the world available to our members and visitors.

### Location

Cranbourne Library,  
65 Berwick-Cranbourne Road,  
Cranbourne.

### **NW&DFHG is a member of:**

Casey Cardinia Local History Reference Group  
Genealogical Society of Victoria  
South Eastern Historical Association Inc.  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria

### Opening Hours for Research

Tuesdays and Saturdays 11 am to 3 pm

Research room phone number: (03) 5995 3032

### Meetings

*Location to be announced before meetings*

Entry Cost \$3

October - April: 2.00 pm

2nd Wednesday of the month (except January).

May - September: 2.00 pm

3rd Saturday of the month!

***The Lorraine Taylor Research Room will reopen on Tuesday 1 February 2022 subject to the Covid requirements in place at the time. We look forward to welcoming all our members and visitors in the new year.***

### Membership

Single \$35, Joint \$50. Payable 1 July each year.  
Casual visitors \$5 per day.

### Membership Renewal

*A reminder that memberships were extended to the end of June 2022 for all members who were financial at the end of September 2020.*

### Research Queries

We offer a research service for those unable to visit our Research Room personally, but please note that we can only research our own holdings and those of the local municipal libraries. The cost for this service is \$15 per hour plus photocopying expenses. All research queries can be sent to the Research Officer at the above postal address or email: [research.officer@nwfhg.org.au](mailto:research.officer@nwfhg.org.au)

**Disclaimer:** Contributions made to this newsletter are accepted in good faith and the Committee does not accept responsibility for accuracy of information of submitted articles nor opinions expressed.

## President's Report

What a mixed time we have had, just as we got back into having the room open and face to face meetings we plunged back into lockdown. For the second year we held our AGM via Zoom and I would like to thank the committee for all the work they have done during the past 18 months not least being that they all nominated to continue this year in their current positions. Thank you.

The other day I heard the phrase Boomers are Zoomers and without a doubt Zoom has kept our group connected and huge thank you to Eileen for her expertise. From committee meetings, general meetings to speakers and social gatherings she has been the lynch pin.

Zoom has also allowed us to enjoy talks from many different groups. We've had Patrick Ferry from National Archives Australia, Rob Hamilton spoke at our AGM on records relating to the Freemasons, and Di Christensen gave us an informative talk on resources available for researching in Ballarat.

There has also been the opportunity to join many other free talks, in the last few months I've listened to Gideon Haigh's talk on inquest files at the Public Record Office Victoria, and to more talks by Patrick Ferry. Recently Jillian Hiscock from the Royal Historical Society Victoria in conjunction with the Genealogical Society Victoria gave a talk on the early RHSV pioneer register and Heather Arnold has continued giving talks through the Casey Cardinia Libraries.

Zoom allowed me to attend the annual Members' Day for the Genealogical Society of Victoria at the beginning of July. This was my first time and it was good to put faces to names and gain lots of hints about writing – why we should write up our research and ways of doing it. Zoom is also how I attended the Local History Reference Group meeting

and it was great to hear how other local groups are coping in this world of lockdowns.

The Covid restrictions curtailed the official opening of the Narre Warren North Primary School's new administration building. It would have been a great opportunity to see an enlarged Max Thomson photograph that adorns the wall at the entrance to the new building. Max Thomson Mondays on our facebook page is certainly creating a lot of feedback and pleasure. Thanks to our facebook page and a story I had in Spreading Branches I was in contact with two 'new' cousins this year. A story in our newsletter can bring many benefits to you, so consider this as an avenue to help your research.

Thank you to Eileen for all the work she has done ensuring we are Covid safe, when you visit the Lorraine Taylor Research Room. You must continue to sign in with the Victorian Government QR code, and also sign our daily sheet and follow the current restrictions in place. We will also have to follow restrictions on vaccine compliance when we reopen on 1 February 2022.

Our planned Cranbourne cemetery walk "No time to say goodbye" for history month in October had to be cancelled due to Covid – it has been rescheduled to be held on Sunday 1 May 2022. Surely restrictions will allow us to hold this walk – originally scheduled for 2020. All the stories are done, the book is ready to print, we just need to be able to gather in the cemetery next year.

As president I'm extremely grateful for all the help, guidance, gentle nudging, laughter and friendship from the committee. We really are a team, working well together. On behalf of the team I wish you all a safe Christmas and New Year in the company of your family and friends and may 2022 be Covid restriction free.

*Jane Rivett-Carnac*

## Videos of zoom talks

If you missed Casey-Cardinia Library's Thursday history talks presented by Heather Arnold and Jane Rivett-Carnac, or the presentations at the history festival 2021 you can watch them at <https://www.cclc.vic.gov.au/local-history-videos/> <https://www.cclc.vic.gov.au/casey-cardinia-heritage-festival-2021/>

- The House That Sam Built – Edrington Park
- Along The Track And Past The Smoke
- Women's Stories From Our Local Cemeteries
- Research Places at The National Archive
- Engineering Feats From Our Past
- How Our Heritage Infuses Our Future – Berwick Mechanics Institute and Free Library
- A Celebration Of Our Farming History
- Local Hotels of Casey and Cardinia in the 1900s
- Engineering and Development of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp

- A Virtual History: Cranbourne, Berwick, Pakenham
- Convicts, exiles and criminals
- Organising your family history information



**Casey  
Cardinia  
Libraries**



## Georg Caspar von Rüti

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On 22 December the *Preussen* arrived in Melbourne. The crew were vaccinated against smallpox. Two hundred and sixty passengers were disembarked at the Point Nepean Quarantine Station. At the same time as the cargo and mail was being offloaded, Georg von Rüti deserted the ship. At 4.30 pm the *Preussen* set sail for Sydney where, on 24 December 1887, the remainder of the passengers were sent to the North Head Quarantine Station. In all seventy nine people contracted smallpox and thirteen died.<sup>5</sup>

A warrant for the arrest for a breach of the quarantine laws of Victoria was issued for the deserter Georg von Rüti. A £20 reward was offered. He was described as being about twenty four years old, five foot eight inches tall, dark brown hair and eyes, a thin black moustache, slender build and speaking German and Italian.<sup>6</sup>

In February 1887, two months after his desertion from the ship, two fishermen reported they had seen a man with a wild look about him on Mud Island. They hailed him, he shouted back in broken English and disappeared into the scrub. If this had been Georg how did he get there? It is eight kilometres from Point Nepean. There were no houses on Mud Island just some sheds. The newspaper states that a few days later Sorrento police secured him.<sup>7</sup> I could find no other information.

The next record I can find of Georg von Rüti is his entry in the rates book of Prahran in 1891. He is living at 123 Williams Road Prahran and working as a dairyman.<sup>8</sup>

Two years later on 5 May 1893 Georg von Rüti died of typhoid. Typhoid is a bacterial disease which he may have contracted through infected milk. He had been admitted to the Prince Alfred hospital five days prior to his death by a doctor who had been treating him for four weeks for influenza. The town clerk of Prahran wanted to know why authorities had not been notified of an infectious disease until four days after the death. Doctors told them that typhoid had been suspected but not completely diagnosed until an autopsy had been performed.<sup>9</sup>



Georg never married. He died intestate. At the time of his death he was the manager of the Northcote Dairy Company.<sup>10</sup> Immanuel Wanke who lived in Harkaway, sent his milk to this dairy and says in the administration files that he had known Georg since he had arrived in Australia and Georg had frequently told him of his mother in Rastatt, and a married sister living in Kalsruhe.<sup>11</sup>



*Badische Landeszeitung (Germany) 30 July 1893*

I wonder who paid for his headstone? I didn't know when I started the story that my great grandfather, Immanuel Wanke, would have small part in Georg von Rüti's life. Maybe the Lutheran Church was involved or his family in Germany sent money over.

*Barbara Sharp*

5 The Telegraph 15 March 1887 pg. 2

6 New South Wales Police Gazette 5 January 1887 pg. 7

7 The Mercury 5 March 1887 pg. 4

8 Victoria, Australia, Rate Books, 1855-1963. City of Prahran pg. 61

9 The Age 20 May 1893 pg. 7

10 Warragul Guardian and Buln Buln and Narracan Shire Advocate 28 March 1893 pg. 3

11 Public Records Office of Victoria VPRS 28 P0000, 52/387

## Recollections & Comparisons

Casey Cardinia residents lived through two world wars, the Spanish influenza pandemic, depressions, plus their own personal issues as they provided for their families without all the mod cons of today. There were hard times but there were times to have fun.

The Spanish flu outbreak was over 100 years ago but has similarities to Covid-19. Sadly, Koo Wee Rup had their share of loses during the pandemic:

*1919 brought more troubles as the Spanish influenza came to Victoria. The flu became very bad by February when 1650 cases were reported in Victoria and 77 deaths. The railway picnic to which we had always looked forward on Australia Day, had to be cancelled.*

*The Spanish flu had become very serious with 150 cases in our district, and in the news of 14th June 1919 we read that Mrs Townsend had died. Formerly Miss Harris, she had only recently married a popular young storekeeper, Harry Townsend, who worked at O'Riordan's store. She had been a popular musician and played at most concerts and dances. Her death meant a great loss to the town and everyone felt very sad about Harry's bereavement. Again, on the 16th, we read of another death from the flu and again on the 17th. On the 18th, a schoolmate, Jack Dixon, passed on, one of the two deaths that day that I noted in my diary. The next victim, a young chap Ned McCarthy, better known to us as "Stere", died on 19th June, aged about twenty-two. I think Stere might have been his real name but the McCarthy family apparently adopted him. A week before this run of flu deaths, we had another tragedy, the untimely death of Harry Savage, killed by a dray near his home. Harry was the son of Mr & Mrs Jack Savage. I am not sure how it happened but the Savages were well known and his death meant a great loss to his family and the town. In the tragic list of flu deaths were Mr & Mrs Tom O'Hehir, age twenty-two and twenty-three, who died within three days and left three orphans, and also of a Selway and a Mrs Short. Dr White closed the school for fourteen days.*

*A C Colvin won commendation for his work with his hire cars during the epidemic. His cars did 1300 miles in one week. We were inoculated against the flu and we had to wear gauze masks made of lint soaked with eucalyptus, apparently to help keep out the germs. They were not very popular but they had to be worn in crowds. In those days, eucalyptus was said to be a good cure for many things, for colds we took five drops on a teaspoon of sugar.<sup>1</sup>*

I couldn't find any instances of panic buying toilet

paper in my research, it seems that was just a Covid-19 shopping phenomenon. Our shopping experiences have changed over the years. There was a time when housewives used a ration coupon system to purchase food for their families, and today we purchase most things by a swipe of a card. Our memories of shopping probably differ in comparison also:

*The other smell that brings back memories was the smell of Paternoster's Store in the High Street. It was a smell that made us feel hungry. Sides of bacon hung from the ceiling, there were large bins full of rice and sugar, great round cheeses from which Mr Paternoster would cut fat segments. Cellophane had not been invented, and there was no packaging as we know it now in supermarkets. Everything was weighed and wrapped or paper bagged on the counter. We could buy a small tin of sardines for a penny. A small spirit heater cost a penny. In the paddock behind the school near the corner of Palmerston Street and Campbell Place we had cubby houses where we cooked the sardines. I cannot remember where we got the methylated spirit and matches.<sup>2</sup>*



### Electricity comes to Nar Nar Goon North

There were a lot of community festivities when electricity came to the Casey Cardinia area. Nar Nar Goon North had a function in their hall where Mr W M Irvine (SEC consumers' engineer), helped

2 The School That Was - A History of the Berwick Grammar School 1882 - 1928 - John Bellair

1 Mickle Memories of Koo Wee Rup - D J Mickle (2nd Edition)

Mrs E Lawry, who had lived in the district for 70 years, to cut the ribbon and turn on the power.

Here are just a few of the memories of electricity coming to Nar Nar Goon North and the great times had while living in the area, they were recalled after seeing the photo compilation on our CaseyCardiniaRemembers website:<sup>3</sup>

Debbie Vallender says  
*I have not seen these photos in years... I grew up just up the road from the hall... I have the honor of being the youngest person in the ceremony... I'm sitting up there with one of my brothers and the Tehennepe boys... Mum was on the hall committee for years... it was always in use... remember having a wonderful time at the Christmas parties and the dances... badminton and youth club and the long gone tennis courts... the hall and post office was the heart of Nar Nar Goon North.*

Dianne Ferrari says  
*The switching on the power at Nth Nar Nar Goon was in 1962 & I think it was Friday night 1st of June (I have an idea it was published in the Pakenham Gazette), Mrs Lawry who was the lady who cut the ribbon on that night was my grandmother, I do have a cutting with a write up and photos of that night. I lived on Olsen Rd. with my parents Joe & June Bramich (Lawry), Mrs Lawry was an Olsen & Olsen road was named after her parents & Warren Road was named after her mothers family, I have lots of fond memories growing up at Nth Nar Nar Goon. Hope this will help your good work.*

Keith Perkins says  
*The Switch-on was on Friday May 18th 1962. I still have the news paper clip from the Pakenham Gazette. Mum (Dorothy Perkins) kept news paper articles on family & friends.*

*I too have fond memories of the hall where we went to Sunday school, Christmas parties, youth club, Badminton, Dances, Flower shows & a 21st birthday. We all new each other in those days & the Hall was the place to meet & socialise.*

# NORTH 'GOON GETS LIGHT AND POWER



North Nar Nar Goon was agog with excitement last Friday night and about 200 district residents crowded into the local hall to celebrate one of the most important events in the history of the centre — the switching on of S.E.C. light and power.

For the switch-on ball which had been arranged, the hall was lit in the early stages with dozens of old hurricane lanterns. When power was switched on the scene was a brilliant one, the normal lighting with fluorescents having been amplified for the occasion with festoons of colored bulbs.

Pictured on the left is Mrs. Lawry, together with Mr. Irvine, of the State Electricity Commission. She has just performed the task of severing the ribbon which switched on the lights in the Hall.

*Pakenham Gazette 25 May 1962*

*Included in the kids photos: Trevor, Keith & Lynette Perkins. I also know Debbie & Diane, we were friends of both families.*

*We lived in Nar-Nar-Goon North from 1954 to 1965 and I am always interested in any history of the area. Thanks for your good work.*

## FUN AND FROLIC AT DEVASTATING "DEBS" BALL

### "Lady Winston" Does The Honors At Berwick

**UP AT BERWICK** they're still chuckling over the Novelty Debutantes Ball which packed the King's Theatre last Thursday night and just about rocked the building on its foundations when the fun started. The laughs came thick and fast from the time "Lady Winston" arrived until she had received the "cream" of Berwick's coy and devastating young "Debs." "Such beauty! Such gracefulness! The like of it has never been seen here before," writes our social editor from the hills of Berwick.

#### Debs Balls

The biggest social events were the Debs Balls where young ladies were introduced into society. They were normally formal occasions, but in June 1945 when Lady Winston received the cream of Berwick's coy and devastating young Debs, the laughs didn't stop all night.

The article in The Dandenong Journal said thanks to Mrs W F Triplett who organised the event in aid of the Berwick Pre-school Group. It was one of the most successful Deb Balls that Berwick had ever seen. It must have been a fun event to organise.

We would also like to thank Lady Winston who was none other than Mr Jim Hall, Head Teacher at Berwick State School, for all the laughs. Thanks

<sup>3</sup> Casey Cardinia Remembers website - Nar Nar Goon North Hall (caseycardinia remembers.org.au)



also to the debutantes and their partners: Little Audrey Aniseed (Alan Funston), partnered by Jack Rae; Catherine Corkscrew (Keith Andrews), partnered by Wilba Naylor; Flossie Fussalong (Ivan Thomas), escorted by Alan Wanke; Hilary Horsfall (Frank Fritzlauff), partnered by Warwick Spencer; Jenifer Jeep (Graham Murdoch), escorted by Ivo Street; Minnie Moonstruck (John Loveridge), squired by Bill Gardiner; Penelope Popcorn (Harry Turner), accompanied by I. Murdoch; Winnie Wake-up (Fred Rae), with Avon Hall in tow.<sup>4</sup>

### **Furphies**

Australians are infamous for telling a Furphy or two. Would you believe the one about the moonlight rodeo that affected milk supplies:

*Mac was a day boy, but he has told me about a happening organised by some of the more adventurous boarders. Berwick in those days was a country village and many of the households owned a cow which provided them with milk. There was no village common as such, but the Berwick Shire Council, for a small fee, allowed the owners to graze their animals on local roads. Many of these roads, although fenced, were unmade. For example, Brisbane Street, from the school down to the Cardinia Creek was fenced but unmade with not one house on it. This system of grazing was known*

*as the "long paddock". It was of mutual benefit to both cow owners and the Council, as the grass on the roads was kept short by grazing. One moonlight night, a group of boarders stole out of the dormitory, rounded up some of the cows and drove them down to the creek. The drill then was to jump on a cow's back and see how long you could stay on. It was a kind of junior moonlight rodeo. I've no doubt there were plenty of bruises, but there were no reports of serious injuries. Dairy cows being temperamental animals, the milk flow of those who were forced to take part in this nocturnal event was affected. When their owners in the morning unexpectedly found their house cows gave very little milk, or none at all, enquiries were made. The local police sergeant eventually discovered the reason. No one was punished, but in future moonlight rodeos were definitely off the agenda.<sup>5</sup>*

Was it just kids that were told a scary Furphy to keep them from going onto certain properties:

### **Lucy's Lane and the 'Pleuro' Paddock**

*There was a lane running north to south on the west side of the Andrew's property. It was always known as Lucy's Lane. It was owned by a Mr Lucy.*

*This lane was always a mystery to me when I was a child. It had an iron gate at the entrance from the*

4 Fun and frolic at devastating "debs" ball – Dandenong Journal, 6 June 1945, pg. 11

5 The School That Was (A History of the Berwick Grammar School 1882 – 1928) by John Bellair

*Princes Highway end which was locked by chain and padlock. It was a narrow lane fenced with post and wire on the eastern side and a thick hawthorn hedge running down the western side.*

*As children, my brother and I explored it one end to the other. It seemed to go nowhere for no purpose. It stopped at a paddock adjacent to the railway line. Another locked gate closed it off from the paddock. We heard at one time the paddock down there was called the 'pleuro' paddock. We, as children, were rather fearful of this paddock. Cows that caught pleura-pneumonia often died.<sup>6</sup>*

### **Aussie Rules Football**

More than practical jokes we love our game of Australian Rules Football. In 1951 a Pakenham resident gave his recollection of the Pakenham Football Club:

*Old timers can remember this poplar game being played in the nineties. At that time there were no local associations governing the game and matches were arranged between adjoining towns, which included Dandenong, Berwick, Pakenham and Gembrook, and also metropolitan teams. Players provided their own uniforms, paid their own expenses and travelled to grounds as best they could. There were no bicycles then, and horses, ridden or driven, were the best means of travel. No charge was made for admission, and home teams provided the umpire. At that time most of the players had more muscle than science making the game harder than at present. A great deal of interest was taken in these games and it was common to see fights take place amongst players, and arguments amongst spectators plentiful. About the year 1900 competitions began. Since then Pakenham has played in Central Gippsland, West Gippsland, Dandenong and Berwick Associations. In 1914 Pakenham won the Dandenong-Berwick premiership. The war caused football to cease, and many of the Pakenham team enlisted for service. Unfortunately several made the supreme sacrifice. In 1919, competitions were re-started. Since that time Pakenham has been premiers seven times, runners-up thirteen times, and out of the finals only seven times – a record that both players and supporters are proud of.<sup>7</sup>*

If you are a “Baby Boomer” or a “Gen Y” baby, would you have been able to live through the “Gold Old Days”. Maybe our memories of the way we live today, may be compared with events of the next 100 years.

*Eileen Durdin*

6 Hallam 1830 – 1930 - City of Berwick Historical Pamphlet 2

7 Back to Pakenham Souvenir Booklet – March 3-10, 1951

## **Ballarat Briefings**

More meetings on Zoom. I love Zoom as I can see people from all over Australia. Friends I would never see, even without lockdowns. Hopefully these are all finished within Victoria and life can return to normal, but maybe not quite as it was before.

This week we used Zoom with our daughter in Melbourne to assist us adding our vaccination certificates to our mobile phones. Today a friend told us a 7-year-old had helped him with this same task. Technology is great but for those in the older age bracket or without internet and mobiles, life has not been made easier.

In my talk several weeks ago, *Researching in Ballarat*, I mentioned the Geoffrey Blainey Research Centre at Federation University and its curator Clare Gervasoni. Recently, Clare was awarded a prestigious award from the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria (AMaGA Victoria). The Martin Hallett Award for individual contributions to community heritage recognises Clare’s work in enabling preservation and digitisation skills in museum and gallery volunteers and best practice through use of Victorian Collections historical digital archive.

Evidently, Martin Hallett saw regional collections going into decay. As a public servant he had some research done into this and then was able to go to government and put forward a case for the Collections Victoria website. Many ideas came out of the 2009 bushfires, where places like Marysville lost their whole collection.

Now a great conservation copy sits on a server at Melbourne Museum, so that if disaster strikes, you have a copy.

Clare is the consummate champion of preserving and making accessible grass roots community collections using Victorian Collections

Congratulations Clare, and thank you.

*\* Thanks to Caleb Cluff of the Ballarat Courier for this information.*

### **Ballarat cemeteries – an update**

My sister and I have been searching for the grave of our great grandfather this week. After looking unsuccessfully, she contacted the cemetery office and they printed a list of names of nearby graves. However, if you intend visiting from afar, I suggest you find the location using Ballarat Cemeteries Deceased Search online, then contact the office on (03) 5332 1469. Give them several days’ notice. Sadly the touch screens do not show the exact location.

*Di Christensen*

## Cormore Tea Rooms and the Funnell family

On Easter Tuesday in 1922 a land auction was held in Upper Beaconsfield to sell "22 choice mountain gems," which included fourteen half acre township blocks.

The land was owned by George Wilson Martin, a local farmer who moved into the real estate business and valuation of land. For over twenty years he had been a councillor of the Berwick Shire Council. He had acquired the land in the township in 1912, and together with two other agents, Robert Allan and Frederick William Werrett, had grand plans for the future of Upper Beaconsfield. The land was under mortgage to Carl Johan Hjalmax Nissen, a Swedish born hotel keeper, merchant, racehorse owner and investor. It was probably his financial pressures that initiated Martin's 'Upper Beaconsfield Township Subdivision', which dated back to the 1880s.

### Cormore is built

About three years before this auction Harry George Burton and his wife Isabella had bought lot 24 on the corner of Halford Street and Beaconsfield-Emerald Road. During 1919/1920 he built a substantial weather board tea room with adjoining billiard room. They called it "Cormore Tea Rooms". Business seemed to be quite good, and newspapers reported that a Sydney resident had invited her family and

friends for afternoon tea at Cormore. "Pleasure was expressed at the service and the delicious home-made scones and cakes provided. This tea room should become very popular for this kind of social

entertainment." Harry Burton expanded and bought the 14 township lots along Halford Street. He paid council rates for only a short time. A full title for those lots never changed hands to him. By mid-1924 Harry Burton had started working as an estate and insurance agent.

The title for the Cormore property was transferred to Isabella Burton on 6 September 1922. A mortgage on it from Robert Allan was listed on the same day, and a further mortgage a year later. They must have been in financial trouble as by early 1925 Burton advertised a business, likely Cormore. Then on 14 July an auction was held for both the business and the land. It is unlikely that a buyer was found, as only two weeks later, Allan foreclosed, and the title was transferred to him. Since the introduction of the car, patterns of tourism changed and tourism trade had declined in Upper Beaconsfield, and with it

the business at Cormore. It is not known for certain who ran the tea rooms for the next few years – Isabella Burton may have stayed on.

On 28 January 1928 Allan and Werrett held a sale which included Cormore.

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**Up In The Hills**  
 When Visiting **Beaconsfield Upper**—  
 DON'T FAIL to call at  
**"CORMORE" TEA ROOMS**  
 For Morning or Afternoon Tea,  
 and enjoy the Picturesque  
 Scenery from our Up-to-date  
 Premises.  
 Cool Drinks. Home-made Ice Cream.  
**HARRY G. BURTON, Proprietor.**

**ALSO CORMORE TEA ROOMS.**  
 Situated in the township of Upper Beaconsfield, adjoining Post Office, Hall and Store; land 100 feet by approx. 250 feet depth, facing main metalled road, upon which is erected a substantial shop and dwelling known as "Cormore Tea and Billiard Rooms," comprising 8 substantial rooms, including tea and billiard room, bath room and sleep out, detached wash-house woodshed, stable, etc. The remainder of the ground laid out in fruit garden; splendid lot of apple trees, very best varieties.  
 Terms Easy. at Sale. Certificate of Title. The Owners are Determined to Sell. Further particulars apply:  
**W. H. A. RODD & SONS, Auctioneers, Dandenong.**



*Cormore Tea Rooms at the Upper Beaconsfield Reunion in 1935.*

## The Funnell family

Frederick and Amy Funnell were tenant farmers at Birch Grove, Sussex, England, and had four children, Fred, Arthur, Queenie and Robert. Their eldest son, Fred, joined the navy, but jumped ship in Sydney. The rest of the family migrated to Melbourne in late 1913 and they re-united in Upper Beaconsfield, where they initially worked on the large Bryn Gwyn farm on Split Rock Road.

The Funnells soon bought 100 acres along Sugarloaf Road, an area that had been divided into five acre lots in the 1880s. Funnell Road runs between some of these lots. They cleared the land with an axe and a crosscut saw, then established a 20 acre orchard. When the orchard proved successful they built their comfortable house, 'Birch Grove'. In 1930, while they were living at Cormore, a fire destroyed their house.

Relationships in the families involved in this story are complex, so please bear with me.

## Louisa Horner

Before coming to Australia, Amy Funnell had a close friend – Louisa Baker (nee Horner). Family recollections are that the two women may have met through the Suffragettes movement. Aged 24 in 1894, Louisa had married Daniel Baker, a widower, then 63. He had a rich military history, and was then a King's Messenger/Royal Bodyguard. Shortly after their marriage they took part in "The Dunmow Flicht", where married couples enter a "trial" by six maidens and six bachelors that in 'twelvemonth and a day' they did not wish themselves unmarried again. Daniel Baker recounted that he met Louisa, a hospital nurse, at a picnic party in December 1893. Three weeks later they married. They won the flicht of bacon after they had satisfied the judges.

Daniel and Louisa had one daughter, Victoria, born in 1899. Daniel died in 1906 leaving Louisa a single mother. As Louisa had to work, Victoria spent a lot of time with her grandmother. When Louisa's mother died in early 1912, she wrote to her two brothers who had gone to Australia in the 1880s, informing them of their mother's death. She also enquired if they thought she could give her daughter a better life in Australia. James Horner, then living in Melbourne with his family, sent her



Back from left: Amy Funnell, Marie Baker (nee Smith), Louisa Smith with friends

tickets for the journey. They arrived at the end of December 1912. Louisa also had a younger sister, Mary Ann, who married Daniel Baker's son Albert. Mary Ann died in 1918 during the influenza pandemic in England.

## Samuel Smith

When Victoria finished school at age 14, she went to work in the offices of Samuel Smith, who was the proprietor of "S. Smith and Co." (later Mirror Paints), a well-known varnish manufacturing business. Samuel Smith had come to Australia as a widower with five children in 1890. He remarried in 1900 and had a daughter, Catherine, known as Marie. By late 1913 Samuel had been widowed twice more, and married Victoria's mother Louisa Baker the following year. Victoria recalled that he treated her and her step sister Marie equally.

By now Louisa Smith and Amy Funnell had rekindled their friendship. In 1922 Victoria Baker married Amy's son, Fred Funnell. Initially they lived in Kensington with Samuel and Louisa Smith,



Victoria and Fred Funnell

and worked in the family company. Fred studied chemistry at the Brighton Technical College in 1924 and 1925. Realising that Victoria was more suited to this field, she attended the Working Men's College (now RMIT) and studied both organic and inorganic chemistry in 1930. The following year their only son, also called Fred, was born. By now they were living in Brighton, but weekends were often spent in Upper Beaconsfield. After Samuel Smith's death, his company was jointly owned by Victoria Funnell and her stepbrother Samuel Smith.

In 1925 Samuel Smith's younger son, Sydney Henry Smith, came to Upper Beaconsfield. He bought some of Fred Funnell senior's land, and established the 'Grasmere' property. He also worked as a painter. His two children attended the Upper Beaconsfield Primary school for some time.

Amy's and Fred's only daughter Queenie had married returned soldier William Henry (Bill) Wintle in 1922, and they settled on a large soldier settlement block in Gippsland. As for so many other returned soldiers, it didn't work out, and they came to live at Upper Beaconsfield. The Funnells thought that Cormore Tea Rooms would be a good business opportunity for them, and bought it when the shop came up for sale in January 1928. However, after only a few years, Bill Wintle found a more exciting opportunity, when he first accepted a job in the public service at Maribyrnong, and then when he was appointed as peace officer at Yarralumla in Canberra to take on guard duties at Government House, a position he would hold for 25 years.

Looking for someone else to take over the tea room business, the Funnells invited two of Victoria's cousins, Thomas and Charlie Horner to come to Upper Beaconsfield. They had lost their jobs due to the 1930s Depression. Charlie and his wife Johanna were an enterprising couple. Johanna ran the tea rooms, and Charlie extended the southern end to include a grocery business. Victoria Funnell would visit them on Friday nights, do their books, bank the takings and get a list of requirements from the wholesalers for the following week. However, in 1936, Charlie returned to his old job as a plasterer in Melbourne.

Fred Funnell senior died in November 1936. According to his probate at the time of his death he was the owner

of the Cormore property, then valued at £500. The title, however, was only transferred into the names of Amy Funnell and their son Fred on 5 May 1941. Just a few weeks later the freehold was sold to Charles Alexander Berglund, probably to aid his son Will, who ran a green grocery store there for a time. Previously such a business had been conducted by James Paxton on the opposite side of Emerald Road, before he moved to Berwick in mid-1937.

### **Funnells at White Lodge**

In 1935 Victoria Funnell had bought the 18-acre crown allotment 5 Section D, Parish of Gembrook, through which the then new Beaconsfield-Emerald Road ran. On the smaller part, being just over three acres on the corner of Stoney Creek Road and Beaconsfield-Emerald Road, she designed and built 'White Lodge', a house still standing today. The title was transferred to her mother, Louisa Smith, and the house was completed for their Christmas party in 1937. After Louisa's death the property reverted to Victoria. Around this time Victoria's step-brother Samuel retired, and Victoria bought his share of the company. To be able to pay him, Victoria had to sell her Brighton property, and came to live at 'White Lodge', commuting to work in Kensington every day. After her husband's death in 1965 she moved back to Brighton. In the early 1970s 'White Lodge' was sold to John and Kathleen Poole, who were associated with the local RSL.

Amy Funnell died in Canberra on 6 June 1949, where she had spent the last few months of her life with her daughter's family. She was buried in Berwick Cemetery. Her other sons stayed in the area until the 1960s and 1970s respectively. Arthur 'Digger' Funnell had returned from the First World War with severe injuries, and lived in a shack on Amy Funnell's original property. Robert worked for the Berwick Shire Council, and lived in St Georges Road.

Victoria Funnell died in 1995 and is buried with her husband, her mother and step-father in Brighton Cemetery. The Mirror Paints company operated until early 2018.

Marie Smith, Victoria's step-sister, married Albert Baker, the widower of Louisa's sister Mary Ann, and son of Daniel Baker. John Baker in the photograph (left) was her son.

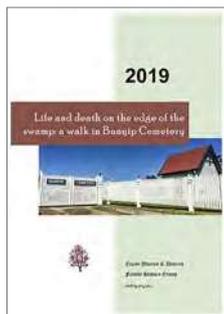
*Marianne Rocke*



*Louisa Smith and Victoria Funnell at White Lodge, Stoney Creek Road, with Louisa's grandsons Fred Funnell and John Baker*

## Publications for sale

### ***Life and death on the edge of the swamp: a walk in Bunyip Cemetery (2019)***



It is one hundred and thirty-three years since ten acres were set aside for a cemetery at Bunyip, however, the official burial register didn't begin until 1894 when six year old William Henry Barnes was buried. Nineteen of the first twenty recorded burials were of children. We believe the first actual burial to take place here was of Henry Manley in August 1886 – his story is featured in this book.

Thirty-one more stories of life and death on the swamp are also told in the book. Elisha Grose, winner of the second Stawell Gift is buried here in an unmarked grave, as is Mary Clifford, a poor deserted child of fourteen years of age who met a cruel and untimely death. As did Catherine O'Donohue while out collecting for charity and Elizabeth Gallaher who died while pregnant with her eighth child. Maria Little's life was cut short while on a bus tour, and Joseph Henderson lost his life at Garfield railway station in 1915.

We also have stories of triumph over tragedy and adversity like returned soldier Edwin Hobson, or the incredible story of how John Mannix overcame a horrific childhood and ultimate desertion by his mother to make a better life for himself and his family at Iona. William Rogers also had a rough start in life, sent to Canada as a Home Child at ten years of age with his seven year old brother Augustus. William eventually came to Australia as an adult and made a wonderful life for himself and his family.

There is an eclectic mix of stories about well-known identities who appear in published histories and are fortunate to have headstones marking their final resting place and stories of people long forgotten, whose only trace is an entry in the register.

*\$15 + \$8 postage + handling*

### ***Ordinary people, interesting lives: A walk in the historic Harkaway Cemetery (2016)***

Abounds with people who needed to grow crops or nurture their livestock to be able to eat, neighbours who no longer remained strangers, faces who became familiar at church or school or the general store or railway station.

Our volunteers researched and wrote the stories of families that travelled thousands of miles to a country on the other side of the world. A country with people who didn't necessarily speak the same language or held the same beliefs.

*\$15 + \$8 postage + handling*

## ***World War 1 walk cemetery books***

### ***Peace at last: a World War 1 walk in Lang Lang Cemetery (2018)***

Stories of 98 soldiers from the Lang Lang district and the 48 families who waved goodbye to them and prayed for their safe return. Not everyone's prayers were answered in the way they'd hoped for, prayers for the return of 24 fathers, sons, husbands and brothers were not answered at all.



### ***They answered the call: a World War 1 walk in Cranbourne Cemetery (2018)***

We tell the stories of courage and sacrifice of 111 men and one woman with Cranbourne area connections.

### ***For some the bell tolled: a World War 1 Walk in Harkaway Cemetery (plus Harkaway Avenue of Honour) (2017)***

This book contains the stories of 36 families of Harkaway who watched, waited and pined for the 66 men and 2 women who enlisted and tried to make it safely back to home. Ten did not return.

### ***Sacrifice and Patriotism: a World War 1 Walk in Pakenham Cemetery (2016)***

Includes stories of sets of brothers, a father and his son, a nurse and a sailor along with two Indigenous soldiers. Soldiers who received awards, served as troopers, gunners, sappers, drivers, and signallers; in the Light Horse, Pioneers, Railway Unit, Anzac Police and Provost Corps and in the Cyclist Battalion.



### ***100 men, 100 years: a World War 1 Walk in Berwick Cemetery (2015)***

Our stories embrace 100 men from over 70 families – all linked to Berwick Cemetery and the community it served. Twenty-eight men did not return; they are still in France, Gallipoli, Belgium, Malta, Palestine, at sea and 6 have no known grave.

*each book \$20 + \$13.80 postage + handling*

## **Cemetery Tour booklets**

Pakenham (2011), Cranbourne (2012), Lang Lang (2013) \$10 each

Berwick (2014), Pakenham (2015) \$15 each

*Add \$8 for postage + handling.*

## **Other books**

### ***Kindred Spirits. NW&DFHG 1989 – 2009***

*\$25 + \$13.80 postage + handling*

### ***Please note:***

***Early Settlers of the Casey-Cardinia District (2010) is now out of print***

More details, order forms and indexes are available on our website at [nwfhg.org.au/publications-2/](http://nwfhg.org.au/publications-2/)