

# FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

ANGLESEA AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER NO.2  
AUGUST 1999

It was decided that because of the speed our group is growing that a interim newsletter would be a good idea, this edition going only to financial members of the Family History Group, the quarterly edition still going to all members of the Historical Group for twelve months.

The main reason for the sudden leap ahead is the extremely generous grant from the Historical Society Committee to enable us to purchase necessary equipment, microfiche and Cd-Roms, that would otherwise take a long time for us raise the necessary funds for

At the moment we have three fiche readers, two computers and a computer printer, we also have all Victorian B.D.Ms that have been released on fiche and on Cd-Rom, as well as the 1881 British Census, which consists of 25 C D s, the Australian and British Vital Records, also on C D the 1851 Census of Devonshire, Norfolk and Cheshire.

As we have already outgrown the original room we were given for research, we have now moved the fiche readers into the main display room, leaving the small room for the computers, this makes researching much more comfortable, particularly seeing more members are taking advantage of the facilities being open for four hours on Monday and Friday.

The August meeting will be a problem solving session, so please bring along

those ancestors you can't find or any other problems you may have ( only family history of course ).

It is hoped that the September Meeting will be a trip to Geelong to have a tour of the Geelong Family History Society research rooms in the morning then onto the Deakin University Woolstores Campus for a look at what they have and maybe a bit of time for some research, we shall have lunch somewhere, possibly at the Deakin Cafeteria. Transport will be arranged either by bus or cars.

At the moment the committee decide what format the meetings will be, but if any members have any suggestions as to what they would like please let somebody on the committee know or bring it up at a meeting.



**The Argus Melbourne,  
Monday June 5, 1854  
For Sale**

Houses warranted complete, for 21 pounds 13 feet 2 inches by 10 feet 4 inches, floored, papered and glazed. John and George Martin, 126 Bourke Street East.

Potatoes, Potatoes, Potatoes- 30 tons best Sydney, in prime order, for sale at Simpson and Courtins, corner of Mincing Lane, opposite the Wharf.

## WHERE DID THEY COME FROM AND WHY DID THEY COME

Once you have researched back to the ancestors that arrived in Australia from overseas, the next step is to discover when they arrived and from where and possibly why.

Firstly can you possibly imagine their feelings when they eventually arrived at their port of destination, wherever that may have been in Australia, Sandridge (Port Melbourne ) Geelong or Portland in Victoria, maybe Sydney, Adelaide or even Freemantle, no matter where they arrived the feelings would have been the same. Having travelled half way round the world in tiny sailing ships, not knowing where they were or what lay ahead of them. It certainly must have been a strange feeling leaving family and friends behind knowing you would probably never see them again.

In the case of convicts it was most likely they were taken straight from court to prison where they awaited transportation, without ever having a chance to say goodbye to loved ones, particularly children like James Copp aged 11 Years sentenced to 7 years for larceny, or at the other end of the age scale 82 year old Dorothy Handland getting 7 years for perjury, but we will deal with the convicts at another time.

Once you have the death certificate of that first arrival you will discover how long he has been in the colony and in which state; from there on it is a matter of checking the shipping passenger lists and hope you can find him there, these records are held at the Public Records Office in Victoria the assisted passenger lists are at Cherry Lane Laverton, whilst the unassisted are at Casselden Place 2 Lonsdale St. Melbourne, If you are lucky you will find him there, otherwise you must look in other places, he may have been a seaman and deserted ship to go in search of gold, some changed their name for various reasons, and in many cases they had their names changed accidentally, as the shipping lists were written on arrival at the port of embarkation and the as majority could not read or write many names were spelt incorrectly.

The main thing is to keep looking and don't give up, there are many clues out there and eventually you may succeed.

One of the more interesting parts of this research is why they came, it is not hard to imagine why many single men arrived here in the early 1850's—GOLD, how many found it is another matter, also it is not hard to work out why the thousands of Irish people arrived—escaping the potato famine, but why would thousands of young women leave their families in England and come to a land that they could not even imagine would be like.

One reason was the lack of unmarried females in Australia, compared to the number of single males, so the British Government really made an effort to even this balance up by initiating what was known as the Bounty System, which had business people in Australia sponsoring these girls, in return the girls worked for these people for a specified period of time, many girls came to Geelong in this manner. To a lesser extent families were brought out by the Bounty System also.



## The first Doctor in Melbourne

Barry Cotter was the son of an Irish Magistrate and was born in Limerick, County Cork, in 1807. His parents were Barry and Eliza Cotter (nee Hayes).

Barry qualified as a Doctor in Ireland, but emigrated to Van Dieman's Land in 1830 to take up a position as Assistant District Surgeon. He held this position at Campbelltown for five Years.

The party with which he travelled from England included Lieutenant- Colonel Kenneth Snodgrass, whose family had as their companion, Inez Seville Fitzgerald. She was the daughter of the Hon. Thomas Fitzgerald, and would eventually become Barry's wife in 1838.

She too had an interesting family history; her father being the son of an Irish peer and her mother Inez Isobelle Seville being a Spanish actress. Her father had died when she was a child, so she had been reared by her grandfather. It was therefore in his charge as a governess and companion to the Snodgrass family, that she voyaged to Australia to settle in Sydney.

In 1835 at the same time as John Batman was arranging a private expedition party across Bass Strait, Barry Cotter was appointed as agent for J.T.Gellibrand and had arrived in Port Phillip aboard the "Norval" on November 5<sup>th</sup>. 1835. On his arrival, John Batman appointed Cotter to manage the settlement until Batman's own concerns with Tasmanian affairs could be straightened out and Batman could transfer his home and interests back to the banks of the Yarra River.

Although the population of Melbourne numbered only about twenty at this time, Dr. Barry Cotter had ideas of establishing a practice as a Doctor. He arranged for a rough weatherboard house to be brought across from Tasmania, and erected this on the corner of Collins and Queen Streets. As well as operating a surgery there, he stocked it with pills, powders, lotions and embrocations, along with miscellaneous stock of other goods. Thus Melbourne's first doctor became established.

Owing to the fact that his small practice did not occupy much of his time, Barry Cotter cared for sheep and watched over the estates of the Port Phillip Association.

He also became a partner with George Smith, in the Port Phillip Hotel. This Same George Smith also founded Scotts Hotel and became a pioneer settler in the Bundoora district.

When the first Melbourne land sales took place on June 1<sup>st</sup>. 1837 Dr. Barry Cotter, purchased a prime block on the corner of Bourke and Swanston streets for which he paid thirty pounds.

In 1838 he married Inez Seville Fitzgerald and soon after was involved in the first duel to occur in Melbourne. His opponent in this harmless yet historic event was George Arden, one of the founders of the Port Phillip Gazette.

Over the years Barry and Inez raised 5 children, and at one time the family travelled back to England, where his wife and children remained in order that the children might become educated. However all the family finally returned to Melbourne.

Dr. Cotter had become a very wealthy man by the time he and his family travelled to England, but while there he had placed power of attorney in the hands of a man who later became

involved in a series of unfortunate financial dealings. By the time Cotter arrived back in Australia he found he was financially ruined.

Thus upon his return to Melbourne, he again set up practice as a doctor, this time in a tenement in Collins Street. However there was now too much competition to enable him to make a success of his practice, so he elected to leave Melbourne and for a time set up practice in Adelaide. From there he drifted into New South Wales, working for a short time at various locations before moving on again.

Eventually, he settled down for some time to practice medicine in Balranald in Western N.S.W. until failing health forced him to retire. He then moved to Swan Hill, but his deteriorating health resulted in his admission to the local hospital where he died in November 1877 at the age of 70 years.



For those researchers who have already found some overseas ancestors, it is not a bad idea to join a Family History Group for that area you are interested in, most counties in Britain have a group and in some cases they have an agent in Australia, through whom you can join and pay your subscription in Australian currency.

In the case of the Kent Family History Group, they put out a newsletter, quarterly which varies in size from 125 pages to 175, so there is plenty of interesting reading in them. The annual subscription for this one is \$28 and the newsletter comes by airmail.