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Gympie Gazette

Newsletter of the Gympie Family History Society Inc.



Gympie
Houses



A Glimpse of
Past Glory

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EDITORIAL

A belated Hello to everyone in this tumultuous year 2020 and welcome to this edition of Gympie Gazette. Who would have thought that after a very successful 2019, we would have to close our rooms and self-isolate at home, only venturing out for essential items, due to this COVID 19 virus. This much slower pace of life has given us time to reflect on our family history and endeavour to gain more knowledge of and appreciate our ancestors. After all, they also had to survive previous pandemics in the years gone by, albeit without the aid of social media. For the present time, the 40th Anniversary of the formation of our society which was to be held in June has been postponed because of the current restrictions, but hopefully it can be held later this year. . Member's contributions are as usual greatly appreciated and, in this edition, Michael Carter has given us his life story in his own words, a wonderful read. COVID 19 restrictions have not only resulted in closure of our rooms but also loss of personal interaction with members, a particularly important aspect of our friendly society... Our rooms may be closed in the interim, but Research officer Denise Juler is still able to research at home and is willing and ready to assist with any queries. I think we shall all look at things differently when this is over. Priorities may change and we shall cherish family and friends even more in the future. V.B.

Society snippets and Back Room Banter:

News from the back room is almost non-existent at this point in time. It seems we had barely reopened our rooms after our extended Christmas/New Year break when the advent of COVID 19 into our lives changed the world as we knew it. In that short interval of opening, we enjoyed the talk on the Local History resources available at our Gympie City Library by Rochelle, the Local History Librarian. Our wonderful record of chancing the weather with our Cemetery Crawls came to a crashing halt in

March when rain beforehand made the walk around the cemetery too risky, resulting in the March crawl postponed to June. With the current restrictions still in place, watch this space for resumption of our Cemetery Crawls. GFHS Inc. Facebook page, ably administered by Conny and Denise continues to be our anchor in the social media world and generates a lot of interest.



We all experienced an Anzac Day with a difference with many members joining in the movement honouring our Anzacs with their personal driveway tribute on Anzac Day. Last year saw a change in Presidency for our Club. After many years of being our President, Margaret Long stepped down. She has been a tower of strength over the past years and we wish her all the best in the future. Robyn Dahl our new President, is doing wonderful things with grants etc. and keeping things running smoothly. Our Cemetery Crawl dates ,along with several other planned events have been thrown into confusion, all dependant on when the current restrictions are eased, or better still, lifted. The monthly social lunch get-together has been a big casualty of the restrictions and one we will be happy to resume when the time is right.

Pam Jones, convener of the DNA interest group has submitted this update. *“As you are aware we have not had a DNA meeting this year. I have had a lot of time to put together what our future meetings direction will be. Have you made progress on your DNA matches? We have had quite a few changes to the Ancestry site that gives extra help to sorting your matches. I have the approval to go ahead with one on one sessions to help you further your DNA knowledge, which will help us move forward with our monthly meeting to show interesting topics on DNA. A question for you till we meet is-- How to create the best family tree for DNA matches? Focus on biological branches. A wide tree is usually better than a tall tree. I look forward to resuming our monthly meetings when restrictions are lifted. Stay safe till we meet again.”* Pam Jones.

Reopening of the Rooms: To be advised when restrictions are lifted.

Publications for Sale. *Gympie’s Great War book series is now complete. The series comprises six quality books that will stand the test of time as a reminder of what the Gympie region experienced through the long, challenging years of WW1. Each book in the series is \$30 (postage is \$14 for up to and including 3 books). If you wish to order and pay by deposit, bank account details are: **BSB 633000 Account # 164520546** just email secretary@gfhs.com.au with your order and mail address.*



Gympie’s Great War books proudly displayed by society members.

THE HOUSE THAT FRED BUILT.



What a sight it must have been when this stately home stood proudly on the corner of Channon and Myall Streets. The home would have commanded magnificent views over the town and the Mary Valley.

By the time this house was built, architects and builders were adapting their designs to meet the requirements of the Queensland climate.

Although, this house is a typical example of the Australian tropical house or “Queenslander” it had a few features that made it special. One of the special features was the attic rooms and the Juliet balcony on the front of the house. Usually the roof cavity was left empty to try and capture any cool air. Probably coming off the main bedroom, the views from balcony must have been spectacular.

The gardens must also have been spectacular. Carefully pruned and tended they must have been a feature of the home.

The house was the home of Frederick Charles Stuart Murray ‘Fred’ and his family. He was the founder of the business later to become Murray Views. Originally from Scotland, Fred came to Gympie in 1906 to manage a local photographic studio. He married Winifred Shaw in 1908 and their first home was in Barter Street, Gympie. According to the 1919 Electoral Roll, Fred and Winifred were now living at “The Bend” which is the location of this house. Information from the Murray family has it that Fred built the house in about 1919. A keen bowler and tennis player, the house boasted a bowling green and tennis court at the rear. It became quite the social hub of the town as people came for tennis and bowls parties and to take tea on the sweeping verandah. Perhaps that is Fred lounging playfully on the front lawn.

Sadly, this house was demolished in the 1960’s to make way for brick houses and very little of its history remains. If you can contribute any information to this story, please leave a comment or a message on our Facebook page.



*Frederick
Charles
Stuart
Murray*



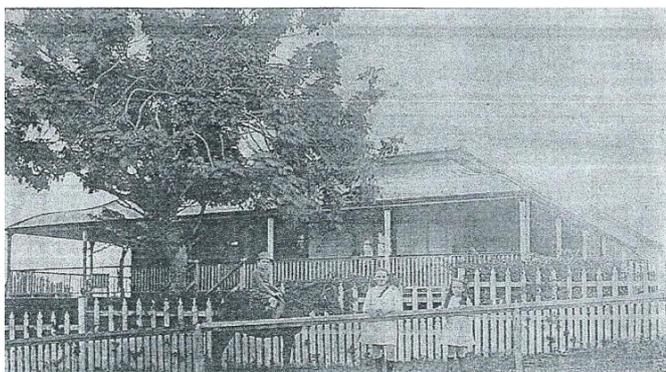
This photo was taken outside Fred Murray’s home Maroa, on the corner of Myall and Channon Street.

THE THOMAS HOUSE. ALDERMAN L J THOMAS - MAYOR OF GYMPIE - (1920-1924), (1924-1927), (1927-1930), (1937-1941) In the early days of the Gympie goldfield, there were diggers from all corners of the globe trying their luck at prospecting. One such family was the **THOMAS** family from the coal mining town of Glyncorrwg in Wales. David **THOMAS**, together with his wife Evis and son Luke John travelled from Wales to Rockhampton, arriving on the ship “**SCOTTISH HERO**” on 29th January, 1884.

Who would have imagined that this 2 year old boy would grow up and become Mayor of Gympie in later years? Not only once but would carry out four terms. Unfortunately, he passed away during his last term. He was educated at the One Mile State School from which he entered the office of Messrs. **MAXEY** and **MOODIE**, mining secretaries, where he remained until 1912, by which time he had become the firm’s chief clerk. Resigning that year, he started business in the Market Square – “where buyers and sellers meet” –entering into a partnership with Mr. R. M. **MOORE** as Auctioneers and Commission Agents. Sale yards were erected at the rear of the premises and cattle, horse and pig sales were conducted here until the late 1920s. Thereafter, the sales were conducted at yards at the Gympie Railway Station.

In 1913 he was elected as an Alderman of the Gympie City Council. In the following years, Luke was closely associated with the Fire Brigade Board, Hospital Board, School of Arts, Memorial Park, Cemetery Trust, Show Society, Friendly Society, Braemar Lodge and was a founding Member of the Gympie Eisteddfod Committee and a Trustee of the Welsh Church in Crown Road.

In 1904, Luke married Miss Agnes **NEILL**, a daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John **NEILL**, pioneers of the Monkland district. He had a family of four children - Rachel, Bryce, Jean and Jack. Luke and Agnes lived in the lovely old home which stood on the corner of Wickham Street and Channon Street. Over the years, there were several owners with it being used as flats in the early fifties.



The family home (c.1915) of Luke John Thomas and his wife Agnes Jane at No. 2 Channon Street on the corner of Wickham Street. The Thomas children in the foreground are, David Bryce (b. 1907), Rachel Sarah (b. 1905) and Agnes Jean (b. 1909) Source: (Photo - Cooloola Shire Library) (The Way We Were, p.9 - The Gympie Times of Friday, April 16, 2004)

Following relocation, alterations and lots of tender loving care, it then morphed into the wonderful home it is today, complete with beautiful wide verandahs and a central hallway. All very typical of our “Queenslander” homes of yore.

The “Thomas House” as it is today, relocated renovated and restored to its former glory.





Wedding Bells.

A quiet and very pretty wedding was celebrated in St. Patrick's Church, Gympie, on Easter Monday, April 9th. The contracting parties being Rose, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs. Arthur McMahon, "Rossmore", Inglewood Hill, Gympie, and Edmond, fourth son of the late Mr. T. O'Connor, Mt. Pleasant, Gympie. The Very Rev. Dean Horan officiated. The bride, who was given away by her father, was attired in a bridal gown of Spanish lace mounted on an underslip of white satin and trimmed with seed pearls and ninon. The train, which hung from the shoulders, was of fine Brussels net over pink silk trimmed with pink bebe roses and seed pearls. Her beautiful embroidered veil (which was lent by her sister, Mrs. A. Lydement) was arranged in a cap fashion and fastened with a wreath of pink bebe roses. She carried a bouquet of Easter lilies and other choice blooms, tied with white satin streamers, presented by Mrs. J. Bush.

The bride's two sisters acted as bridesmaids. Miss C.M. McMahon (chief), wore a dainty frock of pale blue crepe de Chine, black hat relieved with pale blue, Miss M.E.McMahon was daintily attired in a pretty gown of pink silk. She wore a pretty pink hat trimmed with black lace and roses. Both bridesmaids wore gold rings, gifts from the bridegroom. Their bouquets were comprised of pale pink roses and asparagus fern. Little Miss Una Vowles, cousin of the bride, acted as train bearer; she was frocked in white crepe merle relieved with pink, hat to match, and wore a gold brooch, a gift from the bridegroom.

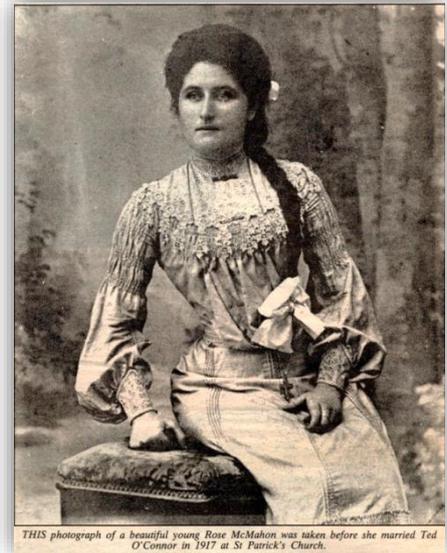
The bride's present to the bridegroom was a suitcase, and the bridegrooms to the bride a silver manicure set. Mr. H.T.Heymer, of Wynnum, took the role of best man, and Mr. Arthur McMahon, brother of the bride) as groomsman. After the ceremony the wedding party motored to Murray's studio, where they were photographed, and thence to "Rossmore", Inglewood Hill, the residence of the bride's parents, where a sumptuous breakfast was laid in the large dining room, which had been decorated by friends and sisters of the bride with flowers and flags. The chief feature of the table was the beautiful wedding cake which stood in the centre of the table under a wedding bell, which was suspended from the ceiling. During the breakfast, the usual toasts were honoured. The catering was done by the City Café.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor left by the afternoon train for Sandgate, where the honeymoon was to be spent. The bride's travelling dress was of navy blue silk trimmed with floral; her large American sailor hat was black tagel straw trimmed with cerise silk and roses. The bride's wedding gown was made by Miss E. Baty, Mt. Pleasant, and her travelling dress by Miss Dornan, Inglewood Hill.

The presents received were costly and numerous. Including cheques from the following:-Mrs. A. Shanahan (Townsville), Mr. and Mrs. T. O'Connor (Gympie), Mr. and Mrs. P. Earner (Sandgate), Mr. and Mrs. J.T.Clare (Eidsvold), Mr. and Mrs. W.J.Hayes (Chinchilla), Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor (Brisbane).

Mrs O'Connor was born in Gympie in 1886" and died at the age of 99 after spending a week in hospital away from her home and family in all her life. Although she spent most of her life in Gympie, as a young woman, Mrs. O'Connor worked for five years as a governess at Augathella, a job for which she was recommended by her former teachers, the nuns at Gympie's Sisters of Mercy Convent."

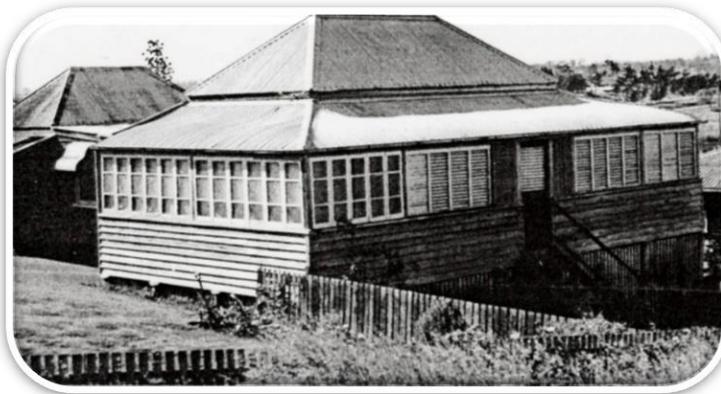
It wasn't long after she returned to Gympie that governess Rose McMahon met her future husband Ted O'Connor, who was a battery hand in the mines. They married on Easter Monday in 1917 and eventually had a family of three sons, Arthur, Francis and Neil. In 1932, the family moved to a house in Jubilee Street Inglewood Hill, purchased from a family member at a cost of £ 325. On New Year's Day 1932, Rose O'Conner began writing in a diary and the first entry reads: *"Turned out a beautiful day. Went to Mass at Monkland, Father McSweeny celebrated. Our first visitor was Mrs. Harman with bags of tomatoes and cucumbers. We went out to the swimming carnival and sat in Ramsey's paddock. Had a good evening."*



THIS photograph of a beautiful young Rose McMahon was taken before she married Ted O'Connor in 1917 at St. Patrick's Church.

Writing in her diary became a daily habit with Rose O'Connor, recording details of family life, Gympie events, church happenings, friends and the all-important weather. Her last diary entry was in May 1983. *"Cold, dark wet day. Dr.PV Kenny here 9 am. Neil (son) and I received Holy Communion at Mass offered for Dean family. Enjoyed my lunch.....Catholic Ball is booked out."* Although Ted O'Connor

predeceased her in February 1949, Rose remained living at "Glenveigh" in Jubilee Street Inglewood Hill until her death on July 15th1985. She was ninety-nine years old, a gracious and well respected lady of the Monkland area at the time of her death. (*Gympie Times Weekend: Saturday, April 27, 1991---1.*)



Gympie woman dies at 99.
(*Gympie Times. 15th July 1985.*)

Long-time resident, Mrs Roseanna O'Connor, died this week just eight months short of her century. She will be buried today after a requiem mass at St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

For more than 50years Mrs O'Connor has lived in the same house in Jubilee Street and four months ago it was where she was guest of honour at a party to celebrate her 99th birthday. However, on Monday after-noon, after a short illness, she died in the Gympie General Hospital. Mrs O'Connor is survived by her son Neil, who has looked after her for the past four years. He took over the role from his brother, Arthur, who had lived with his mother up until his death. Another son, Francis, also predeceased his mother. Mr Neil O'Conner said yesterday that his mother, a widow since 1949, was thankful all her life for her good friends and neighbours.

Ed: *Jubilee Street Inglewood hill was named to commemorate Queen Victoria's 50th Jubilee. In 1887. The Origin of Inglewood road and Hill is unknown. (Taken from How Gympie's Streets Were Named compiled by Mr. G Thomas.)*

Nurses from World War 1

(Born or trained in Gympie)



Alice Elizabeth Branch Harding

Alice Elizabeth Branch HARDING

Alice Elizabeth Branch Harding was born on the 13th January 1869 in Gympie, Qld to parents Edward John Branch Harding and Hannah nee Watts.

Published in *the Nashville Times, Gympie and Mary River Mining Gazette on the 9th February 1869*

BIRTHS HARDING – On 13th January, at her residence, Caledonian ill.

Alice was the 5th of eight children born to parents Edward and Hannah with just three surviving to adulthood. The family returned to live in Victoria when Alice was very young. Her father died in 1874 and with the death of her mother in 1896, Alice made the decision to take up missionary work, joining the China Inland Mission for work in the remote interior of China. She sailed from Sydney on 28th October 1897 with Alice noted as the 50th missionary, arriving in Shanghai on 21st November.

After undertaking fulltime language studies for several months, she was appointed to work at Si-hsiang, along with two other missionaries. The missionaries continued their work there until the Boxer uprising and murder of westerners made the area unsafe for the women and they escaped by boat to Shanghai in September 1900. In 1901, Alice found herself at a crossroad in her life when she was reported as not strong enough to continue in her work with the China Inland Mission. A fellow missionary was Matron at the CIM Home in Shanghai and offered Alice work as a nurse. Soon Alice settled into a new career as a nurse. She then went on to work for the China Inland Mission from c1902-1916, then transferring to the Shanghai Municipal Nursing Service.

World War 1 Service

Enlisting in Australia on the 18th of June 1917, whilst she was on furlough from China, Alice embarked on the SS Somali in Melbourne arriving in Bombay India at the end of July. Posted to the Gerard Freeman Thomas Hospital in Bombay then transferred to the 44th British Hospital in Deolali, in mid August 1918 sees her posted to the 34th Welsh General Hospital then onto the Stationary Hospital in Bangalore in early September.

Postings saw her back at the Gerard Freeman Thomas Hospital in Bombay by mid February 1919 however by the end of February she had embarked on the SS City of Cairo for return to Australia where her appointment was terminated on 1st June 1919.



At some time prior to Alice's enlistment she must have applied to the Shanghai Hospital for leave, as she wrote in one of her many letters home, published on **Tuesday 4th June 1918 in the Euroa Gazette Vic: (excerpt only)**

NURSE'S LIFE IN INDIA I received word from Shangai hospital.

They said I had done the right thing in taking up war work, but it was a good thing that

I did not wait for permission because I would not have had it granted.

I must go back and finish after the war is over. When will that be?

Alice returned to Nursing in Shanghai from 1919 - c1937.

Alice Elizabeth Branch Harding never married, she died on 19th

July 1958 in Brighton Vic aged 89.

Information gathered and compiled from the following

Sources. By Conny V. and Val B.

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au>

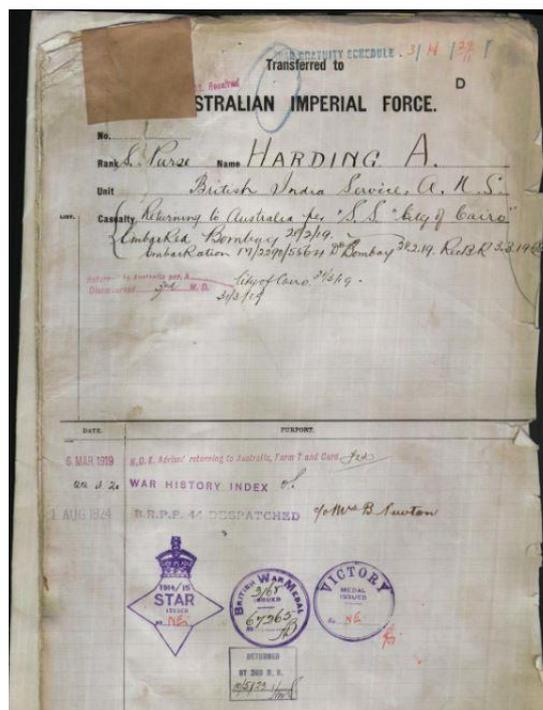
<https://www.ancestry.com.au> (public member's tree)

<https://trove.nla.gov.au>

<https://www.bdm.qld.gov.au>

<https://billiongraves.com>

(Most details sourced from 'trove', ancestry and naa files).





My - Two Life Stories

Michael John Carter

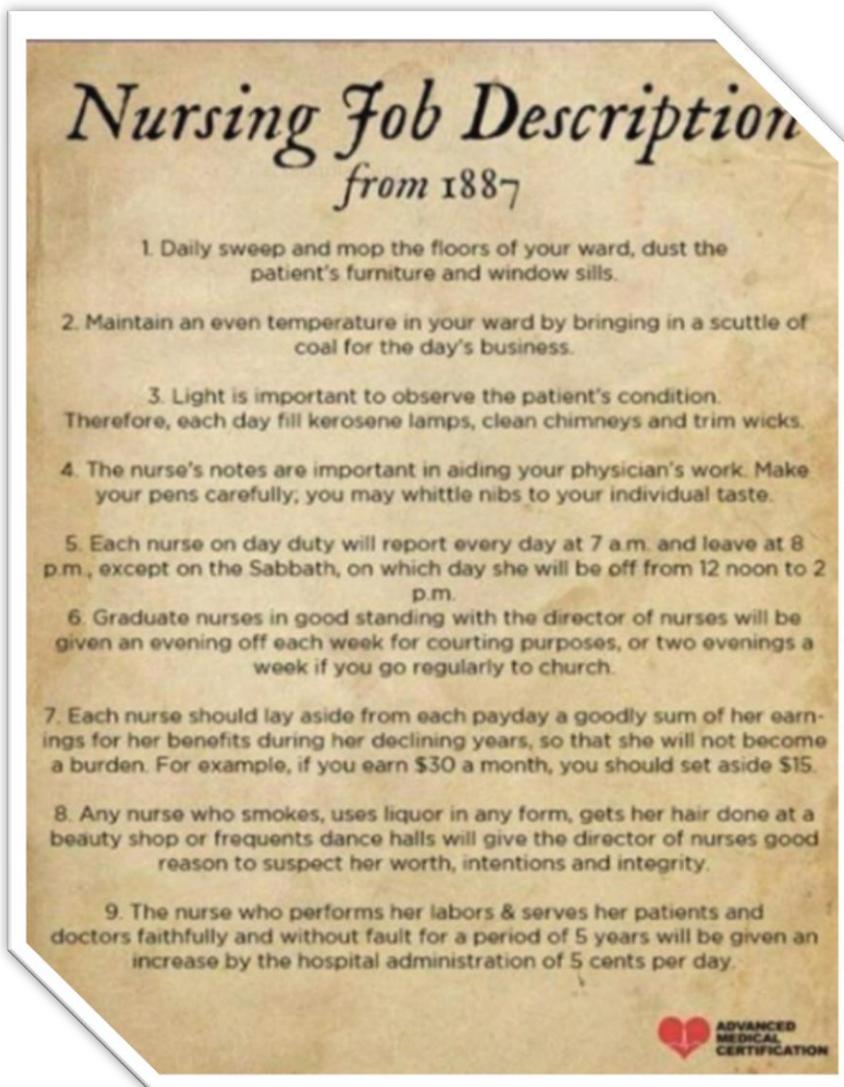
My very first life memory is of sitting on a flour covered bench, beside me was another child.

Where this occurred was at the Bakery in Acland (photo) which my parents were operating at the time.



At the age of around 7 or 8 years, I told my parents of my memory and remember so vividly the look on their faces. More a look of fear, than surprise

that I was able to remember something from such a young age. I would have been between 6 and 10 months of age at the time! I was told that the other child was the son of friends of mum and dad and the subject was closed.



Acland was a very small town and as I was approaching school age my parents decided to move to Toowoomba where there were better education facilities.

In 1962 we moved to Warwick where my father had been offered a job as foreman for a local bakery. After finishing school, I joined my father working at the bakery, first as a delivery boy on the bread delivery run, then as apprentice baker.

I made some great and enduring friendships and relationships in Warwick. In 1968 I met Margaret Miller, daughter of a local businessman, she told me early in our relationship that she was an adoptee who had been born to a young mother who was unable to look after her, and her parents had adopted her. I remember feeling sorry for her and how she must have felt upon learning about this, especially since she had been told at around the age of ten years, by a school friend who was also an adoptee.

We later found ourselves in a similar situation, Margaret was pregnant with our child and her father would not allow us to marry. Margaret was sent away to live with her sister where she would relinquish our child after the birth.

We kept in touch and took up the relationship upon Margaret's return to Warwick, and as soon as possible we married and went on to have two more children, a daughter and son.

In 1976 I began study for an Amateur Radio Operators License and passed the Certificate of Proficiency in 1978. This interest in electronics led to my next job with the, then Australian Post and Telecommunication Dept., as a Technician.

Margaret's adoptive parents had both passed away, and we had moved to Toowoomba, in 1985 she decided to search for her birth mother. JIGSAW QLD conducted the search and located her birth mother, one of their volunteers acted as mediator. Margaret's biological parents lived in Gympie and had married three years after her birth and relinquishment for adoption in 1952. A happy reunion followed, with her biological mother and father and three full brothers.

The assistance provided by JIGSAW QLD prompted me to join JIGSAW to give back as a volunteer. My role was researcher and mediator in my spare time in the Toowoomba area, assisting adoptees with research and outreach. After study I gained a certificate in social work and qualified as an Accredited Adoptions Counsellor for the then, Department of Family Services – Adoptions Branch. Over time I pieced together a difficult search for our relinquished son. Researching school registrations in the Rockhampton area where he was born resulted in a positive result for the birth date and the school confirmed the child was an adoptee. An electoral roll search resulted in a positive for the address of the family. Having no idea if he was aware of his adoption, I contacted his adoptive parents to let them know of our situation and of the existence of his biological siblings, stating that we would welcome a reunion if this was also their wish, leaving the decision with them. A few months later his wonderful adoptive mum invited us to meet our son and the family in 1987, our families have been blended ever since.

My dad passed away in 1985 in Toowoomba and then in 1993 mum was hospitalized with a serious illness. I would visit mum in hospital of an evening, one evening she asked me to collect a folder from her home which contained some important papers. I called in at her place on the way home from the hospital and collected the folder. Once home I had a quick look through the contents, nothing out of the ordinary, I'd seen it all before. That evening before bed, Margaret was going through the folder when she said these words, which I will never forget..... "Oh my god Mike your birth certificate only has 8 items"

In my role as adoption counsellor I had been contacted on so many occasions by people who were suspicious that they may be adopted but did not wish to approach family to ask. My response was stock standard "do you have a full birth certificate"? "check this, it should contain 11 Items, the certificate of an adopted person only contains 8 items"

Had I ever checked my own full birth certificate????????????????????????????????????

The thought had never occurred to me. I looked like my maternal grandfather and nobody had ever suggested that I may be adopted.

At two o'clock the following morning the phone rang, it was the nursing sister, mum had passed away.....

In the morning I called my aunt, and after I told her of mum's passing I said that I had discovered the secret. She was so relieved and was able to tell me my birth mother's name, she said that when mum and dad collected me from the Orphanage they had promised the Sisters Of Mercy that they would not tell me that I was adopted.

At 41 years of age discovering this secret and dealing with the loss of my adoptive mum took its toll, but I was determined to carry on and find my biological family. After things had settled down following mum's funeral, I commenced a search of QLD electoral rolls. I found my birth mother who was living in Bundaberg and contacted her. My adoptive parents had kept my given names, and my birth mother was given the names of the parents who adopted me. She had kept a track on us using electoral rolls and telephone directories over the years. A happy reunion followed, a large family of uncles, aunts and cousins, but no siblings, my birth mother had not had any more children. They accepted me as though there was not a day missing and this continues to today.

My birth mum told me my birth fathers name, he also lived in Toowoomba as fate would have it! She said she would contact him for me, she had kept track on him too! My birth father wasn't receptive to a reunion, until his wife learned of my existence. A wonderful woman, she was instrumental in our meeting, it was like looking in the mirror! A reunion with his family followed, my brothers and sisters, uncles and all. Again, our families blended and remain so to this day. Strangely I used to have a beer on Friday afternoons at the same hotel as my brothers and would buy raffle tickets from my uncle, this gave us all a laugh when we met.

My birth mum was able to fill in some blanks for me. Her family were then living in Mackay where her parents made arrangements through the Catholic Church for her to live in a Brisbane Covent with the Sisters of Mercy until my birth and adoption. I was born at Nundah Private Hospital, then transferred to the Diamantina Receiving Depot and Infants' Home at Woolloowin. My birth mum came each day to be with me and resisted adoption for as long as possible, signing the adoption papers when I was six months of age, and returning home to Mackay.

No wonder my "Adoptive Parents" as they turned out to be, looked somewhat shocked when I told them of my early memory, of sitting on a floury bench with another child. They had not told me of my adoption! Did they wonder what else I remembered about this time of my life?? Sadly they never broached the subject it was kept a secret by all of my adoptive family. My cousins all knew but never told me. So did the staff at the QLD. Dept. of Family Service, Adoptions Section. When I applied for the position of Adoptions Counsellor and during the preparation course prior to my appointment. They all knew!

In the 1980's I visited the Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery, where I asked for the location of the grave of "baby Carter" stillborn to my parents. The record listed the burial occurring in 1949. I believed this to be incorrect at the time as I had been told that mum could have no further children following the difficult pregnancy and stillbirth, which should have been post my birth in 1951..... So, as it turned out I was adopted as mum could have no further children after the birth of their first in 1949.

In 2008 we moved to Gympie to be nearby and support Margaret's ageing biological parents, with the bonus of having Aunts, Uncles, and Cousins all living in the city.

In the 1980's, I had begun researching my family history, prior to the discovery that I was adopted, and now had to start all over again, this time researching my biological family. The research was interesting as it turns out I was related to many of my friends and schoolmates from Warwick. In 1848 my GG Grandfather William Chadburn joined the Leslie Brothers on Canning Downs Station as the Head Groom, where in 1851, he married Louisa Sarah Stokes who was Emmeline Leslie's assistant/servant. They had three children (one my G Grandfather William Henry Chadburn). In 1857 my GG Grandfather drowned while crossing a flooded Condamine river on horseback, returning from registering the birth of my G grandfather.

His wife (my GG Grandmother) Louisa Sarah Chadburn remarried in 1860 to John Robert Howe and they had 5 children, one of whom was John Robert (Jackie) Howe, the famous shearer. The Leslies and Chadburns were among the first white settlers on the Darling Downs, a heritage I'm quite proud of.

Today I am in contact with a number of ancestors of William Chadburn and Louisa Stokes, many of whom live in Warwick. I would love to have been able to share this information with my loved adoptive parents.

My adoptive and biological family, Margaret's biological and adoptive family, and the adoptive family of our son, we are all part of one big blended family. Not surprisingly when referring to our family members, outsiders can find it difficult to understand! But we get it! This is my story.

ED: Michael's story in his words.

In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage- to know who we are and where we come from. Without this enriching knowledge there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness. (Alex Haley. - Rootes)

The man the A.I.F knew as Edward Wager # 3758B

Edward Wager, his true name was Theodore Andersen from Gothenburg, Sweden where he was born on 1st June 1881. He was working as a general labourer in June 1913 at Albany Downs and Hillsborough Station both are properties of approximately 22 square miles located south west of Mitchell, Queensland. At this time he was always short of money and spent what he had freely in the nearby hotels of Mitchell and Roma. During his time in the region he met and became good friends with George Llewellyn Ellis. By 1913 George and his wife Eliza had moved to Cooran where George worked as a dairyman at the property named Fernleigh. Edward later followed also hoping to find work.



At the age of 36 years Edward had found work as a labourer and was also living at Cooran when he enlisted for WW1 on 23rd June 1917. He gave his good friend George L. Ellis as his contact person. Edward was given the service number 3758 and assigned to the 10th reinforcements, 49th Battalion. On the 27th July he arrived in Sydney where he boarded the troopship H.M.A.T A7 'Medic' that sailed a few days later. The ship sailed via Halifax, Nova Scotia where on 21st September 1917 Private Edward Wager was transferred to the S.S. 'Orita' before finally disembarking at Liverpool, England on 3rd October 1917.

Training was undertaken at Codford Camp from his arrival in October 1917 and on throughout the winter until orders came to proceed to France in mid-January. Edward was illegally absent from camp for a period of two days during this period and on his return was fined 12 days' pay.

During his time in France from January 1918 he was engaged in defending the supply line along the Amiens Albert Road. The enemy used gas shelling to disrupt troop movements successfully taking a number of soldiers out of action with the effects of gas poisoning. Edward was one of these men who were so struck down that they required stretchers to take them to the Field Medical Unit for treatment.

He and the other soldiers were then moved for further treatment through the Lines of Communication to the 26th General Hospital at Etaples suffering from Pyrexia of unknown origin (high fevers with unknown cause). After two weeks he was still not a well man, so he began the transfer to England where he was admitted to Whipps Cross War Hospital. His rehabilitation and recovery were spent at Leytonstone Infirmary, Colchester Military Hospital and later the Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield,

Colchester for convalescence. Furlough was granted for two weeks in May- June 1918 and he reported to No.1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny on his return to await further orders.

Edward again went absent without leave (AWL) for a period from 23rd July 1918 to when apprehended in London on 17th August 1918. He was charged with this offence on 18th August and held in custody at Longbridge Deverell until a District Court Martial (DCM) on 30th August 1918.

He was found guilty and forfeited a total of 84 days' pay. From the end date of the Court Martial there is no record of where he was stationed or held, although it is most likely he returned to Sutton Veny.

He was guilty of being absent without leave twice more during November – December 1918. On being apprehended on 11th December, Edward underwent a medical assessment confirming that from the effect of the gas poisoning he was found to have developed a heart condition and early senility. He was declared as permanently unfit for general service and would therefore not be offered as a soldier. On 2nd January 1919 he was invalided home to Australia and departed from Avonmouth, England aboard the troopship 'Karmala'. The ship arrived in Moreton Bay, Brisbane on 25th February 1919 and on disembarking from the Karmala he was transferred to 1st. Military Division, Brisbane where he spent some time in hospital.

Private Edward Wager was discharged from the A.I.F on 20th March 1919 eventually returning to Hillsborough Station, Mitchell seeking work, but there was no work to be had. He became itinerant and roamed the south west region in search of work, frequently becoming lost in the bush and rescued by the local police, given food and lodging before being allowed to leave. In 1920, after one such event, he was admitted to the Goodna Asylum as a mentally incapacitated person then transferred to the Willowburn Asylum at Toowoomba on 20th July 1920. When he was discharged on the 3rd August 1920 an insanity file was created.

He returned to the only area that he knew well, the south west of Queensland where this time he found work at Albany Downs. On 13th December 1920 he stopped at the Court House Hotel in Mitchell where he asked the manager Cornelius Cooke to look after some of his earnings from Albany Downs as he was heading into Roma on the midnight train and then into Brisbane. Of the £40 earnings that Edward had in his possession the manager was to hold £10 for his return and Edward left for Roma. However, these back up funds were soon eroded as on 15th December Edward sent a telegram from Roma to Mr. Cooke saying, "*gone stiff wire me two pounds*". A few days later on the 20th December Mr. Cooke received another telegram saying, "*wire me two more pounds*" again he complied with this request. The following day Mr. Cooke received a phone call from a man named Hoskins asking for 30/- for Edward, as he wanted to come back to Mitchell, again this was sent to Roma. It seems Edward had been on a drinking bout in Roma during his time away and never made it to Brisbane. On 26th December 1920 Edward caught the regular rail service from Roma to Charleville heading for Mitchell some 24 miles (40Klm) distant. When the train stopped at Amby mid-way between Roma and Mitchell, Edward alighted and headed for the hotel.

The train left without him and seeing no alternative Edward, who was by this time well inebriated, decided to walk to Mitchell some 14 miles further up the track. In the summer of 1921 temperatures were above average. Edward's death occurred in incredibly sad circumstances, as he died alone in the scrub.

A young lad found his body slumped against a tree on the boundary fence of the property known as Benbrook Hill just outside of the small township of Amby. Edward had walked in the heat without provisions or water and under the effects of alcohol. Mr. B. C Hohmann J.P, at the Magisterial Inquiry in Mitchell on 10th February 1921, recorded Edward's death as 27th December 1920 from dehydration. Mr. J.F.H Lutze J.P. ordered a burial on 5th January 1921 and Edward's body was buried in Amby Cemetery presumably in a pauper's grave as only a small amount of the £10 that Edward had put aside for his return was left.

Today the gravesite is unmarked and undistinguishable from the others in this small cemetery. The Queensland death certificate records his name and surname as Theodore Andersen known as Edward Wager.

So how did he come by the name Edward Wager? The clue is on the front page of his enlistment papers where he gave his birthplace as West Hartlepool, England. Record searches proved that he was never born there as the later inquest confirmed. As details are hard to find about this man the circumstantial evidence has been used to provide a theory. The inquest following his death proved that only John William Marsh of Hillsborough Station knew that Edward's true name was Theodore Andersen from Sweden and that he had a mother and a sister still living in Sweden. His relatives could never be contacted through a lack of information at the time. Theodore Andersen had first arrived in Australia as a seaman aboard the 'Campania' that left Liverpool in 1901. The following years until his next encounter in Australia may have been as the mechanic on board this ship or others. In 1908, while crossing Carrington Bridge in Newcastle, NSW he was stabbed in the abdomen by another drunk who demanded the bottle of whisky that Theodore was using. By the time he was discharged from hospital his ship had sailed leaving him to find work in Australia. Being classed as a deserter from his ship this may have been when his new persona of Edward Wager of England came into use.

West Hartlepool, on the east coast of England, was a seafaring town with a fine harbor to which ships from Sweden and other countries would trade. It is likely that Theodore, being a seaman, had arrived in port and headed to the hotel. In all likelihood this is where he first heard the story of a man named Edward Wager from Derbyshire who had brutally murdered his wife of three months Harriett in 1867. The original Edward Wager had been tried and sentenced to convict transportation to Australia. Using this name Theodore enlisted for service giving his birthplace as West Hartlepool, England. *Robyn Dahl.*

The Real Edward Wager.

ED: to bring closure to this Edward Wager story,

At the Derbyshire March Assizes Edward Wager faced trial for "willfully and of malice afore thought, killing and murdering Harriett Wager". He was sentenced to death. The sentence of death was duly commuted, and Edward Wager was sentenced to penal servitude for life. Edward Wager was thirty nine years old on arrival in Western Australia. He was 5'8" tall, brown hair, hazel eyes, fresh complexion, stout, enlargements on the right hand that has been broken, literate, protestant. He died on 24th December 1885 at his house on the Helena River, Western Australia. Official cause of death was given as "That the deceased died from natural causes, and by the visitation of God"

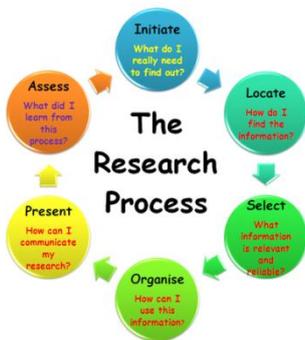
(TROVE: Eastern Districts Chronicle 26 December 1885 p3.)

RESEARCH FEES

Members Free (when visiting personally to the rooms and doing your own research although we are happy to help guide you or if you are from interstate and are not able to do your own research)

For Research Requests: Denise Juler is our very well-credentialed and enthusiastic Research officer who goes over and above in her response to the many and varied queries she receives, i.e.: family history, land records, house records, cemetery records etc.

Email: research@gfhs.com.au or mail to: GFHS, P O Box 767, Gympie QLD 4570



Non Members (at our discretion)

Mail & Internet Inquiries

\$40.00 Australia

\$45.00 overseas

\$5.00 per name for lookups from our indexes published on the website.

The Research Process Explained:

Once you have made your enquiry, we look to see what information we can find quickly, then we contact you to see if you wish to proceed and advise of the fees.

If you do, we ask for \$40 (or \$45 overseas, to cover extra postage).

Once payment is received, we then investigate either your specific queries or start at the beginning and check cemetery records, BDM registers, local registers, school registers, pedigree charts, some shipping, local history books, Gympie Times records, previous cemetery crawl presentations, previous research requests, mining, electoral rolls and so the list goes on.

Payment can be by either cheque sent to our P O Box as above or direct deposit into our Bank account is another option for those who feel comfortable with the method.

Details of our bank account are: BSB 633 000 Account# 164 520 546 and is with Bendigo Bank.

We ask that you confirm by email if possible when you have made the payment or simply put your name in the reference box. Then we can allocate your payment and get on with the research. **Denise Juler.**

GYMPIE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC. OFFICE BEARERS 2019-20	
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MEMBERSHIP FEES	Annual fees are due by 31st August each year Family Membership \$45 (Two members of an immediate family residing at the one address)		
PRO RATA till 31st August	Dec - Feb	Mar - May	June - Aug
SINGLE MEMBERSHIP	\$40	\$30	\$20
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP	\$50	\$40	\$30
LIBRARY HOURS:	Wednesday 9.30am -2pm	Friday 9.30am – 12pm	Saturday 1pm – 4:00pm

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Gympie Family history Society Inc.

GFHS Inc. Monthly Meetings
Second Saturday of each month at 2pm.

Location: 1 Chapple Street, Gympie
Ph. 5482 8211
All welcome

