



Tomaree Tattler

Journal of the
Tomaree Family History Group,
Nelson Bay NSW Inc.
July 2011



TOMAREE FAMILY HISTORY GROUP NELSON BAY NSW INC.

President	Elaine Monro	49190148	elaine99@tpg.com.au
Vice President	Gordon Thwaite	49843638	gordonjt@tpg.com.au
Secretary	Marilynne Sharp	49810177	marilynnejcullen@gmail.com
Treasurer	Marie Williamson	49811199	bmwil00s@hotmail.com
Membership Person	Ann Watson	49811556	kevinann@nelsonbay.com
Web Person	Michelle Smith	49191560	smithw_m@bigpond.net.au
Librarian	Andrea Ryder	49844380	rodyder@bigpond.com
Committee	Vince Hughes	49191017	hughes87@bigpond.com
	Graham Chapman	49847092	grachap@bigpond.com

T.F.H.G meets on the first Saturday of the month [except January] in the Boronia Room of the Tomaree Library, Town Circuit, Salamander Bay at 9.30am

The Group's Resource Room in the Library is open every Monday morning from 9.30 am - 12.pm and on the 1st Saturday of the month after our workshop and on Saturdays 9.30 - 11:45am. Use of the resources is free to members.

Address for correspondence:
The Secretary
Tomaree Family History Group Nelson Bay NSW Inc.
18 Wynne Cr
Corlette NSW 2315
Email: marilynnejcullen@gmail.com

Visit our Website

www.tomareefamilyhistory.com



Contents

1.	Publications	1
2.	President’s Message	1
3.	Dates for the Diary	2
4.	Pioneer Register	2
5.	Who Was My Grandmother?	3
	5.1 My Paternal Grandmother – May Wakeham	3
	5.2 Ellen Olive Tracey	4
6.	Learning English	6
7.	Bewdley’s Buried Treasure by Peter Johnson & David Thomas	8

Welcome to the 2nd edition of the *Tomaree Tattler* for 2011.



1. PUBLICATIONS

- “The Lives and Crimes of the Convicts who arrived on the Salamander in Sydney in 1791” Cost \$35 includes postage.
- Pedigree Certificates From \$25

2. PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

We began with our Mother’s Day breakfast which went off very well. We had a good attendance and everyone enjoyed the excellent food also mixing socially with each other. We had Tony Mumford, ex RAAF who spoke about the Gallipoli campaign and what went wrong during this campaign. I personally found it very interesting.

The following workshop was a discussion on our “Brickwalls” and how to get around them. These workshops are always very interesting and one can learn from them.

Last workshop was to write about our Grandmother. It is amazing when we sit down to do this just how much we know [or don’t know] about what our rellies did before they became grandmas.

I would like to say a big thank you to our librarian, Andrea who does a good job cataloguing all our books and newsletters. Remember these resources are available to ALL our members and we have newsletters and magazines from many other groups so you may find info on your family in these publications.

Our Pioneer Group is progressing slowly as we are checking all information and this is very painstaking as it must be correct.

We are looking for extra people to volunteer to do duty on some Mondays at our room. We seem to be relying on the same people all the time. If you are not sure what you have to do just call in on a Monday 9.30 – 11.30am and you will be shown. If you could do one Monday monthly it would be good.

President
Elaine Monro.



3. DATES FOR THE DIARY

AUGUST WORKSHOP:

Guest Speaker

TOM SWEENEY from Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium

SEPTEMBER WORKSHOP:

Father's Day Breakfast

AGM

OCTOBER WORKSHOP

Guest Speaker

John Clarke aka "Stinker" who will talk on families associated with the fishing industry in Nelson Bay prior to the launch of his book.

Visit to Rookwood cemetery

NOVEMBER WORKSHOP

Guest Speaker to be confirmed

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

FORT SCRATCHLEY

4. PIONEER REGISTER

Work continues on this mammoth project. We are at the stage where information is once again being checked. If anyone had family in the Nelson Bay area up to 1920 it is not too late to have them included in the book. We would like members of families to check our information before we go to print. Photos would also be much appreciated..



5. WHO WAS MY GRANDMOTHER?

Our July workshop was devoted to discovering our grandmothers. Members were given pro forma sheets to fill in with information about a grandmother. After morning tea and much chatter a brainstorming session took place and internet sites were written up on the whiteboard and these were explained for the benefit of our newer members. Following are some member's stories.

5.1 MY PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER – MAY WAKEHAM

May was born at Botany on 3rd May, 1893 to Lydia [nee Hartley] and Richard Wakeham, eleven years after they were married. No birth certificate can be found to validate this. Daughter Betty recalls her mother had one blue eye and one brown one. May had two siblings who were both adopted Harold Victor and Alice Lillian 1911.

When May was about six her family moved from Botany to Belmont.

May initially had a governess for her early schooling but went to Belmont Public school later 1904 – 1910. As Hilda Rayfield quoted in "A Book of Memories Belmont Public School [1874 – 1910]"

"Her closest friends were Ethel Marks, Daphne Campbell, Jean Williamson and May Wakeham"

As a small child before she went to school May used walk to the Hotel near Gallagher's Pharmacy to get a billy can of beer for Richard's lunch. May possibly worked in her father's shop.

May played the piano and was taught by Kate Moynahan. May walked from her home on the Pacific Highway around Ross Street for lessons. Later on May loved attending Colin Chapman amateur shows held at the Roxy theatre at Hamilton and would go on her own to see a show on a Saturday afternoon. She loved Al Johnson songs and musical films. She also liked going to the races at Broadmeadow.

May was a quiet reserved person. She was strict with her family especially the girls. Her early friends were Daphne Laughlan, Mrs Rayfield, Mrs Hoy, Toddy Parker and Janet Parker[see chapter on the Parker family] and later on Mrs Stella Hubbard and Ivy Urane and Mrs Dora Calender.

May was a member of the Church of England and played the organ in the Church. In her early life she was an active member of the Red Cross. She was also a member of the Australian Native Association{ANA} and was presented with a gold brooch.

May went to Wollongong often and went with Mary Cullen [married to Peter's brother, Patrick] on coach trips to Canberra. May and Peter had trips to Queensland by train as Colleen was there and May loved to go to the races there. This came to an end when she had a fainting fit and was told by her doctor to avoid crowds. Peter & May also enjoyed holidays in the Blue Mountains and camping holidays.

May liked playing cards. She didn't entertain often. She was a good plain cook. She always had a baked dinner on Sunday [cooked on the fuel stove], flowed by apple pie and date scones. She took an interest in local cricket and when Peter played she and the family were there to cheer Belmont to victory.

May was a very charitable person. She had the priest, who came from Swansea for breakfast after Mass as the Cullen home was opposite the Catholic Church in Ernest Street. Swansea-Belmont parish was one parish and belonged to the Sydney Diocese. When Cardinal Gilroy from Sydney came to administer Confirmation May provided him with breakfast.

May married Peter Joseph Cullen at her father's home on the Pacific Highway on 13.7.1918.

May and Peter's children:

Richard 1919, Colleen 1923, Betty Agnes 1925, Patricia 1927, Peter 1928

May became a Catholic in later life.

May died on 8 October, 1966 aged 73 at Stockton Psychiatric Hospital. She had been in hospital for sometime. Cause of death is stated as Cerebro Vascular accident, cerebral thrombosis and arteriosclerosis cerebri. She was buried at the Belmont Catholic Cemetery on 11 October, 1966 after a Requiem Mass at St Francis Xavier Church, Belmont. When she died May had 16 grandchildren.

~Submitted by Marilynne Sharp

5.2 ELLEN OLIVE TRACEY



Figure 1 - Ellen on her 21st Birthday

I realised after attending the recent workshop on grandmothers how little I really know about my paternal grandmother, Ellen Olive Tracey.

I know she was the fifth child of Thomas Michael Tracey, an Illiterate Labourer, and Mary A Moran who were married in Westmeath, Ireland on 4 March, 1878 prior to immigrating to Australia as assisted immigrants, arriving on the 'Samuel Plimsoll' on 28 July 1878. The immigration records show Mary's sister was already in Sydney. Thomas and Mary had nine children in total:

- Mary Ann - Born 1878 in Sydney
- Richard
- John - 1880 in Sydney, New South Wales.
- Michael - Born 1882 , New South Wales.
- Ellen Olive - Born on 03 Mar 1885 in Prospect Reservoir, New South Wales.
- Jane - Born 1887 Central Cumberland, New South Wales.
- Thomas - Born 1890 Central Cumberland, New South Wales.

- Lawrence – Born 1892 in Burwood, New South Wales.
- Nora - Born 1893 in Newtown, New South Wales.

Ellen married Edward Victor GILLIVER on 26 Jun 1911 in St Marys Catholic Church, Concord, New South Wales. She was a tailoress at the time of her marriage but like most women of this era became a housewife. She was fortunate to marry into a family which was reasonably well off and her father in law built and gave his son and his new wife a home in Bankstown, New South Wales. It was named 'Nellieville' in honour of Ellen.



Figure 2 - 42 Rookwood Road, Bankstown



Figure 3 - Ellen with Edward and Mary c 1917

Ellen had three children:-

- Edward Victor ('Ted') – born 4 April 1913, Cnr. Underwood and George Streets, Concord, New South Wales (Ellen's parents home)
- Mary Madeline ('Mollie') – born 2 November 1915, 42 Rookwood Road, Bankstown, New South Wales
- William Francis ('Bill') – born 20 June 1920, 42 Rookwood Road, Bankstown, New South Wales

Ellen was a devout Catholic. Her sister was a nun. Ellen spent her much of her time raising money for St Felix Parish Church in Bankstown. Her daughter, Mollie, told me that her mother would raise money to get the church out of debt, only for them to decide to build something else, hence causing a new debt that need to be paid off!

In 1943, my father, Edward, was in the army. He was in camp in the Atherton Tablelands in Queensland and it was while he was in camp here that word came through that his mother had died, aged only 58. This, of course, was a great shock to him. He was given compassionate leave but it took him over a week to get back to Bankstown - things don't move too quickly in wartime. He said the trains were so slow and kept stopping and troops were being moved all over the place that you just had to wait around.

Another thing was that in wartime the government takes over everything, including burials, and the funeral had to go ahead on the day and time stated. He finally got home but his mother had already been buried. She died on 31st December, 1943 at her home at 42 Rookwood Road of a coronary occlusion and was buried on 1st January, 1944 at St Felix De Valois Graveyard in Bankstown, New South Wales.

I wish I knew more about her than I do. I wish I'd asked more questions of my father and his siblings to find out about who she was. She had been gone for so long before I was even born and even longer by the time I became interested in family history. Ironically, she is the person I look most like and yet she is probably the person I know least about in my immediate family.

~Submitted by Michelle Gilliver-Smith

6. LEARNING ENGLISH

Estonia is one of the Baltic States situated on the shores of the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea. Because of its geographical position Estonia had been fought over and occupied by Germans, Russians and others since its inception. I was born there during the Second World War. By that time my country was already being incorporated into the Soviet Union and the first deportation of Baltic people (June 1941) to Siberia and northern parts of Russia had taken place. My father, as I now know, was one of the many Estonian men 'conscripted' into the 'Red Army' and deported. He was killed before I was born.

In 1944 many Estonians, including my mother, feared further deportations under renewed Russian occupation so she decided to leave her homeland. At that time there were still many ships sailing between Tallinn and Germany which were virtually empty: an opportunity not to be missed. On arriving in Germany, mum just 'toured' around the country-side from one 'Displaced Persons Camp' to another not having any idea of where she was going. In some ways it sounded exciting and it was treated as an 'adventure'. Apparently there were train loads of people doing the same: no doubt attempting to stay clear of the war.

My first language is Estonian. It is an ornate and well-developed language representing the Balto-Finnic branch of the Finno-Ugric family of languages. And it is quite different from English. It comes very close to the idea of a phonetic language, where, unlike English for example, the same letter or letter combination is used for the same sound.

I was two years old when I left Estonia, much too young to have developed any language competence or specific ways of behaving, thinking and communicating. On arrival in Australia at the age of seven I could speak Estonian quite fluently but had limited proficiency in writing and reading it.

In Australia during the 1940s and 1950s assimilation was generally regarded by the Government as the logical and desirable consequence of the nation's immigration policy. The term 'New Australian' symbolized the expectation that migrants would learn and adopt the English language and culture. The post-war era also saw a period of aggressive monolingualism in which the use of any language other than English was considered disloyal. Furthermore, it was expected that migrants would abandon their own cultures. Such were the expectations in Australia at that time.

Soon after my arrival in Australia (May 1949) I started school at Bathurst Primary where students were assigned to class according to appropriate age-level and not at all by measure of language ability. Many others in my class were also migrants from various cultural backgrounds and with no common language. Nothing had prepared me for these totally new circumstances in which I found myself: new country, new environment and a new school where proceedings were conducted in a new and unfamiliar language. Despite the attendant psychological and physical experiences to contend with, we were all expected to respond to English-speaking teachers and to start learning English without prior bridging classes. I, like others, was thrown in the deep end and it was a matter of sink or swim.

Then, unlike now, there was no recognition that I might have special language needs, let alone problems in school. Hence, I felt totally inadequate and lost in this English-speaking environment and withdrew as a defense against failure: I probably used silence and minimal responses to escape drawing attention to my apparent inadequacies. I neither understood what was said nor what instructions were given. At the start I looked at what others in the class were doing and mimicked them.

The lack of a common language actually became a 'bond' between migrant students. This was because, as children, we adapted fairly easily to our new environment due to the desire to make friends, to belong to a group and to be accepted by others, which was far greater and more important than our individual cultural identities. I do not wish to imply by this that the transitional process was easy – it was not. There were adjustments that I had to make – to accept and learn a new language in a new cultural environment and thus become thoroughly absorbed into the Australian way of life.

The teachers themselves would have faced their own difficulties in that they had very little understanding of the way the non-English speaker's linguistic needs differed from those of the native speaker – my teacher certainly did not appreciate how linguistically different Estonian was from English. It soon became evident that teachers were only trained to teach those whose repertoire of English language structural patterns was in existence. They were unable to give any English support instruction – there was nothing available. The materials and methods used in normal English lessons in school were designed for those whose first language was English and were unsuitable for migrants learning English as a second language. Consequently, I had to learn to read and write English, not as a second language, but as it was taught to native speakers.

Perhaps the most conspicuous index of assimilation is language. People who persisted in speaking their first language, especially in public or to their children, were considered not assimilated and therefore un-Australian. In this regard many teachers advised parents to use nothing but English at home, regardless of how badly they spoke it. This was allegedly to avoid 'harming their children' by reversion to their first language. This advice was not taken in my home where my mother insisted that only Estonian would be spoken: I thus grew up bilingual.

While my early cultural background was Estonian I was far too young to be conscious of it before migration to Australia. This lack of cultural awareness actually became an advantage as it enabled me to adapt quite readily into the Australian way of life. My mother's cultural expectation with regard to my upbringing in Australia was predominantly education-centred. In relation to specific cultural variations that might normally be expected to create some difficulties for older migrants, these, however, were not a problem for me. This was because the acquisition of social identity through interaction and friendship with other children of similar age far out weighed any cultural or language difficulties. In other words, at that age, the need for acceptance and belonging was paramount.

On the whole, however, because I was young and open to new ideas and experiences I found school enjoyable and soon assimilated into the school community without much difficulty. Assimilation with the outside community followed naturally.

~Submitted by Anna Cordwell

7. BEWDLEY'S BURIED TREASURE BY PETER JOHNSON & DAVID THOMAS

A Wribbenhall Recipe

To make gravy – take a cow's liver and dip it in cold water, rub it with ½lb of course sugar and salt it for 9 days. Dry with a cloth. Boil 3ozs of salt-petre and 1lb of common salt in just brine enough to cover the liver. Let it lie 6 weeks and hang it up like bacon. Cut a slice not so large as three fingers, boiled in a pint of water with a little carrot and onion. This makes the richest gravy possible [meanwhile your dinner has frozen to the plate or you've starved to death].

~Submitted by Ann Watson.

