

# progenitor



***Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc.***

*The Family History Place*



***DECEMBER 2019***

# GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INC

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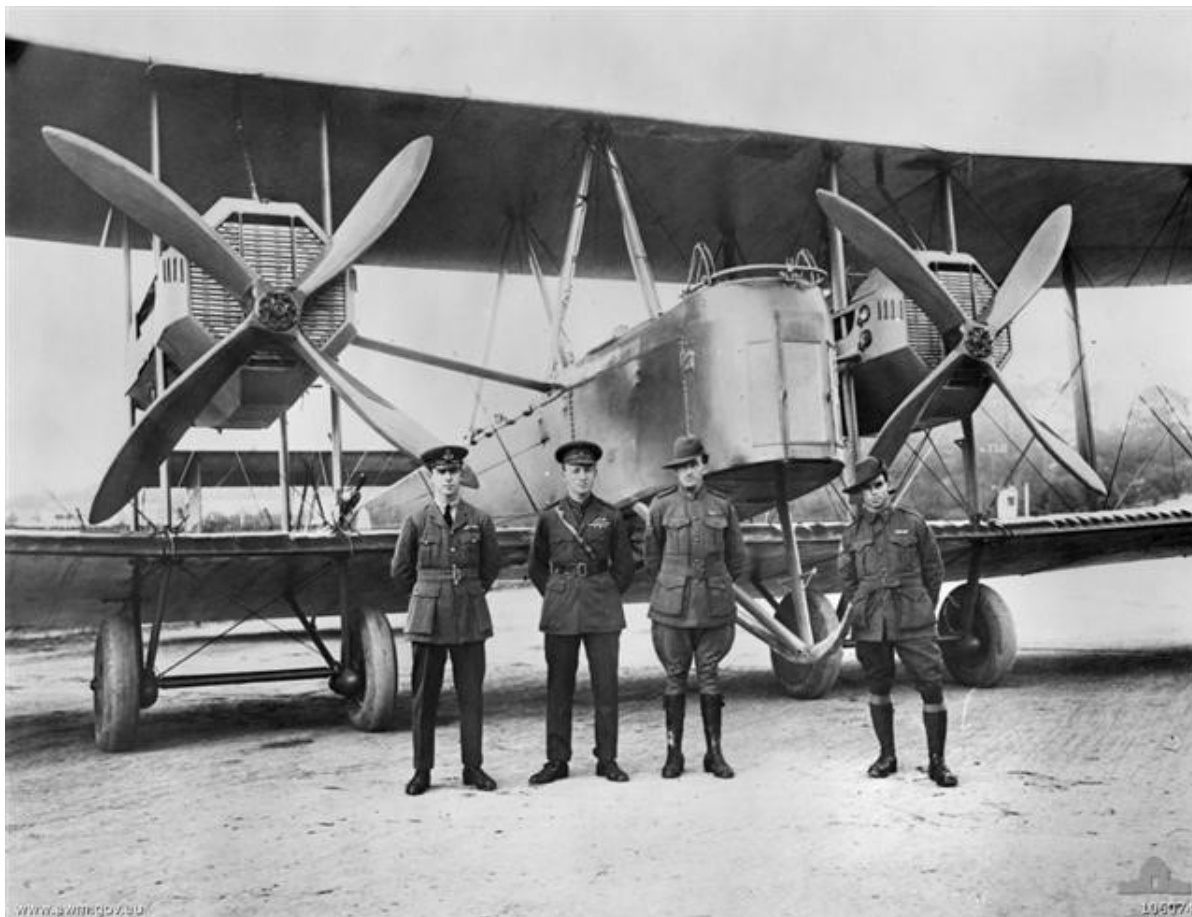
**FRONT COVER:** The pilot and crew that successfully flew from London to Darwin to win the Great Air Race in 1919 now feature in a large-scale street art mural in the Territory’s capital, as part of a new program of events to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ‘race that changed the world’.

The striking artwork is painted by Darwin Artists Jesse Bell and David Collins.

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## THE GREAT AIR RACE

BY JUDY BOLAND



10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 marks exactly 100 years since the arrival in Darwin of the flight that changed the world.

In 1919 the Australian government offered a prize of £A10,000 for the first Australians in a British aircraft to fly from Great Britain to Australia. Of the six entries that started the race, the winners were pilot Ross Smith, his brother Keith Smith as co-pilot, and mechanics Jim Bennett and Wally Shiers, in a modified Vickers Vimy bomber.

### **The Competition**

The competition was the brainchild of Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes. It offered a prize of £A10,000 for the first flight from Great Britain to Australia, under specific conditions. Prime Minister Hughes, stated that valid aircrews must all be Australian nationals, the aircraft must have been constructed in the British Empire, and the journey must be completed within 720 consecutive hours (30 days) and be completed before midnight on 31 December 1920. The departure point must be Hounslow Heath Aerodrome), with reporting points at Alexandria and Singapore, and final destination in the region of Darwin.

### **The Contestants**

#### **Sopwith Wallaby**

On 21 October 1919, Captain George Campbell Matthews AFC as pilot, and Sergeant Thomas D. Kay as mechanic, took off from Hounslow Heath Aerodrome in a Sopwith Wallaby (G-EAKS). Bad weather caused delays at Cologne and Vienna, then they were imprisoned as suspected Bolsheviks in Yugoslavia, with further delays due to snow at Belgrade. A cracked engine cylinder at Constantinople, and bad weather at Aleppo caused more delays. Finally, on 17 April 1920, the Wallaby crashed on landing at Grokgak, on Bali. Matthews was slightly injured

#### **Vickers Vimy**

Vickers entered a converted Vimy bomber (G-EAOU) (the registration being whimsically said to stand for "God 'elp all of us"), crewed by Captain Ross Macpherson Smith with his brother Lieutenant Keith Macpherson Smith as co-pilot and mechanics Sergeant W.H. (Wally) Shiers and J.M. (Jim) Bennett. The Vimy left Hounslow Heath at 8am on 12 November 1919. It flew via Lyon, Rome, Cairo, Damascus, Basra, Karachi, Delhi, Calcutta, Akyab, Rangoon racecourse, Singora (Songkhla) (in Siam unscheduled in heavy rain), Singapore, Batavia and Surabaya where the aircraft was bogged and had to make use of a temporary airstrip made from bamboo mats, reaching Darwin at 3.40pm on 10 December 1919. The flight distance was estimated as 17,911 kilometres and total flying time was 135 hours 55 minutes. The prize money was shared between the Smith brothers and the two mechanics. The Smith brothers each received a knighthood for this exploit, and the company presented their aircraft to the Australian government. It is now displayed at Adelaide Airport.

#### **Alliance P.2**

On 13 November 1919, Lieutenant Roger M. Douglas, MC DCM and Lieutenant J.S.L. Ross took off from Hounslow Heath in an Alliance P.2 Seabird (G-EAOX) named 'Endeavour'. It crashed in an orchard in Surbiton; Ross was killed outright, and Douglas died soon after of his injuries.

#### **Blackburn Kangaroo**

A team with a Blackburn Kangaroo (G-EAOW) had selected as navigator the Australian aviator Charles Kingsford Smith. Smith withdrew from the contest, and Captain Hubert Wilkins MC and bar took his place. On 21 November 1919, the Kangaroo took off from Hounslow Heath, piloted by Lieutenant V. Rendle with Captain Wilkins, Lieutenant D.R. Williams and Lieutenant Garnsey

St. C. Potts as crew. Problems were experienced with the engines, and the plane was forced down over France. Repairs were made and the flight continued, still with engine problems. On 8 December 1919, the aircraft crash-landed at Suda Bay, Crete, ending up against the fence of a mental hospital. The crew escaped without injury.

### **Martinsyde Type A**

On 5 December 1919, Captain Cedric E. Howell and Lieutenant George Henry Fraser left London in a Martinsyde Type A Mk.I (G-EAMR) aircraft. On 9 December, the aircraft disappeared near Corfu. The wreckage and Howell's body were found offshore, but Fraser's body was never recovered.

### **Airco DH.9**

On 8 January 1920, Airco DH.9 (G-EAQM), piloted by Lieutenant Ray Parer, with co-pilot Lieutenant John C. McIntosh, took off from Hounslow Heath. The aircraft completed the flight, the first by a single-engined machine, in an epic 206 days later on 2 August 1920, earning Parer the sobriquet "Battling Ray". Although outside the time limit, the crew was awarded a consolation prize of £A1,000, second only to the Vimy. The DH.9 has been restored and placed on display at the Australian War Memorial at Canberra. The machine is labelled PD after its sponsor, millionaire Peter Dawson, a whisky manufacturer, who financed the purchase of the machine and much of the journey.

### **The Monument to Aviation**

The Aviators' Monument here on East Point Road, was the nation's thanks to the intrepid ex-servicemen who had safely completed an aerial flight from England to Australia in an heavier-than-air machine, and the precursor to later long-distance flights between continents.

Amid the euphoria which gripped the nation following the successful flight from England to Australia on 10 December 1919, the Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes suggested that an obelisk be placed as near as possible to the landing site to commemorate this great deed.

As early as 13 February 1920, barely eight weeks after the successful landing, capital city newspapers on the east coast were reporting that

*"The Federal Government has decided to erect an obelisk on the spot near Darwin where Sir Ross Smith and party landed", whilst two days before on 11 February 1920, the Albury Banner and Wodonga Express announced that "The Commonwealth Government has decided that the monument to be erected at Port Darwin to mark the landing of Sir Ross Smith and party after their across the world flight, shall take the form of an obelisk, with the names of the party incised into it. The Royal Australian Historical Society offered an inscribed tablet for attachment to the monument. The Government has decided however, that no stone available for the purpose is procurable locally, and that as metal, applied to stone, would not in any form have a long life in the climate of Darwin, the wording of the proffered tablet shall be incised into the obelisk"*

By mid-April 1920, the Director General of Works was circulating drawings for an 'Aviation Monument Port Darwin NT'. The drawing called for a monument of bluestone blocks 16 feet in height, the pedestal of which would be faced and weathered bluestone placed on a rubble and concrete base.

In covering the official unveiling of the Monument, The Northern Territory Times and Gazette reported Senator Pearce the then Minister for Home and Territories, paying the following tribute to the fliers

*"The great gallantry of the intrepid airmen who had accomplished their wonderful flight from England to Australia on December 10, 1919, in 28 days. They had won the Commonwealth Prize for*

*the feat which was accomplished under tremendous difficulties. At the commencement they ran into a severe snow storm and their food was frozen so hard that they could not eat it. Then they experienced torrential rain in Italy and tropical storms in India. Landing places were bogs, and they had difficulty getting their machine out. Their final feat was in negotiating the vast sea between Darwin and the Dutch Indies.*

*Ross Smith was an Anzac and afterwards was one of the greatest of Britain's air pilots. He had been decorated six times in the field and finally was knighted by the King. He had proved the possibility of reaching Australia by air and Darwin had been chosen as the most suitable landing place. The Northern Territory also had another honour, for it had the best record for enlistment of Anzacs over any other proportionally populated portion of Australia, and her men had won every honour in the field from the Victoria Cross downwards.*

*Ross Smith's flight was carried out with a great scientific object in view – it has demonstrated that Australia could be reached with heavier than air machines. And it demonstrated that Darwin was the danger spot in Australia, and when further improvements were made in seaplanes, Darwin would be the spot chosen by the enemy who would make a descent by air, for the same reason that actuated Ross Smith."*

That monument which you see in front of you, is a landmark on the foreshore at Fannie Bay. It is clearly visible from both land and sea, and enjoys free access from both land and sea. It was the result of a suggestion made by Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes shortly after Ross Smith and Party successfully completed the first aerial flight from England to Australia in a heavier-than-air machine. The monument was constructed by the Commonwealth Government.

It was the first monument in Australia to commemorate aviation, an event seminal in Australian history.

*Editors note:*

*The Northern Territory government has a proposed upgrade of the monument site.*

[https://dtsc.nt.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/425098/RossSmithMemorial-Upgrade-Concept.pdf](https://dtsc.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/425098/RossSmithMemorial-Upgrade-Concept.pdf)



## WHO WAS ROSS SMITH?

BY JUDY BOLAND

On 4 December 1892, on a remote and dusty grazing property in South Australia not far from its border with New South Wales and the town of Broken Hill, a little boy was born to a first generation Australian mother and an immigrant Scottish father.

The little boy was the second male child of the family whose father had been appointed manager of Mutooroo Station in the desolate dry north-east of the state.



The little boy's elder brother was named Keith Macpherson Smith. The family, very proud of their Scottish heritage named their second child Ross Macpherson Smith – Macpherson being their mother's maiden name.

Young Ross, like all country children of that time, spent most of his days outdoors, riding, trapping, shooting and generally helping on the sheep station. He quickly developed an intense dislike of crows as they pecked out the eyes of new born lambs. Guarding the lambs, he observed the graceful flight of the crows and wondered if man would ever be able to emulate the birds.

Initially Ross and his brothers were schooled by the station book-keeper on the property, but as Ross reached the age of 10 in 1902, a decision was made to send the boys to Queen's College, Adelaide as boarders.

In 1906, midway through their secondary schooling, the boys were sent as boarders to Warriston School in Scotland. After two years, the boys returned home, their education complete.

His upbringing instilled in Ross a sense of independence, resourcefulness and initiative, all of which stood him in good stead later in his life.

Back home in Australia, Ross obtained a position in the warehouse of the big Australian retailer Harris Scarfe in Adelaide. He also joined the Australian Mounted Cadets – a youth organization aligned to the Australian Army. The Cadets had weekly parades and monthly bivouacs in the Adelaide hills. Each cadet had to provide his own horse and equipment. Coming from a sheep station, this was not a problem for Ross. Horses had played a prominent role in his childhood and Ross had developed a great affection for them.

In 1910, The Australian Mounted Cadets undertook a six months study tour of England, Europe and North America. While young Ross was impressed by the beauty of Europe, especially Lake Como, he was truly amazed by the flying display he witnessed at Brooklands.

Back in Adelaide at the end of his tour with the Cadets, Ross threw himself into the social life of Adelaide. He joined the Adelaide Rowing Club, mainly for the dances rather than the rowing, it was rumoured; he ran with the Adelaide Athletics Club and was seen at all the best parties and dances. With his fair hair, blue eyes and tall yet spare frame, he was a very popular young man about town.

But this carefree life came to a shuddering halt, with the outbreak of War early in August 1914. Ross enlisted in the 3rd Light Horse Regiment, landing at Gallipoli 13 May 1915.

The powers of observation honed in the dusty paddocks of Mutooroo, served him well at Quinn's Post – the most dangerous spot on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In 1917, he volunteered for the Australian Flying Corps. Initially flying as an Observer, again his powers of observation and being able to 'read the land' resulted in many successes. He was then selected to undertake pilot training. Again, more success. He was later twice awarded the Military Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross three times, becoming an air ace with 11 confirmed aerial victories.

He was pilot for T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) and fought in aerial combat missions in the Middle East. He is mentioned several times in Lawrence's book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, (Chapter 114).

Smith and his brother Keith, Sergeant James Mallett (Jim) Bennett and Sergeant Wally Shiers, flew from Hounslow Heath Aerodrome, England on 12 November 1919 in a Vickers Vimy, eventually landing in Darwin Australia on 10 December, taking less than 28 days, with actual flying

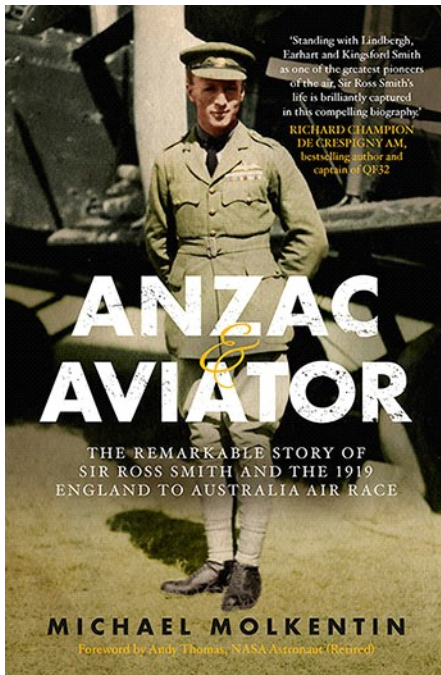
time of 135 hours. The four men shared the £10,000 prize money put forward by the Australian government.

Ross was killed (along with the recently commissioned Lieutenant Bennett) while testing a Vickers Viking amphibian aircraft which crashed in Byfleet soon after taking off from Brooklands on 13 April 1922.

The bodies were returned to Australia and Smith was given a state funeral attended by thousands. He was buried on 14 June at the North Road Cemetery, Adelaide.

The monument you see on East Point Road was originally intended to be a Monument to Aviation, but with the tragic death of Ross, it became his memorial – the first to honour him in Australia.

Vale Ross Smith.



## **Book Review for *Progenitor*, Journal of the Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory**

Michael Molkentin, *Anzac & Aviator: The remarkable story of Sir Ross Smith and the 1919 England to Australia Air Race*. Allen & Unwin, Crow's Nest, NSW 2065, xviii + 406

pages; ISBN 978 1 74237 919 7

*Anzac & Aviator* is the story of an extraordinary Australian, Ross Smith. *Anzac and Aviator* encompasses all facets of Smith's life, from his carefree days as a child on a remote South Australian sheep station to his untimely death in a disaster that shook the world. There was nothing in Smith's childhood that indicated a future as one of Australia's and indeed the World's greatest pioneering aviators.

Michael Molkentin has used a wide range of sources from which he crafts an absorbing story of a young lad very much the product of the times. Smith rides off to war, only to leave his horse behind in Egypt and man a machine gun at Quinn's Post – possibly the most dangerous spot on Gallipoli.

Surviving Gallipoli, Smith expects to be sent to the Western Front, but fate determines otherwise and he and his horse find themselves on the sands of Sinai, but Smith's resourcefulness and initiative drive him to volunteer for the fledgling Australian Flying Corps. Smith reasons that he could do more damage to the enemy from the air, than he could from the back of a horse. He survives two gruelling years of aerial combat over Palestine, to emerge as one of the most skilled and decorated Australian pilots of the war.

Ever seeking new challenges, Smith volunteers as pilot on the first mission to survey an air route from Cairo to the East Indies. It was during this survey, that the concept of a flight right home to Australia dawned on him. On his return to Britain,



Smith learnt that Australia's Prime Minister Billy Hughes was offering a £10,000 prize for the first airman to fly from England to Australia. This was his chance to achieve his dream of flying home.

The trials and tribulations of the 1919 Great Air Race are well documented, as is the later test flight for a round-the-world attempt that claimed Smith's life.

*Anzac & Aviator* is a well-constructed book, divided into five parts, all of which are in chronological order and cover special periods in Smith's life. Each part is subdivided into chapters which make for easy reading of the narrative. Readers will appreciate the nice little touch of using a silhouette of the Vickers Vimy to indicate breaks in chapters.

There is a good selection of images – 41 in total – printed on gloss paper in the centre of the book. There are also four maps; one of SA (with an insert of Adelaide and environs) showing the position of Mutooroo Station c. 1910; one of Egypt, Sinai and Palestine 1916-1918; one of the Gallipoli battlefield May 1915, showing the proximity of Quinn's Post to Turkish Trenches, a mere three yards away and one showing the route of the first flight to Australia, 1919. All of which contribute significantly to the reader's understanding of the story.

Overall, Smith is portrayed as 'a determined boy – a leader born', who had an easy confidence when dealing with people whether they be fellow military personnel or women. Smith maintained a strong emotional attachment to his mother, writing to her every week of the five years he was away from Australia. These letters provide an insight into Smith's character. He tells his mother that he 'found flying exhilarating' and gained 'a savage satisfaction of seeing them [Turks] drop'.

All things considered, Molkentin has given us a well-crafted biography, which will totally absorb the reader, despite a couple of mis-spellings (Nagambe; axels) and the incorrect name of Brunette Downs (Burnett, Burnette). The Vickers Vimy actually landed on a flat piece of country at Cobb's Creek bore (Bore No 13) in the Barkly Tableland, where they were found by Percy Peacock, a Bore Driller working in the area with his father Syd. The Peacocks provided the aviators with food and water, then set off in their truck to get help. Sadly, the Peacocks are only referred to as 'a Bore Driller'. It would be a shame if their names was lost to history,

Apart from these few irritations, it was a great read.

Judy Boland

## **GREAT AIR RACE COMMEMORATION**

When researching in NT Archives the preparations for the Great Air Race for the talks given to mark the centenary of the event, Fiona Douglas came across this exchange in the House of Representatives recorded in Hansard: COST OF REMOVING TREES AT DARWIN

Mr BOWDEN – Has the attention of the Assistant Minister for Defence been called to the statement in the newspapers, that the Defence Department has paid £700 or more for the removal of two trees from an aeroplane ground at Darwin? Is the statement correct? If not, what work is done for the money?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE – I read the statement in the press, and knowing something of the so-called working men of Darwin, I was surprised that the smallest tree could be removed for the ex-

penditure mentioned.

Mr MATHEWS – A most indiscreet reply.

Mr PARKER MOLONEY – It is a slur on the working men of the Northern Territory.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE – The so-called working men of Darwin are the greatest Bolsheviks in Australia. I have no hesitation in saying that. In any case, they have no vote. NAA:A3, NT1922/3339 p.510

Great Air Race commemoration events continue up to the date of the centenary of the first overseas flight into Australia, 10 December, when there will be the annual ceremony at the Ross Smith Memorial.

## **CHRISTMAS**

By Joy Davis

### **Christmas 1914**

My father Stuart Drysdale and his brother owned horse teams and carted supplies to all the outlying Stations from Darwin to Wyndham.

On Christmas Eve 1914, Dad happened to be at Wave Hill and the Station manager invited him to stay over for Christmas.

The day dawned hot and humid like any other December day in the northern outback, and Dad was glad of the respite. At dinner, all hands and visitors were seated at the table and were served by the cook. The meal although simple was very acceptable with the cook out doing himself and everyone eagerly awaited the dessert course. Cookie arrived from the kitchen carrying a large platter of Christmas puddings, but everyone was astonished to see all the puddings were shaped like a foot.

On inquiry, the cook, a very resourceful man, stated that he didn't have any suitable cloth to cook the puddings in so he had used his socks for the job.

### **Christmas 1941**

Pearl Harbor was attacked on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1941, making a similar attack on Australia's northern outpost imminent, so the Government ordered the evacuation of all women, children and inform from Darwin.

An Army Major would arrive at the door and order the woman with her children to be down on the wharf at 6 o'clock the following morning bringing one suitcase per family. On several occasions, my mother received her and my removal order but refused to go, until finally the Evacuation Major came to see Dad and said could he persuade her to go, as he did not want to have to forcibly remove her.

The owner of Guinea Airways was a friend of ours and told Dad he had a plane leaving in the morning for Adelaide and there would be room for Mum and myself. Subsequently, Mum was persuaded to go on my account so we were to be at the airport at 6am the next day.

No toys were permitted but my only concern was as it would be Christmas Eve when we left, how would Father Christmas know where I was. All day I instructed Dad and my older brothers and sister that if the old fellow arrived at our house they were to tell him I was in Adelaide, this they promised to do.

After a long day in a small aircraft, the 20 passengers arrived in Adelaide and found accommodation the night.

Christmas Day dawned and to my surprise I found Father Christmas really did have magic because he had found me in Adelaide and left a lovely blue cuddly bunny rabbit.

## **CHRISTMAS 1974**

### **"TRACEY"**

#### **An uninvited Guest**

Christmas Eve dawned with a slate grey sky and intermittent light showers of rain. In Darwin, this was no different from all other days for this was the wet season. There were cyclone warnings being broadcast on the radio but no one took any notice, for each wet season cyclones came close but when they were imminent veered away without affecting us. Cyclones had struck Darwin on an average of every forty years.

All day people were bustling about doing the usual last minute shopping and preparations for the big day, whilst the children became more excited with the prospect of Father Christmas calling.

Towards evening as usual, my 80 year old mother arrived for dinner and to stay the night and spend Christmas Day with us. The radio was still giving out cyclone warnings but Darwin parties were in full swing and still people took no notice.

About 7pm, I thought it an idea to cook the chickens and other goodies because the wind seemed to be picking up and we may be without power the next day. This suggestion was vetoed as unnecessary because only three weeks before had not cyclone Sefena come close but passed us.

After dinner, the children had their showers but just as a precaution instead of pyjamas, they were told to dress in clean day clothes, and were tucked up in bed for the night. My family had lived in Darwin during the past cyclones and family members were told to wear clothes to bed because if a cyclone did strike one may be blown outside and would be soaking wet and cold and may catch pneumonia.

The radio warnings continued and the wind was becoming stronger all the time. At one stage, the wind was so strong that it was forcing gum leaves between the front door jamb and the door. Then water began dripping through the ceiling next to the bay windows. The next radio warning stated winds were gale force and seas phenomenal. The bathroom being the smallest room in the house was considered the safest so I woke up my mother and our children to move to there. When ushering everyone to the bathroom there was an almighty bang and all hell broke loose. Large timbers smashing through the windows allowed Tracey inside. Amid flying glass, wood, branches and other debris we raced for the safety of the bathroom. The plaster ceilings held the roof long enough for us to all get inside and the with smashed roof tiles and timber, all came crashing down.

In the bath sat our three youngest children and the cat all covered with a blanket to protect them from falling rubbish and rain, and my mother sat on the side. I sat on the closed toilet while my husband and eldest son stood at the sliding bathroom door holding it almost shut against the wind. Each time the door was fully closed a piece of plaster ceiling held up by timbers that was protecting us began to rise with the pressure build up inside this also affected me and I could not breathe. At 11pm (unknown to us), the electricity was turned off at the powerhouse and radio contact was lost. We were in total darkness listening to the crashing, bashing and constant heavy rain on the outside and inside our house. Everyone was silent so my mother started singing to help relieve the anxiety of the children. My husband went outside to see if any of the neighbours

needed help and I, fearing electrocution by fallen electric wires kept calling him to return. He came back because he couldn't see anything it was so dark and so much rubbish everywhere.

The night dragged on and all were relieved when daylight arrived and the winds abated. We sent outside and were amazed at the destruction about us. My comment was, "There will be hundreds killed in this." All this Christmas day people moved about like zombies trying to find relatives, friends, those buried under rubble, attending to the injured and trying to find a dry place to sleep. Everything was destroyed and there was no water, power or shelter. For Christmas dinner, we had some damp pieces of bread and a tin of cold soup mixed with the only clean water we had, water from an electric jug. We all had to force ourselves to eat but found after doing so we felt a lot better.

Father Christmas negotiated the wind and arrived during the night before the destruction occurred but the presents not blown away were all wet and covered with broken glass and plaster. Thus ended our Christmas Day, never forgotten.

## **THE STORY OF INGARFIELD PRIVATE HOSPITAL QUEENSLAND**

While researching my family story I found my mother was born at the Ingarfield Hospital on Old Sandgate Road, Albion in 1925. As my grandmother was a nurse working at Lady Bowen Hospital on Wickham Terrace in Brisbane before moving home to North Queensland to nurse her own mother, I was surprised to see my mother was not born at Lady Bowen. During the research it was obvious Matron Ingarfield was known to my grandmother and her family. Ingarfield Private Hospital has a colourful history, following is the story.

THE DAILY MAIL (BRISBANE QUEENSLAND) Wednesday 31 January 1917 Page 4

### **INGARFIELD PRIVATE HOSPITAL**

#### **A Modern Institution**

The Ingarfield Private Hospital, situated in Old Sandgate Road Albion, is one of the most up to date private hospitals in Queensland. It is conducted by Matron N M Ingarfield, ATNA who is a nurse of wide experience, she having held responsible positions in many of Queensland's leading public and private hospitals. Matron Ingarfield founded the business some years ago at Eagle Junction, but expansion of business demanded larger and more up to date premises, and it was decided to erect a building specially designed for use as a private hospital. The splendid building now occupied by the hospital was recently completed at a large cost, and is, we understand, the only one in Queensland specially built for use as a private hospital. The building is of imposing outward appearance, and it is none the less attractive inside. Each room opens on to a veranda. White is the only decorative color used in the bedrooms, the walls, bedsteads, and furniture being of this color. Special attention has been paid to ventilation and position of each room, the result of this being that there is not a hot corner in the whole building. The bedsteads in use are of the latest approved hospital design, and were made to the matron's special order. The operating theatre and kitchens are on extended wings away from the patients' quarters. Everything possible for the convenience of patients has been embodied in the building. The Ingarfield Private Hospital is convenient to trams and train. It is on a high elevation, and magnificent views of the surrounding country are obtained from the many verandas.

**42ND CHEMICAL LABORATORY COMPANY  
BASE SECTION 3  
CLAYFIELD, BRISBANE, QLD  
DURING WWII**

Peter Dunn's "Australia @ War" web site [www.ozatwar.com](http://www.ozatwar.com)

The 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company (42d CLC) originally known as the 3rd Chemical Field Laboratory was established in May 1941 at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland, USA. The Unit left the USA on 21 November 1941, in the Pensacola Convoy headed for "PLUM," the code name for the Philippines. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, their convoy diverted to Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia arriving on 22 December 1941.

On 28 January 1942, Capt. John C. Morgan, of the 3rd Chemical Field Laboratory Company, established a chemical section in USAFIA. Col. William A. Copthorne arrived on 2 February 1942 with a number of experienced officers and enlisted men. Known as the Remember Pearl Harbor Group, these men were being rushed to the Pacific to serve wherever senior command and staff officers and specialists were needed. Copthorne became chemical officer and was assigned to the USAFIA Chief of Staff's special mission for co-ordinating relief shipments to Corregidor.

The 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company initially had their headquarters in Somerville House in Brisbane but then moved to Ingarfield Private Hospital at 90 Bonney Avenue, Clayfield. This may now be the Bonney Vale Hostel. The enlisted men of the 42 Chemical Chemical Laboratory Company had billets at 59 Bonney Avenue, Clayfield which extended into the adjacent property.

On 5 June 1942, Captain Cone, Richard M., O-250706, of the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company was killed in the crash of an unknown bomber aircraft near Archerfield Airfield in Brisbane. Second Lieutenant Parker, James W., O-385535, of the Chemical Warfare Service, initially survived the crash but subsequently died of his wounds on 8 June 1942. It is believed at least 7 crew and passengers died in this tragic accident. Captain Cone and 2nd Lt. Parker were carrying out experiments to determine whether incendiary bombs could be improvised from training bombs, using gasoline thickened with crude rubber as a filling.

Maj. Burton D. Willis, Chemical Officer, Base Section 3 in Brisbane, would provide training for the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company (formerly the 3d Chemical Field Laboratory). He held several courses in chemical warfare defence, using a classroom at the Queensland University. Colonel Copthorne dispatched Captain Burke to open a theatre training school. Captain Burke reported to the Brisbane Base Section 3 Headquarters on 12 July 1942 to establish a chemical warfare school for all American forces. Whilst it started as a Base Section training school it was in preparation to become a SWPA CWS School. The first 33 gas officer students were actually in training before the school was approved in August 1942. Whilst the third class of unit gas officers was in progress the school officially became a SWPA theatre activity as part of the Chemical Warfare Service Training Centre. The third class graduated in September 1942.

Norman Fine joined the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company in June 1944. By this time the 42nd had been in Brisbane more than 2 1/2 years and some of the men had married local Brisbane girls and had children, and lived off the base. The base for the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company was actually two large houses in Clayfield, an upmarket Brisbane suburb where many



homes had private tennis courts. One house was used for living quarters and their mess facilities, while the other house contained the laboratory and animal quarters. Wallabies and cockatoos were common pets.

42nd Chemical Laboratory Company, outside the Mess Hall in Bonney Avenue, Clayfield. It is believed that this house was No. 122 Bonney Avenue, located on the corner of Bonney Avenue and Victoria Road. There is a three story apartment block located on the site now.

**Back Row L to R:-** T-4 Wisniewski, T-5 Forrester, T-5 Brunke, Pfc Heller, Pfc Pawlak, T-4 Van-nah, Cpl Slates, Pvt. Lang, Pfc Smart, Pfc Dillavou, Pfc Bucher, Pfc Windgassen, Cpl Jones, T-5 Caskey, T-5 Layman, Pfc Benn, T-5 Schweitzer, T-5 McCarty, Pvt. Morgan, T-5 Lendel

**Middle Row L to R:-** T-4 Farrell, Pvt Wasserman, Pvt Chesher, Pvt Koerner, Pvt Eddy?, T-3 Hor-witz, T-5 Rothchild, T-4 Ball, T-3 Phelps, Pvt Jaimic?, Pvt Balmer, Pvt Hightower, Pvt Horne, T-5 Downing, Pvt Stone, Pfc McBride, Pfc Zahuta, Pvt Barnes, Pvt Bednarczyk, T-5 Rose

**Third Row L to R:-** S/Sgt Stapinski, T-4 Modlo, T-4 Hunt, Cpl Bobb, T-3 Wells, 2nd Lt Casper, 1st Lt Glass, 1st Lt Reichardt, Capt Heatwole, Capt Halter, Major Hillis, Capt McDaniel, 1st Lt Hardy, 2nd Lt Roswell, T-3 Dagg, T-5 Breen, Pfc Broderick, T-4 Phillips, T-5 Dolan

**Front Row L to R:-** T/Sgt Klein, T/Sgt Miller, M/Sgt Zulak, M/Sgt Flythe, M/Sgt Wheeler, T/Sgt Baldwin, T/Sgt Klafter

**Absent:-** Anthony Pape

In October 1943, Major H.W. Hillis was the commanding officer of the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company

One early job for the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company from the Quartermaster Corps was to turn 100,000 pounds of fatigue uniforms into camouflage suits for the soldiers fighting in New Guinea and the islands. The 42nd produced a dye using local products. Another assignment was to study the physical properties of CWS agents at high altitudes and low temperatures. Problems of water purification, rust inhibitors, skin dye for personal camouflage, and improved methods for using napalm are but a few examples of the developmental projects undertaken. In the analytical department, analyses of defective ordnance components, captured enemy explosives, soap and solder flux, and many other materials helped smooth our Pacific war effort.



Initially chemical warfare teams near the front line sent flamethrowers, smoke candles, pyrotechnics, gas masks back to either the US 42nd Chemical Laboratory at Clayfield or to the Maribymong Victorian Munitions Supply Laboratory for expert analysis.

Here are some examples of Miscellaneous reports by the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company on Japanese equipment included in Captured Material Technical Reports (CMTR):-

CMTR No.21: Japanese Army Gas Mask Nomenclature (25 October 1943)

CMTR No.28: Facepiece, Japanese Hood-type Gas Mask (21 March 1944)

Norman Fine's initial assignments were analysis of captured Japanese material. On one Pacific island, there was a cache of 55-gallon drums containing a watery, purplish liquid with a smell reminiscent of Teaberry chewing gum. Analysis found methyl salicylate and traces of a soluble iron salt in aqueous dispersion. The iron and salicylate reacted to form a purple compound. No literature was found with the drums, and the purpose of the liquid remained a mystery (perhaps it was a liniment). On another island, drums of a viscous, inflammable liquid were discovered. Distillation and qualitative tests showed that the liquid was benzene thickened with a methacrylate polymer. The liquid was probably intended for flamethrowers.

A problem of mineral analysis was that it required liquids of varying density for physical separation by flotation. One dense liquid needed was methylene iodide, which was not available in Australia. It was synthesized by first preparing a large batch of iodoform which was then reduced to methylene iodide. Obtaining chemical reagents was a constant problem. Those requisitioned from the United States involved many delivery uncertainties and delays. One time, they ordered 10 grams of dithizone, a reagent used for trace analysis of heavy metals. Dithizone is a very fluffy substance: 10 grams would fill a large jar. Several months later, a truck pulled up and began unloading 5-gallon, widemouthed carboys, each filled with dithizone; 100 pounds had been ordered owing to a clerical error. They distributed dithizone to every laboratory in Australia.

The CWS had a large cache of CW agents stored in 2-ton tanks in the Australian outback. The 42nd had the task of inspecting and maintaining the tanks. This was a very desirable mission, although it was somewhat hazardous. A convoy of trucks and jeeps loaded with "C" rations and apparatus set out for a two-day trek to the dump. Using protective suits that encased the entire body, the team inspected the tanks and took samples for later quality-control analysis in the laboratory back at Brisbane.

U.S. forces landed in the Philippines on 20 October 1944, and by 3 March, 1944 Manila was occupied. It was time for the 42nd to move back to its original destination. Laboratory equipment and reagents were packed in crates. The 42nd had acquired a large supply of 1-pound cubes of metallic sodium in hermetically sealed tins; these were not to be taken to Manila. There was too much sodium to employ the laboratory method of disposal: dissolving sodium shavings in alcohol. Men of the 42nd disposed of the sodium cans in the waters off Brisbane. They hurled punctured sodium cans over the stern of their boat. The huge eruptions of yellow flame and the sodium cans skimming over the surface made an impressive display. The 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company left Brisbane for Manila in June 1945.

Gerson Kegeles was another member of the 42nd Chemical Laboratory Company.

## **REFERENCES**

*The 42d Chemical Laboratory Company in World War II: A Chemical Reminiscence*

*CML Army Chemical Review, Sep 2003*

*By Norman Fine*

***"Australia @ War" Research Products***

## NEW YWCA HOSTEL

The Ingarfield Hospital, Bonney Avenue, Clayfield, which has recently been vacated by the American Army, has been bought by the Young Women's Christian Association for use as a hostel. Although the exact purpose the hostel will serve has not been decided the claims of school children and of women passing through Brisbane are considered equally pressing. A decision is expected at a board meeting on Monday night.

## DNA Seminar 2019

On 8<sup>th</sup> April a cruise ship arrived in Darwin and travelling on it were a group of genealogists who were having lectures and seminars with various speakers on genealogy throughout the voyage. During their stop-over in Darwin, the organiser had arranged a seminar for The Genealogical Society of the N.T. and I had signed up to go. The subjects were very interesting, especially "other avenues" in Scotland. Also, very interesting for me was The Irish Famine and its consequences. In the lunch break, they had a prize draw and I won entrance to a Seminar on DNA worth \$155.00. The only drawback was that they were being held in Brisbane or Sydney. I opted for Brisbane (the seminar was in August) and managed to get airline tickets for \$199.00 return.

On 10<sup>th</sup> August at 10.00 p.m. I got a taxi to the airport for my flight to Brisbane. My son, Wolf, picked me up at the airport on Sunday morning. The seminar was on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August, I was lucky it was a Public Holiday in Queensland so Wolf was able to drive me there. The presentations were great including

### 1. Introduction to DNA

Blaine T. Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D.

This lecture was an introduction to genetics and an overview of the different types of DNA test available and modes of inheritance.

### 2. Using Autosomal DNA for 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Mysteries

Blaine T. Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D.

I found this lecture fascinating as the speaker gave an example in his own family of a mystery lady who turned out to be a relation rather than the adopted child as designated in other documents.

The lecture was about having 2 family trees, the one we are familiar with and a genetic family tree which one needs to commence when going down this path.

### 3. Using GEDmatch and DNAPainter to Analyze Your Autosomal DNA

Blaine T. Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D.

This lecture explained the terminology used in DNA matching and the relevance of the number of "segments" in a match. The units used cM ( a **centiMorgan** (cM) or map unit (m.u.) is a unit of recombinant frequency which is used to measure genetic distance. It is often used to imply distance along a chromosome, and takes into account how often recombination occurs in a region. A region with few cMs undergoes relatively less recombina-

nation. The number of base pairs to which it corresponds varies widely across the genome (different regions of a chromosome have different propensities towards crossover). One centiMorgan corresponds to about 1 million base pairs in humans on average. The centiMorgan is equal to a 1% chance that a marker at one genetic locus on a chromosome will be separated from a marker at a second locus due to crossing over in a single generation.) and the relevance of DNA tests of various relations. Also mention of companies involved with mapping.

#### **4. Limitations of Cousin Matching**

Blaine T. Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D.

Mr Bettinger's final lecture detailed the pitfall that can result in matching DNA results.

I have copies of all these lectures if anyone is interested.

#### **5. Verify a Family Line with DNA**

Louise Coakley

M/s Coakley's lecture was aimed at guiding one after one has received their DNA results. She also presented a number of papers on Australian matches and other resources to help.

As a result of attending this seminar, I ordered a DNA kit which were on special for \$99.00 to get myself tested as a first step. After completing the requirements, I sent my DNA sample in, and when the results came back, I was astounded by the result which has me 52% in the Wirral (South. Lancashire/North Wales) the rest is 48% Irish Scottish. I had a number of matches, surprisingly an Aunt's son's child as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Cousin. My Dad visited them in Sydney in the 1980's. He/ She (Ancestry only gives you a message board to contact people) remembered my Dad's visit and was aware that there were relations in the Northern Territory. I had 223 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Cousin matches. I am hoping one may prove to connect to my elusive Scottish line but that is a project down the line for now.

**Julian R Schuller**

### **IONE'S CHOCOLATE CAKE**

(Note: I got this recipe out of the Mother's Day edition of *That's Life* magazine when I was 13 years old)

**Ione Jolly**

#### **Ingredients (cake):**

1 ½ cups plain flour

½ cup cocoa

1 tbs instant coffee

1 tsp bicarb soda

¾ cup caster sugar

1 cup buttermilk

180g butter, melted and cooled

½ cup apricot jam

2 eggs

vanilla essence

**Method (cake):**

1. Sift flour, cocoa, coffee powder and bicarb soda into a large bowl.
2. Add sugar, buttermilk, (cooled and melted) butter and apricot jam. Mix with an electric mixer for 2-3 minutes (medium speed) or until all ingredients are combined.
3. Add eggs and vanilla essence. Beat for 1 minute. Mixture will become light and creamy.
4. Bake for 1 hour at 160C. Stand in tin for 10 minutes before turning out onto a baking rack. If baking in cupcake tins, bake for 25-30 minutes (check after 20 minutes).
5. Once the cake is cool, ice with chocolate ganache.

**Ingredients (ganache):**

200 g milk chocolate melts

½ cup cream

1 tbs coffee liqueur (optional)

**Method (ganache):**

1. Put the chocolate and the cream in the bowl. Microwave for 15-20 seconds. Stir. Repeat until all of the chocolate is melted and the mixture is glossy.
2. Put the mixture in the fridge and allow to cool.
3. If you want, you can leave the ganache in the fridge for longer until it thickens and then use it to ice the cake/s.
4. Once the ganache is fairly thick, ice the cake/s.



**Researcher Profile**

**Dr. Ione Jolly**

*PhD (History), BA (Arts)(Hons), BA(AsSt)/BComm*

Dr. Ione Jolly is a local historian, born and raised in the Territory. Her life-long interest in family history was inspired by the childhood stories her grandmother told her of being descended from a Thai princess. Though this story has not yet been proven, she has found pirates (and Portuguese pirate hunters), Indonesian slaves (and Dutch slave owners), unionists, Irish freedom fighters, suspected Communists, West Australian gold miners, Armenian diamond traders, a couple of

Irish convicts, a plethora of military ancestors, a few dirty rotten scoundrels and a handful of ancestors who will never be spoken of again.

Though her research interests are eclectic, she has focussed her academic research on communities of mixed-descent (Eurasians, Anglo-Indians etc.) in the (British) colonial period. Her doctoral research focussed on Eurasian migration from Malaysia and Singapore to Australia under the later stages of the White Australia Policy, and her honours research explored the experiences of Eurasians in Malaysia and Singapore during WWII.

As with many Territorians, Ione has a diverse background and her personal family history research has taken her to locales such as Penang (Malaysia), Pondicherry (India), County Longford (Ireland), and Venice (Italy). Over the last twenty years, she has researched onsite at numerous archives and libraries around the world including the:

- National Archives of Australia (Canberra, Darwin and Adelaide),
- State Records of South Australia (Adelaide),
- Public Records Office of Victoria (Melbourne),
- National Archives of the UK (London),
- British Library – India Office Collection (London),
- Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) (Belfast),
- National Archives of Singapore (Singapore),
- Arkib Negara Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Johor Bahru), and
- NT Archives (Darwin).

She has extensive experience with reading, transcribing and translating old documents. A recent research project required working with documents in 9 languages ranging from Latin to Slovakian to Hebrew. This project, though challenging, assisted a local Darwin family with identifying, tracing and tracking the experiences of relatives who were killed in the Holocaust.

In recent years, Ione has also guest lectured on WWII at the University of Malaya, appeared on national television in Malaysia, and gone into the field with a team from the US Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency who were searching for missing US servicemen from WWII.

A member of the Genealogical Society of the NT, Ione also has experience with researching local Aboriginal and Chinese family histories.

If you have hit any brick walls in your research (or fallen into a research abyss and need help climbing out), Ione would love to hear from you. Her rates are available upon request. She can be contacted at [ionejolly@hotmail.com](mailto:ionejolly@hotmail.com) or on 0418 272 520.

T'was the night before Christmas,  
he lived all alone,  
in a one bedroom house,  
made of plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney,  
with presents to give,  
and to see just who,  
in this home, did live.

I looked all about,  
a strange sight I did see,  
no tinsel, no presents,  
not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle,  
just boots filled with sand,  
on the wall hung pictures,  
of far distant lands.

With medals and badges,  
awards of all kinds,  
a sober thought,  
came through my mind.

For this house was different,  
it was dark and dreary,  
I found the home of a soldier,  
once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping,  
silent, alone,  
curled up on the floor,  
in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle,  
the room in disorder,  
not how I pictured,  
an Australian soldier.

Was this the hero,  
of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up on a poncho,  
the floor for a bed?

I realized the families  
that I saw this night,  
owed their lives to these soldiers,  
who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world,  
the children would play,

and grownups would celebrate,  
a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom,  
each month of the year,  
because of the soldiers,  
like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder,  
how many lay alone,  
on a cold Christmas eve,  
in a land far from home.

The very thought brought,  
a tear to my eye,  
I dropped to my knees,  
and started to cry.

The soldier awakened,  
and I heard a rough voice,  
"Santa don't cry,  
this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom,  
I don't ask for more,  
my life is my god,  
my country, my corps."

The soldier rolled over,  
and drifted to sleep,  
I couldn't control it,  
I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours,  
so silent and still,  
and we both shivered,  
from the cold night's chill.

I did not want to leave,  
on that cold, dark, night,  
this guardian of honour,  
so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over,  
with a voice soft and pure,  
whispered, "carry on Santa,  
it's Christmas day, all is secure."

One look at my watch,  
and I knew he was right.  
"Merry Christmas my friend,  
and to all a goodnight.