

progenitor



Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc.

The Family History Place

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INC



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FRONT COVER: 21 year old Englishman Adelaide River War Cemetery

Flight Sergeant Peter Frederick McCarthy Veteran

Birth 7 Aug 1922

Belper, Amber Valley Borough, Derbyshire, England

Death 5 Feb 1943 (aged 20)

Darwin, City of Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia

Burial Adelaide River War Cemetery

Adelaide River, Coomalie Community Government Council,
Northern Territory, Australia

Plot G. Row B. Grave 16.

**Flight Sergeant 1271615 Peter Frederick McCarthy - 54
Squadron, RAF**

Peter Frederick McCarthy was born on 7 August 1922 in Derbyshire. His father was Lieutenant Commander Harold McCarthy RNR (retired) and his mother was Elizabeth Frederica (née Sandham).

First educated at Cecil Road and then Gravesend Grammar he left school and started work as a clerk at Gravesend Hospital and then joined the Borough Library as a technical assistant. He was keenly interested in the Scouting movement and was patrol leader in the All Saints (4th Gravesend) Troop.



When the Auxiliary Fire Service was formed at the start of the war he volunteered as an auxiliary fireman at Perry Street, Northfleet, and in 1940 he took part in the evacuation at Dunkirk as a crew on one of the ships taking part in the rescue.

He enlisted in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in April 1942 as a Flight Sergeant and was sent for training in Canada before returning to the UK and joining 54 Squadron.

In mid-1942, No. 54 Squadron was sent to Australia to help bolster the air defence in the Pacific, particularly around Darwin, which was a critical target of Japanese air raids. After arriving, the squadron joined No. 1 Wing, also known as the Spitfire Wing of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), which was tasked with defending northern Australia from Japanese aircraft.

The squadron faced challenges upon arrival, such as the inexperience of some of the pilots and technical difficulties with the Spitfires, which had been damaged during their shipment. Despite these obstacles, No. 54 Squadron engaged Japanese forces over Darwin. Although combat encounters were often brief, the squadron managed to score several victories against Japanese aircraft, contributing to the defence of Australia during a crucial phase of the war.

Flight Sergeant Peter McCarthy died on 5 February 1943, aged 21, when his aircraft collided with another Spitfire on the runway at Darwin as they landed from a squadron formation flight.

He was originally buried at Berrimah War Cemetery, but was transferred to Adelaide River War Cemetery, Northern Territory, Australia in September 1945.

Reference: Find a Grave and War Graves Commission.



From TRUMPETERS CORNER, JANDOWAE, QUEENSLAND

The Pilot

Badge: RAAF 426179 F/O E.S.C. Steggall

Ted Steggall won a soldier settler farm and moved to this area with his wife, Faith, in 1948.

Like many young men of this era, Ted saw WW2 as an opportunity to escape the boredom of his humble life in northern NSW. He enlisted in the RAAF in May 1942 and trained in Qld, NSW and Victoria, before sailing to the west coast of the USA. Along with thousands of other servicemen, he travelled by train across to New York and then on to Scotland on board the Queen Mary.



His training continued in England and finally in March 1945 just after his 22nd birthday, he graduated to the Avro Lancaster as Flying Officer, based at Wrattling Common with 195 Squadron. Ted flew nine operational flights to various parts of Germany, including one 8½ hour flight to the heavily defended Berlin.

Two of the more eventful flights are recollected.

Flight over Gelsenkirchen:

Target – Synthetic Oil Factory. Daylight flight of 5 hours 15 minutes duration. 19 March 1945.

As the Lancaster approached the target, they were struck by an enormous amount of flak that pierced various parts of the fuselage and wings, including the navigator's table, rear gunners' seat and outer starboard engine. The fire in the engine was extinguished and the 12,000 pound payload was dropped. With power restricted to just three engines, they lost altitude and contact with the remainder of the Squadron. At 16,000 feet they levelled out just above cloud cover to give them some protection as they headed back to England. Good fortune was on their side and three spitfires located them near the Dutch border, providing escort for a few minutes until it appeared evident there was no immediate danger. Further along the Dutch border they were graced with the good company of a squadron of USA Flying Fortresses also returning from a mission and on their way back to England. Upon their final approach to Wrattling Common another Lancaster loomed in front of them as they descended through the 400 foot cloud cover. To avoid a collision the throttles were opened to gain altitude, resulting in the inner starboard engine over-

heating and shutting down. With only two engines left they circled around to another final approach and successful landing.

Escaping a Messerschmitt.

Target – German Naval Base. Night time flight of 5 hours 45 minutes duration. Date 9th April 1945.

On the flight to Kiel the rear gunner spotted a Messerschmitt closing in on their tail at about 1,200 yards. As the Messerschmitt got closer the gunner reported the distance to Ted in 50 yard intervals until the gap was down to 900 yards. To gain airspeed the 68,000 pound Lancaster went into a gradual evasive descent while losing about 2,000 feet in altitude, indicated airspeed increased from 220 to 270 knots and the closest sighting was 850 yards, well clear of the 600 yard mark where bullet fire can be expected from Messerschmitts.

Ted and Faith moved to Warwick after ten years and that was home for the rest of their lives. Ted never lost his love of flying, being honoured with life membership of the Warwick Soaring Club.

Contributed by the Steggall Family April 2016. From a plaque at Trumpeter's Corner, Jandowae, Queensland.

Reflections of a Senior Citizen

Just a line to say I'm living, that I'm not among the dead,
Though I'm getting more forgetful and mixed up in my head.
I've got used to my arthritis, to my dentures I'm resigned
I can manage my bifocals, but, Oh God, I miss my mind.
Sometimes I can't remember when I'm standing on the stair,
If I'm, going up for something, or had just come down from there,
Before the fridge, so often, my head is filled with doubt.
'Now, did I put that food away, or come to take it out.
Sometime, when it's dark, and I've my night cap on my head
I don't know if I'm retiring or just getting out of bed.
If it's not my turn to write, dear, I know you'll forgive me for
I may have already written and don't want to be a bore
But as I stand beside the mail box, my face is very red
I didn't mail this off to you, I've opened it instead.

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT W.C.F. (FRANK) WHITE
426802 RAAF
ACTIVE SERVICE 62 SQUADRON RAF

Frank was a city boy from Kelvin Grove in Brisbane, who loved the bush and dreamed of becoming a farmer. He passed scholarship in 1928 but left school to make his own way in the world in pursuit of his dream. He chose to milk cows for his cousins in suburban Brisbane. Ring-barking, rabbit trapping, labouring and finally goldmining on Cape York occupied him until he enlisted in the RAAF in 1942. Selected for aircrew, he sailed to Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme.



He qualified as Wireless Operator Air Gunner and was despatched to India in June 1944 to join 62 Squadron RAF as a member of Combat Cargo Task Force. The rest of the war was spent in Burma supplying ground troops. 62 Squadron flew the Douglas Dakota (the DC3).

After demobilisation in 1946 he returned to mining on Cape York but in 1948 he drew the block he called Wilga Lea. There was more hard work ahead and he was back to milking cows, but also to that special friendship that ex servicemen share. In this quiet spot there was a spirit of mateship and larrikinism. Problems were shared, successes celebrated and tired bodies restored.

He married Audrey Taylor in 1953 and 4 children soon followed.

Wilga Lea was sold in 1957 and they bought a grazing block at Jinghi Valley but by 1962 realised that the best future to the family lay in Toowoomba.

Frank's time in the district was another chapter in a full and varied life. Despite all its ups and downs as he always said, "Things have a way of working themselves out."

Contributed by Jennifer White. April 2016

From a plaque at Trumpeters Corner, Jandowae, Queensland.

William James Cogan (His Story) by Chris Regan

“May The Road Rise Up To Meet You And The Wind Be Always At Your Back”

An Irishman who could read and had no ambitions to own a farm was a rarity in our family.

William James Cogan was a city boy from the city of Cork. He was an adventurer and from early on he wanted to make his fortune. He came from a family of builders, married his childhood sweetheart, and even before he was 21, they travelled together to the other side of the world.

He and Hannah Watkins married in St Finbarr's in Cork (yes, sounds like an Irish pub....maybe it was!) on Feb 5th, 1837. Also in Cork at that time were clever and controversial migration agents who promised great wages and good conditions to tradesmen and encouraged them with overseas opportunities better than existed in famine and poverty ridden Ireland at that time. The reality and the promise often didn't stack up. Anyhow, in August 1837 William and Hannah, along with another Hannah (William's sister), and Catherine (Hannah's sister), sailed to Hobart Town as bounty passengers aboard the ill fated merchant vessel, *Bussorah Merchant*.

It was an awful trip. On the way 4 adults and 64 children died from measles and small pox. On board was a midwife who helped the surgeon deal with many ill patients. On arrival though, she had to legally fight for the wages she was promised. The ship limped up the Derwent River on Dec 12, 1837 without flying the yellow flag signifying illness on board. Nevertheless the ship was immediately quarantined at the mouth of the Snug River. Some passengers comprising 55 families, were able to disembark, but were immediately put into quarantine in Bellevue House in Hobart, at government expense until they could find 'suitable' employment. It certainly wasn't the rosy new life they might have been expecting! Surprisingly, many passengers, including William, signed a public letter supporting the captain and the surgeon. One wonders if money was exchanged?

All talk in Hobart Town would have been about John Batman and the new settlement at Port Phillip. I can guess William was very enthusiastic about this new adventure because for him, "the grass was always greener" elsewhere, certainly other than Hobart at that time!

So....August 18, 1838 William and Hannah and the ever keen sisters sailed to Port Phillip on the Yarra Yarra. On arrival they would have found a very young town with no wharf and very little planning. As a builder, William would have seen a gold mine! His friends from Cork who sailed from Ireland with him, Eugene and Mary McCarthy, also settled in the new town. Eugene was a plasterer, and he also had no hankering for farming.

Hannah's sister Catherine married in both St James Church of England, and the next day (May 26, 1838) became the first marriage in the nearby St Francis' Catholic Church. The latter, incidentally, was the same day the McCarthy's baby was baptised. William, Eugene, and an ex-

convict (Thomas Halfpenny: ...a publican) had worked very hard to get St Francis' Church up and running. Thomas, by the way, was later to become William's brother-in-law. Thomas was reputedly the first to sell whisky in the new town, and later also became the first policeman officially appointed to Horsham. Meanwhile, William achieved a reputation as a competent builder, whilst Hannah started her upholstery business in Collins Street. William's efforts are outlined in a book: "Old Melbourne Described".

On Feb 6, 1840 William and Hannah had their first baby christened: Catherine ("Kate") Cogan. The godparents were Thomas Halfpenny and Catherine Graham. Catherine, nee Watkins, was Hannah's sister.

As William's business grew, so did his family.... which comprised three surviving children. He was busy....apart from family and business, being involved in both the church, and politics (supporting John O'Shanghnessy who was later to become Premier of Victoria in 1857).

An incident: William and Thomas rashly signed "a bond of integrity" for a Joseph Byrne to become a Rate Collector. Unfortunately Joseph's integrity wasn't up to scratch, as he disappeared with the money he collected, and nicked off back to Ireland! Sustained rumour has it that Joseph later studied at The Temple, in England and became a lawyer. Ironic? Fitting? Probably both.

Anyhow William and Thomas were stuck with the bond they signed, and had to find 28 quid each to clear the debt. Remember, it was 1843, times were tough, and 56 pounds (28 pounds each) was a lot of money....particularly for very young families trying to establish themselves. On the record, on "e Melbourne" there is a letter written by William asking for more time to pay and requesting a warrant be issued for the ever missing Joseph Byrne, but to no avail.

Still....things must have been progressing OK, because William was able to greet his older brother Robert (who was also a builder) when he arrived on *The Royal Consort* with his wife and family on Feb 1, 1844.

But the issue persisted. Because of "the badness of the times" in Jan 1845 William was still requesting time to pay off the bond. Perhaps it wasn't the priority it should have been because he was still very busy. He continued to establish himself and owned property in Collins Street, donated to the building fund for the new hospital, was on jury duty, and was part of a Catholic group that faced off against the Orangemen on July 12, 1846. We might point out that Father Patrick Geoghegan, who was the first Catholic Priest of Melbourne, was one of William's close friends.

Things became serious later that year: his wife Hannah died of consumption on Aug. 17, 1846. A report in *The Argus*, Aug 21, 1846 reads: "At her residence in Flinders Street Melbourne on Monday last, after a lingering illness of 2 ½ years, which she bore with Christian fortitude and resignation, Hannah, the beloved wife of William Cogan, builder, has left three children to lament the loss of an affectionate mother".

Hannah was only 28.

William was left with their three children, and he married a second time on Feb 12 1848. His new wife was Mary O'Connor from Cork. She had immigrated and arrived in 1844 on the same boat that brought his older brother Robert and his family. Mary was from a large family whose members settled in Sydney and Port Phillip.

William's problems were not over. He won a contract to build the Immigration Barracks (also known as The Orphan Immigration Barracks). At the time he was described as "an unusually skilled workman" which must have pleased him a lot. However, the money promised by the government, 773 pounds, was not enough to cover expenses of wages and goods and he was certainly not pleased that the contract would not help cover the difference! A disagreement when his ferocious dog attacked a policeman at that time also didn't help his case!!!

His family grew, but so did his difficulties. He had a very public disagreement with Martin Healy over the ownership of some bricks. Luckily more damage was done to Healy's hat than to his head.

Anyhow, by October 1849 William took the advice of his mate Eugene and started to sell off his assets and to "re-set". He upset some creditors when paid off his numerous relatives first and "stored" his tools and furniture with his brother-in-law.

But...there was a plan to avoid being declared insolvent. He packed his pregnant wife and their child off to Sydney on *The Dart* to one of her brothers. For his part he sailed to Hobart on the cutter *The Spy*. The name is ironic, because he rowed out to the cutter just before it sailed. When he got to Hobart, he bought some tools, (2 pounds 10 shillings), bedding (1 pound 10 shillings) and a ticket to California on the ship *Edora*. William travelled steerage for 35 pounds, but he wasn't skipping the country, or "gold struck". He had a plan.

On board was Nehemiah Bartly who had loaded timber, prefabricated housing and shop fronts. He was taking it all to San Francisco, and had a deal with William to be the builder. They planned to make money, and William saw that as a way to pay off his debts, as well as have another adventure.

On New Years Eve they passed "Traps and Snares" off the south point of New Zealand but didn't stop. They regretted not stopping because later in the trip they almost ran out of water. There is a wonderful account of the trip written by Nehemiah and titled "Opals and Agates"....including his accounts of the "beautiful and half dressed women he met along the way". Anyhow, they got to Honolulu, where they stopped, and would you believe they sold a lot of timber! They off loaded a lot of Tasmanian timber, built a row of houses, and made a lot of money.

Many of the ship's passengers liked Honolulu, got off there and stayed, but not William. He proceeded to San Francisco, as per the original deal, and arrived there on May 15, 1850. They sold the rest of their cargo, made some more money, and by July William was back in Australia. He was now flush with cash. He travelled back to Oz cheaply as passenger on a boat returning to

port in Newcastle. It was a coal transporter, which had taken a load of coal to San Francisco and was coming back for another load.

From Newcastle, William got another boat to Sydney, met up with wife Mary, and met his newest daughter, Jane Hannah. The family then shipped back to Melbourne on a boat ironically named *The Shamrock*.

The story continues: In Melbourne he filed documents with the Supreme Court, claiming that many of his book receipts and papers had been accidentally destroyed by his wife when he was in California. The outcome is that he was declared insolvent and lost his builder's certificate for 12 months. The supreme court found that "he had formally carried on business as a builder, and left some time hence for California via Tasmania whence he recently returned".

Was he tempted to stay in California? Maybe, but we don't think so. His three children with Hannah were with friends in Melbourne and still at school, and his current wife and baby girl were in Sydney, so he had strong reasons to return. He is reported as testifying "My intention was if I succeeded in California to come back and pay my creditors....but I did not ask their permission". Maybe he was fortunate the deal with Nehemiah and the successes in Honolulu and San Francisco made his decision easy. The facts are...he came back, he met with his creditors and paid them 50 pounds, he and Mary had two more children, they settled in Melbourne, and he regained his building certificate.

It wasn't over. He was again insolvent in 1858. That, perhaps, is another story!

William died suddenly on Sept 13, 1859. He was only 41. His death certificate lists six children, but only one wife....the most loved Hannah. It's probably quite telling that his death notice simply says he died "On 13th instant, at his residence in Swan Street, Mr William Cogan, builder, aged 41 years, for many years a resident of Victoria and much loved by all who knew him".

Addendum:

When I first started the Family History Journey, I was given some great advice from Elaine Barry. She said: "Always follow the siblings".

From DNA analysis I found that Hannah Cogan, nee Watkins, had a brother who also came out to Australia. He didn't have to pay his way. He came as a 19 year old "noted and expert offender". John Watkins was arrested in Cork for stealing 80lbs of tea. He was transported to Sydney on the *Elphinstone* in 1838. In 1845 he had his Ticket of Leave cancelled for stealing some blankets, and spent some time in chains in Newcastle. Somehow he made his way to Victoria where he reinvented himself, "married" his childhood sweetheart, and became a farmer at Euroa. William's friends Eugene and Mary took their family to California, probably after hearing from William about the opportunities for them there. I was contacted by one of their descendants and told that their son became a newspaper owner who employed Mark Twain....they became close friends and had many adventures together.

There are so many resources available these days. When I first researched William I only had some dates, but no real details. Now, through Ancestry, Family Search, parish records, Tasmanian libraries, Trove, online books, DNA, convict records, BDM, and, of course, the wonderful library at the Genealogy Society of the Northern Territory (managed by my dear friend June Tomlinson) William's story has come to life.

In 21 years in Australia William made and lost a fortune, buried his wife, sister, brother and three children. He had travelled extensivelyCork to Hobart to Melbourne to Hobart to California to Newcastle, to Sydney and back to Melbourne. He had been on both sides of the Law...as a jury member, and as an accused of assault. He had friends in high places, but also took care of his more lowly paid labourers (well....that's what I like to think!). He had been declared insolvent twice, and married twice.

The library at the NT GS lists all the old headstones in the Old Melbourne Cemetery: William's contains the phrase "A man of literary tasks, and no mean versifier,"....which was stated as testament to his beautiful and emotionally lovely written script he created for Hannah's headstone (his first wife).

The bottom line.....he was an Irish immigrant to Australia, a builder of high repute, and a pioneer of Melbourne.

Not bad eh? As the cliché goes: *A life well lived.*

While searching my Weir Family from Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland

I came across the following web site of interest.

<https://www.captaincooksociety.com/>

The Captain Cook Society

The Captain Cook Society has an international membership from countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. They receive a free quarterly publication called *Cook's Log*. Each issue contains articles on many aspects of James Cook's Life and those associated with him.

Membership is open to anyone interested in Captain James Cook, whether professionally or as a hobby.

Alexander Weir (1732-1768)

Alexander Weir was baptised on 10 December, 1732, at Dysart, Fife, the son of David and Margaret (née Buchannan) Weir. Weir was on Cook's First Voyage for only three months.



He joined *Endeavour* on 27 May, 1768, as a quartermaster, and drowned at Madeira on 14 September.¹ He was dragged down by the buoy-rope and anchor in the harbour.

Weir was already acquainted with Cook, having joined the brig *Grenville* on 10 March, 1768, as a midshipman. Before he could sail in her he was discharged at Deptford on 18 April, and followed Cook to *Endeavour*.

His will was proven on 10 August 1771.² In it, Weir left everything to his wife, Anne, of the parish of St George's in the East in London.

John Robson

References

1. *Cook's Log*, page 953, vol. 16, no. 3 (1993).
2. *Cook's Log*, page 16, vol. 35, no. 4 (2012).
3. The National Archives (TNA). PROB 11/970.

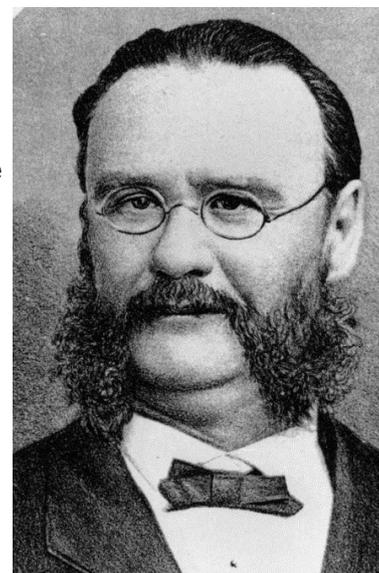
Originally published in *Cook's Log*, page 5, volume 38, number 1 (2015).

Lost in the Bush – a Doctor's Story

From Ipswich Libraries Picture Ipswich

Thanks to staff at the Ipswich Hospital Museum who pointed us in the direction of this part of our history.

Born on 6 April 1837 at Hesse-Cassel in Germany, Dr William Henry (Wilhelm Heinrich) von Lossberg journeyed from Hamburg to Brisbane in 1863 as surgeon-superintendent on the ship, 'Alster'. A bachelor at the time, Dr von Lossberg soon took up residence at a private boarding home in East Street and began what would be a long medical career in the Ipswich area. He was known for his willingness to travel to outlying stations by horseback and on one occasion shortly after his arrival, he rode to Nanango to treat a patient. As well as his medical endeavours, Dr von Lossberg was also an elder of the Ipswich Lutheran congregation and was chairman of the committee who were influential in organising the erection of the first Lutheran Church in Ipswich. It was most unfortunate then, that on Sunday, 26 June 1864 – the day of the dedication of the St John's Lutheran Church – the good doctor was lost in the bush.



The doctor had left Ipswich with a guide on 22 June to travel approximately 80 kilometres to Telamon Station near the headwaters of the Logan River. The reason for his visit was to amputate the arm of one of the station's employees. Having performed the operation, Dr von Lossberg began the return journey alone and it was then that he ran into trouble. As he began to cross a sandy creek, the doctor's horse sunk right up to its saddle-flaps and despite his best efforts, he was un-

able to free it. With great reluctance he left the horse behind and went in search of assistance. It was at this time, wandering alone in the bush, that he became lost. The further he walked, the thicker the bush became and adding to his difficulties, his matches were sodden during his attempted creek crossing, making it impossible to light a fire or his beloved pipe.

Dr von Lossberg spent five days and nights lost in the bush, without food or water, apparently chewing on leaves to quell his cravings of hunger and thirst. Since it was winter the nights were cold and as time passed, his condition weakened and he began to lose hope. On the sixth day, Dr von Lossberg sat on a log and composed his last will and testament and letters to his family in Germany. While doing so, he was disturbed by what he thought were the sounds of nearby animals. As he stumbled off to investigate, the doctor not only discovered a flock of sheep but on his way towards them, he came across a most welcome sight – a creek. Having drunk his fill, Dr von Lossberg was washing himself in the creek when an aboriginal man spotted him and then, without a word, ran off. In his weakened state, the doctor lay on the bank of the creek not knowing when, or if, help would return.

Thankfully, the man returned in the company of Charley Watkins, a hut-keeper on Maroon Station. With the assistance of both men, Dr von Lossberg made it to Watkin's hut where he ate his first meal in six days – cold turkey and damper. He even got to enjoy a smoke. Charley then took the doctor up to the head-station, but the family were themselves in Ipswich, at the annual June races of the North Australian Jockey Club. He slept that night in a comfortable bed and the following morning, he left Maroon station, having been provided with a horse and meticulous directions to Coochin Coochin station.

The doctor arrived safely at the station, and after spending another comfortable night, he travelled onto Dugandan. Although he was treated most kindly there by Mrs Macquarie Macdonald, Dr von Lossberg did not stay and instead rode on. It was at this point that he once again became lost. Luck was on his side as he accidentally stumbled across an Aboriginal camp. One of the people there offered to be his guide for 2s.6d. (25 cents), although this price was increased to 6s. (60 cents) during the journey. On their arrival at Peak Mountain Station, Dr von Lossberg met up with Mr William Watkins as well as one of the policemen who had been combing the countryside for him. Together they returned to Ipswich where Dr von Lossberg resumed his normal work, having missed the dedication of the church.

Picture Ipswich www.pictureipswich.com.au

EARLY NORTHERN TERRITORY TEACHERS by Ruth Sheridan

Colin Sydney Butcher was born at Whyte-Tarcowie South Australia on 27 November 1913. He married Lucy Sinclair in 1938. He taught at Pt Augusta West in 1953. His service in the Northern Territory was as head at Batchelor School in 1956. Butcher died on 15 March 2006.

National Archives of Australia ID 4573446

Margaret Phylis Cameron was born at Pt Pirie on 27 November 1913. She married John James Short. She taught at Tantanoola South Australia in 1944. In 1953, she was an infant mistress in Darwin. Then she taught at Darwin Higher Primary in 1955.

Margaret died at Mt Eliza Victoria on 12 November 2005.

Northern Standard (Darwin), Thursday 18 June 1953, page 8 Ryerson Index

Northern Standard (Darwin, NT), Thursday 5 March 1953, page 4

Alistair McKinnon Cant was born at Delamore, South Australia on 27 August 1902. He married Dorothy Lawrence Prime at Rose Park South Australia on 12 May 1934. His teaching career included a posting as head teacher Willunga Higher Primary, head of Lockleys Primary and Headmaster of Darwin School where he served from 1953. *The Advertiser* article reported: "A drive to Darwin will begin tomorrow for Mr. and Mrs. Alistair Cant, of Lockleys. They will take their children Elizabeth and Bevan with them, truck their car from Quorn to Alice Springs, and drive the rest of the way. Mr. Cant will take over a new school at Darwin."

Alistair McKinnon Cant died at Toorak Gardens SA on 14 May 1972.

Northern Standard (Darwin, NT), Friday 7 November 1952, page 6

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA), Wednesday 21 January 1953, page 10

Oral history Joan Angeles 2025

Ivor Vernon Carpenter was born on 18 August 1928 to parents Alfred Ernest Carpenter and Hazel May Clifton. He taught at Darwin in 1950. He died on 28 October 2019 and was buried at Houghton Cemetery.

Ryerson Index

Donald Clare Chambers is another South Australian teacher whose career was interrupted by WWII service. He was born on 25 April 1910 at Stewart's Range South Australia. He spent his boyhood days in Mt Gambier. He married Delcie Olive Nagel. He enlisted on 30 June 1940. (See National Archives of Australia ID 6397117 for his service record).

He taught at Kapunda in 1952. Then he was transferred to the NT as head of the newly opened Hatches Creek School in 1953. Later in 1963, he taught at Katherine. Chambers died on 30 March 1984.

National Archives of Australia

Beryl Lorraine Clode was born in Adelaide on 7 May 1919. She married Keith Terence Traeger. She worked as an assistant teacher at Croker Island in 1954. Beryl died on 16 February 2009 at Heidelberg Victoria. She was buried at Templestowe Cemetery and Memorial Gardens.

Find a grave. *Advertiser* (Adelaide, SA), Monday 23 December 1940, page 5

Claude Hampson Coats was born in Adelaide on 4 March 1907. Circa 1937, he joined the South Australian Education Department. He worked for the Malayan Education Service in Singapore from 1938. He returned to Adelaide on sick leave in 1940.

The News (Adelaide) announced his marriage thus:

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Hampson Coats, who were married on Saturday, left today for Western Australia on their way to their future home in Singapore. Mrs. Coats was Miss Dorothy Frances Stirling and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Stirling, of North Kensington Park. Her husband is a Master of Arts of Adelaide University.

When Singapore was invaded by the Japanese, Coats was interned as a civilian in Changi Prison. He was forced to work on the Thai-Burma Railway along with POWs. His wife set out to escape Singapore on the *Mata Hari*, but it was captured in the Banka Banka Straits. They spent the rest of the war not knowing if the other was alive and where they were. After the war, they were re-united and returned to Adelaide.

Coats suffered ill health following his work on the railway, including cerebral malaria, tropical ulcers, dysentery, beri-beri, scabies, dengue fever and cholera. He returned to work in Malaya but left in 1946 owing to ill health. He rejoined the South Australian Education Department in 1947 and taught at Alice Springs from 1952 to 1954.

In 1957 when he was working at Balaklava High School, he applied for a grant from The Civilian Internees' Trust Fund. In the application, he explains that he has a wife and four children. He claims that he suffers from neurosis and schizophrenia, which was the result of cerebral malaria. He had to relinquish his position as a senior teacher in the Malay Education Service and take a lower position in the SA Education Department as the malaria returned after he returned to work in Malaya. He acknowledged the receipt of an invalid pension from the British Colonial Service. It is unknown whether he received any compensation.

Claude Hampson Coates died at Fullarton SA on 28 April 1991 aged 84.

National Archives of Australia ID 966888

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Coats-621>

News (Adelaide, SA), Monday 18 November 1940, page 6

<https://muntokpeacemuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/>

[Carston_Report_on_HMS_Mata_Hari_and_POW_Camps-1.pdf](#)

Charlotte Emma Flora Cochrane was born on 7 July 1905 at Nairne South Australia. She taught at Hindmarsh Central Girls (1927); at Nailsworth Central (1928); assistant teacher at Kersbrook Primary (1938); East Adelaide School (1939) She was appointed to Alice Springs Higher Primary in 1945. She taught at Myrtlebank in 1946. She was a senior demonstrating assistant at Sturt Street Practising School in 1954.

She died on 7 September 1997 and was buried at Langhorne Creek Cemetery. Trove

The Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc.

Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2025.

The Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc. (GSNT) has now been accommodated at Harry's Place in Tiwi for almost three years. As we were located in the city for decades, there are still people who are rediscovering us in the suburbs. There have been several challenges in the past year which have affected our operations, namely: the limited temporary closure of the library due to minor flooding on two occasions (due to a tree root incursion in the kitchen and a burst pipe in the ceiling), and flooding in the car park during bad weather in the Wet Season. To counter these challenges, we ensured that our volunteers reached out to the public through participation in a range of workshops and events.

In 2024-25, family history workshops were held at the Family History Library at Harry's Place in Tiwi and at Khoda Patel's Community Room at Casuarina Village. Workshops were held throughout the year, including during Seniors Month. Workshop topics included:

- What's in the Library
- Starting your tree basics
- Chinese Family History
- Asian immigration to the Top End
- Going down Research Rabbit Holes
- Using Archives for Family History
- Brick Wall Discussions
- Research Using TROVE
- DNA basics for Ancestry.

In addition to running the workshops, we also engaged with the community through an information (and fundraising) stall that we ran at the NT Caladium Festival in November 2024. We would also like to thank our volunteers for donating all of the plants and goods that we had on our stall at the Caladium Festival. GSNT also continued our sponsorship of the Family History category at the Royal Darwin Show.

At the February 2025 General & Executive Meeting it was resolved that we would use our own Tree as a logo on shirts for Volunteers!

Our community engagement activities were undertaken whilst maintaining normal operations. During the period under review:

- we handled 1155 visits from members of the public,
- attended to 593 research inquiries from both local and interstate,
- had ten researchers, and
- provide 887 hours of research assistance.

Over the course of the year, some of the topics researched by our volunteers included: Cyclone Tracy, Indigenous families in Borroloola, the Wyndham Chinese community, early publicans in outback Western Australia, India (pre and post Partition), British farmers in Namibia and Zimbabwe, and Armenian traders in Malaysia and Indonesia.

In addition we helped a Czech writer to research Czech immigrants in the Northern Territory Cold War period from 1948 - 1989.

A longer project was commenced documenting the Teachers who served in the Territory from the 1870's.

We have significantly increased our Library Holdings through donations from local families

Our interstate inquiries on Northern Territory families increased some taking a significant amount of hours to complete.

Our Death Index continues to be added to. As does our cemeteries, we have had enquiries from Aboriginal organisations asking for persons in a particular cemetery.

Our Family History Library is appreciative of the accommodation grant and continued support received from the NT Department of People, Sport and Culture. Without this grant and support we would not be able to reconnect past and present Northern Territory families.

We would like to thank Territory Technology Solutions for their continued support. We could not have asked for a more supportive, patient and generous IT service provider.

We are also indebted to the NT Department of Tourism and Hospitality through the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) for the provision of grants that enabled us to purchase much needed library equipment.

The backbone of our society is our volunteers. GSNT has no paid staff and relies heavily on our volunteers, who do our research, our cleaning and staff our Library all day Mondays, Tuesdays, Saturdays, and on Wednesday evenings; as well as man our stalls at various events. We are deeply indebted to Julie Andrew, Ruth Sheridan, Julian Schuller, Pat King, Gail Macgregor, Joan Angeles, Neville Jones, Alphonso Shields, Leticia Charrington, Marcia Charrington, Julie Danvers, Brian Danvers, Theresa Jolly, Peter Jolly, and Ione Jolly.

Dianne Tessmann is the Editor of Progenitor and Jeanice Levez is our Web Master. Both Dianne and Jeanice live in Queensland, and we are very lucky to have such dedicated and talented members. Meanwhile Burniece Cross, despite health issues continues to provide us with a steady stream of craft articles that are readily snapped up by both members and visitors.

Where would we be without Eddie Webber and Janet Leather who do a thorough clean and dust of our premises every fortnight, unseen and unheralded. Their efforts are very much appreciated, and we are deeply indebted to them.

Our Pioneer Register continues to grow thanks to the persistent and dedicated work of Julie Schuller, Ruth Sheridan, Gail Macgregor and June Tomlinson. Coordinating all aspects of our work, as well as managing our volunteers and dealing with complex inquiries is June Tomlinson our long serving Secretary. June has been at the helm of the Society for more than 43 years, guiding it through good times and bad. We would be lost without her expertise and guidance.

We acknowledge the significant contribution of our Patron, the Late Hon Austin Asche AC, KC, who for 36 years maintained a keen interest in our operation. He was a valuable source of knowledge on the history of the Northern Territory. AGM's were always looked forward to as Austin entertained with stories and wit.

We hope to finalise the appointment of a new Patron by the end of November 2025.

Despite the challenges we have faced over the year, it is clear that we have continued to offer Territorians a trusted and dedicated service connecting past and present families.

Judy Boland

President (for the period 2024-2025)

13 November 2025