

NEWSLETTER



July – August – September 2010

Volume Eleven Number Three

Linking yesterday with tomorrow

HENRY LAWSON



PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

They Were Here Vol 1	\$ 35
They Were Here Vol 2	\$ 40
War Memorials of the Port Stephens Area	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace History & Heritage	\$ 25
Marriages from the Gloucester Examiner &	
Raymond Terrace Examiner 1894 – 1926	\$ 15
Clearing Out Sales Raymond Terrace &	
Lower Hunter 1895 – 1930	\$ 15
Soldiers & Memorials of Seaham	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Register	\$ 30
Cemetery Master Index	\$ 25
Landholders & Others	\$ 15
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Cemetery	\$ 5
Obituary Books Vol 1 1893 – 1915	
Vol 2 1916 – 1925	
Vol 3 1926 – 1930, 1951 & 1952	

Buy any two volumes of Obituaries for \$45 or all three publications for \$65. Purchased individually the Obituary Books cost \$25.

We also have available for sale a large selection of publications not produced by the Society but covering the local district among them are:

Seaham School of Arts \$ 15
Short History of Raymond Terrace \$ 5
Wades Corn Flour Mill 1878-1902 \$ 10

All prices exclude postage

SKETCHLEY COTTAGE MUSEUM is located opposite Bettles Park, Raymond Terrace and is open to the public on Sundays 10am to 3pm other times by appointment. Bus groups are most welcome, please contact the Secretary to arrange a date and time.

The Society's **RESEARCH ROOMS** are located in the Port Stephens Library, corner William & Port Stephens Streets, Raymond Terrace.

Open Monday & Wednesday
9.30 am to 2 pm - other times by appointment

Membership of the Society is open to everyone with an interest in Local and Family History.

Family Meeting:
Joining Fee \$2.00 Concession \$15.00 Full Membership \$20.00
Family \$25.00 Monthly Meetings are held on the third Friday of the month at St Brigid's Hall, Raymond Terrace at 7.00 pm.

RAYMOND TERRACE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc

**RAYMOND TERRACE & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
PO BOX 255
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**THE NEVER-NEVER LAND by HENRY LAWSON
Written about 1906**

By hut, homestead and shearing shed,
By railroad, coach and track-
By lonely graves where rest the dead,
Up-Country and Out-Back:
To where beneath the clustered stars
The dreamy plains expand-
My home lies wide a thousand miles
In Never-Never Land.

It lies beyond the farming belt,
Wide wastes of scrub and plain,
A blazing desert in the drought,
A lake-land after rain;
To the skyline sweeps the waving grass,
Or whirls the scorching sand-
A phantom land, a mystic realm!
The Never-Never Land.

Where lone Mount Desolation lies
Mounts Dreadful and Despair-
'Tis lost beneath the rainless skies
In hopeless deserts there;
It spreads nor-west by No-Man's Land
Where clouds are seldom seen
To where the cattle stations lie
Three hundred miles between.

The drovers of the Great Stock Routes
The strange Gulf country Know
Where, travelling from the southern droughts,
The big lean bullocks go;
And camped by night where plains lie wide,
Like some old ocean's bed,
The watchmen in the starlight ride
Round fifteen hundred head.

Lest in the city I forget
True mateship after all,
My water-bag and billy yet
Are hanging on the wall;
And I, to save my soul again,
Would tramp to sunsets grand
With sad-eyed mates across the plain
In Never-Never Land.

VALE BILL SPENCER.

Recently our society suffered a thinning of the ranks, with the death of much respected Life Member, Ivan (Bill) Spencer. When Bill and his wife Jean, first joined our society they were living at Karuah, quite a journey away. Fortunately, for us, this distance did not deter them and Sketchley Cottage almost became their second home.



Above: Jean & Bill Spencer after another Successful job at Sketchley.

By MOIRA SAUNDERSON – Life Member.

If you needing carpentry work done, a display adjusted, the lawn mown, the garden weeded, signs or painting done, Bill was there to do it, always backed up by his hard working wife, Jean. When we decided to start accessioning of all our collection, Jean took on the Curator's position, and kept three members fully occupied every week with that task.

Due to ill health, Bill & Jean were forced to move to East Maitland to be closer to medical facilities.

Good members, who work over and above the usual are difficult to replace. Our society is still trying to fill the void left by their departure.

We remember Bill with gratitude and deep appreciation of all that he and Jean undertook to improve the Sketchley Cottage venue and the many long hours they devoted to making a difference.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

- . The next garage sale has been postponed until Sat 18September. If you have any items to donate, please take them to Glenys and Peter's place before that date. If you have some time on the day, your assistance would be appreciated.
- The Market Day has generally been held in August, but with the poor weather over the last 2 years, it was decided that it would be moved to later in the year to try and encounter some milder weather. The date is **SATURDAY 23 OCTOBER**. So, start knitting, planting, thinking up new creative ideas to help us raise funds, and remain viable
- The courtyard is looking lovely, now that all of the hard work is complete. The Maitland Community workers have done a great job, taking up all of the bricks, and then relaying them in an attractive basket weave pattern. The weather was against them, and so it took longer than expected, but the final product was worth waiting for. Thanks to Mick and his band of hardworking assistants for a job well done.



- **A Fun Night**, sponsored by McDonalds has been booked for **Monday 6 September**. The Historical Society will receive a percentage of sales that occur between 6 and 7pm. So ask you friends and family to support us by having a meal out on that night. We appreciate the support given by local businesses.
- **A movie matinee** has been arranged for **Saturday 4 September** at Scotty's Cinema in Raymond Terrace. Tickets are available from society members, at the Research Room at the library (on Mon and Wed) and from the Cottage on Sundays. There will be drinks and nibbles before the movie, and some lucky door prizes, so come along and enjoy the movie – "Tomorrow When the War Began" – that, in part, was filmed in King Street.
- **If you have a story** that you would like to have included in the next newsletter, or have an idea for a story, please let me know.
- **Please return your Raffle tickets** for the mid year gourmet food raffle ASAP. The raffle will be drawn at the Market Day in October.

Recipe from Trish Harris – NIBBLIES

(served at Christmas in July dinner)

1 loaf bread – cut each slice in 4 –remove crusts.

Mixture:

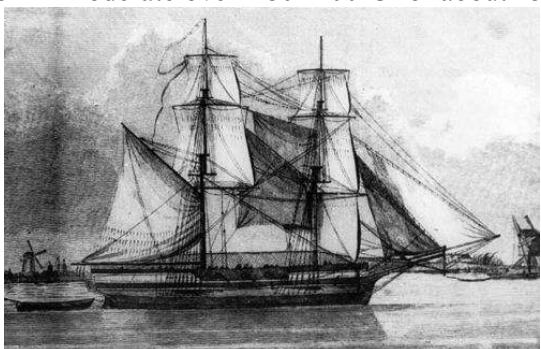
250 g grated cheese

Worcestershire Sauce – add just enough to colour cheese.

1 egg

Beat together with fork. Put onto bread. Add 1 piece of bacon on top.

Cook in moderate oven 180°-200°C for about 15 minutes.

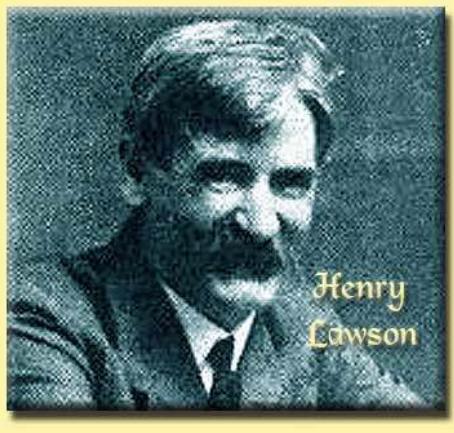


Lady Nelson was launched in England in 1798, and arrived in Sydney in 1800. She sailed between Tasmania and New South Wales, Macquarie calling her the best and safest boat he had ever sailed in.

Kay Bonomini's Story of Working as an Usherette
at the Fiesta Theatre



I have lived in Raymond Terrace all of my life, and used to go to matinees at the old theatre in Kangaroo Street (The Empire). Pearl Mitchell and I were the first usherettes at the new Fiesta Theatre. We had red corduroy dresses in a princess style, with turn-back folds as sleeves, with gold buttons. If moviegoers didn't have booked tickets on most Saturday nights, they wouldn't even get in. People had their favourite seats, which they kept booked. 'K' row was much in demand amongst the young as this was where couples sat and "canoodled". There were stories told about some who did more than watch the movies!!! There was also a crying room where parents could take their fractious children – no noise could be heard, but parents could still watch the movies



Australian politicians and educators, particularly conservative ones, tend to promote the myth of Henry Lawson as a homespun rural author, and consequently, a bucolic view of Lawson is very widespread – he has been washed in antiseptic and billy tea. For example, one website says, "Henry Lawson lived in the country on a selection in Sapling Gully approximately 6 kms from Mudgee in New South Wales." In fact, from the age of 17 to his death at 55, Lawson spent almost his entire life in Sydney, a bustling world city twice as populous as San Francisco in his heyday 1890s, where he mixed with the bohemian and radical intellectuals and activists of the era, as did his mother for the last 37 years of her life. A large part of Henry's writing, especially his poetry, was political, swinging between what we would call today "left" and "right". Progressives and reactionaries, unsure of what to do with him, have preferred to ignore him or make him a kind of literary jackaroo. Louisa Lawson's life, too, probably because she was both poor and in many ways excessively progressive for her times, has been virtually swept from public consciousness despite her incredible achievements. I hope the Almanac's Lawsons Chronology might in some small way help to correct the historical revision of the whole 'Lawson myth', by showing these two Aussies in context.

*Southern men of letters, vainly seeking recognition here-
Southern men of letters, driven to the Northern Hemisphere!
It is time your wrongs were known; it is time you claimed redress –
Time that you were independent of the mighty Northern press.
Sing a song of Southern writers, sing a song of Southern fame,
Of the dawn of art and letters and your native country's shame ...*

In the land where sport is sacred, where the labourer is a god,
You must pander to the people, make a hero of a clod!
What avail the sacrifices of the battles you begin
For the literary honour of the land we're living in?
Henry Lawson; from 'A Song of Southern Writers', The Bulletin, May 28, 1892

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

On 18 July, 20 members braved the cold, rainy night for a Sketchley Cottage Fundraiser – a progressive dinner. What a wonderful evening it was!



Our first stop was Faye and Steve's home, for mini pizzas and kebabs. Poor Steve was sent out into the cold with the BBQ while the rest were inside keeping warm and giving him encouragement.

Next stop was to Peter and Glenys' home for a baked dinner, with lots of talking going on around the many tables. That was after eating the lovely hot meal.

Next stop was at Moira and Vicki's home for sweets. What a sight to see. The table loaded with chocolate-coated strawberries, trifles of different kinds and lots of good things. Coffee and chocolates followed.

Then it was time to brace the cold and go home, with promises to diet the next day. Here's hoping for another lovely evening in the future.

by Laurel Young.

An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.

Martin Luther King, Jr.



NEW ACQUISITIONS IN THE LIBRARY – LESLEY GENT

Minutes of Hinton Arbor Day Committee
And letters to Mr T. Pearse re P.P. Union

Craven - A History 1903 - 2009

Myall Lakes National Park

1 Wollombi Cemetery - Grave Listing (Elaine Hall)

1 Deaths & Obituaries from the Cessnock Eagle
(Elaine Hall)

Early Architects of the Hunter Region Parts 1 & 2
(Port Stephens Library Service)

Walk About in Palestine 1940-1943 (Moira Saunderson)

1 The First Fleet

1 Kings of the Road

Northbridge History Project - Perth W.A.

1 Thunderbolt - Scourge of the Ranges

HENRY LAWSON – A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE

An exert from www.wilsonsalmanac.com



*Give me a pound a column, and a drop to clear my throat,
An' I will write the reddest song as ever poet wrote.
Henry Lawson; 1892*

Henry Lawson (b1867,d. September 2, 1922), Australian's best-known writer of short stories and verse, noted for his realistic portrayals of bush life and the revolutionary politics of his earlier writing. Henry Lawson was born dirt-poor in a bark hut on the goldfields at Grenfell, New South Wales. Likewise, he died in abject poverty, under a tree in his garden, and Prime Minister William Hughes ordered one of the grandest State funerals ever seen in Australia, and the first for a writer, which was attended by many thousands in St Andrew's Cathedral and out on the streets of Sydney. Years later, his face was on Australia's \$10 note.

Henry Lawson's mother was the pioneer feminist and 'Mother of Women's Suffrage', Louisa Lawson (1848 - 1920), publisher/editor of the progressive women's journal, Dawn (a "paper in which women may express their own opinions on political and social questions"), which Henry Lawson printed in its earliest editions. His brother-in-law was another fiery labor man, Jack Lang, who became Premier of New South Wales in 1925.

When female Australian British subjects won the vote with the Uniform Franchise Act (June 16, 1902), Louisa Lawson was hailed by her political sisters as "The Mother of Womanhood Suffrage" in the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote and stand for election. Unlike many suffragists and feminists of her day, she was uneducated (two years of schooling) and did not come from a privileged background but from the shanties of rural Australia.

Henry Lawson lived much of his life in poverty and alcoholic despair, but even during his lifetime he was acknowledged as a poetic genius, much-loved by the Australian people who until recently had a strong poetic culture. In his lifetime, he was probably Australia's most famous person.

It's popularly believed that Henry Lawson was born in a tent in flooding rains, a myth perpetuated by many including his sister Gertrude, who often wrote inaccurate and exaggerated accounts of her famous brother, in the *Grenfell Record* of 1915 (by which time the elderly Louisa Lawson had lost contact with reality). Similarly, the evidence is stronger that Henry Lawson was born in a hut than in a tent. We do know, however, that the first months of Henry's life were indeed lived in a tent on 'The Result', the mining claim pegged out by his father on the Grenfell goldfield (Roderick, Colin, Henry Lawson: a life, Angus and Robertson. Sydney, 1991)

The first harvesting of sugar cane was done by the South Sea Islanders, (known as Kanakas). Their labour was cheap and it was



thought they could work better in the tropical heat than the white man. The cane stalks were cut by hand, laid in stacks in the ground with a second person cutting the green tops off, tied in bundles and loaded on to a horse drawn wagon to the mills for processing. It was primitive, backbreaking, dirty and tedious work. By 1906, following Federation, it was prohibited to use Islander labour. They were replaced by itinerant gold miners, Italian immigrants and 'cane cockies' from south.

Today full mechanisation of the cane crop has replaced all the hard work of over a hundred years ago. The majority of growing areas have one or two central Mills, to which all the private farmers train their crops right to the centre of the mill for crushing and refining. Once the crop is refined it is, as in the case of the Innisfail area, trucked to a huge storage silo at Mourilyan harbour, then conveyed directly to the sugar boats for export to other countries.

Australia is the third largest exporter of raw sugar.

Moira Saunderson – Life Member.

Any man who can drive safely while kissing a pretty girl is simply not giving the kiss the attention it deserves.

[Albert Einstein](#)

THE AUSTRALIAN DRESS REGISTER PROJECT

Raymond Terrace Historical Society became involved with the Powerhouse Museum when Lindie Ward, Curator of Design, History and Society, visited Sketchley Cottage on 12 March 2008. This was in response to our application for a site visit offered by the Powerhouse Museum Regional Services program, which Vicki Brooke, Regional Museums Advisor, organised for us. During this day Lindie looked at a range of items from our textile collection. She was able to assist Jean, Moira and myself to identify materials from which items were made (eg dress made from pina cloth – pineapple fibre – from the Philippines), methods used (eg machine/handmade lace) and suggestions for storage and preservation (acid-free tissue and storage boxes). One of these items was the 1869 Moxey Wedding Gown. This silk taffeta dress particularly interested Lindie, as its pale and mid blue striped material predates the Victorian custom of white wedding dresses. She expressed the opinion that it is rare and valuable, despite its extremely fragile condition, which makes it unsuitable for display. She showed us the draft of a proposal by the Powerhouse Museum to set up a National Costume Register which would document such significant items of Colonial dress but would, most importantly, ensure that the costume stays in the area where it is most relevant and where its history (provenance) can continue to be recorded.

As a result of this visit we were invited to take part in the Dress Collections Seminar for regional museums and galleries held at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, on Monday 10 November 2008. Moira and I took the gown to display and gave a powerpoint presentation about its history. This was a great honour for our society, although somewhat daunting, as the auditorium held an audience of approximately 200 people. As a result of this, we received a further invitation to a roundtable meeting where the progress of the project was explained.

Helpful notes were supplied to guide our preparation for data entry into the site. A further meeting was held on Wed 30 June 2010 to explain refinements made to the program by Powerhouse technical staff and also to set up an Advisory Committee of people from outside the Museum to help run the project. The national launch of the Dress Register is anticipated in Sept/Oct 2010. Moira, Boris and I attended this meeting: our continued support for the project has been appreciated by the Powerhouse Museum.

Each group who takes part in the register can enter as many as 5 items. We have submitted the data and photos of the Moxey Wedding Dress and are awaiting feedback on our entry. We are currently assessing the collection to see what else we could add. Items of men's clothing are under represented, so we are looking at this area. The Raymond Terrace Band Master's Uniform and a man's wedding suit and shirt (hand made at Dungog) would be of interest to researchers using this site.

The Hunter Region launch of the Dress Register, hosted by our Society, will be held on Saturday 4 December 2010 at a suitable local venue. Lindie Ward and Rebecca Pinchan (Regional Services Coordinator, Powerhouse Museum) will present a workshop. The invitation to be involved in this project from its inception recognises the importance of our textile collection and the work of the accessioning team lead by our former curator, Jean Spencer. Moira and I will continue to be involved and will update you on further developments.

Sue Sokoloff – Honorary Curator



8

THAT SWEET STUFF WE ALL LIKE - SUGAR

Although I regularly visit tropical Queensland, I have to date, not taken much notice of the sugar cane harvesting. This trip I had the opportunity to visit the Australian Sugar Museum, located at Mourilyan 10 kms south of Innisfail on the Bruce Highway and open 7 days 9am to 5pm. The museum was officially opened in July 1977.

Once inside this cavernous building, the displays elaborate on



every aspect of growing sugar cane, including two continuously operating TV videos, which take you through the various methods of cutting and the transport used to get the product to the mills. The first recorded growing of sugar cane in Australia took place at Port Macquarie in 1823. After a few years this venture proved unsuccessful due to severe frost damage. More suitable areas were sought northwards on the eastern seaboard. Crops were planted in the Clarence River in 1867, Brisbane 1865, Bundaberg 1872, Mackay 1868, Innisfail 1881 and Cairns 1882. Experiments in cotton growing had also been undertaken in the mid and far north of Queensland, and as the cane growing proved successful, the cotton growers moved south to the dryer climates of western New South Wales and Queensland.

13

Chad Lavis took the photos of the cottage and our collection, to use in the new colour brochure. The complete set of photos that Chad took is available to view in the Research Room at the Library.



Linda Ennis, and her company Visual Insight were responsible for the production of the colour brochure.



Thank you, to both of them, for their skills in producing such a quality product.

Dave's Internet Clippings

How to create a new folder:

Double click on My Computer icon.
Left click on Folders, scroll down to new folder.
Type folder name and press Enter key.

Saving websites to Favourites

Example: Search for a caramel slice recipe using Goggle.
Highlight website address in address bar make sure it has a dark blue background when web address is highlighted.

Left click on Favourites (yellow star) above address bar.
Click on the folder you want the website to be kept in.
Then left click on Add.

Useful websites

www.ancestry.com.au

www.rhymezone.com

<http://www.aussiegardening.com.au>

<http://www.grandpapencil.net/austral/hist4.htm>

<http://www.ironcurtainkid.com/>

By David Gunter.

QUOTES FROM THE DALAI LAMA

- We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.
- Where ignorance is our master, there is no possibility of real peace.
- We can live without religion and meditation, but we cannot survive without human affection.

FROM AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS 1921

Unification of Gauge.—The development of the railway systems of the Commonwealth has shewn that the adoption of different gauges on the main lines in the several States was a serious error. As already mentioned, the extra cost, delay, and inconvenience incurred by the necessity of transferring through-passengers and goods at places where there are breaks of gauge are becoming more serious as the volume of business increases. As an indication of the extra cost thus involved, the junction charges on interstate traffic between New South Wales and Victoria range from Is. 2d. to 2s. lid. per ton.

Although the cost of alteration to a uniform gauge would be great, many propositions have from time to time been put forward with the object of securing such a gauge, and attention has been drawn to the importance of the unification of gauges before further expenditure on railway construction is incurred by the States. The problem is, however, one which is by no means easy of solution, and the difficulties are increased by the introduction of what may be called questions of local or State policy.

The first question that naturally arises in considering the problem is as to which gauge should be adopted as the universal gauge of the Commonwealth. As regards State Government railways, the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge has a mileage of 4,975.81, all in New South Wales; Victoria and South Australia have a combined mileage of 5,215.70 of 5-ft. 3-in. gauge; while New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia have together 10,442.17 miles of 3-ft. 6-in. gauge. In addition, the Commonwealth Government has (i) 4.94 miles in the Federal Territory, 597.36 miles in South Australia, and 453.94 miles in Western Australia of 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge, and (ii) 477.96 miles in South Australia, and 198.68 miles in the Northern Territory of 3-ft. 6-in. gauge. By far the greater part of the mileage of private railways open for general traffic has also been constructed to the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge. The mere question of preponderance of mileage, therefore, indicates the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge for adoption. But this question is obviously subordinate to those involving engineering and economic considerations. Thus, the relative efficiency from the widest point of view, the relative costs of alterations of the permanent way and rolling stock, of carrying capacity and speed, that is to say, questions of a technical nature about which figures are not available, enter into the grounds for decision.

Many conferences on the subject of the unification of gauge have taken place from time to time both between the Railways Commissioners and between the Premiers of the States concerned, and references to these conferences have been made in previous issues of the Year Book (see No. 11, pp. 657-8). A conference between the engineers of the Commonwealth and States railways was held in Melbourne in August, 1918. Much consideration was given to the devices to deal with the break-of-gauge question, which had been submitted to the conference, but all of them failed to meet the requirements of the conditions laid down by the conference in order to ensure both safety and celerity of action in train working.

In June, 1920, a conference took place at Sydney between the Commonwealth and State railway engineers. Four proposals were dealt with, of which the third was considered the most satisfactory compromise for the present conditions of traffic. This proposal favored the conversion of existing lines between the capitals and the construction of such new lines as are advisable to the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge, the cost of which was estimated at £2(5,581.000, of which £8,154,000 would be for new line construction. In July, 1920, a conference took place at Melbourne between the Commonwealth and State representatives of three Governments, and a decision was arrived at under

which a committee, consisting of two experts from abroad and an Australian representative

not connected with the railways, was to consider the whole question of gauge unification and report to the various Governments concerned as to the best course to be adopted. On 8th February, 1921, the Governor-General appointed a Royal Commission consisting of two railway engineers—one civil and one mechanical—together with an independent commissioner to inquire into and report on the question of the unification of gauges. The Commission was constituted as follows :—Chairman, Mr. John James Garvan; Civil Engineer, Mr. Rustat Blake; Mechanical Engineer, Mr. Frederick Methven Whyte ; with Mr. E. Simms as Secretary.

CAN YOU HELP?

Looking for:-

Thomas Walter Shaw and Margaret Elizabeth Charlton
Margaret Healy / John Bevan / James Thompson
John Norris Campbell

If you can help with any of these queries, please ring Elaine Hall 49873477 or email elainehall@bigpond.com

COTTAGE SPRING FAIR

We are asking for donations of prizes suitable for the Chocolate Wheel at our Cottage Spring Fair in October.

Also, asking members to buy an extra bottle, can or jar of something to donate to the Bottle Stall at the Fair.

Another ask for some kind persons who will donate a bottle of wine or something equally nice for the 1. food hamper

2. Bottle Stall and
3. Chocolate Wheel.

DENNELL/SEE BIBLE

We are very proud and honoured to have been entrusted with this Bible from the Dennett/See families. Newcastle Family History Society has been looking for a home for this Bible, and I answered the appeal in their newsletter explaining that we have descendants here in the area and have people still coming in to research these families. I am very thankful that they decided to house it at our research Rooms. It will be treasured and well looked after as I have promised.

Elaine Hall