

# NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY

Australia



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NEWSLETTER NO. 1.

October 1986

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The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society - Australia is now a reality and our first newsletter is produced thanks to the energies of our Steering Committee which was formed at the Inaugural Meeting on 27th June 1986; and the efficient handling, by Ian M. Nisbet of the various meetings which have taken place in the meantime. Ian of course is the First President of the Australia Branch and of the six members of the now disbanded Steering Committee four are office bearers and their names etc. appear at the end of this newsletter. Of the two other members of that committee, one, Dr. Ian T. Nisbet with his brother Gary Nisbet are on the Newsletter Working Party with the Editor. The other, Lyn Mc Farland has been approached to be our Archivist when her studies, which are in the archival field are completed. Thanks must be extended to those who attended the Inaugural and First General meetings whose advice and suggestions were invaluable; and also to Joy Nisbet, who made her home available for each of the three meetings following the Inaugural Meeting; and for providing delectable fare on each occasion.

It is important that members be informed of the vocations and avocations of their Executive and each of the Executive has been asked for a short biography which will appear in subsequent newsletters.

I hope that prospective Nesbitt/Nisbet Society members presently on our mailing list have not been intimidated by the awesome Membership Application Form, previously supplied. If such is the case, the attached smaller version may be completed to speed up the process of compiling our mailing list. However it is important that as much information as possible is supplied with the larger form for our records and we look forward to receiving it.

## WHY A NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY? by Ian T. Nisbet.

As the world about us grows more complex day by day, I'm sure that many of us feel more than a little uncertain about the future. At which time, it is perhaps appropriate to think for a moment about our predecessors. They also lived through times of uncertainty. They faced wars and plagues; they suffered flood and famine; they crossed stormy seas. And through all these trials, they somehow triumphed. If they hadn't we would not be here today. We all owe our existence to the perseverance, resourcefulness and suffering of those who came before. The least we can do for them is acknowledge their existence and ensure their memory is not lost to future generations. By taking the trouble to find our forebears, we may also find ourselves. By taking pride in our forebears, we can take pride in who we are. Through the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society, hopefully each of us will be able to learn about our past and, at the same time, document the role N/N's have played in the development of both our own country and also our ancestral home. Please take advantage of this opportunity to play your part in the Nesbitt/Nisbet Heritage. Make the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society work for all of us.

## GETTING STARTED: by Ian Grainger Nisbet.

**WHY START:** There is no simple reason why people begin to investigate their family history. For me it was having a middle name for which no satisfactory explanation was ever given other than it was a family name. For another it was uncovering a naturalization document dating back to the early days of Australian colonization. For others it was a desire to know more of their forebears as it has been popularized

to know ones "roots". Whatever the reason the study of your family history can become as absorbing as any 'who dun it' as you attempt to put the pieces of the puzzle together. However, in contrast to the detective novel, the list of characters expands as your investigations take you back into past generations.

Alexander Nisbet - The Herald (1657-1725), probably best summed it up when he wrote "To flatter no man, but to fairly and truly collect from authentic documents, seals, tombs, and other monuments, whatever may tend to honour.....and be of satisfaction of families".

**WHERE TO START:** Like all projects, the start is marked by small beginnings. For the student commencing to delve into family history, a major source is readily to hand; your family relatives and friends.

Families are the source of much information, (although they may not know that) ranging from highly reliable to that which may be best described as "leads". That information which is more reliable is that information which has been written down either as a legal requirement, as a record of some event, or as a means of communication. Often equally important as the written history and not to be underestimated, is that family history which has been passed down by word of mouth - the oral history.

The oral history can often be the source of leads which if followed by some investigation can later be substantiated by the written word. For example, for one Nesbitt/Nisbet, the only knowledge of one brother was that he had gone to St. Louis U.S.A. Examination of the St. Louis telephone directories for some likely names and addresses, writing three letters, and some months later, 80 years of history came to light.

**HOW TO START:** There is no simple recipe of how to start, and each of us will have a different approach, but the family history is based on people, each individual contributing a part to the overall history of the family. Some individuals are more significant contributors than others. However as with a jigsaw puzzle the picture is not complete without all the pieces either large or small.

For each person in your family there can be written all or some of the following:

Full name:

Date of Birth: Place of Birth: Male/Female.

Educational History: School/College/University.

Qualifications: Apprenticeships/Diplomas/Degrees.

Awards/Honours:

Employment History:

War Service:

Date of Marriage: Place of Marriage, etc.

Children of the Marriage:

Immigration: Passenger Lists, Port of Entry.

Date of Death: Place of Death, Circumstances.

Much of this information is to be found readily at hand through the examination of home records, including diaries, bibles, letters, newspaper cuttings and photographs. Gaps in the information can be filled in by asking relations either directly or writing letters on specific issues. **HINT!!** Always include your questions on a separate sheet - to be returned on completion - with sufficient space after each question for the answer to be inserted.

Once you have exhausted your family sources of information and recorded them appropriately, you are now in a position to start to tap the sources of information which lie outside the family. Tapping the records outside the family will be the theme of an article in our next Newsletter.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:** In reply to my Introductory letter of 28th April 1986 I received many notes and letters. It may be of interest to mention one in particular from John Nesbitt of Howick New Zealand our only member from that country. John is a retired school principal aged 75 years and the coupon was forwarded to him by his son Alan of Alice Springs Northern Territory. John is New Zealand born and is very interested in the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society and is an early financial member. With the assistance of the Northumberland Historical Society he has built a direct Nesbitt tree to 1756 to Cramlington Northumberland. John's father had migrated from Cramlington in 1907 and had not maintained contact with his family back 'home'. A researcher in Northumberland from very meagre information which John had gleaned from his widowed mother was able to put John into contact with three cousins living in Cramlington and in 1974 they had an emotional and happy meeting. John says and I quote, "with considerable assistance from the staff at the County Records Office at Newcastle-on-Tyne Northumberland, I found my own family line amidst innumerable Nesbitt/Nisbets' etc., of Northumberland where the name is thicker than SMITH." He continues, "all in all the name Nesbit with it's many variations is very well established in Britain and is now widely spread throughout the world." He congratulates us for our energy and perserverence in starting the branch in Australia. Also he says "for myself, some sickness and bereavement in these later years has slowed my research, but has not dimmed my interest. Thank you for keeping me in touch". Signed: John Nesbitt. We will certainly do that John. John's son is Alan Nesbitt 6 Jasmine Court, Alice Springs Northern Territory Australia.

In a recent letter, Miss Andrina Nisbet, Regional Secretary for Scotland who hails from about as far away as one could be from us down here - the Shetlands to the north of Scotland - has passed on the Society address to a Mr. A.G. Nisbet of Christchurch New Zealand. So we may have another member from that country!

**NESBITT/NISBET CONVICTS:** We have in our society a person well informed of Nesbitt/Nisbet family history who is a prolific letter writer and supplier of copious quantities of relevant material.

The following relates to seven Nesbitt/Nisbet convicts, the boats on which they travelled, dates and ports of departure and dates of arrival at New South Wales.

There are conflicting reports by various authors as to the port of arrival of some of the ships. In the early Colonial days the complete east coast of Australia including Tasmania and New Zealand was named New South Wales by the British. It was not until 1856 that Van Diemen's Land was named Tasmania; after Abel Tasman the Dutch explorer who recorded sighting the coastline as early as 1642 when he dubbed it Van Diemen's Land. If the following table is referred to it can be seen that the ships could have berthed at Moreton Bay (Brisbane); Sydney; or Hobart in Tasmania and it would be correct to say that they arrived at N.S.W. The state of Queensland remained part of N.S.W until 1859. From the above preamble it is obvious that difficulties would be encountered in the identification of those Nesbitts'/Nisbets'.

NAME	SHIP	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	SEX	
Pat Nesbitt	Atlas II	Cork	30/05/1802	N.S.W. 30/10/1802	Male
Ann Nesbitt	Minstrel	England	04/06/1812	N.S.W. 25/10/1812	Fem.
George Nisbet	Countess of Harcourt	Portsmouth	19/04/1821	N.S.W. 27/07/1821	Male
Susan Nesbitt	Lady Rowena	Cork	19/01/1826	N.S.W. 17/05/1826	Fem.
Samuel Nesbitt	Guilford	Dublin		N.S.W. 04/11/1829	Male
Alexander Nesbitt	John II	Sheerness	30/09/1836	N.S.W. 07/02/1837	Male
Betsy Nesbet	Margaret I	Cork	24/01/1837	N.S.W. 30/05/1837	Fem.

**HEADSTONE INSCRIPTION:** Found among some old papers is this reference to an inscription which was on a headstone on a grave at the Old Melbourne Cemetery. Some headstones have been removed to the Fawkner Cemetery to the north of Melbourne. This one bore the inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of Caroline NESBIT Wilkie the beloved wife of James Malcolm Esq., of ORLIG, who died 15th November 1853 aged 30 years". Maybe this information will provide a clue for a society member.

**THANK YOU:** I would like to thank Bill Kelsey editor of the U.S.A. Newsletter for his support and advice since we started corresponding in May 1986 and also introduce him to our members who in the near future will be reading some of his work. His name is William B. Kelsey and to use his own words from the U.S.A. Newsletter Vol. XIV No.2. of the Spring of 1986 says: "more familiarly known as 'Bill'. I'm married with two children, both of whom live and work in California. I'm retired from a career in the heavy construction equipment industry, living with my wife in Panama City, a small city in the Panhandle of Florida, midway between Tallahassee, the capital, and Pensacola to the west. I am a Nesbitt descendant through my maternal line. My immigrant ancestor was Nathanael Nesbitt, whose documented presence first surfaces in the mid 1700's". As Newsletter Editor Bill introduced the Boar's Head Logo, which we and the U.K. branch have adopted. Three Boar's Heads, as many members may know appears on the Nisbet Coat of Arms. Our Logo was designed by Mrs. Thelma Pelleu of Sun City Arizona who occupies the position of Regional Officer for the region.

**APOLOGIES:** My apologies to Brian Nesbitt our Regional Officer for the A.C.T. I omitted to submit Brian's name to Bill Kelsey as our R.O. for that area, and as a result Brian's name will not appear in the U.S.A. October publication as holding that office. Also our President's Post Code was shown incorrectly in our recent Report. Both errors have been rectified in this Newsletter.

**GENERAL:** If the U.S.A. October Newsletter arrives in time we will extract relevant items for publication in this issue. Items from the U.K. Newsletter which arrives about three weeks after Bill Kelsey's and is basically the U.S.A. Newsletter with additions, may be used in our next issue in January. The Newsletters of the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society are not protected by copyright and we are free to use part or all of each-other's publications. This arrangement will ensure that relative information is available to the members of all branches.

**MEMBERS INTEREST:** Each member is permitted 2 entries in The N/N. Newsletter each year and a personal card (5" x 3") or sheet of paper filled in as shown below is to be supplied. Please show your ID No. which will appear on your address label.

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| ID XX. NESBET J.J.H. (Mr.) | Card 1. need be submitted only  
| 1111 Howard Street, | once regardless of the number of  
| Bendigo, 3888 | families being researched.  
Victoria, Australia.

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| Member's ID. XX. | Card 2. 50 words may accompany  
| CARTER | this card. Please keep the entry  
| WASHINGTON D.C. U.S.A. -1861 | brief, to the point, and PRINT.  
| EAGLEHAWK VICTORIA AUSTRALIA +1853 |  
BENDIGO VICTORIA AUSTRALIA +1856

**ANOTHER LINK:** Mrs. Hilda Maud Richards, nee Nesbit, aged 96 years and living at Bendigo Victoria, referred to in our Report of September last, has been linked with yet another member - Mrs. Evelyn Clark, nee Nesbit, of Eden Hills South Australia. Evelyn writes, in part, "About my Aunt who lives in Bendigo - Yes, she is my father's sister - I was surprised when I saw her name in the newsletter (report) I wrote to Ian Nisbet right away."

It is rewarding that we have had our successes, even before the publication of our first newsletter, and we hope that such achievements continue.

**SUB GROUP ACTIVITIES:** Our two Sub Groups have not been idle.

**WHERE DO I GO NOW?** A workshop on tapping resources outside the family - arranged by the Education/Information Sub Group - will be held on Saturday 25th October 1986 at 7 Plant Street Malvern. In attendance will be people who will be able to provide guidance in your family history investigation. It is primarily aimed at people who have recently commenced their investigations and are seeking guidance to further their research. Bring along whatever information you may have.

Details: 'WHERE DO I GO NOW?'  
Date: Saturday 25th October 1986.  
Time: 2 P.M. - 5 P.M.  
Place: 7 Plant Street, Malvern.  
R.S.V.P. Heather Ames (03) 20 3088 (A.H.)

**VICTORIAN GATHERING:** The Social Committee Sub Group asks Victorian members to keep Sunday 30th November free for a family get-together in the form of a picnic commencing at NOON. Victorian members will be notified by mail as soon as a suitable venue has been selected. Interested interstate members are welcome to attend and should contact the editor for further information. Ph. (03) 467 2638.

**A GATHERING** of the descendants of John George Mitford Nesbit to celebrate the 130th Anniversary of his arrival at Castlemaine in 1856 is mooted for Sunday 23rd of November. The Gathering will take the form of a picnic lunch at the gardens to the north of the town. Electric barbecues are in situ. Enquiries to the editor or to Mrs. Pearl Nesbit of Castlemaine.

**CAUSES OF DEATH STATED ON MISSOURI, U.S.A. DEATH CERTIFICATES:** The following article appeared in the U.K. Society N/N Newsletter Vol. II, Nov. 3, 1984 and had been carried previously by the Iowa City, Missouri, Genealogical Society Newsletter.

**The Causes of Death Listed on Missouri Death Certificates found by a Researcher:**

1. Died suddenly - nothing seriously wrong.
2. Worn out.
3. Went to bed feeling well - woke up dead.
4. Don't know - never been fatally ill before.
5. Don't know - died without the aid of a physician.
6. Blow on the head with an axe - contributing cause - another man's wife.

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**NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA**

Application For Membership

ID.....(No. on Address Label).

To the Treasurer: Please find enclosed my Cheque/Money Order for \$10.00 being my subscription for the year 1st September 1986 to 31st August 1987. This amount is to cover my membership and the four Nesbitt/Nisbet Newsletters. Copy deadline is 30 days prior to the first day of the month of publication.

SURNAME.....Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms. Post Nominals.....

GIVEN NAMES.....

ADDRESS.....

Please forward with remittance to Treasurer Nesbitt/Nisbet Society - Aust.  
P.O. Box 84 Caulfield East, 3145, Victoria.

This form may be photo-copied and passed on to a relative or interested friend.

**REGIONAL GROUPS:** To become a successful society Australia - wide, regional groups must be formed. There has been considerable interest in the society in all states. What we need now is local structure and organization. Let us hear from anyone who would be willing to arrange a meeting in their particular area and they will be supported. Dates and venues will be published in the newsletter. If a meeting could be arranged, for example, in Sydney, Ian (our president) and Bruce (Newsletter Editor) would be ready, willing and able to address the assembly. Once a group was formed, meetings and local gatherings could be arranged, and sub groups formed, as has been done in Victoria. Come on Australia - LET'S GET ORGANIZED!

**MORE ABOUT MEMBERS' INTEREST.** Let us have your enquiries for insertion in our next newsletter. Requests from members seeking information regarding their ancestors; and interesting anecdotes of incidents from the past. Remember, this is your newsletter and interest will only be maintained by your input. Next newsletter due for publication, January 1987.

**SUB GROUPS:** The following is a list of the name and address of each member of the Victorian Sub Groups.

**EDUCATION/INFORMATION:**

Mrs. Heather Ames	7 Plant Street, Malvern, 3144, Vic., Aust.
Mr. Gary Nisbet	43 Dorset Road, Croydon, 3136, Vic., Aust.
Mr. Ian G. Nisbet	1 St. Johns Parade, Kew, 3101, Vic., Aust.

**SOCIAL:**

Mrs. Joy Nisbet	26 Walnut Road, Nth. Balwyn, 3104, Vic., Aust.
Mrs. Jan Nisbet	19 Nethercote Dr. Mt. Waverly, 3149, Vic., Aust.
Mrs. Gwen Marsham	294 Beach Road, Sandy Point, 3954, Vic., Aust.
Mr. Ken Nisbet	20 Howitt Street, Glen Iris, 3146, Vic., Aust.

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Ian M. Nisbet, A.M., 26 Walnut Road, Nth. Balwyn, 3104, Vic., Aust.
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Ian G. Nisbet, 1 St. Johns Parade, Kew, 3101, Vic., Aust.
<b>TREASURER</b>	Gavin M. Nisbet, P.O. Box 84 Caulfield East, 3145, Vic., Aust.
<b>N/LETTER EDITOR</b>	Bruce Nesbit, 6 Kent Court, P.O. Box 84 Bundoora, 3083, Vic., Aust.
<b>Regional Officers</b>	George Nesbitt, 110 Ardross St. Ardross, 6153, W.A., Aust.
	Brian S. Nesbitt, 4 Crowther Pl., Curtin, 2605, ACT., Aust.

The Nesbit/Nisbet Society is a Worldwide Clan Society 3