

# THE N/N NEWS

NO. 24 JULY 1992

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY  
AUSTRALIA



## STARTING POINT

(The Latest News and Views from the Editorial Staff)

OUR NEXT MONOGRAPH: Members will be interested to know that the Editorial Committee is busy working on the next monograph and hopes that it will be ready to be sent out before the next newsletter. We are pleased to announce that this monograph is a composite effort, thanks to the input of Society members. The monograph is actually four short stories, each of which relates to a separate lineage of the N/N family tree. We are delighted to have material of such quality to work with and hope that this is an indication of things to come in terms of members' contributions. Remember, the N/N Society is all about the story of N/N's around the globe, from the distant past through to the present. Your story is our story! The Editorial Committee is dedicated to the task of enabling members to share all our stories.

Dr. Ian T. Nisbet

## (NES)-BITS & PIECES

(Snippets of General Interest)

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SHEETS - PROGRESS REPORT: Your archivist has been quiet but not inactive. Overwhelmed by the flow of information, he has been spending long nights sorting out the many Nisbets from the various Nesbits and both of them from the spreading Nesbitts and Nisbetts.

Australian members of the Society have been particularly responsive. Many thanks to all who have sent in their sheets, they've made an old man very happy. He's even had two biographical information sheets from the U.K. (thank you Bob Nesbitt and Peter W.W. Nisbet), but as yet, none from North American members. The U.S. is however represented - if only too briefly - by William B. Kelsey's family tree, one of the 87 pedigrees the archivist has now completed. With the publication date not too far away (our President keeps pressing him), please forward your Biographical Information Sheets as soon as possible.

## Editorial note:

John is a co-editor, with Dr. Douglas W. Stewart, of "The Journal of the Stewart Society (Victoria)". The Journal was founded in 1991 and the first issue was produced in September of that year.

The Scots Link Magazine, February 1992 on page 21 refers to John's contribution towards the production of the journal in the following terms.

"John Barth, the notable Scottish historian and genealogist has been good enough to edit it in conjunction with Dr Douglas W. Stewart." The article goes on to mention that, ".....all items of genealogical interest will be welcomed."

\* \* \*

NESBIT MOOR, COUNTY NORTHUMBERLAND, ENGLAND: "In 1388, Sir Henry Percy (on the English side), better known as Hotspur, having lost his pennon in a skirmish with Douglas at Newcastle, surprised the Scots who were camped at Otterburn on the Reed, twenty miles west by north of Hexham, Northumberland.

The Battle of Chevy Chase raged under the harvest moon. Douglas fell, pierced by three spears, but his victorious countrymen carried off the English leader a captive, to Scotland. Such raids and fights occurred continually.

When Sir Henry Percy withdrew from the fruitless war, the Percies kept up the hereditary feud aided by the Earl of March, an injured Scottish nobleman.

The allies overthrew the Scots at Nesbit Moor. On Sept. 14, 1402, a still more decisive battle was won by the allied forces of March and the Percies at Hamildon Hill\* in Northumberland."

\* Hamildon or Humbleton Hill is about a mile from the market town of Wooler, Northumberland, England. Nesbit Moor is about four miles north of the same town.

From chapter XVI of "The Graphic History of the British Empire", based on Dr. W.F. Collier's, "History of England". Published by T. Nelson & Sons, 1890. Material by Ian Clarke of Balwyn, Victoria.

\* \* \*

PETER W.W. NISBET TESTS ST NESBIT WINE: In a brief note, dated 13 Apr. 1992, which accompanied his completed Biographical Information sheet, Peter said that he drank his first bottle of St Nesbit wine, and was "feeling good".

In his Spring edition of the U.K. Newsletter, William Nesbitt gave the wine good publicity, and as a result, sales of St Nesbit wines to N/N wine buffs in the U.K. will no doubt be on the increase.

\* \* \*

NESBITT/NISBET MARRIAGES & DEATHS: The Victorian Registrar of BDM's has released the Indexes of Marriages 1914-1930 (2 pages) and Deaths 1941-1960 (3 pages), and the N/N entries have been extracted. Details regarding marriages is scant: no 'place' for the event is shown; however, that item will appear on the certificate. Information relating to the deaths is more complete and identification should be quite simple.

The material has been extracted and listed by Colin and Dot Nesbit of Ascot Vale, Victoria, and copies are held by the Archivist and Newsletter Editor.

\* \* \*

OLD BOYS' SCHOOL TIE: In a recent letter, U.K. President Richard Kerr Nesbitt wrote of the tie, and it is likely that there are members interested in obtaining one.

"It is an Old Boys' School Tie, which by chance is boar's heads on a navy-blue background. I've persuaded them to let me have a dozen - I've enclosed one - but if you or we want more, there's a snag. We shall have to order from the manufacturer, and will have to order a large quantity. I paid 7 pound 50 p each for this batch, but that's an old price and I guess that any future orders will be higher. You will be able to test the market at your end and when Peter Nisbet (U.K. Treasurer) has tested the market here we will be able to order and pay for the large number the manufacturer will require." Richard went on to say that he likes the tie (and so do I), "but really it can be a problem before we can get a regular supply."

Interested members are invited to contact the Editor with their order and when the figure is known a firm order may be placed with Richard. Please do not send money.

## SOCIETY NEWS

## NOTICE

## 6TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 6th Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 5th September, 1992 at 26 Walnut Road, North Balwyn, Victoria, commencing at 8 p.m.

The business will include:

- \* A report from the Executive.
- \* The Financial Report for the year ended 31st August 1992.
- \* Election of Office Bearers.
- \* Fixation of the Annual Subscription for 1992/93.  
(The Executive recommends that the subscription continue at \$12.00).
- \* Guest Speaker - Mrs Margaret Hookey. (See details below).

Members who are unable to attend are invited to send relevant comments or suggestions to the Executive.

R.S.V.P. 31st August 1992.

Joy Nisbet 857 5498  
Lesley Nisbet 862 2258



**PRESIDENT**  
(Ian M. Nisbet A.M.)

**Guest Speaker - A.G.M. - 5th September. 1992.**

We have been fortunate to secure the services of Mrs Margaret Hookey as the Guest Speaker for our 6th A.G.M. Margaret is the Senior Vice-President of the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies. She is an avid amateur genealogist and is planning a visit to Scotland, England and Salt Lake City, covering New Register House, Guild Hall Library and The Family History Centre. Margaret will tell us of her preparation for the trip and what she hopes to achieve.

\* \* \*

**SOCIAL EVENING:** On 20th June 1992 a most enjoyable evening was shared by 25 guests who listened to an interesting discussion and talk by Gemologist Alan

Thomas. We thank him for his time and entertaining talk.

We were also very pleased to welcome several visitors and hope they will come again.

Raffle winners: Tom Nisbet  
Andrew Nisbet  
Heather Ames

Joy Nisbet

\* \* \*

AN 'AT HOME' FOR JO AND RAY NESBIT FROM THE U.S.A.: Josephine Nesbit of Sacramento, U.S.A., Secretary/Treasurer of the North American Branch of the Society and her husband Ray, will visit and tour the eastern Australian states.

They fly into Cairns, Queensland on September 19 and after spending several days there will fly to Sydney on September 22 to take in the sights. On September 29 they will tour to Melbourne via Canberra, Cooma and Albury, arriving at Melbourne on October 2. Whilst in Melbourne, Jo and Ray will be guests of Ian and Joy Nisbet and an 'At Home' has been arranged for them at St Abbs, 26 Walnut Road, North Balwyn at 8 p.m. October 3."

A hop across to Adelaide is planned and from there they will fly to Sydney, departing for the U.S.A. on October 12.

#### FEATURE ARTICLE

(This section is reserved for full length articles of general interest)

VOICES FROM ACROSS THE PACIFIC: Society member, Robert Linford writes in March 1992:

"Since the publication in Newsletters 19 and 20, of the two part article on my search for my Nesbitt ancestors in Ireland, I have had two helpful and interesting letters from Nesbitt/Nisbet Society, North American Branch members in the United States.

"Irene Hall of Detroit, with whom as it transpires I have a common interest in the history of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands - her grandmother Nisbet has a supposed connection with the Clunies-Ross family of the Islands - has been undertaking work on the information I had set down in my article. She is a volunteer librarian at one of the Detroit Mormon Family History Libraries and was interested in how someone else had gone about tracing their particular family history, for the purposes both of expanding her own knowledge of genealogical research and also to be able to pass along research ideas to her library patrons.

"Irene began with the latest (1988) edition of the I.G.I. (International Genealogical Index), which her library has on compact disc for the computer, and one computer search will look for a marriage or birth anywhere in Scotland, England or Ireland. She was hoping to pick up a marriage of William Nesbitt and Mary Kerk (Kirk) somewhere else, perhaps in Scotland. Like myself, she had no luck with this. However, she showed more imagination than I did, and checked in the Kerk/Kirk listings and found what could be the answer to one of my problems. There was a christening of a James Kirk, son of Mary Kirk, on 27th March 1832 in Killinchy Presbyterian Church in County Down. This raised for her the question: had I considered that James might have been an illegitimate son? I hadn't.

"From this, Irene set out a very plausible line of thinking. She mentioned that in my article the only reference I had cited regarding the marriage of William and Mary, was the death certificate of James (b. c. 1830), giving his parents' names as William Nesbitt and Mary Nesbitt nee Kerk. This was, of course, the only information I had. She said that in her research of Scottish records she had often found that illegitimate children used the names of their fathers in later life. She had found death records where the person was listed as, say, John Brown or Smith, illegitimate, parents names George Brown and Mary

Smith. Knowing the reticence of her own parents, she suspected that in the last century James would have been even less likely to divulge information such as illegitimacy to even his own children, if, indeed, the informant was one of his children. Or the informant was embarrassed to give such information to the registrar, who could possibly have been someone the informant knew. Or the registrar, in asking for the parents' names, might have made the assumption that they were married to each-other.

"The date of the christening was acknowledged by Irene as not the one that we would assume from the death certificate. However, we all know that death records are not nearly as accurate as birth records. The information gathered at death is only as accurate as the informant's knowledge of the deceased. Also, we do not know the age of the child at the time of the christening. Perhaps because of the illegitimacy, the mother was not able to have him christened immediately.

"The next step taken was to check whether Killinchy was anywhere near Woodgrange or Downpatrick. Irene could find Downpatrick on the River Quoile near its entrance to Lough Strangford, but her maps did not show Killinchy. The gazetteer stated that it was on Lough Strangford, 6 miles east of Saintfield, but she could not find Saintfield either. However, since the description was 6 miles EAST of Saintfield she felt it was reasonable to conclude that both were on the west (Downpatrick) side of the Lough. The Lough appears to be about 25 miles long from north to south, so she believed it would be safe to say that Killinchy was less than 30 miles from Woodgrange. (My own researches suggest that the actual distance is from 10 to 12 miles.) Irene's conclusion was: 'Now I don't care what they say about the people in those days not marrying far from home. Remember that my gr. gr. gr. uncle left the Shetlands, married in the south of England and settled in the Indian Ocean. I think that 30 miles is well within the realm of possibility.'"

"The last thing that Irene did was to order the microfilm of the I.G.I. source document, having that she could get the microfilm of the actual church register of the Presbyterian Church in Killinchy. She hoped it would give some additional information, such as a more definitive locality for Mary, or a birth date or age for the child James. Unfortunately all she got was a microfilm of a computer index to the church records. She commented that perhaps that particular church did not give its permission for copies of its records to be circulated.

"I am, of course, especially grateful to Irene for her interest in, and her work on my problems. She has given me a highly likely explanation of why I have been unable to identify the marriage of William and Mary (nee Kerk/Kirk) Nesbitt, the parents of my gr. grandfather James Nesbitt (b. 1830/32). The professionalism exhibited in her approach is an object lesson even to an experienced genealogist.

"The second letter received was from Nancy Nesbitt Ost (Mrs. Warren W. Ost) of New York, whose father, she tells me, came from Woodgrange near Downpatrick! Nancy has been able to confirm that there were two Nesbitt families living at Woodgrange at various times during the past two hundred years. One family resided at Loughquarter, and Nancy has established her descent from that line. The 'other Nesbitts' lived in the 'Grange' at Woodgrange until about 1825, and a distant cousin of Nancy, Mary Elizabeth (further details to be obtained), living at Downpatrick comes from that line.

At this stage there are many details of the lines of descent from the Woodgrange families to be sorted out, a problem which is compounded by the destruction of Nesbitt records in a fire in the house of the church custodian. It seems that the church connections of the 'other Nesbitts' were with a church at what was known as Flying Horse, about two miles from Downpatrick, and later with the church at Stream Street, Downpatrick. The church custodian was in charge of the records of both these churches. Some work on the family lines which may be of some assistance has been done by a family genealogist who died in 1957. I now look forward to working with Nancy Nesbitt Ost in an effort to

obtain definitive information."

Note for the editor:

"I think you may be well satisfied that the Nesbitt/Nisbet Newsletter is read with interest in the United States. Irene Hall has mentioned that the prospect of a North American edition of the newsletter is again being floated in the United States but at the moment a willing editor is lacking. However, it seems to be only a matter of time before a North American edition becomes a reality.

**WANTED**

NESBITT, Agnes Ann, age 18 years, m. John James Sherritt, age 26 years, at Coote Hill, County Cavan, Northern Ireland, c1853. They arrived at Port Phillip on the 'Motoaka' from Liverpool, U.K. on 26/5/1854. John was C of E and Ann, who had married against the wishes of her parents, was Presbyterian. John, who was a Sergeant of Police in Northern Ireland went to work for a Captain Harrison of Prahran, Victoria at 75 pounds a year, with rations provided. A child Aaron was born.

NESBITT, Robert, b. County Cavan, Ireland, c1840, father Hugh Nesbitt, mother Ann Nesbitt (nee Richardson). Robert arrived in Australia aboard the 'Greyhound' on 9/1/1859. One known sister, Agnes Ann Nesbitt (see previous entry). Robert never married but had a family of five to Mary Ann Youngman (nee Pettit), namely: Robert James, b. 1874; Mary Florence, b. 1876; Henry Hugh, b. 1878; Annie, b. 1879; and Alfred, b. 1882, d. aged six days. All were born at Eldorado near Reid's Creek, near Wangaratta, Victoria. Robert died on October 14 Oct. 1903 at Eldorado as a result of a fall from a horse. Seeking antecedents and descendants of Agnes Ann Nesbitt and Robert Nesbitt. Contact: Mrs. I.A. Wallace, 29 Wedge Street, Benalla, Victoria 3672.

**FOUND**

(Whose ancestor or relative)

NESBIT(T) PAST LORD MAYOR OF LONDON: In a recent letter, Margaret Nesbitt of Painesville, Victoria, mentioned that a long time ago, she had been told that there had been a Nesbit(t) Lord Mayor of London, but she had not pursued the matter. Perhaps our English cousins can throw some light on the subject?

Enclosed with Margaret's letter was an excellent photograph of Ferniehirst Castle, one of many excellent photographs husband Jack had taken whilst on tour. More photographs have since arrived and are filed in our Society Photograph Album, suitably captioned.

**MISCELLANY**

CASH PLEASE, NO BANK NOTES: The following is a copy of a letter from Nathaniel Nisbitt of Lifford, County Donegal, written on 17th Feb. 1760 to the Earl of Abercorn, London.

"Ever since I knew business, bank notes have been but of little use in this part of the Kingdom where the linen trade is carried on, as nothing will carry that branch but ready money so that we are almost strangers to the notes of any bank. I never had above two or three small bank notes in my time."  
From the Irish Link Magazine No 33, June 1992, page 8; P.O. Box 135, South Melbourne, Vic. 3205; P.O. Box 370 Thames, New Zealand.

\* \* \*

I WAS WRONG: In Newsletter 23, page 5, BIRTHS, CHRISTENINGS & MARRIAGES IN 18 COUNTIES OF IRELAND 1860-1908, I credited Allan Nesbitt of Bathurst as having supplied the data. Allan assures me that it was not he who sent the information and a search of my records leaves me still in the dark.

To give credit where it is due, and straighten out my records, would the member who supplied me with those nine pages of Irish BCM's please contact me.

EDITOR

STOP PRESS

N/S SOCIETY'S (WORLDWIDE) OLDEST MEMBER? Miss Gertrude Nesbitt who is a resident of the Rosden Private Nursing Home at Burwood, Victoria turned 110 on Friday 3rd July 1992.

Mass was celebrated for Gertie (the name she prefers) by Fr. Durkin who first said Mass for her on the occasion of her 100th birthday. A private party which was attended by residents and their families then followed.

Joy Nisbet visited Gertie and although another year older, Joy found her to be as mentally alert as ever. Her hearing is very poor, but hearing aids make verbal contact possible, and that, with her continued good health and full control of her faculties, is a plus.

The event of Miss Nesbitt's 109th birthday made an English newspaper, the 'Northern Cross' in July 1991. From what I have gathered from the cutting in my possession, the Northern Cross is a Northumberland paper, as Newcastle, Hexham and Shieldfield all Northumberland towns, are mentioned.

The following is part of an article by Joy Nisbet which appeared in Newsletter 12, July 1989 on the occasion of Miss Nesbitt's 107th birthday:

During the party Miss Nesbitt accepted Honorary Membership of the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society offered to her by President, Ian M. Nisbet.

FOR THE GENEALOGIST

* Full Name	Mary Jane Gertrude Nesbitt
* Born	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumberland, on 3rd July, 1882.
* Father	Robert, b. Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
* Mother	Mary Jane Cavanagh (Irish descent)
* Brothers)	Clement - 1 daughter Madeleine
* )	Robert - killed in W.W. 1, aged 25
* Sister	Hilda - (Mrs Ramsay) - 1 son, Frederick Clement.

Miss Nesbitt came to Australia in 1950 aged 68 years to live with her nephew (Frederick, son of sister Hilda). He died four years ago. His wife, Mrs Sadie Ramsay, looked after Gertrude until she (Gertrude) had a fall about 12 months ago (1985). On leaving hospital she entered Rosden, Private Nursing Home, Burwood, Victoria.

Miss Nesbitt said that she would like other Nesbitt/Nisbets to visit or write to her.

\* \* \*

**END OF AN ERA:** At the latest meeting of the Editorial Committee Bruce Nesbit announced that, with publication of this Newsletter, he will be resigning as Newsletter Editor. Health considerations preclude him from continuing in this important and demanding role,

Hopefully the A.G.M. will see a member step forward to fill the vacuum that Bruce leaves. In the meantime, all correspondence should be forwarded to the Secretary.

Dr. Ian T. Nisbet

# NOTICE BOARD

(Upcoming Events in the Local and Overseas Calendar)

1992	Aug. 9	Luncheon and Historic Walk - Williamstown.
"	Sep. 5	A.G.M. With Guest Speaker. (see p. 3).
"	Oct. 3	An 'At Home' for Jo and Ray Nesbit who are visiting from Sacramento, U.S.A.
"	Oct. 15	Executive Meeting.
"	Oct.	Newsletter 25.
"	Dec. 5	Christmas Party.
1993	Jan.	Newsletter 26.
"	Mar.	Country Gathering: Possible venue Gisborne, Woodend or Macedon.

## GENERAL COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT Ian M. Nisbet, A.M., 26 Walnut Road, Nth. Balwyn, Vic. 3104, Aust.  
 SECRETARY Ian G. Nisbet, 1 St. Johns Parade, Kew, Vic. 3101, Aust.  
 TREASURER Peter Watson, 30 Mitchell Road, Box Hill North, Vic. 3129, Aust.  
 EDITOR Bruce Nesbit, 6 Kent Court, P.O. Box 84 Bundoora, Vic. 3083, Aust.  
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 BOARD MEMBERS Dr. Ian T. Nisbet, Gavin M. Nisbet, Graeme Nisbet,  
 Lyndell Watson, Karen Nisbet, Effie Todd.



## NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Bruce Nesbit, Dr. Ian T. Nisbet, Gary Nisbet, Graeme Nisbet, Karen Nisbet.

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

Joy Nisbet, Heather Ames, Lyndell Watson, Merryn Nisbet, Lesley Nisbet, Elyse Classon, Jan Nisbet, Diana Dimattina, Barbara Leslie, Helen Nesbit, Catherine Nisbet, Michie Jensen.

## REGIONAL OFFICERS:

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The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society is a Worldwide Clan Society