

THE N/NEWS

NO. 39 APRIL 1996

NEWSLETTER OF THE
NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY
AUSTRALIA



10th Anniversary Year

STARTING POINT

TENTH ANNIVERSARY YEAR: Rather than the standard editorial I have decided to start with a note from Effie Todd. It serves as a timely reminder of where we've come from and should be of particular interest to those members who weren't around when we made the first, tentative steps to form the Society in Australia ten years ago. Effie writes:

"As this is our Tenth Anniversary year I thought I would select this extract from the UK Newsletters (of 1986) -

" Nesbitt/Nisbet Society of Australia forms.

"The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society (United Kingdom and North America organizations) wish to welcome the official organisation of the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society of Australia. It is the result of much research and effort on the part of two people - Mr Ian M Nisbet and Mr A Bruce Nesbit, as well as the cooperation and support of the Charter Members.

"Bruce Nesbit has been interested in genealogical research and family history for a number of years. Seeing an article about the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society in the United Kingdom, he wrote London for more information and eventually became a member - the only one in Australia.

"Doing research, he discovered that there were many persons in Australia of the Nisbet surname and its variant spellings. From this, he conceived the possibility of a Nesbitt/Nisbet group in Australia, and again wrote London. They replied with enthusiasm, offering any necessary support.

At this point, Mr Ian Nisbet became interested. He and his wife were just then leaving on a trip to England, and while there, they met and talked with several members of the UK organization. Upon his return, he joined Bruce in the organizing effort and procedure.

The inaugural meeting was chaired by Mr Nisbet, at which a Steering Committee was elected and met a short time later. Here recommendations of issues governing the Society were recorded. On the 8th of August 1986, the first general meeting was held. The following officers were nominated and elected:

Mr A Bruce Nesbit - Conveners
 Mrs Helen Nesbit - "
 Mr Ian M Nisbet - President
 Mr Ian G Nisbet - Secretary
 Mr Gavin M Nisbet - Treasurer
 Mr A Bruce Nesbit - News Editor
 Mr George Nesbitt - Regional Officer

"Regional Officers for New South Wales, Victoria Queensland, South Australia and North(ern) Territory, and Tasmania will be selected at a later date.

"Dues were set at \$10.00 for a husband, wife and children up to 18 years old.

"The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society of Australia is a completely autonomous and independent organization and is interrelated with the existing Nesbitt/Nisbet Society organizations. Again, WELCOME, CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK."

Effie continues:

"I would like to add my congratulations and thanks to the members who have served on the Committee for ten years; what an achievement - not many societies would have a record like ours."

(NES)-BITS & PIECES

NESBITT CASTLE (IRELAND): Much has been written in these pages about Nisbet House in Scotland. Less well publicised is an Irish N/N abode. The following article on Nesbitt Castle in Ireland is reprinted from the UK Newsletter, Autumn Edition, Vol 12 No 3, 1995, pages 10 & 11.

NESBITT CASTLE (Ireland)

The Editor has seen a number of references to 'Nesbitt Castle', one of which indicated that it was in Co. Tipperary. It was suggested that he should approach the Tipperary Genealogical Society who might be able to show some light on it.. Unfortunately the address that he was given was incorrect but eventual contact was made and he was referred to Miss Mary Guinard-Darmody of the Local Studies Department of Co. Tipperary Joint Library Committee.

Sadly she told me that she had not come across Nesbitt Castle; she suspected that it was more of a fort than a castle, but she undertook to find out more about it and let me know. Her fears were well founded. A few days later she sent me the following details:

Liskinlahane LIOS CIN LEATĀIN: Fort of the Broad Head.

There then follow some six different spellings: Liskinlahan, Liskinlahane, Liskinlane, Liscanlane, Liscanlan, Liscanlane. These spellings were attributed to different authorities. It may be noted that 'Liscanlane' was attributed to 'Robert Nesbitt Esq.' Such differences in spelling can be readily accepted by the Nesbitt/Nisbet Family who now have well over sixty different spellings of their name credited to them, and doubtless more will come to light.

The Fort is described as being in the south east end of the parish about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south east of Burresokeane. There is a further note: "This townland is chiefly under cultivation, there is much bog in the south end. Fort Nesbitt demesne and house is in the east end; there are several limestone quarries in the centre".

These details were taken from 'The Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1840, Borrisokane Civil Parish'.

There is then a reference to Crottagh Bridge.

CROTA:

Again several spellings are quoted: Crotta Bridge, Crottagh Bridge, and Crotta. Crottagh appears to have been favoured by 'Robert Nesbitt Esq.', possibly the same person as Robert Nesbitt Esq. referred to above. The bridge is described as being on the boundaries of Crotta, Lisleaghbeg and Bannmodre (Bawnmore ?, Ed.) about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south east of Burresokeane. It is described as a small bridge on the small road from Burresokeane to Parsonstown, (built of stone and mortar). It was added that there was nothing remarkable about it.

At this point the Editor noted that there was also 'Nisbett Bridge' slightly to the west of where Crotta Bridge appears on the map - Tipperary Townland Index No. 2 - an extract of which is shown below.

FORT NISBETT:

Once more several different spellings were noted: Nisbett, Nesbitt and Nesbett: not surprisingly Robert Nisbett Esq. favoured 'Nisbett'. The fort is stated to be in the east side of the townland of Liskinlahane, about 1 mile south east of Burresokeane. It was said to be a commodious house, situated about a mile from Burresokeane; and the residence of Robert Nisbett Esq.

There is evidently a number of forts in this area and the Ordnance Survey Name Book goes on to describe:

FORT HENRY:

This would appear to have a number of names, since it is also referred to as 'Gray Fort'. Robert Nisbett Esq. refers to it as 'Fort Henry'. It was located near the centre of the townland of Grayfort, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile E S E of Burresokeane. It is described as a commodious house, the residence of Henry Ely Esq. It may be noted that 'Grayfort, is spelt Greyfort on the map referred to above.

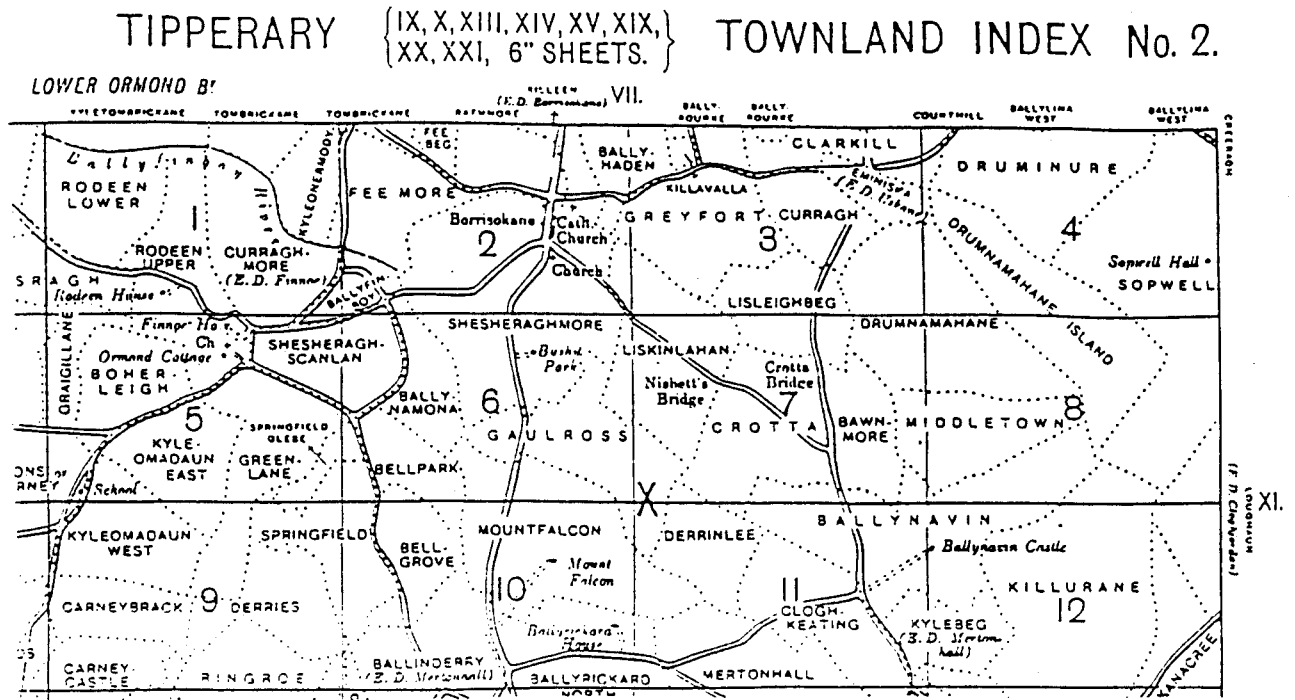
Miss Guinard-Darmody also forwarded a copy of another document:

Primary Valuation of Tenements Parish of Borrisokane

In this document it can be seen that the Rev. James Nesbitt was the lessor of a number of properties in Liskinlahan and leased these to a number of different people. In addition he occupied some twenty-one acres, described as bog, in fee. The net annual value of the properties that he let amounted to £103-0-0d; a not inconsiderable sum at today's prices.

It would be of great interest to discover who the Rev. James Nesbitt and Robert Nisbett Esq. were, and indeed whether the latter was the same person as the Robert Nesbitt Esq. also referred to in this Ordnance Survey Name Book.

It would be very much appreciated if any member having any knowledge of the Nesbitts/Nisbetts in this area, Co. Tipperary, would please contact the Editor. It certainly seems that these are an entirely separate branch of the family.



SOCIETY NEWS

TWO LADIES OF DIRLETON: The latest N/N publication was despatched to members during March. The monograph 'Two Ladies of Dirleton' was first published by the UK Branch of the Society and supplied as an electronic copy for reprinting in Australia. The current monograph makes an excellent companion to Robert V Nisbett's 'The Progression of a Branch of the Dirleton Nisbets to Australia' which was published in 1990. In fact, it makes such an excellent companion that Robert was motivated to make the following comments in a letter to Ian M Nisbet:

"I most certainly enjoyed reading the 'Two Ladies of Dirleton'. I had a fair knowledge of Mary Nisbet, mainly handed down by family hearsay and more factually from 'Nisbet of that ilk'. What pleased me most about Stephen Bunyan's Monograph was the earthy manner in which it portrayed Mary as the woman with her depth of character, rather than just the high profiled Lady Elgin. On the occasions I have visited Dirleton Village, said to be the prettiest in Scotland, I discovered ample evidence to indicate Mary had greatly cared and provided for the village and its inhabitants as she lived the remainder of her life out at nearby Archerfield.

"I knew little of her grand daughter, Mary Nisbet Hamilton Ogilvy and am now pleased to say I am much the wiser. When you consider all those estates which came into her hands, she was an extremely wealthy woman in her own right. There being no possibility of a direct heir or heiress must have been a great disappointment to her. Being an ardent golfer I was most interested to read of their love of the game and because of their generosity the establishment of various courses, including that of Muirfield which has hosted the British Open on numerous occasions.

"This monograph is now firmly established in my Nesbitt/Nisbet library and I will enjoy reading it many times over."

Thanks to Robert for those positive words on the monograph. It is good to hear that the hard work going on in both the UK and Australia is appreciated.

Material from Robert Nisbett, 71 Lakin Street, Bateau Bay, NSW 2261.



GOLDEN WEDDING: Ian M and Joy Nisbet recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Our 'roving reporter' Bruce Nesbit was one of the invitees and gave the following description of the occasion:

"Eighty guests attended the Melbourne Savage Club in Bank Place, Melbourne on Saturday 3rd of February to celebrate the golden wedding of Ian and Joy Nisbet.

"Nesbitt/Nisbet Society members, twelve in all, attended: Peter & Bette Collins, Ian & Heather Clarke, John & Elyse Classon, Bruce & Helen Nesbit, Fred & Michie Jensen, Tom G Nisbet and John Barth.

"The function was, as you would expect, planned to the last detail, and went off without a hitch.

"Cocktails and hors d'oeuvre were served in the foyer with piano accompaniment before the guests were ushered upstairs to the dining-room which was jammed to capacity. Ian gave a brief speech to start off the proceedings. Helen and I were with a group of N/N Society members and chatted until dinner was served, with waiters offering to keep our glasses filled with a choice of several white wines.

We were entertained after dinner by *The Performers of Pot-Pourri*: two sopranos, a tenor, a baritone and a pianist. They performed excerpts from various operas including several light operettas by Gilbert and Sullivan. All presented in a light-hearted manner, but very professional, with occasional humorous line changes to fit the occasion: with reference to Ian and Joy. The girls mixed with the guests during their performance and during one number Fred Jensen, who was seated near the front, was virtually dragged on stage to join the group, where he entered into the spirit of the occasion to the enjoyment of all. We were certainly well entertained!

"The function was still in full swing when Helen and I left at 11.45 pm."

On behalf of all N/N members, congratulations to Ian and Joy in reaching this milestone in their lives. These two people have given so much to our Society, and we wish them many more happy years together.

Material from Bruce Nesbit, 6 Kent Crt, Bundoora, Vic 3083.

COUNTRY GATHERING - PORTSEA, SUNDAY 3 MARCH 1996: Once again this important day in the N/N calendar was well organised, well attended, and well enjoyed by those who made the trek down the peninsula to Portsea. We were privileged to have a beautiful setting, superb weather and our own private tour of the Quarantine buildings conducted by Mr Peter Collins. As always, Bruce Nesbit penned a few lines describing the day:

"Thirty-four attended the function, including one lady from the USA, Kerrie-Anne Heimadinger a friend of the Todds.

"We were entertained by the dolphins, closely attended by several boats and swimmers, and there was constant sea traffic at close quarters. A formation flying display of light aircraft, which performed at low altitude and the occasional low pass along the beach maintained our interest. One plane in particular, not part of the formation group, gave a spectacular performance of loops, rolls and other eye-catching manoeuvres."

One piece of entertainment not mentioned by Bruce was that of the self-generated kind, namely the annual Boar'n Games. I'm not sure if anyone actually kept track of 'who won what' but the competition was certainly vigorous. This was especially true for the gumboot throwing contest. If this ever becomes an Olympic event we may have some champions in the ranks. Who knows, maybe for Sydney 2000?

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING - DUNADRY, IRELAND, SATURDAY 18 MAY 1996: While it is a little late for Australian N/N members to plan to attend, we have been advised that the UK Society is having its annual gathering for the first time in Ireland. The following is extracted from the meeting notice:

"The UK Society has compiled a database of Scottish families and similar work has been done in Australia and USA. Now, significant progress is being made on family information in Ireland where Nesbitt and Nisbet families have lived for so many years. This has kindled considerable local interest.

"The Society has therefore decided to hold a meeting in Ireland for the first time. Over 300 copies of this notice have been sent to N/Ns listed in the local telephone directories. Anyone is welcome to attend the meeting and it is hoped that you will want to come too.

"The meeting will be informal giving you an opportunity to hear what is known generally about the family, to examine books and writings on family trees, history and general information, to meet others of the same surname and to establish links. Dr Brian Trainer, The Research Director of the Ulster Historical Foundation has kindly agreed to be there to talk about the family in Ireland."

The Gathering is to be held at the Dunadry Hotel, Dunadry, Co Atrim, Ireland on Saturday 18 May, from 10.00 am to 5.00pm. Anyone interested in finding out further information should contact Mr Stanley Nesbitt, 54 Drumnabreeze Rd, Donaghcloney, Craigavon BT66 7NY (Telephone 01846 613 036).



FAMILY SNIPPETS

This section is for brief snippets of news to keep members informed on the comings and goings of our extended family. Send snippets direct to the Editor, or scribble a note on your membership renewal form. One line is all we need!

- * Our prolific South Australian correspondent, Evelyn Clarke, has been unwell recently - to the point of being 'carted off to hospital in an ambulance. We hope that all is OK now!

FOUND

MATRON L E NESBITT: The note in N/News 38 on Matron Nesbitt elicited a response from one N/N member. The following letter was received from Margaret Nesbit:

"I feel sure you will get lots of information about Matron L E Nesbitt. I never met her but she was well known as Matron of Presbyterian Babies Home in Canterbury - that was before (the) Uniting Church came into being. I believe she was a Scottish lady - the time would be in the 30s. She later opened a clinic in Collins St for the treatment of babies with skin problems - a rather unusual venture at that time. Perhaps you could get more accurate details through the Presbyterian Church Assembly (Collins Street). I feel sure she would be mentioned in some records. Her Christian name was Laura."

Thank you Margaret for this information on Matron Nisbet.

Material from Margaret Nesbit, 72/20 Manningtree Rd, Hawthorn, Vic 3122.

THE WANTED LIST

JAMES NESBITT AND FAMILY: Ian G Nisbet recently received the following letter seeking information on this N/N and his family:

"I have been given your name and address as being the contact person for the Nesbitt Society of Australia, by the Genealogical Society of Tasmania.

"I am a descendant of a James Nesbitt who came to Queensland in 1878 with his wife Margaret Elizabeth (nee Lancashire), from Drum County, Monaghan, Ireland.

"At least two cousins have made efforts to trace the descendants of this Nesbitt family (and Lancashire) in Ireland, without success. It is thought the relevant records, (from) the 2nd Drum Presbyterian Church, were destroyed by a fire.

Recently a couple of letters have come to hand that were kept by my late Mother. From these letters I learned that my Grandmother had a brother who migrated to America. Contact was lost between this brother and sister sometime before 1929.

I thought that there may be a chance that a descendant of this John James Lancashire, the immigrant to America, could have made an attempt to contact his sister's people (Nesbitt) in Australia, by way of your Society.

"My proposition is very tenuous but still worth a try."

Please contact Mr Kevin Hardy, 3 Allens Ave, Lutana, Tasmania 7009.

NOTICE BOAR-D

(Upcoming events in the Local and Overseas Calendar for 1996)

4 May	House party - Scattergories Game Night
18 May	International Gathering (Ireland) - see page 6
29 June	10th Anniversary Dinner - Melbourne Savage Club
July	Newsletter 40
3 August	Evening with speaker
28 September	Annual General Meeting

GENERAL COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT: Ian M Nisbet, 26 Walnut Rd, Nth Balwyn, Vic 3104, Aust.
SECRETARY: Ian G Nisbet, 1 St Johns Pde, Kew, Vic 3101, Aust.
ASS SEC: Effie Todd, 18 Hillview Ave, Mt Waverley, Vic 3149, Aust.
TREASURER: Peter Watson, 30 Mitchell Rd, Box Hill North, Vic 3129, Aust.
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ASS ED: Ian G Nisbet, 1 St Johns Pde, Kew, Vic 3101, Aust.
ARCHIVIST: John Barth, 102/442 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne, Vic 3004, Aust.
BOARD: Bruce Nesbit, Gavin M Nisbet, Graeme Nisbet, Lyndell Watson,
 Karen Nisbet, Gary R Nisbet.

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Ian T Nisbet, Ian G Nisbet, Gary Nisbet, Graeme Nisbet, Karen Nisbet.

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MEMBERSHIP CONTACT OFFICER: Lyndell Watson

DISTRIBUTION OFFICER: Andrew Nisbet

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE:

Graeme Nisbet, Ian G Nisbet, Gavin Nisbet

SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

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

REGIONAL OFFICERS:

George Nesbitt, 110 Ardross St, Ardross, WA 6153, Aust.

Brian S Nesbitt, 14 Davitt Cl, Isaacs, ACT 2607, Aust.

James E Nisbet, 53 Yeo St, Cremorne, NSW 2090, Aust.

OVERSEAS CONTACTS:

USA: Mrs Gail Jones, 321 Dixon Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15216, USA.

UK: Peter W W Nisbet, 7 Stafford Pl, Weston-super-Mare, Avon BS23 2QZ.

10th



year

The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society is a Worldwide Clan Society