

NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY

Australia



NEWSLETTER NO. 3.

APRIL 1987

*** STARTING POINT ***

(Latest News and Views from the Editorial Staff)

CENTURY UP: Well fellow N/Ns, it's official! After less than a year in existence, the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society Australia has more than one hundred paid up members. At latest count 102. I think we can all give ourselves a pat on the back. Our achievement is even more notable in view of the fact that we now have more members than the parent N/N Societies in the U.K. and U.S.A. Let's keep up the enthusiasm - next target 150!

NEW FORMAT: After two newsletters under our belt, together with their inherent teething problems, the newsletter committee is starting to get a feel for what is involved in putting together an interesting newsletter (we hope). In order to streamline the operation we have opted for a more structured format and have aimed for short, punchy articles. We hope the changes meet with members' approval - let us know what you think.

FEEDBACK: The N/N newsletter is central to the effective operation of our society. It is the only real way that all members can maintain contact with each other. In order to work properly it is essential that the newsletter reflects it's members' interests. The only way it can do this is by members contributing to it's makeup. We desperately need short articles, comments, feedback, criticism (well, not too much) from members. How about it? Just a few lines of general interest would be a start. Come on folks, this is your newsletter - make the most of it!

*** (NES) BITS AND PIECES ***

(Snippets of General Interest By N/Ns, For N/Ns and About N/Ns)

WHAT'S IN A NAME: I'm sure all N/Ns have suffered the annoyance of having their surname misspelt at some time or another. It often amazes me that such a simple name can be so readily misconstrued and distorted by non N/Ns. This is not a recent problem. It dates back to the earliest origins of the family. Alexander Nisbett (the historian of Lismore) noted that between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, the name was invariably spelt with an 'e' in the first syllable, with the most common spellings being Nesbyt, Nesbyth and Nesebite. However, from the middle of the fourteenth century, the Nisbet spelling became the most common in Scotland. Other versions of the name in these early centuries included Nezebit, Nezebeth, Nisbert, Nisbite, Nizbeth and many others. Clearly our predecessors and their contemporaries were also plagued with a spelling problem!

From these origins arose the modern derivations of the name. As well as the more frequent Nisbet and Nesbitt versions, we have such variations as Nisbett, Nesbit, Nesbet and Naisbitt. Undoubtedly, with the passage of time other versions of the name will appear and be perpetuated. I sincerely hope

that this is not the case for a particular misspelling that recently came my way. Having thought that I had seen every possible distortion of my name, I was quite astonished when a letter came to work addressed to one Ian Neshit. I trust that this was simply a spelling mistake and not a reflection of me personally. Hopefully this derivation of the name will not come into popular usage in the future!

By Dr. Ian T. Nisbet, editorial staff

PRODIGAL PREDECESSORS: An alert neighbour of the editor recently brought to our attention one of the less auspicious aspects of the history of N/Ns in Australia. On October 22, 1873 two of our forebears appeared before Judge Barry at Sandhurst charged with burglary and larceny. One, David Nesbit, was found guilty and sentenced to four years hard labour. The other, James Nesbit, was found not guilty. David Nesbit had appeared previously on July 17, 1873 (charges not known), and on that occasion had been found not guilty.

OVERSEAS CONNECTIONS: Those of us N/Ns who are fortunate enough to travel overseas will be pleased to note contacts available through the society. Gary Nisbet (a member of the newsletter work party) and his wife Merryn are currently travelling around Europe and the U.K. Through the N/N society, Gary was contacted by Dick Nesbitt, the U.K. president, who very generously offered his hospitality and the chance to look at some of his rare N/N reference books. I'm sure Gary will have plenty to write about in future newsletters. (Brother Andrew is sitting in for Gary to assist in the production of this newsletter).

NESBIT COURT in Castlemaine Victoria is named after Anthony (Tony) John Nesbit, b. 1942. Tony is the son of N/N Society members, Stan and Pearl (Norris) Nesbit of Castlemaine.

He has been a councillor of the City of Castlemaine since 1967, and Mayor on three occasions - being installed in that office for the first time in 1970. He has been involved in many community activities. Presently he is President of the Mt Alexander Hospital Committee of Management. He is a former President of the Castlemaine Art Gallery Committee; a former member of the Castlemaine Apex Club; a member of the Castlemaine Pioneers and Old Residents Association; and a member of the Vintage Car Club. He has been the Council Representative on many committees at various times.

By Pearl Nesbit, member.

NESBIT & JERGER, Watchmakers Jewellers & Opticians, appears on the sign above one of three shops in the main street of the Western Australian goldmining township of Coolgardie. In front of the shops is a group of people and three camels. The camels were used to carry water to the outback township of the early 1890s.

A two-page photograph of the scene described above appears in the magazine "Two Hundred Years" issue 12, pages 280/281, published by Bay Books, Anzac Parade, Kensington, N.S.W.

*** SOCIETY NEWS ***

A QUIET DAY AT RYE: On Sunday 22nd February a small group journeyed to Rye to enjoy the hospitality and (would you believe) Melbourne's mildly pleasant late summer weather at Ian and Joy Nisbet's holiday cum beach retreat. After lunch some younger N/Ns were even seen sporting beachwear, although most were content to shelter in from the wind either at the beach or back at the house.

Thanks to Ian Joy and Andrew for sharing your "Shangri La" and from one very young N/N, a ride in a jeep.

By Ian G. Nisbet, secretary.

WORKSHOP REPORT: Ian G. Nisbet and his wife Leslie were hosts to a small gathering at their home on March 21.

Ian continued on from his previous talk which dealt with, amongst other items, family and state records. He went on to detail the facilities offered by libraries, electoral rolls, genealogical societies, the titles office, educational institutions and finally, professional researchers. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it's vast genealogical library was also given prominence.

We are surely indebted to Ian for his talks; and his article "Getting Started" in three parts - the last of which appears in this newsletter. To both Ian and Leslie, thank you for arranging a warm and congenial get-together and refreshments.

GENERAL MEETING - SPEAKER

The Society's first GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS will be held on Friday 22nd May 1987 at the home of Joy and Ian M. Nisbet, "St. Abbs", 26 Walnut Road, North Balwyn, 3104, Melbourne, Victoria, commencing at 8 P.M.

Your Executive will submit a report on activities to date and plans for the future.

Our guest speakers are Janet and Bill Gibson. Janet was born in Duns, Berwickshire Scotland (the location of Nisbet House). She went to school there and returns regularly to visit her father. She has agreed to speak to us on "The Borders". This area on the edge of Berwickshire and Northumberland has a special interest for N/Ns. We are fortunate that Janet has consented to tell us of her first-hand experiences.

Bill lived in Glasgow and Aberdeen before emigrating to Australia. He is a member of The Melbourne Scots, and has a wide knowledge of Tartans and Crests.

At the conclusion of the meeting, supper will be served.

We look forward to a large attendance of N/Ns.

R.S.V.P. Joy Nisbet, "St. Abbs", 26 Walnut Road, North Balwyn, 3104, Victoria, Telephone (03) 857 5498, by 15th May 1987.

*** FEATURE ARTICLE ***

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

In this edition we have the third and final section of Ian G. Nisbet's article "GETTING STARTED".

Previously, the importance of family and state records was outlined. In this article we look at other important sources which may assist in broadening your existing knowledge, or if you are fortunate, giving new information.

1. LIBRARIES

While libraries will have a wide range of books on genealogy, family and local histories, the references made below are to specific types of books.

* Directories - They contain alphabetical lists of main householders' names and addresses, and trades and professions. While directories may vary in content they can be used as a guide to the approximate year when a person died, or alternatively if seeking contact with a living relative, an address to which a letter may be directed.

Each state library will have it's local directories. The libraries of Edinburgh and Glasgow also have directories which may be useful. The Edinburgh Post Office Directories held by the Edinburgh Library date from 1773. The author has obtained very useful information from the Glasgow Post Office Directories.

* Local Histories - Local histories of towns and areas may be useful especially if your forebears were local identities or holders of office.

e.g. local council members.

* Electoral Rolls - May be useful in locating or cross referencing.

* Occupational Listings - Many occupations for one reason or another may be listed. In Victoria (which may differ slightly from the other states, or indeed the U.K.) the following occupational listings are held: chemists, public service, dentists, doctors, lawyers, parliamentarians, teachers etc.

While state libraries have such listings, similar listings are likely to be held by the relevant professional groupings, e.g. there are records of all ministers of parish churches of Scotland dating back to 1560.

2. TITLES OFFICE

The purchase sale or lease of land, as now, has always been well documented and the records of such transactions have been recorded and are held at the titles office or it's equivalent. In Australia, early dealings in land are also likely to be held at the state libraries.

3. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

If your forebear received an education other than primary or secondary, and was indentured or even attended university then a record is likely to exist. For example in Edinburgh, owing to a fee being payable for indenture, records exist of apprenticeships going back to the early 1700s.

Most universities will have records of it's graduates. The author has a record of all NISBETS who attended the Glasgow School of Art from 1880 to 1954 including dates of enrolment and address at the time of enrolment (maybe useful for census search).

4. EMPLOYERS

Employers may be able to give a substantial amount of detail on the working life of a forebear, although there may be some reluctance to pass on such information without some persistence or establishment of your bona fides.

5. GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

There are a number of genealogical or family history societies which may be able to supply source material and/or advice. Some N/Ns belong to such societies and they can and do provide a healthy link between the N/N Society and these organizations. Such Societies include:

(i) The Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies.

(ii) The Genealogical Society.

(iii) The Society of Australian Genealogists.

(In each state, consult your local telephone directory for address and telephone number).

Similar societies exist overseas and in Scotland there are at least four geographically focussed family histories societies including:

(i) Glasgow and West of Scotland FHS.

(ii) Aberdeen and N.E. Scotland FHS.

(iii) Tay Valley FHS.

(iv) Highland FHS.

As with the Nesbitt/Nisbet Society, none undertake research on behalf of individuals.

6. CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS - The Mormons.

The church has the world's most extensive holdings of genealogical records. Access to nearly all of these records is available through the local Mormon Church.

* You can register your interest in a particular individual which then becomes part of a world wide register called the Genealogical Index.

* Visiting the local stake (Mormon divisional) library you can view on microfiche many of the Births, Deaths and Marriage records from across the world. The author discovered a marriage recorded in 1784 on such a microfiche at the Heidelberg, Victoria, stake library. (See your telephone directory for the address of the library in your state).

7. RESEARCHERS

Professionals are available at a fee to conduct family history research on your behalf. In Australia addresses may be obtained by contacting the Society of Genealogists. In Scotland, the Genealogical Register Office for Scotland in it's Ancestry Leaflet lists 19 such researchers who are available to carry out work on your behalf.

8. SCOTS ANCESTRY RESEARCH SOCIETY

A non profit organization promoting research into Scots ancestry will also undertake research for a fee.

A final word: in the above and previous articles the various sources of information which may assist you have been outlined. The process of researching out information is not an exact science and my advice to anyone starting out is firstly, ask yourself "if someone wanted to find information on me, where would they enquire/write/visit", then set about doing the same for your forebears, but with a little wider sweep. Good luck!

EDITOR'S NOTE: The new address of the Genealogical Society of Victoria is Floors 5 & 6, Curtin House, 252 Swanston Street, Melbourne 3000, Victoria.

*** WANTED ***

Member's Searches

For descendents of John NISBET, born Ararat 1859, died 1902. Married Carol Sanders 1887 in Victoria.

For descendents of Robert Thompson NISBET, born Ararat 1866. Married Mary RYAN 1890.

Contact Mrs. Lyndell Watson, 30 Mitchell Road, Boxhill North, 3129. Victoria.

NISBET, Margaret - b. 1800, Chapleton, New Kilpatrick, Stirlingshire; m. 1819 William DALGLISH, b. 1799, Dumbarton. Children: David, b. 1820; John, b. 1822; Alexander, b. 1830; James, b. 1836; Margaret, b. 1839. All arrived at Moreton Bay Queensland 3/6/1857 on the "Hastings", accompanied by Margaret's brother William. They moved to North Melbourne in September 1857. William NISBET and David DALGLISH were at Port Albert 1860-1861.

Contact James E. NISBET, 53 Yeo Street, Cremorne, 2090, N.S.W., Ph. (02) 90 1943.

Note: James is in the early stages of arranging a meeting of N/Ns in the Sydney area and would welcome enquiries from any interested N/Ns.

ANY SUCCESS: Members who have had searches published in previous newsletters are requested to give some indication of the success (or failure) of their search. A short note about new information obtained, or new contacts made would be of interest to other members and may encourage others to submit searches of their own.

*** FOUND ***

(Nesbitt/Nisbet Arrivals 1827-1833)

From the book "Shipping Arrivals and Departures 1803-1833" by I.H. Nicholson, first published in 1983 by Roebuck Society, publication No. 30.

Alexander NISBET, R.N., was ship surgeon on the 'Grenada' which departed London England on 10/9/1826 and arrived at Port Jackson (Sydney Australia) on 9/1/1827. The Master was Jn TRAC(E)Y, and the ship carried 83 female prisoners, 38 free women, 28 children, ship/CT, 408/480, 4th trip.

Dr. NESBET was a passenger on the 'Medway', 450 tons, 4 guns, Master B. W(R)IGHT; which departed Sydney on 2/2/1830 and arrived in Tasmania (?), on 16/2/1830.

*** NOTICE BOARD ***

(Upcoming Events in the Local and Overseas N/N Calendar).

1987	May 14.	U.K. N/N Society Meeting, Naval House London.
	May 22.	General Meeting - Guest Speaker. (Please see page 3).
	June 1.	Closing date for material for inclusion in Newsletter No. 4.
	July	Newsletter.
	Aug.	Workshop.
	Sept.	Annual General Meeting.
	Oct.	Newsletter.
	Nov.	Pre-Christmas Social event.
1988	Jan.	Newsletter.
	Aug. 14.	International N/N Gathering, Jedburgh, Scotland.

Further details as they come to hand.

*** OBITUARIES ***

Members of the N/N Society will be saddened to learn of the passing of two fellow members:

NISBET, Kenneth Francis Nigel, (26/2/1907 - 7/3/1987). Ken was a foundation member of the society, a member of the social committee and the father of Gavin our treasurer.

NESBIT, Harry Maxwell, (27/6/1913 - 22/2/1987). Max took an interest in the development of the N/N society and was one of the first members. He was a brother of our newsletter editor, Bruce.

STOP PRESS

WANTED-INFORMATION: Does This Man Belong To You?

NAME: James Lyons NESBITT.
BORN: 27/8/1857, aged 18 years.
DESC: Hazel eyes, brown hair, 5'9.5" tall, two moles on back of neck, two brown spots on right cheekbone.
TRADE: Labourer.
RELIGION: R.C.
OFFENCE: Assault and robbery.
SENTENCE: 4 years hard labour. 29/7/1875.

The information above is from a photo-copy of a prison record from the P.R.O. at Laverton, Victoria, and was supplied by Dot Nesbit of Ascot Vale. A copy is now kept in our archives.

Do you have anything for our archives? Books articles, photos, any information. And please don't forget those profiles you were asked to complete on the reverse of the Membership Application form. We are still waiting on a few and if you would care to include a photo, it would be greatly appreciated. Please remember on all photos to provide the relevant information; names, place and date. If you don't wish to donate the material to the society, please lend it to us so that a copy may be made. Then everyone will benefit from the information. A missing link or ancestor may be discovered. All archival material will be available at education/information workshops and at any time you may care to arrange with me. Articles may be sent to me directly or through our secretary, or even at the education/information workshops.
Lyn McFarland, archivist, Ph. (03) 481 8969.

EXECUTIVE:

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