

# THE N/NEWS

NO. 77 October 2005

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
NESBITT/NISBET SOCIETY  
AUSTRALIA



## STARTING POINT

*This starting point has been kept to a minimum to make room for a second feature article – a piece written by one of our New Zealand members; written for his grandchildren who have become keen to know something of their family history, but which John is willing to share with the wider N/N family.*

*I thank him for making the article available and although it is perhaps not the story that you might hope to unearth – it is the undeniable factual truth of history. I hope that you find it of inspiration in your genealogical endeavours.*

*Please note July/August for anticipated 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.* Editor

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## NOTICE BOAR-D

(Upcoming events in the Local and Overseas Calendar)

Dec 10	Christmas Gathering, 8:00pm, St Abbs, 26 Walnut Road, Balwyn North
Jan	N/NEWS # 78
April	N/NEWS # 79
May 13	UK Gathering in Kilmarnock, Scotland – further details to follow
July/August	20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – details yet to be finalised

Note: the social calendar can be viewed on the homepage.

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## MEM-BOAR-SHIP

Welcome to the following new member:

- Michael Nisbet of Eudlo, Queensland.

Changes of details have been noted for:

- Bruce Nesbit, now resident in Carina Heights, Qld.
- Dr Ian T & Gwenda Nisbet who have moved to Ivanhoe, Vic.
  - Glen Hollebone contact details updated.
- John & Gail Mowbray change of address, to Stratford, Vic.
  - Pat Nesbitt change of address, Inverell, NSW.

We are saddened to be advised of the passing of Allan Nesbitt of Bathurst, NSW.

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## SOCIAL NEWS

*An informal “family” gathering – as a “fireside chat” was held at the home of Ian & Joy Nisbet on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Twelve or so members were in attendance including one of our youngest for her debut in N/N circles – 7 month old Charleah Nisbet Osborne.*

## FEATURE ARTICLES

### **Finding a Grandfather** *by John B. Nesbit*

Growing up in Palmerston North, my brother and I were part of what we thought was a very small extended family on our Nesbit side. There were my parents, dad's brother uncle Fred, his wife, their three children and my grandmother.

The question was, "what happened to our grandfather?"

The question always elicited the same brief response: "Oh he died when your father and uncle Fred were little boys." They lived in Nelson, and after their father died grandma brought the two boys to live in Palmerston North to be near her sisters for some support. *And what about other relations?* "Oh your grandmother lost contact with them, after leaving Nelson."

These seemed to be sufficient answers for us at that time.

My earliest memories are of a grandmother living with both of her sons alternately. There appeared to be no system, she just moved between the two as she wished, it seemed to work quite well.

The story now moves to 1995 when I was 60. I had been talking with a person about their experiences in researching their family history when I suddenly became aware that my brother and I had not been told the truth or perhaps at best only part of the truth about our grandfather.

By this time there was only my brother and I of the family still alive -- with hindsight -- how I love that word; I realised that neither my grandmother, my father, nor my uncle ever mentioned my grandfather without being prompted and always responded very briefly.

There were never any photographs of him, or comments like, you walk like him, or you wriggle your nose just like your grandfather, or even perhaps your ears stick out like his, or your hair is the same colour, nor any mention of what his job was!

*After never being even remotely interested in family history I suddenly realized that there might be a story here. I became aware that come what may, I would not stop until I found out!*

*Who was he? Did he walk out on them? Was he a criminal? Even a murderer perhaps, or a deserter from the First World War? The ideas ran riot through my mind.*

But where to begin? Then one day my mother's sister sent me a copy of my parent's marriage certificate that she had unearthed from somewhere. And bingo! There it was; the first official recognition of him.

His name was John, his occupation a Brewers Assistant. With some calculated guess work using the date of my parents' wedding and the age of my father at that time there was enough information to search the Family History records at the Christchurch library and find the date of his death and the file number. He died on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1918. This information and \$9:00 was sent to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Lower Hutt requesting a copy of the death certificate.

A week later the reply arrived and with excitement, a little trepidation and a trembling hand I opened the letter. And there it was; the cause of death by verdict of the coroner. He died in Nelson Hospital from loss of blood and shock caused by cutting his own throat with a razor while suffering from influenza.

It is interesting to note that December 1918 recorded the highest number of deaths for a month in New Zealand during the influenza pandemic that swept the world following the First World War.

So there it was, my emotions ran hot and fast. I read and re-read those words often over the next few weeks. I was overcome with a real sense of sadness for my father, uncle and grandmother, that they had felt required to carry this, as a secret to their graves. They were a Catholic family, I remember grandma in the last few years of her life, when she was bedridden. The Priest would come every Friday evening to celebrate the Mass with her.

The two boys went to Catholic schools and both played rugby for the St. Patrick's Rugby Club. Because of their Catholic Faith the suicide would have had an even more shattering effect on them.

I now have a very different view of and understanding of my father, uncle and grandmother. *What would I give now for a ten-minute talk with each one of them?*

The next stage was to find his grave. While on holiday in Nelson, we searched the Catholic sections of the old Nelson cemeteries for a headstone without success. Then I noted on the death certificate that the Anglican Vicar performed the burial. So back to the cemeteries again, this time to search the Church of England sections. Again with no success.

Obviously we would need to be more professional in our search. The next day while walking in the centre of Nelson I walked into the Public Library and asked, “Do you have any old cemetery records here?” “No, but I can tell you where to go”, was the response.

“There is an old City Council building across the street. Go around to the back of the building, climb the outside stairs to the first floor follow the old passage way. Turn right, go up the ramp and there you will find a woman sitting behind a computer. Ask her if she can help.”

After following the directions carefully, I found the woman sitting at the computer. “Can I help you?” She said. With a rather foolish look on my face I said “yes, I’m looking for a grave.”

“Give me some details and I will see what I can do”, she said. “John Nesbit buried 17 December 1918”, I replied. After a few clicks on the computer, “there it is”, she said.

“And now, you will tell me, it’s an unmarked grave and we still won’t be able to find it!” I said.

“Yes it is an unmarked grave”, she replied, “but the graves on either side have head stones with names on them. I will give you the details and a printout of the area with instructions of how to find the gravesite.”

The printout gave information that was personally very significant for me. He was buried in the Wesleyan section of the cemetery.

The next morning dawned warm and sunny, full of excitement it was off to the Wakapuaka Cemetery, following the map directly to the site. And there it was! Right on the highest point, right on the boundary of the cemetery overlooking the Tasman Sea; all these years he had had the best view in Nelson.

I sat on his site in the sun and warm long grass, and full of emotion said; “So here you are you silly old bugger!”



*The best view in Nelson, X marks the spot.*

**John B. Nesbit.**  
**17/08/05**

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*The following detail was sourced from the Australian National Archives (www.naa.gov.au), continuing on from previous listings in N/News 72 to 75.*

## **Boer War Nominal Roll Database**

**Nesbit, James Stewart**  
**Number:** 427  
**Rank:** Private  
**Unit:** 7BN AUST CMNWLTH HORSE (QLD)  
**Fate:** Army  
**State:** QLD  
**Murray Page Number:** 539  
**Notes:**

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**Nisbet, Walter Blake**  
**Number:**  
**Rank:** Major (A.M.C.)  
**Unit:** 4 (QLD IMPERIAL BUSHMEN) CNTGNT  
**Fate:**  
**State:** QLD  
**Murray Page Number:** 479  
**Notes:**

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**Nisbett, James Creolam**  
**Number:** 126  
**Rank:** Private  
**Unit:** 6 (QLD IMPERIAL BUSHMEN) CNTGNT  
**Fate:**  
**State:** QLD  
**Murray Page Number:** 512  
**Notes:** Corporal 01/05/1901 (Murray)

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## **Commemorative Roll Database** **World War I**

**Nesbitt, Alfred**  
**Service Number:** 1553  
**Rank:** Private  
**Unit:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Welsh Regiment  
**Service:** British Army  
**Conflict:** 1914-1918  
**Date of Death:** 27/12/1914  
**Place of Death:**  
**Cause of Death:**  
**Age at Death:** 21  
**Cemetery or Memorial Details:** 22. Le Touret Memorial, France  
**Next of Kin:** Husband of S. Boyer (formerly Nesbitt), of Brynmawr, Moore St., Campsie, Sydney, NSW, Australia  
**Notes:**

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**Nisbet, Thomas Holmes**  
**Service Number:** 8/767  
**Rank:** Lieutenant  
**Unit:** Otago Regiment New Zealand Expeditionary Force  
**Service:** New Zealand Military Forces  
**Conflict:** 1914-1918  
**Date of Death:** 07/08/1915  
**Place of Death:**  
**Cause of Death:** Killed in action  
**Age at Death:** 23  
**Cemetery or Memorial Details:** GALLIPOLI 20. New Zealand No.2.  
 Outpost Cemetery. Sp Mem. 22.  
**Next of Kin:** Son of the Rev. Thomas and Sarah Nisbet, of  
 "Archerfield", Dunedin, New Zealand  
**Notes:** Mentioned in Despatches. Born at Melbourne, VIC,  
 Australia

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### **Honours & Awards (Gazetted) Database** **World War II**

**Nesbitt, John**  
**Service Number:** NX65552  
**Rank:** Sergeant  
**Unit:** 8 Div  
**Service:** Army  
**Honour/Award:** Mention in Dispatches  
**Date of London Gazette:** 6 March 1947, page 1098, position 87  
**Date of Commonwealth of Australia Gazette:** 6 march 1947, page 760, position 136

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**Nisbet, Adrian Home**  
**Service Number:** 422975  
**Rank:** Flying Officer  
**Unit:** 50 Sqn RAF  
**Service:** RAAF  
**Honour/Award:** Distinguished Flying Cross  
**Date of London Gazette:** 20 July 1945, page 3784, position 17  
**Date of Commonwealth of Australia Gazette:** 26 July 1945, page 1599, position 55

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**Nisbet, Thomas Granger**  
**Service Number:** WX11073  
**Rank:** Temporary Captain  
**Unit:** 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Ind Coy  
**Service:** Army  
**Honour/Award:** Mention in Dispatches  
**Date of London Gazette:** 28 May 1943, page 2374, position 37  
**Date of Commonwealth of Australia Gazette:** 3 June 1943, page 1151, position 18

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**Nisbett, William David**  
**Service Number:** QX42072  
**Rank:** Lance Sergeant  
**Unit:** 2 Corps  
**Service:** Army  
**Honour/Award:** Mention in Dispatches  
**Date of London Gazette:** 19 July 1945, page 3718, position 145  
**Date of Commonwealth of Australia Gazette:** 19 July 1945, page 1550, position 24

## Roll of Honour Database Vietnam War

**Nisbet, C R**  
**Service Number:** 1201338  
**Rank:** Private [Pte]  
**Unit:** 1 RAR (RA INF)  
**Service:** Army  
**Conflict:** Vietnam, 1962-1972  
**Date of Death:** 14/05/1968  
**Place of Death:** South Vietnam  
**Cause of Death:** Killed in Action  
**Memorial Panel:** 3  
**Cemetery or Memorial Details:**  
**Next of Kin:**  
**Notes:**  
**Source:** AWM153 Roll of Honour cards, Vietnam

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### N/N's IN THE NEWS

*The Herald Sun* of Thursday, July 28, 2005 p. 7 carried an article entitled "**Shuttle damage probe**" reporting on the efforts being made to gauge the extent of any launch damage to the space shuttle "Discovery". Amongst the crew on "Discovery" was the Australian astronaut Andy Thomas. The report includes quotes from various NASA officers, including the following:

"If anything just could not be fixed they could just stay on board the space station," NASA spokesman **Steve Nesbitt** said.

*The evening before I had heard Steve being interviewed on radio where this statement was made indicating NASA's response should irreparable damage to the "Discovery" be diagnosed.*

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*The Herald Sun* of Thursday, October 6, 2005 on page 19 ran the following article entitled '**Birds in the heart**'.

A VICTORIAN bird lover has been internationally recognised for his work.

**Richard Naisbitt** was yesterday awarded the International Fund for Animal Welfare's lifetime achievement award for his work rehabilitating birds of prey.

Mr Naisbitt works at Healesville Sanctuary caring for eagles and peregrine falcons.

"There is something about birds of prey," Mr Naisbitt said.

"They have a very independent spirit and work with you, not for you."

Mr Naisbitt is one of four carers in Australia to win an IFAW award.

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*The Age* of Saturday, August 13, 2005 in the DOMAIN section, an article entitled '**Simply wizard**' was reporting on the rumour that Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe), also England's second-richest teenager, had purchased a penthouse in Toorak. Supposedly the deal was brokered by Peter Hooymans of Melbourne Real Estate Pty Ltd, and when contacted was unwilling to discuss the sale but confirmed that the second penthouse in the block had been sold to **Alan Nisbet**, an accounting partner in Deloitte, based in Singapore, for \$2.2 million.

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*Home Beautiful* August 2005 edition profiled members of their editorial team and amongst these was **Connell Nisbet**. Connell is also *Home Beautiful's* Chief sub-editor - Copy. Connell's profile reads:

'A flair for language bears much responsibility, so spare a thought for our chief sub-editor Connell Nisbet. "If anyone dies in my family, I'm the one who's called upon to write the eulogy – most of my early literary experiences were born this way." Connell recently joined our editorial team as the only male staff member. Luckily he's open to adventure. He was recently in Vietnam exploring the wilderness and snacking on snakes. So tell us Connell, what was more intimidating – the snakes or an office full of females?'

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## FOUND

In the *Herald Sun* of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005 on page 89 in the death notices a single entry was noted:

**NESBITT** – Friederike (Freda) who died on 30 August 2005 aged 52 years.

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Pat Nesbitt advised that Pte. Vincent Clyde Nesbitt in the Roll of Honour, World War II (see N/News 75 p.2) was his uncle. “A very fine gentleman and chartered accountant; a very well respected young man of Inverell.”

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S. Nesbitt advised that on a recent visit to Lismore in northern NSW they saw a large building in the town centre called “Nesbitt House”.

*Can any one provide any background detail to this building and its name?*

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Gem Symon advised that Lt. Gordon Joseph McKay Stewart Nisbet in the Roll of Honour, World War II (see N/News 75 p.4) was her uncle.

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## WANTED

**Name:** Gem Symon (nee Nisbet)

**Subject:** Great Grandfather

**E-Mail:** gemandjimsymon@tadaust.org.au

**Comments:** Does anyone know anything about my great grandfather, James Stewart Nisbet a Presbyterian minister and secretary of the nation bible society of Scotland? (Born Mauchline 1839 died 1906) ministered in Stromness, Orkney and Edinburgh (St Cuthberts I think) and his wife Josephine Mackay Jobling Nisbet (1848-1874).

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## FAMILY SNIPPETS

As N/News 76 was being printed, Jan & Gavin Nisbet advised of the arrival of their 7<sup>th</sup> grandchild. Anne Carter, their youngest daughter had a son, Xavier Sean, born 13<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Having 2 keen and interested older sisters – Xavier could mistakenly think he has 3 mums. Jan & Gavin now have 5 granddaughters and 2 grandsons. *Congratulations to all involved.*

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## SCOTS of VICTORIA

The upcoming major events are:

Nov 6-11 Uniting Church in NE Victoria, Celtic Pilgrimage Walk, Bright to Beechworth, Vic.

Nov 11-14 Beechworth Celtic Festival, Beechworth, Vic.

Nov 26-27 Gippsland Celtic Festival, Logan Park, Warragul, Vic.

Dec 3 Daylesford Highland Gathering, Victoria Park, Daylesford, Vic.

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*Note that interstate & New Zealand events of a Scottish or Gaelic nature are posted on the homepage under “Events”.*

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## STOP PRESS

*Issued with this newsletter is the Annual Report for 2005. Details of the office bearers and committee members for 2005/06 appear on page 8 of this newsletter. On behalf of members I thank the committee/s for their efforts; and on behalf of the General Committee we look forward to the continued support and generosity of our members.*

**20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations** of the Australian Branch of the N/N Society are currently being developed for July/August 2006 – please note this in your diaries and for any travel plans now!

GENERAL COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT: Ian M Nisbet, 26 Walnut Rd, North Balwyn, Vic 3104, Aust.  
CHAIRMAN & EDITOR: Gary Nisbet, 37 Neuparth Rd, Croydon North, Vic 3136, Aust.  
SECRETARY & TREASURER: Ian G Nisbet, 1 St Johns Pde, Kew 3101, Aust.  
ASSISTANT TREASURER: Heather Ames, 7 Plant St, Malvern, Vic 3144, Aust.  
ARCHIVIST: John Barth, Unit 1/4 Nelson Rd, Camberwell, Vic 3124, Aust.  
BOARD: Bruce Nesbit, Effie Todd, Gavin Nisbet, Lyndell Nisbet, Karen Nisbet, Graham Nisbet.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Gary Nisbet, Ian G Nisbet, Karen Nisbet, Glen Hollebhone.

PUBLICATION OFFICER:

Bruce Nesbit, 6 Kent Crt, Bundoora, Vic 3083, Aust.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE:

Ian G Nisbet, Gavin Nisbet, Shane Allan.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

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

NSW REGIONAL GROUP:

CHAIRMAN: Graham Nisbet, 10 Merinda Ave, Epping, NSW 2121, Aust.  
SECRETARY: Glen Hollebhone, 28 Derna Road, Wattle Grove, NSW 2173, Aust.  
CORRESPONDENTS: Mary & Keith Nisbet, 4/125 Cardinal Ave, West Pennant Hills, NSW 2125, Aust.  
COMMITTEE: Frank Nesbit.  
GENEALOGY CONSULTANT: James E Nisbet.

ACT REGIONAL OFFICER:

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

WA REGIONAL OFFICER:

Pippa Letch, 29 Stonesfield Court, Padbury, WA 6025, Aust.

NZ REGIONAL GROUP:

REGIONAL OFFICER: Margaret Vickers, Kartigi, RD2 Palmerston 9061, Otago, NZ.  
ADMINISTRATION: John Nesbit, 64a, Somerfield Street, Christchurch 2, NZ.

OVERSEAS CONTACTS:

North America: Diana Hawkins, 4625 Settles Point Road, Suwanee, GA 30024, USA.  
UK: Peter W W Nisbet, 7 Stafford Place, Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset, BS23 2SQ, UK.

**The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society Australia is a member of the Council of Clans**

**The Nesbitt/Nisbet Society is a Worldwide Clan Society**

INTERNET SITE:

<http://www.nnsoc.asn.au>