



Reflections

Phillip Island and District
Genealogical Society Inc.

Inc. No A0023887G

Number 132

February 2025

PRESIDENT: Sue Viney

SECRETARY: LESLEY ARGÆT 0488 088 101

Postal Address: PO Box 821, Cowes, Victoria 3922

E-mail: piadgs@outlook.com

Opening hours: to be advised

web page : www.piadgs.org.au

Reflections Editor: Sue Viney
E-mail: sueviney@icloud.com

PIADGS is hoping to move in February to our new home at the Newhaven Hall, 23 Cleeland Street, Newhaven. New opening hours to be advised.



REFLECTIONS ON OUR TIME AT 56 CHAPEL STREET, COWES

By Jan Andrews

For members not familiar with the history of PIADGS, we originally met in the Phillip Island Library, then in 1996 moved to the former Welfare Offices in the Heritage Centre. at Cowes. Over the next few years, a crack appeared in the north wall which, by 2013, was quite large. Council then told us to pack up and move out immediately and without a home, all our equipment and resources were stored in committee members' homes. After inspecting several unsuitable sites, we were offered the use of the old kindergarten in Chapel Street for three months. This has extended for eleven years!



The Phillip Island kindergarten is to be sold, but for the time being, it will become the new home of the local Genealogical Society, currently homeless after being forced out of its rooms at the Phillip Island Heritage Centre, which have been deemed unsafe after a large crack appeared in an outside wall.

They have been good years for PIADGS as we have had our own kitchen, toilet, office and storeroom, and the spacious room has allowed us to accumulate an extensive library, host meetings for up to forty people, including guest speakers, Family Tree Maker sessions, visiting groups and social afternoons. The outdoor area has provided us with a venue for BBQs prior to our AGMs and on Australia Day, which have been very popular, providing a chance to connect with other members. The central Cowes location has led to many passersby coming in to enquire about researching their families or landmarks or just reminisce about the kindergarten.



In 2023, when the Cultural Centre was demolished, the Phillip Island & District Historical Society moved in with us. This further cemented the long-standing relationship between our groups. They have now moved into their research room at the new cultural centre, Berninnet..

With the proposed sale of the building, we are on the move again to a small meeting room at the Newhaven Hall – 23 Cleeland Street, Newhaven.



So, it is 'goodbye' to 56 Chapel Street, but happy memories remain.



AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS IN VICTORIA by Helen Swaine

At one of our recent PIADGS gatherings I mentioned my memories of my father and his job as a Warden during WW2 and it seemed to be of interest. So, here is a bit more of what I can remember. I was born in September 1939, and my memories are probably from about 1944/45. I distinctly remember a concrete bunker, called a “pill box” on our nature strip in East Brighton, it was not large and most likely just for the use of the local Warden and the storage of such things as gas masks, helmets, first aid kits and necessary equipment in the case of a bombing. I have not been able to find out anything about where others were located and there is not much information available about what went on, but I inherited a photo of the local group which included my father. I sent a copy to the local newspaper several years ago and was lucky to have some more names to add.

“The State Emergency Council for Civil Defence in Melbourne advertised for the following – Married men over 35, Single men over the age of 40. Men ineligible for Military Service and Women of all Ages, to learn how to protect your home and loved ones against Air Raids, and at the same time to help your country.”

The following was a list of items to keep in readiness for a bombing –

“Keep by your bedside a torch, a candle with matches, some money, a warm sweater, and a pair of slacks. In a case have a roll of bandages, cotton wool, drinking water, sticking plaster, a bottle of iodine, some cakes of plain chocolate, a pair of low-heeled shoes and a change of clothes. If your home is destroyed these articles may be all you possess. Slacks are sensible for women in shelters. You may need money for food and fares to another location.”

My father was ineligible for military service, so he joined the ARP and worked with an enthusiastic group of neighbours every week in his garage, where they made items for the rehabilitation of returned and injured soldiers. They made bedside cabinets, weaving looms, pegboards for making string bags, folding chairs and bedside trays.

Dad had kept his helmet and the first aid kit which were always in the garage. When I was a member of the Girl Guides, I re-stocked the kit and took it on all our camps. I re-painted the helmet and donated them along with his badge and the group photo to the Brighton Historical Society. They were thrilled and put them on display at one of their exhibitions.



The weaving loom and string bag makers used for rehab of injured soldiers.



First Aid Kit and Warden's helmet



The Brighton Historical Society's wartime exhibition.

The History of English Names

The names of the English have changed. Before the invasion of William I the common names were those such as Leofwine, Aelfwine, Siward and Morcar. After the Norman arrival these were slowly replaced by Robert, Walter, Henry and of course William.

A feast was held in 1171, celebrated by 110 knights with the name of William; no one with another name was allowed to join them.

When Henry I married Edith of Scotland, she was called 'Godgiva' as a joke by his compatriots. It was a parody of an English name, both awkward and archaic. A boy from Whitby, at the beginning of the twelfth century, changed his name from Tostig to William because he was being bullied at school. The serfs and villains kept their ancient names for longer, and a record from 1114 reveals the workers on an estate as Soen, Rainald, Ailwin, Lemar, Godwin, Ordric, Alric, Saroi, Ulviet and Ulfac; the manor was leased by Orm. All these names were soon to be gone. By the first quarter of the thirteenth century the majority of the people of England had new names, many of them taken from the Christian saints of Europe whose cults were spreading through the land. So, we have Thomas and Stephen, Elizabeth and Agnes.

The Normans also gave to the English the concept of the inherited surname that came to define a unified family and its property. It generally invoked a place, or piece of territory, owned by that family. Yet there was no very strong tradition of inherited surnames before the fourteenth century. Only very distinguished families had a distinctive name. Instead, a person would be given a tag by which he or she would be identified - Roger the Cook, Roger of Derby, Roger son of William. Names were also often used to describe the peculiarities of the individual, such as Roger with the Big Nose or Roger the Effeminate. Mabbs was the daughter of Mabel, and Norris was the female child of a nurse.

Even the occupational names might be changed. In 1455 Matthew Oxe, on gaining his freedom from servile work, changed his name to Matthew Groom. Some ancient names survive still. So, we have Cooks and Barbers and Sawyers and Millers and Smiths and Brewers and Carpenters in all the directories.



Source ~ Peter Ackroyd ~ Foundation of England

