

## TAKING CARE OF THE PAST

### LOOKING AFTER OLD BOOKS

Storing old or precious books requires special care. Before storing books, check each one for insects or mould. Anti insect sachets are available from reputable archival supply businesses such as Archival Survival. Dust gently with a soft brush. Pack books in good quality-boxes made from archival card. Ensure they are packed flat, so they don't warp or lean to one side. Store boxes off the floor and away from outside walls, in an area with good ventilation, minimal sunlight and a stable temperature and humidity levels.. Keep books away from heat sources and damp. Check boxed books at 6 monthly intervals and change insect repellent sachets. If in doubt consult a professional book conservator.

Derwent Echo

## BOOK REVIEW

### ON THE FRONT FOOT:

The Rise of Tasmanian

Women's Cricket

BY Jacqui Triffitt

## ON THE FRONT FOOT

The Rise of Tasmanian Women's Cricket



Jacqui Triffitt

November 2021

This recent publication (2021) by Tasmanian author with local family connection Jacqui Triffitt gives a comprehensive account of the milestones in women's cricket in Tasmania. The author played in both club and state competitions.

Who knew there was such a long rich history in women's cricket? This beautiful hardback book includes wonderful photos of early women's cricket teams, dating back to 1891. Of interest is the historic score-cards of the North Bruny Ladies Team versus the Oyster Cove Ladies Cricket Club match held 6 January 1894. Some of the club names were unusual such as the "Whackits" and the "Crackits" playing at Kettering. Not to be outdone were a couple of Derwent Valley teams, "The Dromedary Old Buffers" and the "Dromedary Girls" playing a social match in May 1930. All in all a treasure trove of photos and interesting vignettes of cricket history for family historians.

Ruth Binny

## Tried and True: First Fleet Herbs



### Chillies

Chillies seem to be everywhere at present, even in alcoholic drinks such as chilli beer and vodka. Chillies vary in heat according to the Scoville Heat Scale (created in 1912 by Wilbur Scoville). There are more accurate ways of measuring the intensity of heat in chillies in the 21st. century.

South America is the home of the chilli and there are now thousands of cultivars. Ecuador holds the record for the oldest archaeological remains of chilli peppers. Columbus brought the first chillies back to Europe in 1493 but they proved hard to cultivate. India appreciated the qualities of chillies far sooner than Europe. For many years a number of European countries grew chillies for their decorative value. Even today pots of birds-eye chillies grace kitchen benches as a decorative feature. Recent research suggests chillies have anti-inflammatory properties. As always seek medical advice if you are contemplating making use of chilli remedies.

## NNHIC

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### PUBLICATIONS

Publications of the NNHIC include:

- \* New Norfolk Homes and Pioneers (Series I)
- \* New Norfolk Homes and Pioneers (Series II)
- \* New Norfolk History and Achievements (Series III)
- \* St Matthews Burial Records (Series IV)
- \* North Circle Public Cemetery (Series V)
- \* People and Places (Series VI)
- \* Historic New Norfolk (Series VII)
- \* Memoirs of J J Cowburn (Series VIII)
- \* Federation to Millennium (Volume I)
- \* Federation to Millennium (Volume II)
- \* Federation to Millennium (Volume III)
- Boyer and the Peg Factory

All of the above are available from the New Norfolk Newsagency.

ISSUE NO: 24 — June 2022

# Derwent Echo

## Sir Robert Officer

More than a hundred descendants of Sir Robert Officer held a family reunion at New Norfolk during the first weekend of March to mark the bicentenary of his arrival in Hobart. So who was Sir Robert Officer and what was his connection with New Norfolk?

Robert Officer was born near Dundee, Scotland, in 1800 and by 1821 had graduated as a surgeon. Seeking real-world experience, in 1821 he enlisted as ship's surgeon on the *Castle Forbes*, intending to sail to Van Diemen's Land and back. However, an onboard romance appears to have developed between Robert and an 18-year old girl called Jemima Patterson, whose parents were sailing to VDL to take up land under the recently introduced assignment system. So when their ship reached Hobart on 1 March 1822, Robert decided to stay.

He quickly gained a part-time position in Hobart as assistant surgeon, married Jemima in October 1823 and in 1824 was posted to New Norfolk as a surgeon. Within a year the Officers were living in their newly built home, Hall Green, in New Norfolk. Robert also acquired land at Bothwell, where the Pattersons had also received land grants, and lived there for some time but, even when he lived in Hobart during the 1840s, Hall Green was always occupied by members of the Officer family, including two of Robert's sisters.

From 1825-1844 they had fourteen children, but six of them died in childhood. The four surviving sons all became successful pastoralists in Victoria and/or New South Wales; two of the daughters married in Hobart but later moved to Victoria and raised their family there; a third married in Hobart but had no children; a fourth married an Englishman in Hobart but later moved to England with him and raised their family there.

In the late 1830s, as northern Tasmanian landowners occupied Port Phillip Bay, Robert became involved in land speculation there against Jemima's more cautious judgment. Unfortunately for him, the boom crashed in 1840 and he was faced with possible insolvency and the loss of his Victorian properties, so in order to concentrate on his financial affairs he resigned from his position in the Medical Department. He managed to avoid insolvency and succeeded in holding on to some of his Victorian properties. In 1841 he rejoined the Medical Department as the health officer for Hobart, where they lived until 1850.

Meanwhile his Victorian undertakings had consequences for his children. His two older sons Robert and Charles, born respectively in 1825 and 1827, had been sent back to Scotland to complete their education, but in the mid-40s, much to Jemima's dismay, their education had to be curtailed so they could return to manage Robert's Victorian properties.

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## YOUR LOCAL CONTACTS ON NNHIC

### Community

#### Representatives:

Justin Derksen  
Liz Derksen  
Carol Collins  
Leanda Balmforth  
Liz Virtue  
Peggie Stubbersfield

#### Secretary:

Brian McNab

#### Family History Officer:

Anne Salt

#### Council Representative

Clr. Julie Triffett

#### Chairperson:

Ruth Binny

## FAMILY HISTORIES

*The New Norfolk Historical Information Centre has over 900*

*Family History Files.*

*Come in on the last Saturday of the month from 2 to 4 pm, and see if your Family History is here.*

*Below is a list of the 'N' files:*

Nash  
Natty  
Neale  
Nelson  
Nesbit  
Newell  
Newhouse  
Newman  
Newport  
Nibbs  
Nicholas  
Nicholls  
Nichols  
Nicholson  
Night  
Nisbett/Nesbett  
Norris  
Nossiter  
Nunn  
Nutting

## One Man's War: Letters Home

Letter No 13

16/12/1940  
TX ..... Drv. D .....  
E Troop 16 Fd Bty  
2/8 Fd Regt  
Abroad

Dear Mother,

Have not received a letter from you this week, but I expect I will get one about Thursday.

Last Thursday I had one day leave in Jerusalem, it certainly was very interesting.

I got a very good guide to show me around. A century ago all Jerusalem was within the wall, but now only a ¼ is inside & the rest has been built outside.

The total population is about 120,000.

The present wall was built by the Turks in 1538. I entered the old city through one of the 7 gates (Jaffra gate) & walked through the main shopping centre & so to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The church is supposed to be built on the hill of Calvary in the 4<sup>th</sup> century but the inside has been burnt out & an earthquake recently shook it badly, but it is well reinforced to preserve, the original building.

The Holy Sepulchre is divided into two parts, first you go into the Angel's chapel, in the centre of which there is a stone set in marble (said to be the stone which closed the door of the sepulchre & which was rolled away by the Angel) & then you get the tomb itself.

Then you go down into a cave where the Cross of Jesus was found in 326 AD. You also see the rock with the split in it, where the cross was erected.

From the Church of Holy Sepulchre you can make a visit to the Jews 'Wailing Wall'.

Leaving the old city I preceded by car to the garden of Gethsemane, where I saw the tomb of Mary at the foot of the Mt. of Olives

Also in the garden is the magnificent new church of Gethsemane (1925).

In the city wall opposite the garden of Gethsemane can be seen the arches of the Golden Gate, through which Jesus rode on Palm Sunday. The arches are now blocked off.

On the road to Bethlehem you pass Rachel's Tomb. At Bethlehem I visited the Church of Nativity, supposed to be the oldest church in the world. You go down a few steps into the cave where Jesus was born. The actual spot is marked by a large silver star. Nearby is a small marble manger a model of the original & in the spot where the original was.

From here I went back to Jerusalem & spent the remainder of the day just looking round. I bought a couple of table centres & some maps, which I am sending

I've just read a letter from Roy to 'Shorty' he is in Libya. He says there is tons of Italian equipment lying about everywhere & its no trouble to get souvenirs. Well I think that is about all for the time as it is getting late. Hope you & Tim are both well & Tim is getting on well at school. There is no doubt about this diesel work, they are always wanting men with diesel experience.

Much Love  
D.....

## What's In A Name

### G.F. HUSTON (Husten Circle)

This small street, named in honour of Dr George Francis Huston, is one of a number of streets in that part of Fairview named after early New Norfolk Wardens and long-serving members of Council staff. It is incorrectly spelt as Husten. Details about him are hard to find, as public records at the Council wrongly describe him as W. W. Husten.

Dr Huston was born in Ireland in 1812 or 1813, and by 1835 had moved to Tasmania and settled at Hamilton. In that year he married a local woman Sarah Hawthorn who was four years his junior and had also been born in Ireland. From 1836-59 they had seven daughters and two sons, but only one of the sons survived into adulthood.

By 1838 Dr Huston was a surgeon at New Norfolk, but left for a while in the 1840s to live and practice in Hobart and also to work part-time at government penal settlements at Brown's River (near Kingston) and Oyster Cove. When they were respectively downsized and closed in 1846, he moved back to New Norfolk.

In 1847 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace at New Norfolk. In 1849 he became the Resident Medical Officer at the Asylum, where he was later appointed Medical Superintendent, apparently after the resignation of Dr John Meyer in 1854. He held that post until his retirement in 1880 and was succeeded by Dr W. H. Macfarlane. In retirement he served as one of the Commissioners for the Asylum.

In 1860 one of his daughters married Walter Angus Bethune Jamieson, who became the first Warden of New Norfolk from 1863 until his death by accidental drowning in 1881. Shortly afterwards Dr Huston became the Warden from 1882-90. After some locals pleaded with him to stand for parliament, he did so and, at a time when there were 36 individual electorates for the House of Assembly, was elected in 1886 as the Member for New Norfolk.

He died unexpectedly of acute tonsillitis in December 1890. Sarah died in 1898, and both are buried in the North Circle Cemetery. Brian McNab

## Sir Robert Officer

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Fortunately for them, they both became successful pastoralists in Victoria and New South Wales, as did their brothers Suetonius and William. Robert returned to New Norfolk in 1868, and his daughter Georgina married Harold Hale of 'Cotswold', New Norfolk. They had a number of children who are the forebears of most of Sir Robert's descendants still living in Tasmania.

Dr Officer resigned from the Medical Department in 1850 and retired to Hall Green. In retirement he became involved in politics, firstly in the anti-transportation campaign around 1850. After self-government in 1856, he stood for Parliament and was elected to the House of Assembly. From 1861-77 he served as Speaker of the House, and in 1869 was knighted for his services. He resigned from Parliament in 1877 because of ill health.

In his private life, he was a Presbyterian by faith, but tolerant of and even supportive of other Protestant denominations ("a Presbyterian without Presbyterian prejudices"). He was widely regarded as generous and a benefactor of the poor. As a man of science, he was keenly interested in and actively supported the development of the hop industry; he was also instrumental in the establishment of the Salmon Ponds at Plenty in the 1860s (still called the Salmon Ponds even though the salmon escaped and it became simply a trout hatchery).

Sir Robert died at Hall Green on 8 July 1879, aged 79, and Jemima died two years later aged 77. Hall Green remained in the Officer family until 1917.

Brian McNab

## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to edition 24 of the Derwent Echo. Suddenly it's "cracker night" and we are all wondering where the first half of the year has gone.

The NNHIC continues to catalogue the collection and field family history queries. We have been fortunate to have 3 local visitors whose knowledge of local families is extensive. Much additional information has been added to the photos in the Stan Cordwell Collection. Thank you to the two Sues and June for your valuable contribution. Please note that our next guest speaker is Steve Balmforth who will be entertaining us with stories about ANM and Boyer on 16th June at the Arthouse.

Ruth Binny