

# ROSES AND THORNS



NEWS FROM OUR GROUP  
OCTOBER 2015

## **From the Editor-**

Hello everyone,

I have been a member of the Group for some years but this year I have accepted the role of Programs Officer and Newsletter Editor. This is my first newsletter, I hope you will find something interesting in the following pages.

The newsletter is full of what has been planned for the last weeks of 2015 as well as a wrap up of achievements and activities of previous months.

We held a very successful day at our room on July 20<sup>th</sup> and hosted Wangaratta and Mansfield visitors who thoroughly enjoyed the friendship and all our resources not to mention our hospitality and lovely morning tea and lunch. My first event as Programs Officer.

My thanks to all who helped out on the day, those who assisted our visitors with their research as well as all those folks who helped with the catering. I would especially like to thank Mardi and Shirley for supporting me in the kitchen.

The group is looking forward to attending the Wangaratta Family History Society room on Monday October 19<sup>th</sup> at 10.00am. Please let Bill know if you plan to attend.



Pictured above are our Benalla members with Mansfield and Wangaratta visitors.

## LIMA PARK OPEN GARDEN & HOMESTEAD GUIDED TOUR

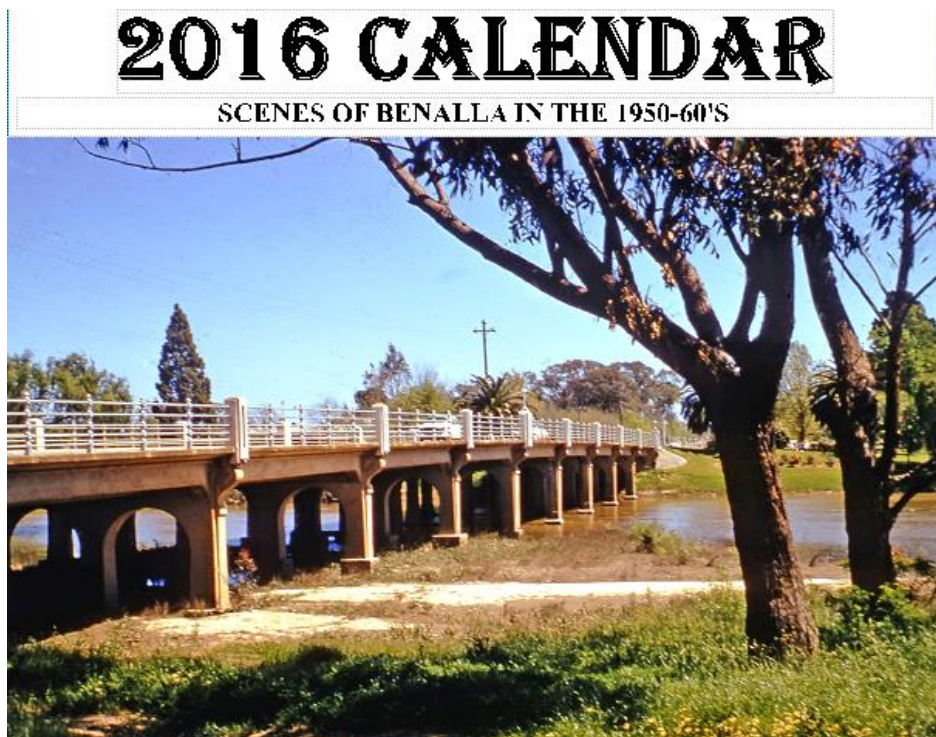
Chick and Co have been busy organising a visit to Lima Park historical home and gardens on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup>. Read the history and see some photos in the newsletter. Also you will have read Bill's Buds and Prickles update on this event. Please support this if you can.

## 2016 CALENDAR

Here is a sneak preview of our wonderful 2016 Calendar.

It is full of photos of Benalla's buildings and streetscapes from the 1950's to 1960's.

This great calendar will be available at \$12.00 or two for \$20.00 and would make a lovely gift for a friend or family member especially as Christmas is not far away.



My thanks go to everyone who has helped with the information in the newsletter this month. As a new Editor I want to make it interesting and newsy. I am looking forward to hearing from our members on what they would like to see in their newsletter and perhaps contribute some interesting stories for everyone to enjoy.

You can email anything newsy via my personal email address or leave articles at the group's room for me to collect. Or you can send me something in the mail 169 Webb Road, Goorambat 3725.

Thank you

*Meredith*

Meredith Tolliday  
Newsletter Editor & Programs Officer

## A Tribute to Mary Millar

As our members are no doubt aware, our President Mary Millar has left us to live elsewhere, although she is President in absentia for the time being. In the time that she has been here and in charge of our group, many wonderful things have happened.

To those members who don't participate in the day to day running of our small group of dedicated people, I urge you to visit and see what's been going on. Perhaps you can spare some time to help us continue to preserve Benalla and Districts history and family stories.

Here are a few of the many improvements that have occurred on Mary's watch.

- We have transformed the room into a much more open and professional environment, and thanks to Mary's foresight and determination we have modernized our facilities.
- Computers have been upgraded and our website revamped and improved. Research requests have been more numerous and this has led to more revenue coming in to help keep the group viable. Visit [www.benallafamilyresearchgroup.org](http://www.benallafamilyresearchgroup.org)
- Thanks to Mary, the internet is now a vital part of our day to day running. Some banking can now be done online and bills paid. Research requests can be answered from our room and dealt with quicker. Research information can be found on various websites and also our members can be helped with finding these sites.
- Mary has re-discovered many wonderful archives that were undocumented - so not in our system. Many of these archives have now been incorporated into our general holdings. This means even more archives are available for researchers.
- Finding these archives - collected by previous members- has led to lots of mini projects happening and has resulted in a new vitality and energy in the room.
- Many more records have been indexed and digitized to help researchers find yet more information. This task is ongoing and almost impossible without the support of more members. Call in and see how you can help.

We are proud of the many changes that have been made since Mary took over the role of President. This is reflected in the compliments we have received from many visitors to our rooms. The relaxed, friendly atmosphere in the room ensures that each member who stays to help feels useful and appreciated. Why don't you come and help us continue to build our archives.

Through leadership and inclusiveness, Mary has achieved a remarkable amount in a relatively short time and we will miss her cheery energetic and caring ways.

Good luck and thanks Mary.

Pam Herbert  
Research Officer

## FROM THE RESEARCH DESK

### The new Benalla Library

Our group was invited to put together a display for the large display cabinet located in the new Benalla library this month and to host an afternoon tea. The display is now up and running for the whole of August.

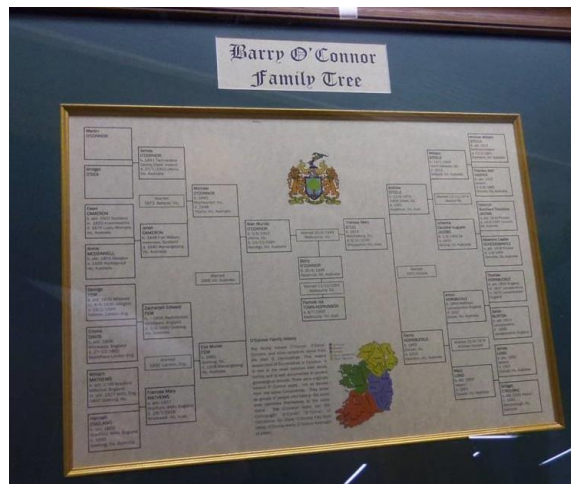
The theme for this display is Your Family Tree - researching, compiling and producing a Family Tree to display on your wall.

### O'Connor Family

On display was the professionally printed and framed O'Connor family tree which was researched and completed by our group in past months.

The O'Connor tree is produced in the bow tie style with the descendant in the centre and ancestors radiating from his fathers and mothers sides. Only direct ancestors are included although the rest of the families were added in note book form along with references.

***Our thanks go to the O'Connor family for the use of this family tree for our display.***



### The Harris Family

The second display was a part of the Jonathan Harris family story. It was there to showcase some of the many pieces of information you would need to produce a family tree. These were- photos, certificates and a large A4 folder about Jonathan and his family.

***Our thanks go to Bill Willett for the use of his family information***

### Jonathan Harris

His story starts in Sussex England where he was born. It involves a crime that resulted in him being transported to NSW and also Tasmania, several marriages, many children and his eventual arrival in Benalla where he lived until his death in 1891 at the age of 91. Not a bad innings after such a harsh start to his life in the Colonies!

### **How was this story of his life discovered?**

It involved much hard work over many years searching for the details of his and his family's story. Today information available on the internet makes it a little easier to research, however proof from documents including certificates is still needed to ensure that you have the correct family.



The search comprised of hunting for-

- Records of birth, death and marriage and baptisms in Australia and England.
- Wills and probate records
- Convict records
- Court records in England
- Newspaper articles
- Relatives who had family stories, photos and more.
- Diaries and family bibles
- Rates records and maps

*(Read more about the Jonathan Harris story in the next edition of Roses and Thorns)*

## Something New From the Benalla Family Research Group

It can't be emphasized enough that finding and compiling the 'proven' data to create a family tree takes a huge amount of time and persistence. This list below gives an idea of the number of people you may want to find out about.

YOU HAVE.....  
2 PARENTS  
4 GRANDPARENTS  
8 GREAT GRANDPARENTS  
16 GREAT GREAT GRANDPARENTS  
32 GREAT GREAT GREAT GRANDPARENTS

Our researchers are offering a new service of not only searching for your family information but also producing a printed A3 tree and one on a USB stick to print yourself or take to a printing place and then perhaps a framing place.

## WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR OWN FAMILY TREE TO DISPLAY ON YOUR WALL?

- The Benalla Family Research Group Inc can help you to find information about your family, or do the work for you
- Or perhaps you already have your information?

Our group can help create a unique family tree chart for you to get printed and framed.

For more details contact:

The Benalla Family Research Group. Email: [research@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org](mailto:research@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org)

## **RATE BOOK INDEX**

Bill has been working on the corrections and correlation of all the transcribed "Farmers" in the rate books up to 1889. It has been, and continues to be a massive job, as there are more Farmers, Graziers and Squatters in the early years than the already indexed Business people.

There are staggering numbers of Farmers, Graziers, Squatters, Gentlemen, Domestic, Clergymen, Ministers, Reverends, Servants Herdsmen in this list that have never been indexed before. Something like 16,000 entries from 1880 to 1889, and 12,500 from 1869 to 1879 have been added to the original rate index over the past 6 months.

Names have been found to be spelt up to 5 different ways for the same person, so an attempt has been made to put them all together in a coloured block, so that when accessing your particular name, the different versions of the spelling are also available. That is not to say that Bill has found all the different spellings but has found a few, along with some doozies that weren't so obvious.

So next time you meet Bill in the street and his eyes are going round in circles, you'll know why. We are still looking for some eager and willing people to transcribe more entries, remembering that the Rate Books go up to 1994. That's nearly fifty years of rates to go, so still a massive job in front of us, but thank heavens, it is appreciated by most of the researchers. Our own Research team has had the whip out for months.

### **NEW LIBRARY BOOKS**

Rock Solid –Story of Downes Family in Australia  
The Delahenty's  
A brief History of Newthorpe  
Violet Town 1917 Anzac Avenue of Remembrance  
Jep Jespersen Bk2  
Benalla Bridge-a compiled history  
Our Liverpool Boys

### **SPECIAL COMING EVENT FOR OCTOBER**

"Lima Park"

Open Garden Day and Guided Homestead Tours

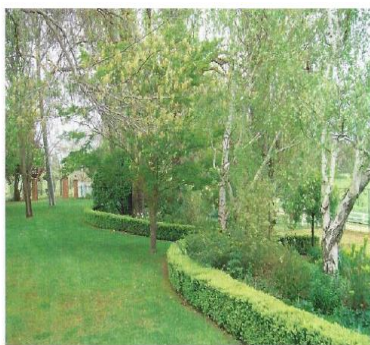
Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup>

From 9.30AM to 4.00PM

Entry \$5.00

Refreshments available

**100 McKellar Road, off Midland Highway Swanpool**



## **HISTORY**

Lima Park today is the home section of what was originally known as Lima Station.

William McKellar took up Lima Station in May 1839 then in 1841 he became involved with William Black in a business partnership known as 'Black and McKellar'. The boundaries of these Stations were not really defined at this time but in 1847, after a boundary dispute between William McKellar and some of his neighbours, a contract surveyor was engaged to draw accurate maps of the area. The surveyor's calculations show that the area of Lima Station was 88,000 acres.

McKellar and Black continued as business partners at Lima Station until 1853 when the partnership was dissolved. William McKellar took over the lease and was one of the few squatters who actually lived and worked on his property. By the 1860's Benalla was growing considerably and in 1861 Benalla was proclaimed a town and by 1869, a Shire.

McKellar built up his stock numbers to 15,000 sheep and 12,000 head of cattle and in 1863, the station was split, into 'Lima Run' on the western side of the Broken River and 'Samaria Run' on the eastern side of the Broken River.

In 1865 William McKellar had started to fence some of this property and advertised in the Ovens and Murray newspaper for

**'Teamsters and Others.**

**Wanted - fencers with teams, for five miles more or less, of brush fence.**

**Level ground, thickly timbered.**

**Apply Wm McKellar Lima Station, Benalla'.**

McKellar was also keen to improve his cattle herds and brought in good breeding bulls, however he had trouble with rogue wild bulls that damaged his breeding programs and ate good pasture. In 1865-7 he advertised and arranged weekend hunts 'under the title of 'Wild Bull Hunting at Lima Station'.

William McKellar had become a man of some standing in the community and in 1874 he was appointed as a Licensing Magistrate for the Benalla District. On 18th May 1875, the North Eastern Ensign, Benalla, reported that William McKellar's Lima Station was sold in a private sale to 'Messrs Wilson & Co. of Borodomanin Run at a satisfactory figure'.

By 1876-William McKellar had bought property in Benalla and his occupation in the Benalla rates entries changed from Squatter to Gentleman. According to his Will & Probate details, he built a large 13 roomed brick and timber house on 4 acres with frontages to Market Street and Garden Street where he lived until his death in 1893 at the age of 95, having outlived his wife Rachel, and son James. The net value of his estate in 1893 was £1595.

In 1885 S. Wilson sold Lima Station to the Morrison Bros who in turn sold it on in 1893. It was then leased for about 5 years by T Cowan, owner of Yin Barun.

In 1898 H.Gidney bought Lima Station, which then comprised just over 4,000 acres of land.

***From 'Cultural Rural Landscape of Lima' by Elizabeth Peck:***

Gidney built his imposing new homestead in 1901 on the site of McKellar's house. The new, large 60 square brick homestead comprised sixteen rooms and several outhouses. Its design in the fashionable Federation style of the early 1900's included detailed ornamentation, embellished verandahs and lattice which enclosed outhouses and divided sections of the back gardens. Elaborate fretwork surrounding roof lines, verandahs, porches and windows as well as decoration inside the house gave the building an ornate appearance, unusual for a country homestead. Its Edwardian garden of lawns, shrubs, trees, including many different species of palms and a variety of citrus trees as well as shaped flower and rose beds, and sweeping gravel drive reflected Gidney's interest in India. He and his family made eighteen visits to India during his ownership of 'Lima' in connection with his lucrative business of shipping horses there to be used in the cavalry.

The government acquired the Lima estate in 1948, planning to subdivide it into Soldier Settlement blocks. 'Eight allotments were offered with the homestead now being offered as a single unit farm' ... 'It was the policy of the government to acquire land owned by absentee landlords or large property which had become run down. 'Lima' was to be in fact the fourth family property acquired by the government.'

The story of Lima Park continues with present owners Mr and Mrs White kindly opening their lovely house and gardens to the public and the Benalla Family Research Group wishes to thank them for their generosity.

This event is a fundraiser for the Benalla Family Research Group Inc.

**History compiled by Chic Walker, Pam Herbert, Barry O'Connor.**

### **DATES OF INTEREST 2015**

Monday October 19<sup>th</sup>- Visiting the Wangaratta Family History Society rooms at 10am

Tuesday October 20<sup>th</sup>- Monthly Committee Meeting at our rooms 11am

Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>- Lima Park- Historical Homestead guided tour and Open Garden

Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup> - Lima Park- Historical Homestead guided tour and Open Garden

### **BENALLA FAMILY HISTORY WEEK- NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> - 7<sup>TH</sup>**

To coincide with the Benalla Festival. Program to be advised once finalised.

Possible events- Cemetery Walk, Guest Speaker, Exhibition in our rooms.

Invitation to local community to visit through these days probably from 2.00pm to 4.00pm to meet our members view our facilities and resources and to bring along any historical items from home.

Wednesday November 4<sup>th</sup> TBA

Thursday November 5<sup>th</sup> TBA

Friday November 6<sup>th</sup> TBA

Saturday November 7<sup>th</sup> TBA



## OCTOBER 2015 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Wangaratta Family History Society visit 10AM	Committee meeting 11AM				Lima Park Open Garden Day and Guided historical homestead tour
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Lima Park Open Garden Day and Guided historical homestead tour						

## NOVEMBER 2015

Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup>- Monthly Committee Meeting at our rooms 11am  
General meetings will be advertised periodically

## DECEMBER 2015

Wednesday December 9<sup>th</sup>- Clean Up Day at our rooms  
Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup>- Last day rooms will be open for 2015  
Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup>- Christmas Break-Up at Benalla Bowls Club at 6 .00pm



## 2016

Tuesday January 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 - Reopening our rooms



With thanks to our wonderful sponsors.

**ROWE & ASSOCIATES  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS**

**Geoff Rowe B.Bus. C.A.**

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## **Committee**

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**RESEARCH OFFICER:** Pam Herbert. Email – [research@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org](mailto:research@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org)

**LIBRARIAN:** Judi Ryan

**MINUTE SECRETARY:** Wendy Webster

**PROGRAM OFFICER:** Meredith Tolliday

**IT OFFICER:** Neil White

**EDITOR:** Meredith Tolliday. Email – [meredithtolliday@bigpond.com](mailto:meredithtolliday@bigpond.com)

## **Research & Library Support Team –**

Doreen Hillier, Wendy Maxwell, Chick Walker, Wendy Webster

Joy Cole, Rosemary Archer, Dorothy Kerr, Carole Gray

Please note we are not open on Saturdays during May, June, July, August or in January. For all other months we are open on the first Saturday of the month from 10 am to 3 pm in addition to our usual open days on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 4 pm.

We are open by appointment during other times if necessary, please contact us via the contact form on our Website or email Bill Willett - [secretary@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org](mailto:secretary@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org)

The Benalla Family History Research Group is a friendly, helpful and dedicated group of people who are striving to collate our local history and maintain it for future generations.

Visitors are always made very welcome and the Research team are available to assist with any enquiries on finding relatives and ancestors. The group encourages and welcomes new members as the resources available are very valuable to a person seeking to learn more about their family tree.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The Group and Editor do not hold themselves responsible for statements or opinions expressed by authors of papers published in this newsletter.

The accuracy of offers, services or goods appearing here cannot be vouched for by the Group.

The Editor reserves the right to condense and edit articles to meet the approved size limit of our newsletter.

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If undelivered please return to: P.O. Box 268, Benalla. 3671. Victoria