

the

# Black Sheep



Inside this issue:   Lost Souls from China  
                          Consultations by Post—Dr T reenery  
                          People of the S treets  
                          O bituary: Janet Reakes

East Gippsland Family History Group Inc.  
 21 Morgan Street (off Moroney), Bairnsdale  
 P.O. Box 1104, Bairnsdale 3875  
 Email: egippsfamhistgp@net-tech.com.au  
 Telephone: 5152 5590

## CONTENTS

Editorial	3
<b>President's Report</b>	4
Financial Statement	5
Obituary: Janet Elizabeth Reakes 1952—2002	7
Discovery 2003: 10th Genealogical Congress, Melbourne	8
Lost Souls from China <span style="float: right;"><i>Leanne Dyson</i></span>	9
People of the Streets	13
Consultations by Post: the life of Dr Trenerly <span style="float: right;"><i>Ken &amp; Kim Trenerly</i></span>	14

### COVER ILLUSTRATIONS

Both of these photographs are from the collection at the East Gippsland Historical Society museum. They show the chinese section of the Bairnsdale cemetery before graves, pegs and other landmarks such as the burning tower and shrine disappeared with the passing years. The top photograph of the brick structures more intact is dated April 1923 while just seventeen years later, in 1940 much of the structure is gone.

The *Black Sheep* is the official journal of the East Gippsland Family History Group Inc. Member of the East Gippsland Heritage Network. It may be mailed to non-members anywhere in Australia for receipt of \$10 per annum. The opinions expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the committee, but of the author [of any article] only. The committee accepts advertisements in good faith, no responsibility for any claims made.

### LIBRARY HOURS

TUESDAY      10am to 4pm  
 THURSDAY    10am to 4pm  
 (up to 7.00pm when volunteers available)  
 SATURDAY     9am to 4pm  
 (except 2nd Saturday of month 9am to 1pm)  
 Charges: Non members \$5 per day

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

Joining Fee	\$5
Ordinary Member	\$25
Extra Family Member (at same address)	\$12.50

### Committee Members 2001-2002

President	Tony Meade	5152 1111
Vice President	Kim Trenerly	5156 0787
Secretary	Deidre Bennett	5152 6753
Treasurer	Neil Cox	5157 1260
Minute Secretary	Marie Munday	5153 2491
Librarian	Lorna Prendergast	5152 4556
Publicity Officer	Leanne Dyson	5156 8484
Editor	Debbie Squires	5152 2378
Committee Member	Dale Goodchild	5152 2490
<b>Members' Representative</b>	Janette Felstead	5156 6420
New Members Contact	Marie Tanner	5152 6668

## Editorial

Well I'm sorry about this folks, but we had to be a bit proper with issue—blame the Annual General Meeting because we have to circulate to you copies of the President's Report and the Financial Statements—so they are our “formality” for this issue.

We have got some terrific articles in reserve for the next issue that we just couldn't squeeze into this one, but never the less we hope you find something of interest in this issue.

Tony's report summarises a quieter year for the group with a change of faces on the committee. It may have been a quiet year but there has been some solid research done by members. Financially it seems we are keeping our collective heads above water, but unfortunately—everything costs—and we need to be creative with how we generate income.

I was saddened to learn of the death of *Janet Reakes* last month. I knew about much of her involvement with 'family history' but gained greater insight into this energetic women after reading her obituary. 'Genealogy' has lost a great supporter and friend.

Leanne Dyson's article on the *Lost Souls from China*, with particular reference to the cemetery in Bairnsdale 'kicked out' another article on the cemetery which we will run next issue. (It was about the recent vandalism where headstones in the old section were smashed including George Abbott who drowned saving others and we will include it in next issue). Leanne was approached to write and present this article because of her Chinese background and I for one have learnt a considerable amount from the article. It is a very neglected part of our town's history and the fact the rather unique shrine and burning tower have been lost is a loss for all of us—not just those of Chinese descent.

Tony and Leanne have both gone *Street mad!* And are obsessed with finding out what they can about the streets of Bairnsdale. And it gets really scary when they start taking about the roads of the district and the streets at Paynesville, and further afield.

Finally in this issue, we present *Dr Trener* who specialised in consultations by post, diseases

of a secret nature and eruptions of the skin. An interesting fellow!

A reminder please, anything for Black Sheep is welcome and we are just as happy to receive it by e-mail to the group. We don't have to re-type it all then.

Last issue, you'll recall I prattled on about the size of Rotherhithe. To my amazement I was contacted by a previously unknown branch of the family who saw this because it is 'her job' to index the newsletters that come into her group. A 'long' phone call and correspondence later we have ascertained that I have copies of original photographs that she has spent years searching for and she has a few tit bits for me. The lesson to be learned is

- A. You can be doing for others, such as the rather tedious job of indexing newsletter, and as a consequence be rewarded for your effort and find information for yourself in the process and
- B. You never now all of it—you can always help someone else (like Janet Reakes said be a candle and share the light, it doesn't diminish your light to share)

(and my apologies that I haven't sent my stuff yet—I promise—it is coming, but then again, so is Christmas!)

And speaking of Christmas. We wish everyone a safe, happy and peaceful Christmas. May you be fortunate enough to have family and friends around you at this special time of the year. I will be continuing my own Christmas ritual that seems even more necessary this year - buying a gift for a “wishing tree”. It gladdens the heart and helps re-ignite that spirit of Christmas that we seek.

Merry Christmas, see you all in 2003 (and I've just got used to writing 2002!)

Ho, Ho, Ho.....

Debbie

# Presidents Report- 14/8/2002

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the EGFHG. It is the purpose of this meeting to present to you, the members, an account of the progress of the group and to elect a new committee to run the group for the next year. On that note I would like to thank our outgoing Secretary Peter Robinson for his efforts over the past year as due to other competing interests he is standing down from the Secretary's position. Peter has been an excellent Secretary, making my job as President an easy one, I know we will miss his input but I am sure that he will still be taking an active interest in the group where he can. We also bid farewell to Pam Sullivan who is leaving to take up employment in Melbourne and while she will still be coming home to Bairnsdale on a regular basis she will be unable to participate in many outside interests. Pam has been a valued member of the committee and I thank her for her input over the years of her involvement with the group.


The past year has not been one with a great number of activities for the group as there have been only a few guest speakers at monthly meetings and very little in the way of other activities. This will be the focus of the next year for our group, as we must all concentrate on ways to both increase membership and the participation of those members that join our group. I think that to gain and retain members we have to keep them interested and the best way to do this is activities in which we can all participate.

The new committee will have this topic as one of their most important agenda items over the coming months and I wish all the members success in this endeavor. The new committee will also need to address the problems of aging infrastructure at our rooms and we will need to update both our imaging and computer equipment in the not too distant future. It is to be hoped that we can gain some financial assistance in the form of grants to undertake these improvements and the committee has commenced this course of action. We may however need to look into other means of revenue raising and it is here that the participation and the input of the general membership will be most necessary.

Finally the new committee will need to

address the issue of our lease on the Research Rooms. It was the belief of many of the group that we had a lease for three years and an option for at least three more years. This is not the case, while that option may have been discussed the actual lease documents we hold at the rooms clearly show we have three a year lease and there is no clause for renewal. This lease ran out in July 2002 and we are now paying rent on our premises three months in advance, that is, we have a maximum tenure of three months. We are waiting a reply from the council regarding this situation and will report to the members as soon as we are able to get a definite proposal from the council.


*Anthony Meade - President*



**WARD'S**  
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS  
LEGAL PRACTITIONERS

TONY WARD B.Juris., LL.B.

10 SERVICE STREET, P.O. BOX 1010, BAIRNSDALE, VIC.  
3875.  
AUSDOC DX 82203  
PH.(03) 5152 1677 FAX (03) 5152 4883  
Email wards@net-tech.com.au



**e-gee**  
printers

Family History Books  
Newsletters Photocopying

45 Macleod Street, Bairnsdale, 3875  
Ph. 5152 5055 Fax 5152 1387  
e-mail. egee@egee.com.au  
Website: www.egee.com.au

<b>EAST GIPPSLAND FAMILY HISTORY GROUP Incorporated</b> <b>STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2002</b>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Income**

Subscriptions		\$ 3,972.50	
Research and day visitor fees	449.00		
Less expenses	34.00	415.00	
Donations		1,417.60	
Sales of charts and surplus library items		45.00	
Fundraising			
- Raffles	980.60		
Less hamper supplies	42.00	938.60	
- Mini tatts		48.40	
- Sundry		3.10	
Photocopying		576.55	
Fiche prints		388.50	
Interest received		122.35	
Black sheep subscriptions and sundry sales		38.00	
Internet usage		205.90	
Grant from Heritage Network		1,400.00	
English Certificate orders	545.00		
Less costs	524.65	20.35	
Sale of books	119.50		
Less proceeds paid	114.00	5.50	
Bus trips	1,074.50		
Less costs	1,043.00	31.50	
Sale of map sleeves		33.00	
Sale of reader		20.00	
Sponsorship		200.00	9,881.85

**Expenditure**

Rental		\$ 1,980.44	
Affiliations and subscriptions		295.20	
Postage		140.90	
Stationery and supplies		388.45	
Newsletter and bulletin printing		1,259.01	
Photocopiers maintenance and supplies		247.25	
Reader globes		88.88	
Computer supplies and costs		955.56	
Post Office box		52.00	
Advertising		116.64	
Insurance		542.50	
Bank charges/Government taxes		41.22	
Groceries, replacements and sundries		38.10	
Telephone and internet costs	695.95		
Less telephone recovery	18.80	677.15	
Lodging fee		33.00	
Travel reimbursement		48.00	
Charts purchased		128.75	
Signwriting		33.00	7,066.05

Surplus for year		2,815.80	
Balance at 1.7.2001		59,461.32	
			62,277.12

Represented by:

Cash on hand	\$ 145.00
Bendigo Bank current account	1,698.25
G.S.I. Ltd. investment account	2,415.70

Library shelves and furniture	3,752.53	
Map press @ cost	230.00	
Filing cabinet @ cost	260.00	
Stapler @ cost	50.00	
Library @ cost 1.7.2001	14,393.56	
additions for year	1,457.10	15,850.66
Microforms @ cost 1.7.2001	26,664.52	
additions for year	2,607.10	29,251.62
Fiche and film readers @ cost	457.30	
Computer and fittings @ cost	3,866.00	
New computer @ cost	1,251.00	
Second hand computer @ cost	200.00	
Printer purchased	294.00	
Vacuum cleaner @ cost	50.00	
Stamp kit @ cost	19.95	
Heat sealer @ cost	317.20	
Steps @ cost	20.00	
Photocopier @ cost	700.00	
Crockery @ cost	90.00	
Urn purchased	220.00	
Heaters purchased	189.30	
Schools Index fiche sets on hand - 453 sets @ cost	1,073.61	62,402.12
Less - Subscriptions in advance		125.00
Net Assets		62,277.12

## The Old Ensay School Bookshop

We have large collections of Gippsland  
and Australian local histories and some  
genealogy, heraldry and UK histories.

Open by appointment at the  
Little River Inn, Ensay

Visit our net site

Email or postal lists on request  
Buying and Selling

## Ngarak Press

[Ngarak@bigpond.com.au](mailto:Ngarak@bigpond.com.au)

[Http://www.users.bigpond.com/  
ngarak](http://www.users.bigpond.com/ngarak)

51573228 (ph/fax) 51573246 (A H)



BAIRNSDALE  
**ANTIQUES**

Antiques • Collectables • Giftware • Second Hand

Stephen & Erica Macdonald

300 Main Street, Bairnsdale Victoria 3875  
Telephone/Facsimile 03 5152 4213



Wine Bar Cafe

A fine selection of local and vintner wines, finger and spirits,  
mixed cocktails, gourmet light meals, coffee and cake.  
Open 10am-1am 6 days Sunday 6pm till late  
Open for lunch 6 days  
Group Bookings essential

# Obituary

## Janet Elizabeth Reakes 1952 –2002

*Those of us who have been researching for some time will be familiar with the name “Janet Reakes”. Janet contributed greatly to the upsurge in family history, particularly in the 1980s when you could hardly pick up a magazine, including our local paper, or turn on the television without spotting Janet ‘talking’ genealogy with the likes of Ray Martin. In the early 1990s she conducted a workshop with us here in Bairnsdale. Her recent death has stunned researchers throughout Australia and we feel it is appropriate that we pay tribute to a woman who shared her enthusiasm with so many — her philosophy being that a candle is not diminished by the lighting of another candle. In tribute to her, her like minded friends are maintaining her website from where this tribute comes. We thank Marion Holding and Stephen Baggs for their assistance.*

Janet Elizabeth Reakes died in her sleep of a diabetic coma early on Saturday 9 November 2002.

To her many friends, Janet and genealogy were inseparable. She did have a life apart from genealogy—as a member of a close-knit, loving family; as a wonderful and innovative youth leader and teacher at church; as a dedicated Scrabble player; as a net surfer; as a talented artist and writer. And those are only some of the facets of the personality of this warm, funny, clever, enthusiastic and generous person. Her most recent role in life, and one that fulfilled a lifelong desire, was that of mother to twelve year old Sarah. As is the way of life, things both good and bad, happy and sad are often **inextricably mixed**. **The day last June when Janet’s leg was amputated in a Brisbane hospital was also the day a court in Brisbane officially granted her custody of Sarah.**

But it was as a genealogist that she was widely known throughout Australia and, indeed, in genealogical circles in England, Ireland, the USA and New Zealand. Janet never tired of telling how her interest in genealogy was aroused—by her employment in greyhound racing, recording the pedigrees of prize dogs. She moved to the Australian Jockey Club doing the same thing for horses, and joked that it was a natural progression to people after she joined the LDS Church and learned of its interest in family history.

Janet was born in Bristol, England in 1952. The family emigrated to Australia in 1961 for the sake of **Janet’s health after she suffered rheumatic fever as a small child.** She grew up in Sydney.

Janet was one who sought the best in life. Thirty years ago, she and a friend felt a need in their lives and decided to join a church—any church. Tossing up which to visit, Janet, an ardent fan of the Osmonds, decided to attend their church. She soon felt at home in the LDS Church and never wavered in her devotion to her religious duties and church attendance.

After several years for ITP as a full time tax consultant, and a period with Otis Elevators, Janet worked at the LDS Church offices, at first in the records department and later as assistant to the Church’s Public Affairs Director. **She left in 1983 to**

start her own business as a Professional Genealogist, working from her Bass Hill home and wholeheartedly assisted by her parents, Tom (Cyril) and Margaret. Over the years Janet passed exams and became the most highly-accredited genealogist in Australia. For six years, she had a regular spot on the nationally-televised Ray Martin Midday Show. She made guest appearances on numerous TV and radio shows, and wrote columns for local and state newspapers.

**The author of 26 “how to” books and five videos on genealogy and family history,** Janet travelled widely teaching classes and giving seminar papers. Talking and joking at express speed, Janet captivated her audiences. Afterwards, she was seldom too tired or too busy to answer individual questions and give advice to struggling researchers. Her research in public libraries, for herself or her clients, was often interrupted as she was recognised and surrounded by people seeking her help. Her enthusiasm was contagious and her knowledge of family history research prodigious.

Margaret, Tom and Janet moved to Hervey Bay in 1989 and loved the Queensland lifestyle from the first moment. The addition of Sarah to the family **early this year was the crowning joy of Janet’s life.** Even the ordeal of losing her leg could not dampen her joy in Sarah or daunt her courageous spirit. She was counting the days till November 25 when she was to be fitted with her artificial leg.

Janet became ill the day before her death. Two minutes before midnight, she sent an email to a few friends, detailing her sudden illness and telling us that if she had not improved in the morning, she would have to be hospitalised. She ended the email **by writing prophetically “You never know what a day will bring.”** As we were opening and reading our emails next morning, Janet passed peacefully from this life to the next.

**“God’s finger touched her,  
and she slept.” (Tennyson)**

*This obituary comes from Janet’s website and was written by Dr Marjorie Newton.*

## Discovery 2003 Discovery, Deadends & Databases

The 10th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry  
Melbourne Convention Centre  
23 -27 April 2003

International speakers including Stella Colwell, Iain Swinnerton, Michael Gandy, George Redmonds, Sherry Irvine, Elisabeth Mortimer and Australian speakers including Gary Presland, Andrew Peake, Dianne Snowden, Geoffrey Burkhardt, Cora Nunn, Helen Harris and Vivienne Parker.

Five concurrent sessions to choose from, free access to on-line databases, free tours of the Genealogical Society of Victoria, State Library of Victoria, Royal Historical Society, Public Record Office, Police Historical Unit and Immigration Museum. Plus static displays, bookstalls, software demonstrations, author's night, Congress dinner and much, much more.

Enjoy the camaraderie and friendship of fellow genealogists, share knowledge, learn new avenues to explore and refine your skills.

The congresses can be a great experience and if you are at all inclined to go—even just for a day visit—go! It's 27 years since the first Congress in Melbourne (and that was great fun) more details at [www.conferenceconsultants.co.au/discovery2003](http://www.conferenceconsultants.co.au/discovery2003)

**W.G.&M.**  
**WARREN.GRAHAM & MURPHY**  
*Barristers & Solicitors*

Warren, Graham & Murphy is proud to continue its long history of providing quality legal services to the East Gippsland community.

For specialist advice in all areas of the law.  
Contact your nearest W.G. & M. office:

Bairnsdale: 5152 2661  
Orbost: 5154 2010  
Sale: 5144 1777

Omeo: 5159 1323  
Mallacoota: 5158 1286  
Lakes Entrance: 5155 1286

*Proudly serving East Gippsland for over 100 years.*

***The Main Hotel***

**Bairnsdale's Leading  
19<sup>th</sup> Century Hotel**

Choose from our Superb Menu

**HARRY'S BISTRO**

Select Wine List  
Accommodation Available



270 Main Street  
Bairnsdale  
Phone 5152 3787





# Lost Souls from China

Leanne Dyson

***In early October Leanne was approached by a member of the local steering committee for “The Torch”. They were looking for cultural contributions from the area and with her Chinese background, Leanne was an obvious choice. Some members were lucky enough to see the production at BREC and sadly, some of us missed the publicity and didn’t know it was on. Here is Leanne’s valuable contribution.***

Picture a peaceful rural setting, a neat manicured cemetery. Half way along the road at the front you can see a long hedge that stretches back down into the cemetery, right there is a large rectangle area of lawn. It is bordered to the front by row upon row of plaques in a lawn section, at the back a narrow road and shed, on the left are large marble headstones and statues of a typical Italian Catholic section. On the right a hedge fence that was originally the fence along the sextants house, but is now the Catholic section, distributed neatly at the edge of the lawn along this hedge are four simple graves with their own individual wrought iron fences and rectangle headstones with their own inscription etched in Chinese characters. The only other way you can tell that this area had anything to do with the Chinese is a small white wooden sign on top of a thin pole placed at the back, at the point where the narrow roadside and the hedge meet, it **reads in black, ‘Chinese Section’**. You naturally assume this Chinese section only has four people interred there but what I found out is the story I am about to tell you.

I had been researching my family history that I had found unique in many ways. My great grandfather on my **mother’s side was Chinese; he had arrived** in Australia in the 1850s. As a result of my research I read many articles and books describing the conditions that the Chinese endured both in their homeland, China, and here in Australia in the 1840s through the gold rush era to the 1920s. Their quiet determination and industrious work ethic was a credit to them.

In the 1840s, in their own country, China, the Chinese people survived famine and over population, the opium war, feuds and plundering between the Taishan and the Hakkas, heavy fighting between the imperial forces and the rebels of the anti-dynastic Red Turban Secret Society that devastated the countryside around Canton. Word arrived about the wealth that could be had, gold, in a far away place, Australia.

The Chinese have extremely close ties to their family. Number one priority. They wanted a better life for their families and were prepared to sacrifice much of their lives to achieve this goal.

Mainly men made the long journey to the Australian gold fields. These men would firstly join a co-op band like the **See Yup Society that had it’s own rules** and conditions to be followed on their departure and for time spent in the colony. Their passage was organized and paid for by a Credit Ticket System where a merchant, clan leader or broker would arrange passage, provisions and possibly a small wage. In return the passenger would repay his debt by giving what he earned for one year. There had to be a guarantee that was usually given by the **passenger’s family. This was yet another** burden and reason to succeed then return to China. A majority of the Chinese who made the journey took wives before they left China that increased the desired likelihood of a return to their homeland, China.

On arrival in this strange land they were often not looked upon as individuals but rather a bulk load of Chinese. The names that were recorded on various

documents were often not their real **Chinese names. Sometimes a 'sounds like'** plus an English name was given and a majority of the Chinese registered in those **days had the prefix as 'Ah'**. Ask someone from China and they will tell you that there is no such name in their language.

Names like, Ah Chong, Ah Chow, Ah Yee, Ah Pow, Ah Sam, Ah Ling, Ah Kin, Ah Toy the list goes on, but you should get the picture. Obviously the language barrier had a lot to do with translation but it certainly makes family history research difficult.

Because the Chinese arrived in such large numbers and looked, sounded and behaved so differently to the Europeans they were immediately treated suspiciously being subjected to many belittling events and accused of many **things that they didn't have anything to do with**. They were taunted and teased, harassed and arrested for crimes they **didn't commit. They aroused suspicion** just because they were different. There was great resentment toward them because of their method of patiently fossicking through tailing piles and often finding more gold than the original miner. As a result of this fear in 1855 the **Victorian Government passed 'An Act to Make Provision for Certain Immigrants'** this set a limit on the number of Chinese per ship that entered Victorian ports. This also set an entry fee of £10 that each Chinaman had to pay on arrival to the colony. This did not deter them and instead hundreds disembarked at Robe in South Australia, then walked overland to the Victorian gold fields. In 1857 another **act was passed, 'An Act to Regulate the Residence of the Chinese Population in Victoria'**. **So the Chinese then had to pay a fee of £2 every two months for a 'License to Reside in the Colony'**.

Although there were 18,000 Chinese (this number varies depending on what material you research) on the gold **fields in 1857 they weren't here to stay**. The rules of their Co-op were good sensible laws to try and avoid any problems with the Europeans. Even to the extent of them not being allowed to

argue in public, and to abide by colony law. Their pig-tail (cue) were an object of ridicule and an item to be pulled and at **times even cut off as a joke. It didn't** matter that this made it impossible for a Chinaman to return home to China. To have your pig-tail (cue) cut off was a sign you were a rebel—the consequence of this - punishable by death. Any Chinaman who had no pig-tail **simply couldn't go** home until his pig-tail grew back. This **didn't change until after 1912 when the** law in China was finally changed.

By 1860 the gold rush in Victoria had all but ceased, then there were some discoveries in the mountains around Omeo, Cassilis, Grant and other locations, so those Chinese that had decided to stay on moved to these areas. Around this time was the Buckland Riots where many Chinese were brutally killed, their tents burnt and their implements destroyed. The majority of the Chinese had returned to China and only a small portion remained. They used their farming abilities to create market gardens which were a great source of income for the Chinese and fresh produce for the people of the area. Many of them married English or European women and they adopted European customs and dress. All of this began to distance them of their Chinese heritage, but to survive in this land they were not able to be Chinese. It must have been a difficult choice knowing their deep ties with family. The women who married these men must have been remarkably strong willed and dedicated to be able to hold a place in the community **especially in that time. Farming wasn't** their only skill or talent. Some of the Chinese were craftsman and built furniture, while others ventured into the fishing business on the lakes. Some were engaged in hop picking or grew tobacco or maize. They gained a certain respect in their rural communities and were able to live in reasonable peace and harmony.

In Bairnsdale, in those early days, there was a thriving community of Chinese. There were approximately 1000 in the area and a large community lived in Pearson St, between McCulloch and Pyke Streets. Some had businesses like



The shrine and burning tower at the Bairnsdale Cemetery in April 1923.  
(*Photograph courtesy East Gippsland Historical Society*)

herbalists and shops that sold butterfly fans and wicker covered jars. Half way along this section was a traditional Joss house but they were still teased and tormented. There were appeals to demolish the unsightly hovels, stating they were a fire hazard. On inspection they were found to be as good or even in better condition than some European homes. In February 1885, a 'Gordon' Chinese Mission, controlled by the Presbyterian Church, was established in Bairnsdale. The Rev Paul Young, a Chinese Missionary, was placed in charge. Using his own meagre stipend he erected a hall which was used as a chapel. Rev Young died in 1908 and in 1911 the mission closed. Eventually the Chinese numbers dwindled and after World War 1 there were no more Chinese in the area so everything was demolished to make way for grand new establishments. Their very existence had been erased.

Over the passage of time those Chinese who lived, died and were buried in Bairnsdale were forgotten. The occasional article was written up in the local newspaper but no other reminders

were present. There wasn't anyone to keep their memories or their heritage alive. In a vast leap forward in time from 1923 to 1993 very little was done to preserve the heritage of the Chinese who had been in the area.

What happened was strange in some way, I now feel that I was meant to do all this, it has been pre-ordained or something.

In my own personal life I was experiencing a very sad time, within a fortnight I had attended three funerals of friends and parents of friends. At some time in between these funerals I had attended a Family History Group Meeting where someone had made me aware of the fact that the Cemetery Trust were planning to construct a memorial garden for cremations. This sounded like a lovely idea except that the area they had chosen was the large area of unused lawn beside the Chinese Section in the cemetery. This rang alarm bells like you wouldn't believe. I had a nagging need to investigate this further but I couldn't do it alone so I contacted some of the people I knew who had Chinese heritage and a couple of

other interested parties. We began checking cemetery, burial and undertaker records and found some very interesting facts.

Firstly we compiled a list of 118 Chinese buried at the cemetery. We then correlated as many of these burials as we could with cemetery plans and discovered that we could identify at least 23 gravesites scattered all over the lawn area where the proposed Cremation Garden was to be constructed. The plan had other grave sites but no numbers to correlate. Next we noticed an unusual marked section in the middle of this lawn area, not just down the hedge line that we then found out was the site of two unique structures. We found photos dating back to 1923 showing a large brick shrine with a carving of a terracotta boat with a fish, tree and what appears to be a warrior or lion on board. To the front right hand side of this shrine type structure was what we believe to be a burning tower. The photos also show a lot of pegs or pieces of wood marking a lot of gravesites. Later photos show the deterioration of the structures revealing a large slab that bears Chinese characters within the shrine structure itself. Today only the base bricks remain buried beneath the grassy lawn. So sad to think that these poor souls we so neglected.

After finding all these facts and knowing what the Chinese endured to remain in Australia I felt it to my inner core to preserve the last resting place of these lost souls of China. The Chinese have such a respect for the dead and believe strongly in the spirit world and the afterlife. They worship their ancestors. Death and burial are celebrated in strict tradition. It is not right to visit Chinese graves whenever you wish as we do in our western culture. Chinese respect their ancestors and their elders. The Chinese have **'All Souls Day' once a year, this is** when they can visit the grave of their ancestors and burn offerings to them. These Chinese souls deserved the respect they had earned it.

Now we had the proof we needed so

we gave our information to the Cemetery Trust and also forwarded a copy to the executive officer for cemeteries in Melbourne. We had a pleasing result with the Cremation Gardens being constructed in another area of the cemetery. The Chinese Section was saved.

Relieved, but now feeling more should be done, we began the task of investigating the possibility of rebuilding the Shrine and Burning Tower. We formed a committee. Together we wrote and approached various people trying to authenticate and identify the origins of the Shrine and Burning Tower. Using the photos we were able to ask a bricklayer to approximate the size and number of bricks needed to rebuild. We sought publicity through the local paper, contacted the See Yup Society in Melbourne and the Australian Chinese Museum. This was all very fine but it all **came down to funding. 'The all mighty dollar'.** **This is where we began to fold,** it all became too hard. We all had other commitments of our own— I know myself, I had a husband and young family, aging **parents who's health was failing, so I had** to prioritize. The project was shelved for the time being.

Since the publicity, a local Chinese family were pleased to be able to bury their mother in the Chinese Section of the cemetery. Ten years down the track interest has surfaced once again. The Cemetery Trust called a meeting of interested parties in rebuilding the Shrine and Burning Tower and to attempt to get a grant towards the construction. The feeling now is that these symbols of our Chinese history could be appreciated by tourists to the area. More publicity and consultation with an expert on Chinese Burning Towers has happened. It is encouraging that even though this project **seems to fade away I'm sure my Chinese** ancestors along with many more are pushing the issue and it wont go away until we see the Shrine and Burning Towers back in their original glory.

# People of the S streets

We were tossing around ideas for articles for *the Black Sheep* when someone said, **“There are so many ‘Cliftons’ around Bairnsdale—why did they get so much named after them, they must have been important?” We thought, hey, that’s a good idea** research out the origin of our street names!

## *Suding - Lionel Lawson*

This family name is one of the most utilised for street names in Bairnsdale. There is a Street, **Close and Lane with Mr Sudings’ name.** The Suding family owned land around the McLeod’s Morass area and they were graziers and butchers. A local family with ties to the Sudings is that of Kevin Dwyer who is the grandson of Lionel Suding, (his mother was a Suding). Sudings were prolific shop owners in the CBD of Bairnsdale. Mr Sudings’ father, John, was the original family member in the district. Lionel had a brother Frank and a sister Grace. He married in 1907 to Ellen Wilson and according to our member Jeannette Felstead who knew him, he was a lovely man.

## *Eastwood*

This is the name of A.W. Howitt’s property to the East and North of Bairnsdale. Born in Nottingham, England 1830, Alfred William Howitt came to Australia in 1852 with his father and younger brother. After mining for gold for a few years his father and brother returned home to England. Howitt remained and became an expert bushman. It was due to this skill that he was selected to lead a search for the lost Burke and Wills Expedition. They found the bodies of the lost explorers and the sole survivor, Gray, living with Aborigines. Howitt was renowned as a leader who never lost a man, a horse or a camel on his expeditions. In 1863 he returned to Melbourne and was appointed Magistrate and Warden of the Gippsland gold fields. He held these positions for twenty-six years and while stationed at Omeo, Bairnsdale and Sale he studied the minerals, timber and Aboriginal society of East Gippsland.

## *Dalmahoy Street*

Named after Archibald and Colina Macleod’s 13<sup>th</sup> child, Dalmahoy Campbell Macleod. **Dalmahoy was born in 1837 at “Mary Vale” in the Parish of Campbelltown NSW.** He was 2 years 5 months of age when his mother, Colina died. At the age of 10 years he and his family journeyed to Gippsland. In early 1860s he did some dairying at Orbost Station. On 14 August 1865, Dalmahoy, then 28, married Isabella Baudinet, 19 years. They had eight children, the last of whom was born in February 1882. In 1890 Dalmahoy and Isabella moved to Melbourne; 18 years later Dalmahoy died suddenly. He was buried at the Necropolis in Springvale on the 21 May 1908.

## *Nicholson Street*

Was named after a Member of Parliament, William Nicholson who was the Premier of Victoria at the time. Nicholson was famous for his introduction of Secret Ballot in Victoria. The Honorable William Nicholson was a native of Cumberland and arrived in Melbourne in 1842. He was the Mayor of Melbourne in 1850. In 1860 he passed a land bill authorising any person to select to the extent of 640 acres at a minimum price of £1 per acre. Selection was to be after survey. He was one of the founders of the Bank of Victoria. Honorable William Nicholson retired from politics and died in 1870.

## *Bailey Street*

It is thought that Bailey Street was named after Bailey Bros. who ran a small store in 1865 which was purchased by Drevermann. In 1861 Drevermann had built a store on the corner of Main and Bailey Street (Cookes Corner). In 1888 George Bailey was a milk supplier. In 1906 Frederick Bailey ran private drag excursions in the holiday season.

*Thanks to Leanne Dyson and Tony Meade for their efforts in this research—and by the way, Clifton was Angus McMillan’s favourite horse who got bogged down in the morass! And according to el Presidente Tony, he was named Clifton because he was bred on the property of the same name belonging to Lachlan Macalister, McMillan’s employer.*

# “Consultations by Post”

## The Life of Dr Thomas Trener

Ken and Kim Trener

Thomas Marden Trener, the youngest son of William Trener and Mary James, was christened in Redruth, Cornwall in 1823. He was born into a family of middle class merchants, farmers and hotelkeepers.

On 27 August 1845, Thomas married Rebecca Gibbs in London, his address was Praed Street near the London teaching hospital of St Mary's. It is here I believe, that Thomas may have done some of his medical training, but Thomas' medical qualifications are somewhat dubious. The British Medical Association records of 1851 list Thomas as a practising doctor but he has an asterisk next to his name which denotes *doctors practising in or near London who after repeated requests have not made any return of the nature of his qualifications and whose name cannot be identified in the list of members of the University of London, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, or the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, London.*

According to the 1851 census of London, Thomas was 28 and occupation was listed as chemist. He was living with Rebecca, who was 34, and their infant daughter Penrose who was three months old. Their residence was in Lisson Grove, London.

In 1853, Thomas is back in Redruth, Cornwall where he joins the Freemasons. The

following year, 1854, his second daughter, Alice Marden is born, but sadly in 1855, Penrose dies in Islington.

In 1857 the *Guy Mannering* makes it way to Australia and listed amongst the passengers is a Thomas Trener, labourer, travelling alone, to Australia. As I have found no other references to another Thomas Trener in Australia I feel that this is the same person.

Thomas heads to the Victorian goldfields where he starts a medical practise specialising in “diseases of a secret nature” with his advertisements boasting of his “great experience in such diseases and having been connected with the Lock Hospital, London”. The Lock hospital was the first venereal diseases hospital established in London. It is around this time he meets Jane Adeladie Furniesse, twenty years his junior, who was born in South Australia in 1843. Their first child, Haidee Penrose, was born in 1861 in Navarre. In the same year, Thomas is charged with manslaughter after the death in Navarre of Eliza Rendall in childbirth. Thomas spends the night in the lock-up with the local journalist noting “*that I am not a Lawyer by education but by observation I am. I have observed that manslaughter is a bailable offence, but for some reason or other magistrate refuses bail for Doctor Trener*”



**GIPPSLAND SECURED INVESTMENTS**

*“We treat you like a person not a number.”*

Gippsland Secured Investments Limited  
119 Main Street, Bairnsdale. Phone: 5150 0505

*Old and damaged photos?  
We offer a full copy and restoration service*

**FREE QUOTES**

Geoff's  
**Camera House**

83 Nicholson St. Bairnsdale  
Freecall 1800 359 329

RESPECTFULLY desires to inform his  
 Patients and the Public, that he has  
 opened a  
**DISPENSARY & CONSULTING ROOMS,**  
 (Next door to Wrigley's Hotel),  
**High Street, Mountain Creek,**  
 where he may be consulted daily on all Diseases  
 of a secret nature and eruptions of the skin.  
 Dr Trenergy's great experience in such diseases  
 having been connected with the Loc  
 hospital, London, a speedy cure may be relie  
**Eye Lotion and Mixture for  
 Dysentery.**

At the Dispensary will be found a choice and  
 well-assorted Stock of Drugs, Patent Medicine  
 &c. &c. &c.

until communication can be made with the Attorney-  
 General.”

Thomas and Jane's second child, William  
 is born in Maryborough in 1864 followed by  
 three more children born in Sydney—  
 Frederick (1865), Ernest (1868) and Florence  
 (1870).

Thomas died in Sydney in 1872 from  
 “softening of the brain” ironically the polite  
 way of the era to describe syphilis of the  
 nervous system. Before this time, Jane Adelaide  
 had left him and the children and was living in  
 Melbourne under the name of Norton. On  
 Thomas' death certificate his occupation is  
 listed as surgeon and under “children of  
 marriage” it states married England with one  
 daughter living. However, in his will, he leaves  
 all his assets sworn at £200 to be used in the  
 care and education of his Australian born  
 children aged twelve to two years. Jane  
 Adelaide and a friend, Thomas Carter, are  
 named executors.

Jane Adelaide later marries for the first  
 time to Joseph Bale and has six more children.  
 Haidee marries Ewan McMillan, son of East  
 Gippsland explorer Angus McMillan. William  
 becomes a dentist, Frederick becomes a  
 hansom cab driver and later a gardener, Ernest  
 becomes a baker and Florence dies in 1885 at  
 Landsborough, aged 15 years.

Alice Marden Trenergy married John M.  
 Stevenson who was born in Kirkaldy,  
 Scotland, on the 15 June 1875 at Trinity  
 Church, Paddington, London. At the time her  
 father's occupation is listed as surgeon.

According to the 1881 census, Alice and  
 John had three children—Rebecca M  
 Stevenson (5 years), Colin J. Stevenson (3  
 years), and Evelyn I. Stevenson (7 months), all  
 who were born at Paddington. Their address  
 was listed as 28 Woodchester Street,  
 Paddington.

*Kim Trenergy is a member of the group and Ken (her  
 Dad) loves seeing his name in print!*

# the Black Sheep Journal

is published by

The East Gippsland Family History Group, Inc; ISSN 1035-6363

Research queries to -The Secretary

Letters, articles, poems, etc; to

The Editor/Black Sheep,  
P.O.Box 1104  
BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875

Print Post Approved PP325809/00019  
If undeliverable return to  
EAST GIPPSLAND FAMILY HISTORY GROUP INC.  
P. O. Box 1104  
Bairnsdale Vic 3875

[Http://home.vicnet.net.au/~egfhg/](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~egfhg/)  
E-mail: [egippsfamhist@net-tech.com.au](mailto:egippsfamhist@net-tech.com.au)

**SURFACE**

**MAIL**

POSTAGE  
PAID AT  
BAIRNSDALE  
3875  
VIC., AUST

