



**Clan Forsyth Society Australia, Sydney Branch**  
P O Box 396 Roseville, NSW 2069

# NEWSLETTER

**March, 2005**

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**SUNDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL, 2005**

**After the 10.00am Service**

**Fellowship Room  
PARISH HALL  
St STEPHENS ANGLICAN CHURCH  
211 Mowbray Road, Chatswood  
(Near Sydney Street Willoughby)**

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### AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of Previous AGM (21/03/2004)
3. Business Arising
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Office Bearers and Committee for 2005
6. Election of Auditor
7. Other Business

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**Annual Church Service at:**

**St Stephens Anglican Church**  
**211 Mowbray Road, Chatswood**  
*Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2005 10.00am*  
(Near Sydney Street Willoughby)

Followed by the AGM, (see above) at approximately 11.15am or 11.30am

After the AGM, David Forsyth will talk about his recent research into the family of James and Margaret

Following the AGM and Then David's talk we plan to proceed for lunch at:

**Chiquita Cafe**  
**63 Penshurst, Willoughby**  
(on Oakville Street)  
*Approximately 2.00pm*

We will have reserved tables available for a casual moderately priced cafe luncheon.

We have arranged for some space to be set-aside for us but could you please let Judy Forsyth know by Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March if you are able to come (Phone 02 9809 1562).

If you want to go but have transport difficulties please let us know, we will arrange to pick you up.

Sydney Branch Office Bearers for 2003 are:

|            |                 |   |           |
|------------|-----------------|---|-----------|
| President  | Jim Forsyth     | ☎ | 9809 1562 |
| Secretary  | Keith Forsyth   | ☎ | 9489 0697 |
| Treasurer  | Karen Forsyth   | ☎ | 9809 1562 |
| Membership | Barbara Forsyth | ☎ | 9560 9759 |
| Genealogy  | Judy Forsyth    | ☎ | 9809 1562 |
| Newsletter | Phillip Forsyth | ☎ | 9412 1973 |

Do not hesitate to contact the Committee at any time

Postal Address is PO Box 396 Roseville NSW 2069

## ***President's Report***

Greetings Clan Folk!

As this newsletter is the first for 2005, I wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead.

Unfortunately, I have to report that our Commissioner, Alan is not in the best of health and I am sure you would want me on your behalf to wish him a speedy recovery.

Sydney Branch of the Clan Society was the first to be reorganised in Australia and it is important to work together to keep our heritage proudly in our minds. It doesn't matter whether we come from one of the smaller families or from the larger families of James & Margaret - the tanners, Archibald & Sarah - ropeworks, John & Maria - Port Macquarie, or James Brown & Jane - tanners. We are all Forsyths - have been Forsyths - married Forsyths or descended from Forsyths. Our tartan is one of the nicest, not garish, but very wearable. Our banner is spectacular and usually attracts comments on its outings. Your continued support is vital to the ongoing success of your Clan Society.

If you haven't seen our tartan and have access to the Internet, then go to any Clan Forsyth website. If you don't have access to the Internet, please contact us and we will send a print of the tartan.

Following in this newsletter is the details of our 26<sup>th</sup> annual gathering at St. Stephens Church of England Church, Willoughby and the AGM in the church hall and luncheon afterwards. A couple of our Committee members were baptised at St. Stephens Church. We are looking forward to welcoming David Forsyth to the AGM to tell us of his recent research into the family of James & Margaret Forsyth, both in Sydney and London. Perhaps we can persuade him to answer questions.

Our tent will again be one of the many Clan tents at Bundanoon. A wonderful day out, but come early to get a close car park. We usually have folk drop in to say "hello" and we look forward to seeing anyone who can make it. Our Clans folk from Canberra, Cootamundra, the South Coast, Sydney and the Southern parts of Sydney have been to our tent. Even one member from Armidale and another from the Central Coast called last year. The banner will be proudly displayed - except for when it is in the parade.

Tartan day at Lane Cove will be on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June, and we will be represented there. If you work in the city then Tartan day is being celebrated on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July in Martin Place. Scottish entertainment is provided at both places. Take a lunch break and see what is happening.

Our northern country folk may be interested in the Celtic festival that takes place at Glen Innes on the first weekend in May. There is a web site available and I understand accommodation fills quickly.

On 30<sup>th</sup> October is the Combined Societies of NSW Annual Highland Gathering at the Castle Hill Showground. More information later, but put it in your diary.

Congratulations to Brisbane branch who are celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a dinner at Peak Crossing on 12<sup>th</sup> March.

In closing I would ask you all to maintain and cherish our family heritage.

*Jim Forsyth*

## NOTABLE FORSYTHS

### Joseph Forsyth (1763 – 1815)

Writer on Italy, born at Elgin, Scotland, on 18 February, 1763, was the son, by his second marriage, of Alexander Forsyth, merchant in Elgin, a man of intelligence and piety, and a friend of Isaac Watts. His mother, Ann Harrold, was the daughter of a farmer who fought for Prince Charles at Culloden, was taken prisoner, and died on board ship while being carried for trial to England. From the grammar school of his native town Forsyth passed at the age of twelve to King's College, Aberdeen, where he graduated M.A. in 1779. His parents intended him for the church, but his diffidence induced him to decline. He went to London and became assistant to the master of an academy at Newington Butts; was soon able to purchase the establishment, and carried it on successfully for thirteen years. Then, his health failing, he gave up the school and returned to Elgin. He had now the leisure and the means to give effect to what had been a great desire of his life, a visit to Italy. The peace of Amiens was known in Elgin on 7 October, 1801. On the 12<sup>th</sup> Forsyth was already on his way south, and on Christmas day he arrived at Nice. The next eighteen months he spent in the more famous cities of Italy, where he had access to the literary circles, and saw everything with the eyes of a man well read in the poets and historians of the country both ancient and modern, a connoisseur in architecture and a keen observer of thought and life. He was at Turin on his way home when the war was renewed, and on 25 May 1803 he was seized by the police and carried prisoner to Nismes. The restraint there was not severe, but Forsyth was caught in an attempt to escape, and was thereupon marched in midwinter six hundred miles to Fort de Bitché, where his confinement was at first intolerably strict. It was, however, gradually relaxed; after two years he was removed to Verdun, where he remained five years. Through the influence of a lady in the suite of the king of Holland he was in 1811 permitted to reside in Paris; but four months after the English in the capital were ordered back to their places of detention, and the utmost relaxation Forsyth's literary friends could obtain for him was the permission to go to Valenciennes instead of to Verdun. Forsyth had solaced his captivity by further study of Italian literature and art. Napoleon at that time affected the part of a patron of both; and Forsyth was induced by the hope of obtaining his release to appear in the character of an author. His "Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters, during an Excursion in Italy in the years 1802 and 1803", were published in London in 1813, and copies were forwarded to Paris with many solicitations in his favour; but the effort failed, and it was not till the allies entered Paris in March 1814 that he regained his liberty. After a year in London he returned to Elgin, intending to settle there; but his constitution, never robust, had been undermined by his thirteen years of exile. He died on 20 September, 1815, and was buried in his parents' tomb in the Elgin Cathedral churchyard, where his epitaph may still be read. A second edition of his "Italy" appeared in 1816, with a memoir of the author by his brother Isaac, who survived till 1859, and it has gone through several later editions, one (1820) issued at Geneva. Forsyth himself says in his "advertisement" that when he went to Italy he had no intention of writing a book. He wrote nothing else; and his brother informs us that he never to his dying day ceased to regret the publication; but the work, notwithstanding its limits, has proved of permanent value, and both for style and matter it is still one of the best on Italy in our language.

*(Extract from Australian Dictionary of Biography - Volume 7, earliest times to 1900)*

*Many thanks to Judy Forsyth*



## A day in the life of a Genealogist

### THE BRICK WALL

A brick wall is something you have in genealogy, when you can't find out anything about that particular ancestor.

One of my brick walls was my great, great, grandfather – William George Gilbert Knight. He arrived in Australia in 1848 as William Coward with his wife Elizabeth Ann (nee Riddick). It appears that he was illegitimate, with his father being William Knight and his mother Sarah Coward. After his arrival he became a "Knight" and just to confuse matters was often referred to as George Knight. At Hill End they had two male children baptised and another daughter was born and died without any official record found to date. Elizabeth Ann died (no official death – yet) and William married Matilda Reed and it is from this union that my great grandmother was born. William George Gilbert Knight was a police constable at Cassilis. The family story passed down through the generations was that he died as a result of a fall from his horse whilst chasing bushrangers. His death certificate in 1861 says he died and was buried at Dalkeith. Dalkeith is a large property in the area, with a big "private property" sign displayed on its gate; we thought they may have had a cemetery on the property. We have often wondered if this family legend was true. All of the above had been known for years. BUT - last year, we had a weekend in Dubbo travelling via Merriwa and Cassilis, a very pretty country drive and much more interesting than the Great Western Highway. We passed by Cassilis and reiterated that no use looking in the Cassilis cemetery again for Knight as we had already done that without success.

On returning home, I was thinking about William Knight. I sat at the computer and put Cassilis into the search engine on the Internet. I found a site for Cassilis Cemetery with the magical words "also known as Dalkeith cemetery". That meant William Knight was buried in the Cassilis cemetery, but obviously without a headstone. There was an email address for free lookups if you thought your ancestor may be there. The response was quick from an Annette Piper. She said she had often wondered what had happened to the Knight family. Her husband's ancestors had owned a shop in Cassilis, which was robbed, and this would have been the last event attended to by Constable Knight. She had the newspaper clippings from the Mudgee paper, which she promptly sent to me. William Knight had escorted a prisoner to Muswellbrook and in the company of another person on the way home, had fallen from his horse, suffered a compression of the brain and died a few hours later.

His widow, Matilda, my great, great grandmother had a dreadful year in 1861. Her husband died. She had four children under five, plus a child from William's first marriage, and gave birth to another child later in the year. Another of her children suffered serious burns and also died in 1861. The district took up a collection to help her and raised £95-00. Matilda Knight remarried and went on to have several more children, giving her a grand total of 13 children.

This brick wall has come tumbling down and with a little more research the family has been expanded. One should always listen to family stories, they may grow over the years, but there could be an element of truth therein.

*Judy Forsyth*

## **GLEN INNES CELTIC GATHERING**

at the Australian Standing Stones

**29<sup>th</sup> APRIL to 1<sup>st</sup> MAY 2005**

Accommodation enquiries can be made with Fred Blair (Ph 02 6732 2397)

Website: [www.australiancelticfestival.com/htm/events.htm](http://www.australiancelticfestival.com/htm/events.htm)

## **LANE COVE TARTAN DAY**

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

**10.00am to 1.30pm Lane Cove Plaza**

## **ANNUAL HIGHLAND GATHERING**

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

**10.00am to 5.00pm Castle Hill Showground**

**Highland Gathering Ball**

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2005**

**&**

**St Andrew's Dinner Dance**

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2005**

**Enquiries: The Combined Scottish Societies of NSW Phone: 02 9871 3593**

## **Recipe**

***(with Anzac Day approaching)***

### **Anzac Biscuits**

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 cup rolled oats           | $\frac{3}{4}$ cup coconut    |
| 1 cup flour                 | 1 teaspoon carbonate of soda |
| 2 tablespoons boiling water | 1 cup sugar                  |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter    | 1 tablespoon golden syrup    |

Mix oats, flour, sugar and coconut together. Melt syrup and butter together. Mix soda with boiling water and add to melted butter and syrup. Add to dry ingredients.

Place 1 tablespoons of mixture on greased tin (or baking tray). Bake in slow oven for 20 minutes.

(Compliments of Margaret Snodgrass from her Mum's Commonsense Cookery Book, circa 1933 and the thanks to the Willoughby District Historical Society)

## **Membership News**

Sincere condolences are extended to the family of the recently deceased:

*Jean Neville Warner* who passed away on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2005, formally of Lane Cove widow of the late *Robert Forsyth Warner*. Survived by Lorraine, Neville and Gwenyth.

A Membership Committee was recently formed to look at the issues causing a fall in our membership. This Committee including Jim, Ray, Barbara and Bill came up with the following points for further discussion:

1. Maintaining current subscription fees
2. Letters to members whose subscriptions had lapsed
3. What is on offer to membership
4. Is a welfare group needed
5. What of other State group activities
6. More articles in the Newsletter including family history etc

The Committee would be very grateful for any of your feedback. Please contact Jim (02 9809 1562) or Barbara (02 9560 9759)

Bill Forsyth

**Annual Subscription Reminder:** A Subscription Renewal Form has been included with this Newsletter. Your continued support is appreciated.

### ***“Forsyth Adventures” Available in Electronic Form***

(From your Committee with the kind assistance of Ray Forsyth)

Some twenty or more years go, former Commissioner Les wrote a history of the Forsyth Family on such information as he could then lay his hands on. The book was called, simply, “Forsyth Adventures” and related largely to descendants of Thomas and Martha who married in London in 1817. Their grandson Thomas Todd Forsyth was Les’s grandfather, so his family knowledge from that period on was quite extensive.

The book runs to 63 pages and being one of Les’s very early productions had only a small circulation restricted in the main to his immediate family.

Tim Crossley, a computer expert and with Forsyth blood in his veins, has transcribed the prose of this book onto computer facilities. So we now have an electronic edition of Forsyth Adventures splendidly done by Tim and including many family photographs that were not in the original issue.

The Committee has had the book reprinted and of course added the photographs.

**The book or C.D. is available for \$15.00 plus \$2.50 handling and postage.**

***Please send your cheque, in favour of the Clan Forsyth Society Sydney Branch, to the Secretary who will arrange for a copy to be despatched to you.***

# *Bundanoon is Brigadoon 2005*

**28<sup>th</sup> Highland Gathering  
Saturday, 9 April, 2005**

*A Truly Scottish Festivity*

STREET PARADE COMMENCING 9.30am from Town Centre to Oval.

*Pipe Bands      Many decorated Floats      Marching Clan Societies*

AT OVAL

All are welcome to join the traditional and not so traditional Highland games.

- \* *Caber toss*
- \* *Hay toss*
- \* *Shot put*
- \* *Tug of war*
- \* *Haggis hurling*
- \* *Egg throwing*
- \* *Highland dancing demonstrations*
- \* *Scottish country dancing demonstrations  
(you can join in)*
- \* *Pipe band demonstrations.*
- \* *Clan Society information tents.*

*Over 100 Variety Stalls - Arts & Crafts, Souvenirs, Scottish Goods & Food.*

**Not to be missed - massed bands in the morning and at the close of ceremony at 4 p.m. with a lone piper.**

**Visit the website at [www.highlandsnsw.com.au/brigadoon](http://www.highlandsnsw.com.au/brigadoon) for more information**

*Admission is charged to the Oval.*

*Adults: \$10-00    Children: \$5-00    Concessions: \$8-00.    Family: \$25-00.  
(Approximate, based on last years charges)*

**Don't forget to bring a rug or a folding chair for comfort. If it has been raining, it can be soggy underfoot, so wear older sensible shoes.**

**Look out for the Clan Forsyth Tent. See you there.**