



# *Pioneer Echo*

*We look forward to your past*

A PUBLICATION OF THE PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC.

ABN: 79 213 729 409

A Member Society of the G.S.V. Inc.

Inc. No. A0022862G

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Apr—May 2023

## **Mother of Melbourne**



<https://citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>

Mary Gilbert, whose statue sits at the Conservatory in Fitzroy Gardens, was the first European woman to live in the Port Phillip settlement. Read more about Mary and other women of our time (1803-1851) on pages 3-5.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Members and friends,

February was a successful meeting with six people presenting their female ancestor's story. Thank you to Trevor, Carol, Beverley, Elaine, Rosalie and Margaret for your stories.

We welcomed the new Members and were grateful to them for telling us a snippet of their stories.

Please don't forget that articles can be submitted to both the *Pioneer Echo* or *Pioneer Profiles Vol 8*.

It is wonderful to see that the website is now loaded with the *Lester Stephens Record of References* for you all to see in the Members area. Well done Stuart for leading this.

The May meeting is always our AGM and we are in need of several people to take up a role on the Committee as advertised in the last newsletter.

As this is my last report for you, I would like to take this opportunity to say what a privilege it has been for me over the time I have been involved, to meet you, to hear you and your family stories, to meet the speakers and to attend all sorts of activities. I have learnt and laughed so much. Thank you.

Hoping to see you soon at a meeting.

Please don't forget to bring two dollars if you are coming as this helps pay for the hall.

**Barb Hawkins, President PPPG.**

## WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

| PPPG No | Member Name       | Descended From                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Details                                                                                        | Date                                                                                             | Ship or other means                                                                                    |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1553    | Alan HIGGS        | a) Thomas PEACOCK<br>b) Harriet PEACOCK<br>c) Martin PEACOCK<br>d) Peter WHATMOUGH<br>e) Ann WHATMOUGH<br>f) Suzannah WHATMOUGH<br>g) John PALMER<br>h) Ellen PALMER<br>i) Joseph PALMER<br>j) William ROBINSON<br>k) Grace ROBINSON<br>l) Frances ROBINSON | Arr. P.P.D.<br>"<br>"<br>Arr. P.P.D.<br>"<br>"<br>Arr. P.P.D.<br>"<br>"<br>In P.P.D.<br>"<br>" | 26 Nov 1842<br>"<br>"<br>26 Nov 1842<br>"<br>"<br>5 July 1850<br>"<br>"<br>20 Nov 1848<br>"<br>" | Wallace<br>"<br>"<br>Wallace<br>"<br>"<br>Culloden<br>"<br>"<br>Birth of Frances in Portland<br>"<br>" |
| 1554    | Gregory PURTLE    | a) Michael GALWAY<br>b) Margaret GALWAY<br>c) Michael GALWAY Jr.<br>d) Alice HOLMES                                                                                                                                                                         | Arr. P.P.D.<br>"<br>"<br>Born P.P.D.                                                           | 3 Oct 1841<br>"<br>"<br>1833                                                                     | Agricola<br>"<br>"<br>Whapparilla                                                                      |
| 1555    | Susanne WHEELAHAN | a) William SMITH<br>b) Hannah SMITH<br>c) Alice SMITH                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Arr. P.P.D.<br>"<br>"                                                                          | 4 Jun 1849<br>"<br>"                                                                             | Mohammed Shah<br>"<br>"                                                                                |
| 1556    | Peter YATES       | a) James ARMITAGE<br>b) Jane ARMITAGE<br>c) William ARMITAGE                                                                                                                                                                                                | In P.P.D.<br>"<br>"                                                                            | Feb 1850<br>"<br>"                                                                               | Birth of son Joseph at Kilmore                                                                         |

Address at the General Meeting on 11 February 2023

**STORIES OF WOMEN OF OUR TIME (1803-1851)**

Five members of the Port Phillip Pioneers Group presented stories about one of their female ancestors, as outlined below.

**Trevor Cohen** - In 1815, in a London synagogue, Trevor's ggg grandfather, Samuel Moss Solomon (born 1769), married for the second time. His first wife, Elizabeth Moses, was a cousin and prior to her death in 1815 she had given birth to eight children. Samuel's second wife was Esther (Betsy) Davis who was aged forty when they married. She had two children, Isaac Solomon, and Elizabeth 'Betsy' Solomon (born 1821), Trevor's gg grandmother. She was forty-seven when Betsy was born.

When teenagers, two of Samuel's sons from his first marriage were charged with stealing clothes and were sent as convicts on the *Lady Castlereagh* to George Town in Tasmania. They made an unsuccessful escape and were sent to Newcastle in New South Wales. There they served their remaining sentence and eventually moved to Sydney where they prospered.

Their family in England were prompted to migrate to Australia, and aged twelve, Trevor's gg grandmother Elizabeth 'Betsy' Solomon travelled to Sydney on the *Enchantress*. In 1840 she married Michael Cashmore and they decided to move to Melbourne. They set out on the ship *PS Clonmel* but it became shipwrecked around present day Port Albert. Lucky to survive, Betsy and Michael spent their honeymoon on the beach.

In 1841 Melbourne had a population of five thousand people, but it was a scattered village with mud and daub huts. No running water – it had to be bought from a cart. The roads were shocking and impassable in the rain. It was an unhealthy place in which to live, but Betsy and Michael had ten healthy children. The third child did become blind at the age of three. After 20 years living in Cashmore House in Melbourne, they moved to the goldfields.

Despite the lack of modern medicines, and difficult living conditions, the eight children born to Elizabeth Solomon and the two children born to Esther Solomon managed to survive and thrive. They produced one hundred and three

grandchildren who have made an enormous contribution to Australian society. Trevor's ggg grandmother Esther (Davis) Solomon lived to be one hundred years old.

**Beverley Jacobson** is a descendent of Eliza Brison who was one of 259 bounty passengers who travelled from Glasgow to Melbourne on the *Thomas Arbuthnot* which arrived in Melbourne in October 1841. Being only eighteen, she would have been in the care of one of the married couples on board. Women of marriageable age were wanted in the colony as the ratio of men to women was seven to one. There was also a shortage of house servants and the single girls were mostly housemaids.

Conditions for young women like Eliza were very bleak in Melbourne. If they lost their job they were often forced into prostitution to survive. An article in the Port Phillip Gazette, two months after her arrival, showed that she was charged as being disorderly and a 'lady of the pay'. In other words, she was working as a prostitute.

In 1842 she gave birth to Beverley's gg grandmother, also given the name Elizabeth. There is no record of her birth, baptism, or father's name and it is hard to imagine how Eliza managed on her own with the baby. Six years later, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1848, she married William Allen from Bristol, England. Their marriage at St James Church, Melbourne was followed by the baptism of their ten week old daughter, Mary Ann Allen.

Eliza and William were lured to the gold fields and in 1850 a son was baptised in Kilmore. William was shearing sheep in Seymour and in 1855, when Elizabeth was aged thirty-one, she gave birth to a daughter, named Lucy. Lucy's birth record indicated that a son named William had been born before her and had already died. William was probably not their only child whose birth went unregistered, as that was not uncommon in country areas, or on the gold fields. They were living at Myers Flat, near Sandhurst (Bendigo) and their children, who Beverley is aware of at that time were: Elizabeth, Mary Ann, Ann, William and Lucy. At the time of Lucy's birth, her father, William, was aged forty three, and was working as

a butcher.

In 1861, six years after Lucy's birth, a child was born at Corfu Reef. In the birth record, William was aged 50 and although Elizabeth would have been 38, her age was given as 23. Her birth place was given as Sydney, not Glasgow, and it indicated that she had been married 2 years earlier in Castlemaine, not in 1848 at St James, Melbourne.

Beverley believes that William and Elizabeth's 14 year old daughter, Mary Ann, was the mother of this child and that Elizabeth, as informant on the birth record, was trying to disguise the fact. It was a few years before Mary Ann married a man named Charles Lewis.

Eliza Brison was said to have had fourteen pregnancies in twenty-two years. In 1865, she died of exhaustion during a protracted labour of two weeks. She was aged 40.

Charles Lewis was the informant named on his mother in law's death certificate. He provided false information, for reasons unknown, and he didn't include his wife's name amongst the list of Eliza's children. Eliza was buried at Waanyarra Cemetery in Victoria.

**Elaine Barry** – Bridget and Richard Barry arrived in the Port Phillip District on Christmas Eve 1841, having travelled from Ireland as Bounty passengers on the *Gilmour*, one of the last Bounty ships from Ireland.

Three years after their arrival Richard was working at the Port Albert wharf, transporting stock to Van Dieman's Land, to feed the convicts. Their first child, Richard was born in 1845 and their second child, Mary Ann, was born in December 1848. There was no regular minister, but a Roman Catholic priest occasionally came to the area from Portland, and whilst there was no birth registration for Mary Ann, she was baptised at Tarraville, Sale.

In 1864, aged 18, Mary Ann, with her parents' consent married William Wood McGregor. This caused a rift in their families due to religious prejudice. Their children were raised in the Presbyterian faith whilst Mary Ann remained a Catholic. The family shifted to Melbourne, then Bendigo, Greta, (Kelly territory) and Tarrawingee.

In 1890 they were in Wangaratta. Mary Ann was a

midwife and ran a small private hospital for women in Ovens Street. In 1898, Nurse McGregor moved to larger premises. Supported by her husband she built 'Aberfoyle' in Rowan Street. This was a 15 bed private hospital which she operated until her sudden death in 1909. The hospital reopened in 1912, managed by her daughter Jean, a graduate nurse at Wangaratta Hospital. Jean went overseas to nurse in 1918 and the hospital closed. The building is however still standing and is being renovated.

Mary Ann gave birth to twelve babies of whom nine survived. According to her obituary she was highly regarded. She attended many mothers when a doctor wasn't available and is said to have attended over 1,600 mothers, with only one unsuccessful case. Her obituary said she was kind, cheerful and not interested in world affairs.

**Carol Stals – Mary Gilbert – The Mother of Melbourne.** Mary's maiden name was Duff. She was born in Edinburgh, Scotland c1806. When she was 15 she married John Anderson and in 1826, she and her husband were convicted in Stirling, Scotland, of house breaking and theft, and were sentenced to seven years transportation. John was transported to New South Wales on the *Royal George* whilst Mary and her 15 month old son, Thomas, arrived in Van Diemen's land on the *Harmony*. John and Mary never saw each other again.

Mary was 4ft 11 inches and could read and write. She obtained her freedom on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1833 and met blacksmith James Gilbert who was a free settler. Their son James died in January 1835 and Mary was pregnant again when she and James arrived in Port Phillip on John Pascoe Fawcner's ship *Enterprize* in August 1835. The only female on board, she did the cooking for the eight men who they sailed with.

On December 29, 1835, she gave birth to John Melbourne Gilbert – the first European child born in Melbourne. She and James had two more sons, Charles Phillip, born 1837 and William born 1839. The whereabouts of the family is unknown until 1858 when the sons, John and William married in Geelong. They gave their address as Connewarre and their occupations as bullock drovers. Mary's husband James died in 1876 aged 63.

Mary then lived with her sons. In 1878 she was

travelling with them as they constructed fences in South Talbingo in the Snowy Mountains. They were living in bark gunyahs and had a campfire for cooking and warmth. Mary cared for her 5 year old grandson whilst the others were working. In an absolute tragedy, Mary's dress caught fire, whilst she was bending over the fire. Despite her little grandson putting out the fire by collecting water in a saucepan from a nearby creek, she died of her burns. She was 73. The Coroner's report on their squalid living conditions was a tad unfair as they were living and working in a dusty, remote, rugged and wild landscape, doing a job most would not be capable of doing.

Mary would be astonished to know that there is a sculpture commemorating her life in the Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne. (see front page)

**Rosalie Whalen** – Paulina Richter, the daughter of Christian and Frederica Richter was born in Prussia in 1823. In 1849 she married Johann August Schwerkolt (called August) in a civil ceremony in Hamburg. August was a Catholic and Paulina was Lutheran. They migrated to Australia on the *Emmi*, which departed from Hamburg and sailed non-stop to Port Phillip, arriving on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1849. There were 295 migrants on board, mostly vine dressers.

Six months after their arrival, Pauline gave birth to their first child, Emil. In order for him to be baptised, she and August had to be married again. This was carried out in St Francis Church in Melbourne and followed immediately by the baby's baptism.

August became a farmer in Northcote and as soon as

was possible he bought half an acre of land in Separation Street on which he built a house.

Paulina continued having children. Louis was born in 1852, although tragically he drowned in 1855. Augustus was born in 1854, Albert in 1857, and another son, born in 1858, was given the name Louis. Paulina was born in 1860 and John was born in 1861 but died of diarrhoea two months later. Not long afterwards, Paulina also died of diarrhoea.

August purchased 63 acres of land at Mitcham, and whilst Paulina was busy running the household, August began clearing the land to build a cottage. They appeared to be still living in Northcote when their next baby Richard was born in 1863. In 1865 however, when Carl Benno, Rosalie's grandfather was born, they were living at Mitcham. August used to walk between the two properties, a distance of twenty kilometres..

Four year old Richard was killed when a tree being felled (for fence posts) by his nine year old brother Louis, landed on him. Paulina gave birth to nine children of whom only five survived childhood. The four who died were buried in the German Cemetery in Separation Street, Northcote.

August was a successful farmer, timber cutter, charcoal burner, beekeeper, wine maker, vegetable grower, orchardist and dairyman. Paulina, like most farmer's wives would have not only handled all the household chores but would have been very involved in all aspects of running the farm.

She died in 1884 aged 61 and was buried at Box hill Cemetery. August remarried in 1885 to widow, Wilhelmina Oppel. He died in 1887.

**Contributed by Jan Hanslow PPPG Member No 1057.**



**erratum:** On page 7 of issue 227 it was incorrectly stated that Edward and Elizabeth CURR had eleven children when in fact they had fifteen.

Also, apologies to Jo O'Neil for mis-spelling her name.

The Editor

### PIONEER PROFILES VOL. 8

**Don't forget to submit your Pioneer Profiles for**

**Volume 8 to Beverley Jacobson at:**

**[info@portphillippioneersgroup.org.au](mailto:info@portphillippioneersgroup.org.au)**

**(see [www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au](http://www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au)  
for formatting and guidelines)**

## On Being a Volunteer

All voluntary organisations depend on people giving a little of their time and energy to help keep things running.

Volunteering:

- ◆ Benefits the community
- ◆ Promotes participation and personal growth because it is done freely for no financial reward
- ◆ Respects the rights, dignity and culture of other people
- ◆ Rewards the volunteer at the same time as it rewards those who are helped

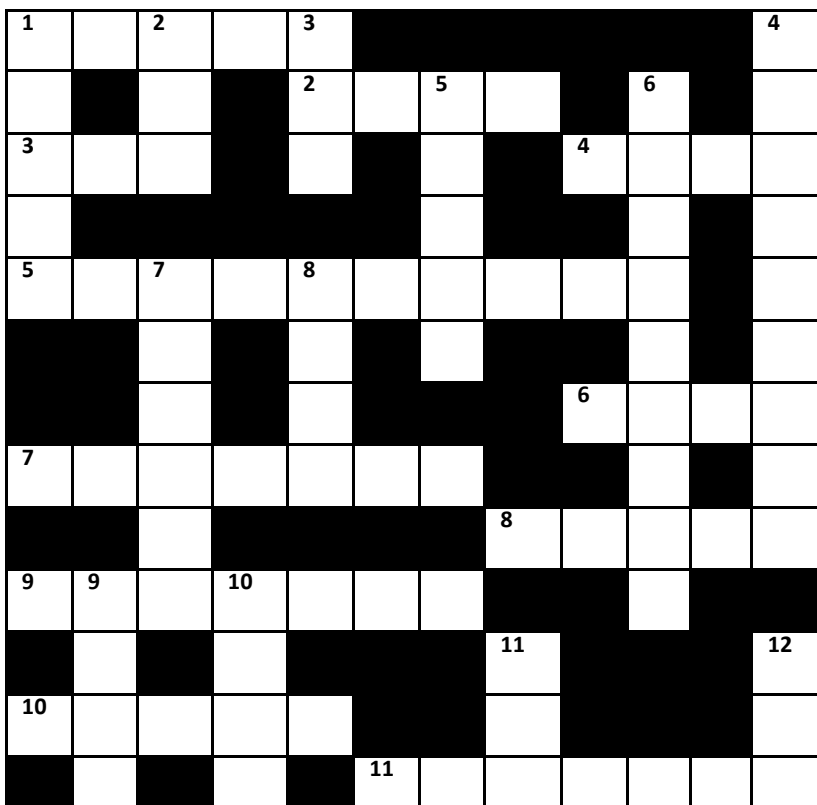


As well as the Executive and Ordinary Committee Members, the PPPG's 'Duty Staff' who

- greet you at the door
- collect money
- organise Zoom for the meetings
- prepare afternoon tea
- manage our library
- compile and produce our newsletter the *Pioneer Echo*
- summarise the speakers' presentations
- maintain the property register

are all volunteers who give their time freely to help our Group function.

***Without volunteers we cease to exist, so please consider becoming a volunteer for our Group.***



### PPPG CROSSWORD NO1.

#### ACROSS

1. Researchers love this online resource
2. Ailing/nauseous
3. Propel
4. Annum
5. P.P.D. Father of Separation
6. Steep/concoct
7. Mother of Melbourne, Mary .....
8. Petty officer on a merchant ship
9. Who surveyed Melbourne first? Robert Hoddle or Robert .....
10. Fortitude and determination
11. First inland town of Port Phillip District

#### DOWN:

1. First Victorian Governor, Charles La .....
2. Sharing word
3. A commoner considered to have gained the social position of a gentleman
4. Edmund Finn, reporter for the Herald, aka .....
5. Photo mosaic by Thomas .....
6. Melbourne's early name
7. 1841 First resident judge arrives - Judge .....
8. Aboriginal bora – initiation .....
9. Latin for wife
10. Barque/ brig
11. A rank in the army
12. Lyric poem

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Port Phillip Pioneers Group Inc. Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 13th May, 2023 at which time all Committee positions will be declared vacant. (see back page for time and address)

All financial members are eligible to be nominated for any of the following committee positions:

President  
Vice-President  
Honorary Secretary  
Honorary Treasurer  
Ordinary Committee Members

Nomination forms may be obtained from the Secretary or see below.

Completed nomination forms are to be delivered by 6th May, 2023 to

The Honorary Secretary  
Port Phillip Pioneers Group Inc.  
c/o 21 Apex Ave  
Hampton East VIC 3188

All Members are urged to give serious consideration to nomination for a Committee position.

PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC.

### NOMINATION FORM

#### ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARER/COMMITTEE PERSON FOR YEAR 2023

We ..... and .....  
(Proposer's Signature) (Seconder's Signature)

Hereby nominate ..... For the office of .....

I accept/decline this nomination

.....  
(Candidate's Signature)

POSITIONS VACANT: President - Vice-President - Honorary Secretary  
Honorary Treasurer - Ordinary Committee Members

PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC.

### PROXY FORM

I ..... Member No.....

am an apology for the Annual General Meeting/General Meeting\* on .....

and appoint as my proxy the PPPG Secretary/[name of member]\* .....

To vote on any matter arising as my proxy sees fit unless I have directed their vote as follows:

Resolution  
concerning.....support/oppose\*

.....  
[signed] [dated]

\*cross out which does not apply



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Next Meeting:</b>      | <b>Saturday 13 May 2023</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Speaker:</b>           | <b>Speaker:</b> Judith Buckrich<br><b>Topic:</b> Life on the Yarra River/Birrarung                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Hall Entry:</b>        | \$2.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Doors Open:</b>        | 1.30 pm. Sign in. Time to browse notice board, borrow library books, and chat.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Meeting Starts:</b>    | <b>2.00 pm.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Guest Speaker:</b>     | 2.30 pm.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Afternoon Tea:</b>     | 3.30 pm. Refreshments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Venue:</b>             | Wesley Hall, St. Andrew's Uniting Church,<br>cnr Burke and Malvern Rds, Gardiner.<br>Public Transport: Right on the route of the No 72 tram and only a short walk from the Gardiner Railway Station. Melways Reference: Map 59 H7.<br>or<br><b>Online via Zoom digital platform</b> |
| <b>Upcoming Meetings:</b> | <b>8 July 2023</b> – Elaine Race: George Coppin - the Father of Australian Theatre?<br><b>9 September 2023</b> - Liz Rushen: Garryowen - The Voice of Early Melbourne<br><b>11 Nov 2023</b> - Gary Presland: Earliest Contacts between Europeans and the Indigenous                 |

## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

|                    |                   |            |                            |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| PRESIDENT          | BARBARA HAWKINS   | 0447582193 | barbh27@bigpond.com        |
| VICE PRESIDENT     | PAUL CRONIN       |            | croninpj@outlook.com       |
| HONORARY SECRETARY | STUART HAMILTON   | 0414300505 | stuarth138@gmail.com       |
| HONORARY TREASURER | DEAN WHEELER      | 0411526002 | dwheelerpppg@gmail.com     |
| COMMITTEE MEMBER   | ANNE BEVIS        | 0423028639 | bevishome11@gmail.com      |
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| COMMITTEE MEMBER   | BRONWYN QUINT     |            | bquint1@bigpond.com        |
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| WEBMASTER          | STURT HAMILTON    | 0414300505 | stuarth138@gmail.com       |

## Representatives from other States/Countries:

USA Mr. Ken McNaughton, 3778 College Ave, Ellicott City, MD 21043 [kjmcn@comcast.net](mailto:kjmcn@comcast.net)

### **PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC.**

A Member Society of the G.S.V. Inc.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** [www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au](http://www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au)

**CONTACT DETAILS:** 21 Apex Ave, Hampton East, 3188

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Dianne Wheeler

[pppgdiw@gmail.com](mailto:pppgdiw@gmail.com)

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINES :** At least 1 month prior to meeting date

All articles and information contained in this Newsletter are accepted in good faith and the Port Phillip Pioneers Group Inc. takes no responsibility for the content and accuracy contained therein.