



Apr - May 2025
Volume 48, No 2

PIONEER ECHO

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR PAST

Newsletter No: 238

GEORGIANA HUNTLY MCCRAE

(1804–1890)



Georgiana was a woman of strong character, exceptional education, wit, charm and cultivated taste, and was a significant figure in the early days of settlement in Victoria. Turn to page three for more about Georgiana.

Have you heard of the ‘University of Arthur’s Seat’? Turn to page four for more details.

PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC.

Inc. No. A0022862G / ABN: 79 213 729 409

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

**Port
Phillip
Pioneers
Group**



**Left: Georgiana McCrae
self-portrait, 1824**

(La Trobe Picture Collection, State
Library of Victoria)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President’s Report.....	2
Georgiana McCrae.....	3 & 4
John McLure and the University of Arthur’s Seat.....	5
Calendar of Events.....	8

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

• New Members.....	2
• PPPG Puzzle #5 answers	5
• Website Update.....	6
• Library news.....	7
• PPPG Puzzle #6.....	7
• Feedback Forum	7

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Autumn has finally arrived and it is time for the Group to refresh its Committee. May is our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and if anyone would like to be involved in the planning for the Group's activities for the year ahead (and beyond), would you please let me know even on the day of the meeting.

Notice of the AGM and nomination forms for the election of office bearers and committee members including proxy forms are attached to this email or for those members who don't have email, a copy will be mailed to them with their newsletter.

The finances are in good shape, the website and Facebook are up and running and our history is alive and well.

Our Vice-President Beverley Jacobson went to Brisbane a few weeks ago for the 17th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry and 5th History Queensland State Conference 2025. I shall let Bev talk about the buzz of Brisbane, but it shows that interest in history is still significant.

For us, knowing how to research and put our various stories together is an important part of history and our guest speaker will provide invaluable help. The topic for Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FRHSV is Local and International Historical Sources and Resources you might not have used in local/family research. As our website advertises, this is a practical workshop and not to be missed.

The next meeting is 2pm Saturday 10 May 2025. For the people using zoom, we hope that being back in our usual hall, we will get the audio/visual balance right.

Paul Cronin

President

NEW MEMBERS

PPPG NO	Member Name	Descended From	Details	Date	Ship or other means
1579	Nicole WHITFIELD	Peter HOLLAND	Arr. P.P.D.	Dec 1841	<i>Bracken Moor</i>

WALK A MILE IN THEIR SHOES

Have you ever thought about what will happen to all your ancestral research? Will all your hard work be lost to recycling as waste paper?

Consider sharing your stories so other Members can walk a mile in your ancestor's shoes and enjoy your hard work by submitting an article to the *Pioneer Echo*.

Email your contribution to the editor Dianne Wheeler at: pppgdiw@gmail.com

Georgiana Huntly McCRAE

Georgiana Huntly **McCRAE** (1804-1890), artist and diarist, was born on 15 March 1804, in London, the illegitimate daughter of George, Marquis of Huntly and Jane Graham of Rockmoor.

She was a good linguist, an accomplished musician and a talented artist. She studied at the Royal Academy and in 1820-21 won medals for a miniature and a group of portraits in water-colours.

After leaving school she lived for about seven years at Gordon Castle, where she was acknowledged and treated as the duke's daughter. After a failed romance Georgiana went to live in Edinburgh, with high hopes of making a good income from portrait painting. She painted 15 portraits at Gordon Castle in 1827-29 and 35 at Edinburgh in 1829-30.

On 25 September 1830 Georgiana married Andrew Murison **McCRAE** (1800-1874) at Gordon Castle, a writer to the signet and a kinsman of the Gordons.

In 1834 they moved to London where Andrew practised law at Westminster. He decided to emigrate but sailed alone on the ship *Royal Saxon* reaching Sydney in March 1839. In 1840 he travelled to Port Phillip, where his brother, Dr Farquhar **McCRAE**, and family, his mother and two sisters, had arrived from Scotland in June 1839. Georgiana was unwell after the birth of her fourth child so she followed Andrew at a later date. She embarked with her four sons in October 1840 on the *Argyle* and landed at Port Phillip on 1 March 1841.

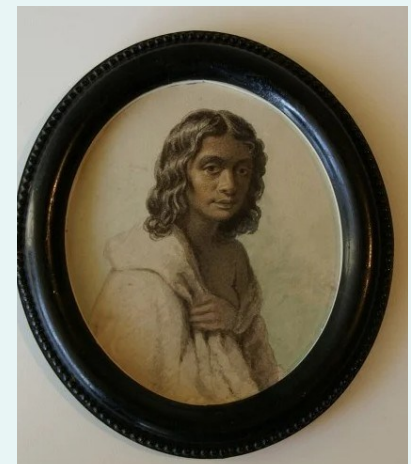
In February 1842 the family moved to *Mayfield*, on the Yarra River (near Studley Park), designed by Georgiana and described as '*one of the first superior houses erected in the Colony*'. Due to financial difficulties *Mayfield* was sold and Andrew took up a pastoral run at Arthur's Seat near Dromana. They built a house, also designed by Georgiana, in which the family lived from 1845 to 1851.

Georgiana was acknowledged by other runholders as a useful drover and was renowned as a 'medicine woman'. She painted Bunerong woman **ELIZA**, her '*particular friend*', who, with her partner **BENBENJIE**, taught Georgiana and her son George words from their language which they wrote in a document they called *Lexicon*. Georgiana was also a close friend of Lieutenant-Governor Charles **La TROBE** and his wife **Sophie**.

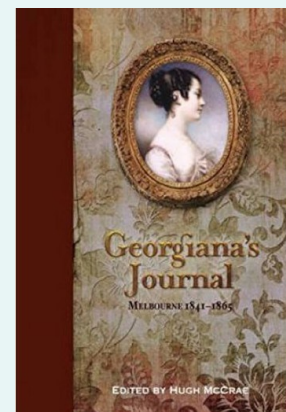
Barely able to sustain his family, Andrew abandoned squatting to become police magistrate at Alberton (Gippsland), then at Barrow's Inn, Hepburn, Creswick, and finally for seventeen years at Kilmore. The marriage was not a happy one. Georgiana did not accompany him in these moves but lived with her children in Melbourne. Andrew retired in 1867 and travelled to Britain for seven years. He returned to Australia and died at Hawthorn in 1874. Georgiana died



Andrew Murison **McCRAE**
aged 30— a miniature by Georgiana Huntly **McCRAE** c. 1830
Source: SLV



Portrait depicting Bunerong woman **Eliza** by Georgiana Huntly **McCRAE** - 1845
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au>



Georgiana's Journal,
Melbourne, 1841—1865
Edited by Hugh **McCRAE**,
Grandson of the diarist

GEORGIANA HUNTLY McCRAE

on 24 May 1890 at Hawthorn and was buried at Boroondara cemetery Kew with her husband Andrew.

Georgiana does not seem to have painted many portraits after she came to Australia. On 8 February 1845 she wrote in her Journal: *'There is a living to be had here through my art of miniature painting, for which I have several orders in hand; but dare not oppose the family wishes that "money must not be made in that way"'*

According to an obituary by Alexander Sutherland, *'It was largely due to the influence of such women as Mrs McCRAE that ideas of refinement and principles of taste were kept alive during the "dark ages" of our colonial history'*.



Grave of Georgiana Huntly **McCRAE** at the Boroondara Cemetery, Kew
Source: findagrave.com

Andrew and Georgiana **McCRAE** had issue :

1. Elizabeth McCrae 1831 – 1834 Scot.
2. George Gordon **McCRAE** 1833 Scot. – 1927 Victoria (Vic)
3. William Gordon **McCRAE** 1835 Scot. – 1926 Vic.
4. Alexander Gordon (Sandy) **McCRAE** 1836 Scot. – 1923 QLD
5. Farquar Peregrine (Perry) **McCRAE** 1838 Scot. – 1915 N.S.W.
6. Lucia Georgiana Gordon **McCRAE** 1841 P.P.D. – 1908 Vic.
7. Margaret Martha **McCRAE** 1844 P.P.D.– 1914 Vic.
8. Octavia Frances Gordon **McCRAE** – 1847 P.P.D.– 1941 Vic.
9. Agnes Thomasine Gordon **McCRAE** 27 Mar 1851 – 1854 Vic.

Georgiana left recollections of her childhood and adolescence in journals and the one that covered the years 1838-48, was edited by Hugh McCrae and published in 1934 with the title *Georgiana's Journal*.

Source: <https://adb.anu.edu.au>
(*Australian Dictionary of Biography*)

An obituary written by Henry G. Turner in *The Argus*, 7 June 1890 on page 3 describes Melbourne when Georgiana **McCRAE** arrived in Port Phillip in 1841.

“This year was known to old colonists as the great immigration year. At its commencement the whole population of the Port Phillip district did not number 10,000, about half those being resident in and around Melbourne. The close of the year saw the population nearly doubled, upwards of 40 vessels having landed ... during the year. Up to this date nearly all the previous arrivals had been from Tasmania or New South Wales...

Naturally such a rush of newcomers outpaced all provision that could be made for their accommodation and greatly intensified the discomforts to be encountered.”

The article gives us a graphic picture of the Melbourne to which the **McCRAE** family were introduced in 1841- “Flinders-street a bog of rich black mud, where a few stumpy houses and mean shops faced the ti-tree scrub that lined the river's bank; Collins-street so cut up by the heavy traffic that even bullock teams avoided it for fear of being bogged in its treacherous depths; Bourke-street a series of gullies, rivulets, ponds and bogs, the avoidance of which was rendered almost impossible by the closeness of the abundant stumps and Elizabeth-street simply the bed of a creek, which in wet weather often cut off communication with the eastern end of the town. Not a cheerful place of residence to contemplate with a large and young family but Georgiana soon made her surroundings a pleasant home.”

Georgiana Huntly **McCRAE** was a colonist of almost 50 years. She died at Hawthorn, in her 87th year and left behind her four sons who came out with her in 1841, and three out of four daughters born since her arrival in Port Phillip. Her husband Andrew pre-deceased her by 16 years. The eldest son, George Gordon **McCRAE** was well known as a poet.

Contributed by: Dianne Wheeler PPPG Member No. 1505

JOHN MCLURE and THE UNIVERSITY OF ARTHUR'S SEAT

John **McLURE**, 25, teacher arrived at Port Jackson, Sydney, New South Wales on 24 January 1838 as a cabin passenger on the *Brilliant* which departed Tobermory, Isle of Mull, Scotland on 27 September 1837 with 312 emigrants on board.

Arriving in Melbourne in 1838 he found employment as a teacher. His first position was at a private school in Windsor then at Scots School, a government-subsidized school in Collins Street attended by both boys and girls.

John **McLURE** was hired by Andrew **McCRAE** as a tutor for his four sons during their childhood commencing in Melbourne in 1842 and later at the **McCRAE** homestead on the Mornington Peninsula in 1844.

The small slab hut roofed with thatch stood a short distance from where the **McCRAE** homestead was being constructed on the lower slopes of Arthur's Seat. At one end was a massive chimney tapering upwards, a doorway at the other and a small window. It was the schoolroom for the **McCRAE** brothers and their tutor's hut. They called it 'The University of Arthur's Seat.'

Evenings were spent playing charades and he composed nonsense rhymes and word games for the children. He and the children sang songs while Georgiana accompanied them on the piano. McLure loved the outdoors and he encouraged the boys to explore their surroundings, to learn the names of plants, birds and animals they encountered.

In 1851 Georgiana **McCRAE** and her children moved back to Melbourne after five years on the Peninsula, whilst Andrew and his son Sandy went to Alberton where he took up the position as Police Magistrate. This led to the parting of the ways between **McLURE** and the **McCRAE** family. **McLURE** took up a position of Clerk of Courts at Pleasant Creek near Stawell in Central Victoria until his death in 1859 aged 42. He was buried in the Deep Lead cemetery, a short distance from town but a long way from his 'University of Arthur's Seat.' His protégés remembered their tutor. The four McCrae brothers erected a memorial at his gravesite to express their esteem and affection. (see right)

Sources:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au>

<https://issuu.com/peninsulaessence>

Right: The University of Arthur's Seat

Illustration by Georgiana McCrae.

Source: SLV



John McLure

Source: <https://peninsulaessence.com.au>



George **McCRAE**'s childhood drawing of a corroboree—
Source: nla.gov.au



In 2019, the headstone and attached marble tribute by the **McCRAE** brothers 'in testimony of their affectionate regard and esteem for the tutor and friend of their childhood and riper years' were restored by the Peninsula Branch of the National Trust.

<https://issuu.com/peninsulaessence>

An Update on our Website

Our website is a source of a wealth of material on the history of the Port Phillip District and the life of our pioneer ancestors. Remember to check it out whether you are doing more research on those pioneers, checking for possible additional ancestors, or just broadening your knowledge of early Victoria.

Most of the information on it is available just for members, but the member section of the site is easily available with a simple log on. Your Username (which cannot be changed) is your member number, and the password assigned to you (which you can change) is your surname.

Within the members area you will find a section called Member Resources which you can most easily access from the box at the top right-hand side of the site once you have logged in.

The single largest resource is the 'Record of References to Pioneers', research done by our former President Lester Stephen. The resource contains a page which explains what this is all about (basically as indicated by its name a colossal repository of all the references Lester could find to every person present in the Port Phillip District before separation). There is a guide showing how to use it, an index to all the names (which it is essential to use) plus a supplement listing information provided by members who joined after Lester was forced to stop compiling his Record through ill health. The whole is an invaluable source of material for researchers and those interested in the life of the District.

Apart from the Record the Resources section, it contains copies of and links to an enormous range of other material, organised according to whether it relates to aids to research ('Methods & Sources'), specific pioneers, the overall history of the district, ships, locations, members and former members and the always worth looking at Miscellany. Items relevant to more than one topic will appear several times

Many of these items were originally articles in our Newsletter, Pioneer Echo, but there are many other items also. A recent addition is *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne* by Garryowen. We list additions in the Member News section of the website (see the banner heading towards the top of the page once you have logged in) under Just Added to Our Posts. Other headings under Member News shows recent additions to our Library (the full Library catalogue can be found in Methods & Sources).

We don't forget potential members – there are some teasers in the front open section of our website, such as a list of all pioneers claimed by members, which may of course be of interest to you too (see About Us>The Port Phillip District).

Contributed by Stuart Hamilton PPPG Member No. 1454

NEWS FROM THE KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Of special interest is an exhibition during the 2025 Australian Heritage Festival.

Taking place in April and May, the Society is presenting a wonderful collection of items in an exhibition titled *200 Years of Wedding Fashion*.

This exhibition in the Villa Alba Museum in Walmer Street, Kew will feature some very beautiful costumes from the Society's collection.

Bookings are required and are now open.

Here is the link:

<https://www.villaalbamuseum.org/events/>

PPPG PUZZLE # 5 Answers

(from the PPPG Puzzler Di Wheeler)

J	P	W	X	C	A	H	I	R	L	T
A	A	N	B	V	H	Y	E	R	Q	E
N	D	Y	A	C	R	O	G	Y	F	E
E	E	D	V	M	M	M	Q	Q	X	E
C	M	T	W	N	T	A	Y	C	D	G
Q	E	N	D	F	U	S	B	T	Y	N
Q	L	A	J	Y	Q	P	A	F	D	I
P	Q	T	C	D	A	L	X	Q	X	K
E	N	A	U	S	Q	U	P	L	H	L
R	A	U	Q	W	Q	H	A	X	M	A
K	U	L	A	B	Q	I	T	Q	W	W

Did you find the hidden word for a small hopping marsupial?

PADEMELON

CAHIR
WALKINGFEET
HOASTMAN
JANECOOPER
HOWQUA
WOTJOBALUK

FEEDBACK FORUM

The Editor is always happy to receive feedback and here is an email I received recently from one of our Members. (reprinted with permission)



Hello Dianne,

I was most interested to read your article about Dick A Dick and Lost in the Bush.

I grew up at Nurcoun, so it was a well known story. We all read it in our Grade Four Reader.

The children were found in Nurcoun on land that my ancestors were settled on for a while, before the ancestors moved a few miles west to land which was still owned by my family.

A memorial was placed where the children were found in Nurcoun in recent years and the main one on the Natimuk-Frances Road near Duffholme/Spring Hill was erected in 1934. In August 2014, an Anniversary of 150 years for Lost In The Bush was held.

In 1973 while I was attending Horsham High School a film was produced by the Education Department. Our principal's wife acted in it as did some locals and other actors. Gabrielle Bulle, Colin Freckleton, Richard McClelland, Barbara Maroske, Adrian Crick etc.

I've just rewatched it on U-Tube but noted that where the children were found on a salt lake, I don't think was quite accurate.

Dick A Dick came from a station near Harrow. Harrow is known as the first inland settlement in Victoria.

Thank you for your Article.

Ruth O'Connor

PPPG Member No. 1292

FROM THE EDITOR

The Pioneer Echo is always keen to accept contributions from our members. Consider sharing your stories so others can enjoy your passion by submitting an article to the Editor Di Wheeler at:

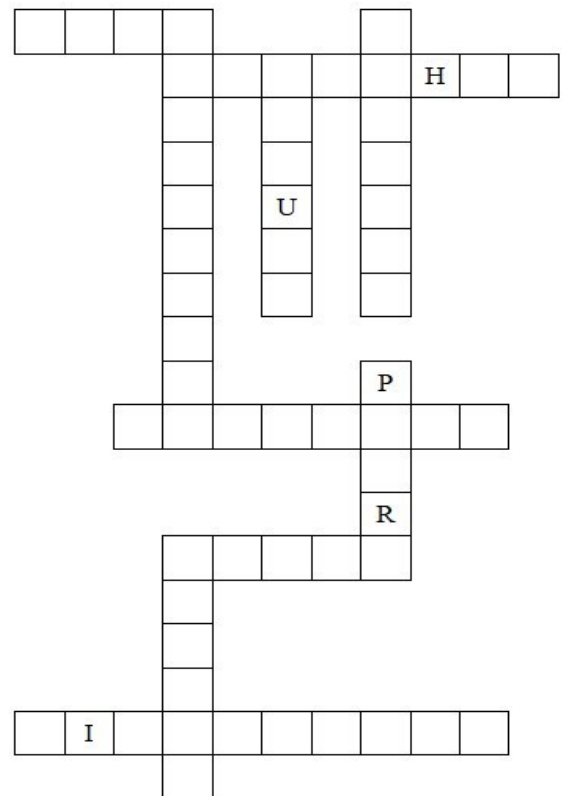
pppgdiw@gmail.com



The Victorian BDM Registry are offering uncertified historical certificates (a scanned image of a certificate which is not valid for official purposes) \$22.50 each. If you buy an uncertified image, you can download it immediately.

PPPG PUZZLE # 6

(from the PPPG Puzzler Di Wheeler)



- cemetery where Georgiana McCrae was buried
- Dr Rosalie Triolo
- Georgiana McCrae painted these
- John McLure's home was a _____ hut.
- name of the McCrae family home on the Yarra River
- the nickname of fifth child of Andrew and Georgiana McCrae
- tutor for the McCrae children
- University of _____ Seat.
- which son went to Alberton with his father Andrew McCrae?
- wife of Governor La Trobe



LIBRARY NEWS

Volunteers are now in the process of sorting our library books with the intention of placing them in a glass cabinet at the rear of the hall making them more easily seen and accessible .

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday: 10 May, 2025

Speaker: Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FRHSV

Topic: Local and international historical sources and resources you might not have used in local/family research

Saturday: 12 July 2025

Speaker: Richard Broome

Topic: Land Management from Deep Time to 1851

MEETING VENUE

Hall Entry: \$2.00

Doors Open: 1.30 pm. Sign in. Time to browse notice board, borrow library books, and chat.

Meeting Starts: 2.00 pm.

Guest Speaker: 2.30 pm.

Afternoon Tea: 3.30 pm.

Venue: Wesley Hall, St. Andrew's Unit-ing Church, cnr Burke and Malvern Roads, Gardiner.

Melways Reference: Map 59 H7.

Or Online via Zoom digital platform

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESIDENT	PAUL CRONIN		croninpj@outlook.com
VICE PRESIDENT	BEVERLEY JACOBSON		jacobsonbeverley@gmail.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
COMMITTEE MEMBER	BRONWYN QUINT		bquint1@bigpond.com
COMMITTEE MEMBER	NICK WAKELING		nick.wakeling@gmail.com
COMMITTEE MEMBER	SUSANNE WHEELAHAN		seagull@bigpond.net.au
COMMITTEE MEMBER	MARNEY BUTLER-JONES	0419119611	marneyejones@gmail.com
EXAMINER OF PROOFS	MARNEY BUTLER-JONES	0419119611	marneyejones@gmail.com
WEBMASTER	STUART HAMILTON	0414300505	stuarth138@gmail.com

Representatives from other States/Countries:

USA Mr. Ken McNaughton, 3778 College Ave, Ellicott City, MD 21043 kjmcn@comcast.net

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au

CONTACT DETAILS: 21 Apex Ave,
Hampton East, 3188

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Dianne Wheeler - pppgdiw@gmail.com

Newsletter Deadline : 10 June 2025

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.. For formatting and guidelines for articles see **www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au**