

Port Phillip Pioneers Group Inc.

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

A.C.N.: A0022862G

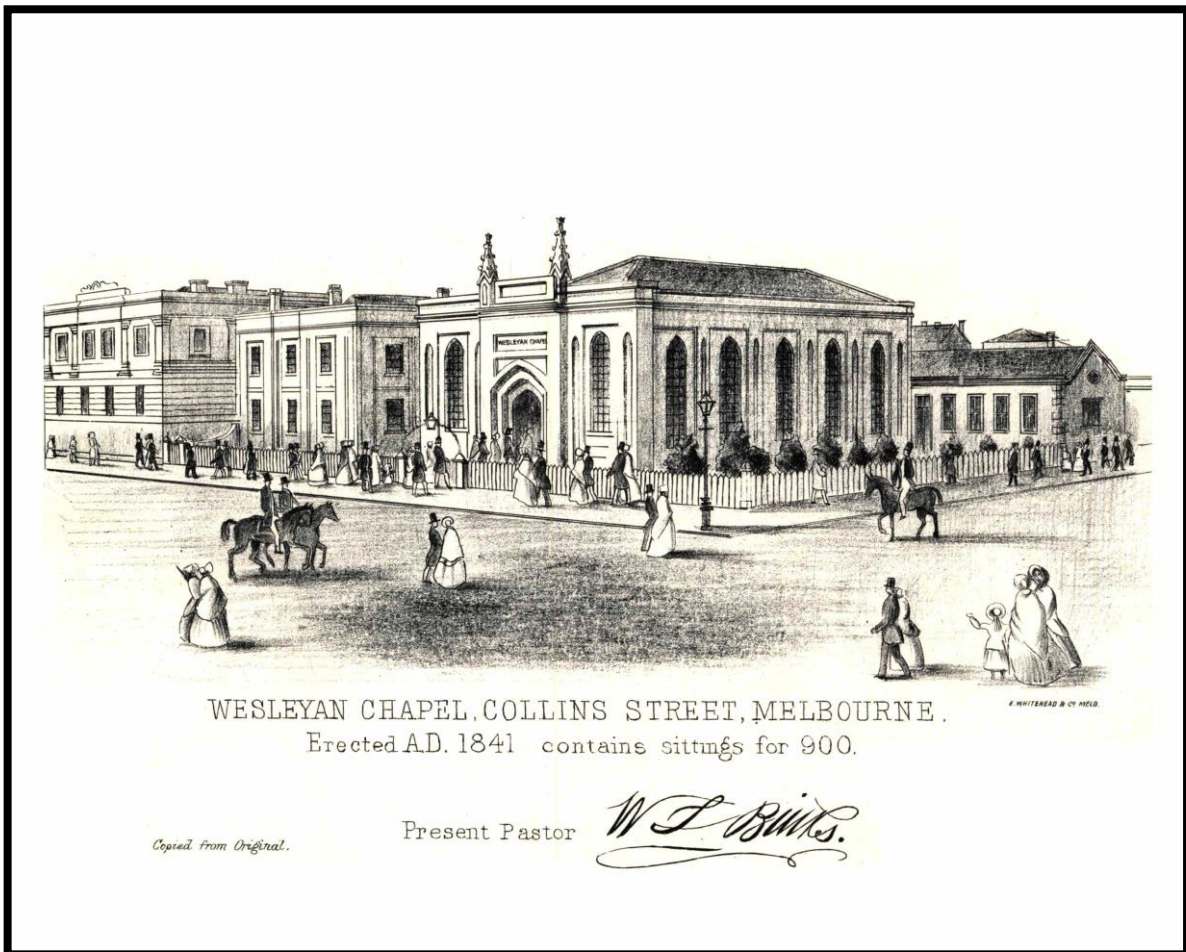
We look forward to your past



Newsletter No: 209

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June - July 2019



The Wesleyan Chapel measuring 57 feet long, 47 feet wide and 24 feet high was designed by John Jones Peers and built at a cost of £3,000. The Rev. Hurst laid the foundation stone on 11 May 1840, and the first service was conducted there on 24 June 1841, although the building was not completed until 1847.

Ten years later the Wesleyans sold the site for nearly £40,000, using the proceeds to build the present Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street.

Read more on the Wesleyan Church and its people on page 7.

PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au

Group Report.

Hello members and friends.

The A.G.M. resulted in a few changes in positions of the committee members. Everyone is still on the committee, but some are in different roles.

President. I, Barb Hawkins took over the role and Jessie Handoll is now Vice President, thanks Jessie for serving six years in this position.

Secretary. Marilla James has retired from this role after fourteen years, thank you for all your work on many levels Marilla. Bev Jacobson has taken over from Marilla, thanks Bev. Marilla will continue as Editor of Pioneer Profiles.

Examiner of Proofs. Clare Bayne has retired from this position after doing it a second term in this role..

Thank you, Clare for your work, including updating the forms required; and Anne Bevis has taken on this position, thank you Anne.

Another change is the person who greets you on arrival at the meetings. Val Farley has done this for many years but is unable to continue, Bronwyn Quint is replacing her.

A big thank you to both these ladies and everyone who helps as we could not run the Group without you.

Looking forward to meeting at a meeting soon.

Barb Hawkins, Newsletter Editor and President.

λ Welcome to the following Members λ

No	Member	Desc. From	Details	Date	Ship or other means
1468 a)	Peter WESTRUP	a) William Hixson and b) Elizabeth nee REID McDONALD c) William Hixson McDONALD JR.	Arr. PPD Arr. PPD	February 13 1847	"Lillias" From V.D.L
1469 a)	Keith GRAHAM	a) Thomas GRAHAM	Arr. PPD	Court documents Arrived prior to 1837	Arrived from Port Jackson
1470	Peter ARKELL	a) Horatio Nelson and b) Janetta nee RITCHIE CARRINGTON c) James 4 yrs	Arr. PPD	January 1839	Arrived on "Abercrombie" From Port Jackson

2019

Meeting Dates

July 13
September 14
November 9

Newsletter Deadlines

August 13, August - September
October 8, October - November

All correspondence for newsletter items must be sent to Barb Hawkins,
email barbh27@bigpond.com

JOHN AITKEN OF MOUNT AITKEN

John Aitken was a pioneer sheepbreeder and leading flockmaster in the Port Phillip District, having first arrived at Melbourne on 19 August 1835 on the "**Endeavour**" from Launceston, Van Diemen's Land. He went back to Launceston later that month but returned to Port Phillip on 1 April 1836 per "**Chili**" with a flock of sheep which were landed at Arthur's Seat with heavy losses. After giving the surviving sheep time to recuperate he drove his flock up to Melbourne and then north-west to what is now the Sunbury area. Here he established the 'Mount Aitken' run which became renown for its Saxon Merino sheep.

In the census of 9 November 1836 he was described as being located near the Salt Water River, about 20 miles from Captain William Lonsdale's HQ in Melbourne. There were four males over 12 years on the property and their residence was still a tent. They had one horse and 1,000 sheep with Aitken acting as agent for Edmund and Francis Bryant as well as on his own account.

When Governor Richard Bourke visited Melbourne from Sydney in March 1837 he rode inland and included a stay at the 'Mount Aitken' on his tour. John Aitken was able to act as guide for the Governor's party to the top of Mount Macedon where they viewed the surrounding countryside.

In early 1838 while Aitken was visiting the station of Mr. Howey he became involved in the capture of an escaped convict named Comerford who had arrived there armed with a rifle and demanding a horse. Fortunately another convict named Charles Cole who was working on Mr. Howey's station as a stockkeeper was able to help overpower Comerford and recapture him for which Cole received a conditional pardon.

Then, on 14 April 1838 Aitken and his servants were confronted by a group of about 40 aborigines at 'Mount Aitken.' The aborigines were armed with spears and three guns. Aitken was able to bluff them into believing that he had more servants about and get them to retreat behind a rock. He then rode around behind them and with the assistance of a Mr. White was able to get two of the guns from the aborigines, after which they went away.

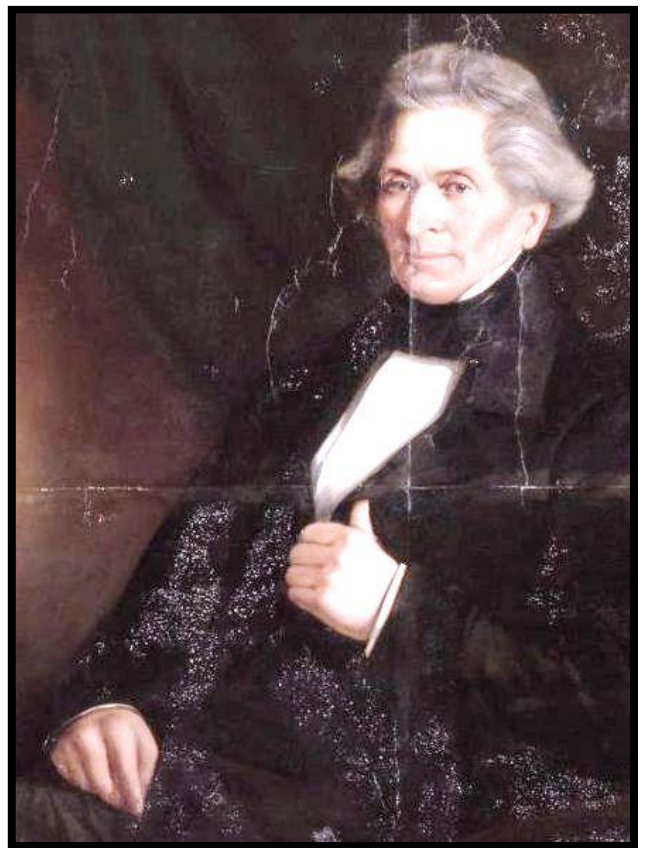
In April 1840 Aitken married Emmaline Stright Jane Harvey and over the following years had five daughters and a son.

When the 1841 census was taken there were 19 people living Duck Ponds, Mount Aitken. Besides John Aitken, his wife and newborn daughter there were 16 single men working there, mainly shepherds and stockmen, and including one convict on private assignment. They had by that time constructed a wooden house.

Aitken's sheep were consistently fetching high prices at sales and in 1842 he won half of the awards at the second Melbourne Show.

In 1850 Aitken lost part of his 'Mount Aitken' estate when William John Turner Clarke obtained a 'Special Survey' in the area, after which Aitken purchased the 'Mount Elephant No. 2' run and stocked it with sheep from 'Mount Aitken.'

A public subscription in 1854 raised the money for a portrait of John Aitken to be painted by artist Francis Frederic Hutton with the intention that it would be hung in the Melbourne Town Hall. This painting is now in the 'City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.'



In 1858 Aitken was in declining health. In mid July of that year he sailed from Melbourne on the "**Emeu**" for Suez en route to England but died shortly after arriving in London.

John Aitken was born on 20 April 1792 and baptised on 10 May 1792 at Kirknewton and East Calder, Midlothian, Scotland, the son of James Aitken and his wife Margaret, nee Brown. His family is thought to have been connected with the nearby Listonshiels Farm, near Balerno. He is thought to have arrived in Van Diemen's Land about 1825 and by 1833 was farming near Oatlands, V.D.L.

Continued on page 6

Val Wilkinson – Mary Gilbert and the First White Child Born in Melbourne.

Mary Duff, her husband John Anderson along with John's brother Hugh Anderson and his wife Sally Robertson, had been on the road for six weeks. They had travelled to East Linton where the men had been shearing, although they were weavers by trade, and were returning to Edinburgh via Queensferry, Linlithgow and Bo'ness.

On the Doune Road near Drip Bridge they were arrested for stealing clothing from the Porters Lodge at Craigforth House. The only piece of clothing found on them was a 'neck' or collar, from a gown which the Porter swore belonged to his wife.

They were incarcerated at Tollbooth Prison in Stirling and at their trial on 22 September 1826 they were convicted of theft by house breaking and sentenced to seven years transportation.

John and Hugh Anderson were sent to the prison hulk '*Justitia*' in Woolwich. Hugh died there in 1828. His wife Sally/Sarah Robertson was transported to Sydney on the '*Louisa*' in 1827. She spent time at the Parramatta Female Factory and gained her certificate of freedom in November 1833.

After serving some time on the hulk, John Anderson was transported to Moreton Bay where he completed his sentence and received his certificate of freedom in November 1833. He was then given four years at the Newcastle Harbour stockade for house breaking.

Mary Duff (it was the Scottish custom for women to be called by their maiden name) already had a child, but was probably pregnant again when arrested. In 1828 with a 15 month old son, Thomas Duff she boarded the convict ship '*Harmony*' for its voyage to Hobart. The ship arrived on 14th January 1829 and the female convicts were the first group to go directly from a ship to the Cascade Female Factory.

At the prison there was a nursery so that the women could work. Mary was assigned to Donald McLeod, but was sentenced to bread and water on 15 occasions for absenting herself from work. Her head was also shaved. In May 1831, she spent a whole night with ex-convict Thomas Thomas in his hut and was given three months in detention. In 1832 she made an application to marry Thomas but permission was not granted probably because she was already married to John Anderson.

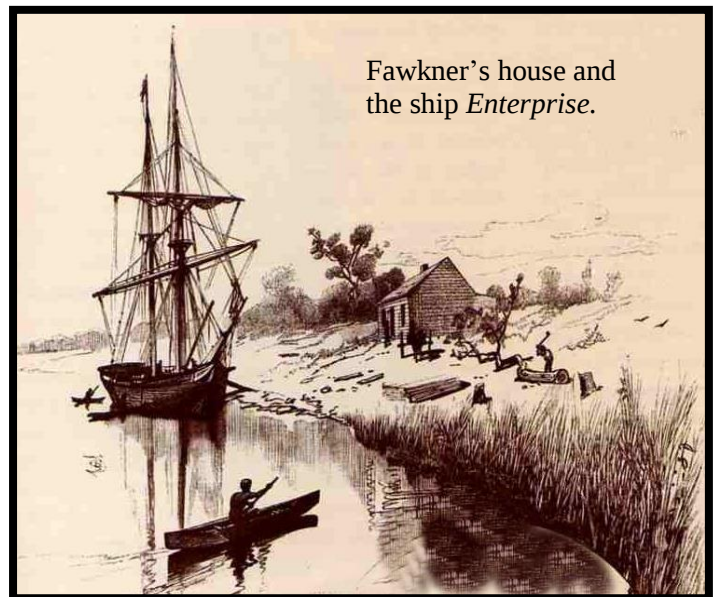
In June 1829 Mary's son Thomas Duff had died and Mary's behaviour deteriorated. From July 1833 she was kept in a working cell until her release in September 1833.

Prison records describe Mary as 4 foot 11 inches tall, brown hair and eyes, with a sallow complexion. She had a flattened 'awry' nose and a large scar on her right arm. She was 23.

When Mary was released in 1833 she was in the company of James Gilbert, blacksmith. They were living in Hobart when a son, James died in 1835 aged 12 months.

John Pascoe Fawkner engaged John Gilbert as horse shoer and blacksmith, to come to Port Phillip in July 1835. Mary was engaged as a servant.

On 29th December 1835, in Melbourne, Mary gave birth to a son, John Melbourne Gilbert. Fawkner was thrilled and said he would grant them land, however he had no authority to do so.



Fawkner's house and the ship *Enterprise*.

Source: Victorian Souvenir Edition. Our first 50 years 1835-1885.

In February 1838, Mary was charged with the theft of eight pounds and was said to be keeping a 'rough' house. As there was no supreme court in Melbourne she had to travel by ship to Sydney where she spent 10 months in gaol before the case was dismissed.

Mary and James Gilbert had three more children: Charles Phillip Gilbert (1839), Eliza (1845) and another child, William, whose birth date is unclear.

In April 1858, John Melbourne Gilbert married Harriet Elizabeth Heath at Christ Church, Geelong and a few weeks later his brother Charles Phillip Gilbert married Amelia Rebecca Quick at the same church. Both men were bullock drivers. Their parents Mary Duff and James Gilbert were witnesses to the marriages.

The family moved to Lexton Springs where Mary Gilbert assisted at the births of two of Charles' children in 1859 and 1861. Charles moved to the Murray district and later to New South Wales where more children were born in Wagga Wagga and Young.

Mary and James Gilbert's son, William married Jane Wainwright in Young in 1871, giving his occupation as 'stockman on Berthong'. At that date Berthong was owned by John King of Wagga Wagga.

In 1872, Berthong Station, Wallendbeen, near Young, with over 18,000 sheep was sold to James Gibb who came from Penshurst, Victoria.

The Gilberts continued their work under the new ownership. Under a system of land purchase called 'conditional purchase' land was often bought under the name of a 'dummy'. James Gibb took up 120 acres in the name of John Melbourne Gilbert and 120 acres in the name of William Gilbert. A few years later the land was transferred back to James Gibb.

James Gilbert died unexpectedly of a brain haemorrhage at Berthong in July 1876. He was said to be aged 63.

Stock on Berthong was moved in the summer months to a property at South Talbingo, on the Tumut River, near Mt Kosciusko. William Gilbert and John Melbourne Gilbert were sent there to build fences, 'log and chock' and brush etc. This was a very remote, lonely area, heavily timbered. With William and John were William's wife Jane, their five year old son, John Robert Gilbert, and their mother Mary Gilbert.

The Gilberts moved along as they built the fences, sleeping in gunyas and staying near water. In September 1877, Jane gave birth to a baby who died, and Jane died soon afterwards. They were buried at Sth Talbingo.

In 1878, James Gibb purchased Yarrangobilly North Run, which adjoined Sth Talbingo. Whilst the men were out fencing, Mary looked after her grandson. On Saturday 16 February 1878, when she was tending a fire, her dress caught alight. Her little grandson threw water on her but Mary's burns were too bad and sadly she died.

The coroner's report was damning. He hadn't seen such neglect and misery. Mary had no clothing other than what she was wearing. Her bedding was a bed of leaves and strips of blanket. Her skin was filthy. The men didn't know their own ages, and they couldn't read or write.

Whether this was a fair report is debatable. They were after all fencing in remote bush. They were continuously moving and so carried little with them. Conditions could be dusty or very wet. John Melbourne Gilbert definitely knew his birth date – he knew he was the first child born in Melbourne. With the horror of their mother's death, perhaps they just momentarily

couldn't remember their ages. Mary Gilbert was buried in an unknown spot at South Talbingo.

John Melbourne Gilbert's wife Harriet Eliza Heath died at the Yarra Bend Lunacy Asylum in 1863. John remarried in 1892 to Catharine Hetherington, and they lived at Lobs Creek in the Snowy Mountains which they both loved. John died there in 1916 and was buried in the Lobs Hole cemetery. This is near to where the new Snowy Mountain hydroelectric plant is to be built.

William's death has not been confirmed. His son John Robert Gilbert married and settled in Wollongong. One of his little daughters died when her dress caught fire.

Val Wilkinson is a descendent of one of the earliest doctors in Melbourne, Dr John Sproat. She has done considerable work in Tumut belonging to the Tumut Family History Group as Research officer. The story she tells is one of great hardship, loyalty to family, perseverance and resilience.

Contributed by Jan Hanslow, PPPG Member 1057.



Val Wilkinson and Stephen Hatcher, who is a direct descendant of Mary Gilbert through her son, Charles Gilbert.

WANTED,

Your Pioneers story for
Pioneer Profiles Volume 7.

We look forward to reading it when it is
published.

Please email your *Profile* to
marilla-james@bigpond.com

JOHN AITKEN OF MOUNT AITKEN

From page 3

He was married to Emmaline Stright Jane Harvey on 9 April 1840 in the Presbyterian Church, Melbourne by the Rev. James Forbes. The witnesses were William Hutton of Saltwater, settler and Frederick Pittman of Melbourne, Merchant. Their children were:

1. Margaret Aitken, born 25 January 1841 and baptised 4 August 1842 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 3 January 1860 at St. Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, Scotland and afterwards at St. Thomas' English Episcopalian Chapel there, to James Murphy Esq., of Lara, Melbourne, Australia.
2. Emmaline Aitken, born 9 July 1842 and baptised 4 August 1842 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 18 December 1861 at St. Thomas's Chapel, Edinburgh, Scotland to John Ingle, late 78th Highlanders, eldest son of John Ingle, Esq., Sandford Orleigh, Newton Abbot, Devon, England.
3. Jessie Ann Aitken, born 4 July 1844 and baptised 25 August 1846 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 17 August 1867 at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, London, England to Jonathan Purse Groome Harding of Besborough, County Tipperary, Ireland.
4. Joan Merino Aitken, born 7 April 1847 and baptised 18 February 1852 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 17 August 1867 at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, London, England to William Peel, junior, of Coleshill Street, Eaton Square, London, England.
5. Clara Jane Aitken, born 22 December 1851 and baptised 18 February 1852 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 1 June 1880 at St. Stephen's Church, South Kensington, London, England to Captain Robert Stevenson, 5th Dragoon Guards, fourth son of Mr. N. Stevenson of Braidwood, Lanarkshire, Scotland.
6. John Aitken, born 8 April 1856 and baptised 13 April 1857 at St. James Anglican Church, Melbourne; married 23 October 1878 in the private chapel at Avon Castle, Ringwood to Gwendoline Evelyn Fitzmaurice Turner-Turner, only daughter of John Turner-Turner, Esq., of Avon, Ringwood, Somerset, England; died 31 January 1918 at Topsham, England as Captain John Aitken, formerly of Gillingham, Dorset, England; cremated 2 February 1918 at Woking Cemetery, Surrey, England.

John Aitken, senior, died on 21 October 1858 at the Great Northern Hotel, London, England shortly after arrival. He was buried at Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland with a substantial marble monument over his grave. His widow remarried in 1870 at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, London, England to William Kaye.

by Alexander Romanov-Hughes - PPPG Member No.52

VAFHO Family History Expo Hamilton

(The Victorian Association of Family History Organisations).

This event was attended by Barb Hawkins and Anne Bevis on 1 June 2019.

It is always nice to attend these events and see familiar faces and chat about the things we have in common.

What is even better is the interest shown by the visitors in our pioneers as they come to chat with us.

Pioneers were found and people we were kept busy for most of the day with queries, which is the purpose of our presence.

The Lester Stephen database of images regarding the Port Phillip Pioneers is the main interest but, the Historical Records of Victoria cannot be overlooked. The indexes in these volumes is an easy way to find your person if they were here in this early time frame.

VAFHO <https://www.vafho.org.au/>

Visit this website to find the latest information on the BDMs. There have been many issues to be worked through regarding the information on these documents and the latest update can be found here.

<https://vafho.com/2019/05/26/vic-bdms-sunday-26th-may-update/>

Other information can be located such as these below.

Education; You can download for free PDF files by school name or school number (or of course both!):

Midwives and Nurses register

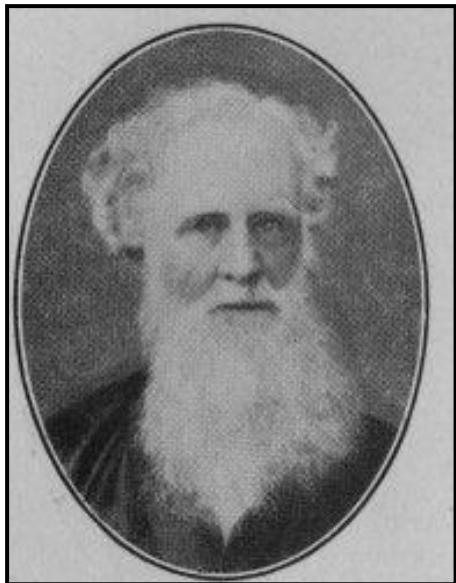
<https://www.vafho.org.au/midwives-and-nurses-registers/>

Searching Wills, Probate and Administration Records on PROV

In November 2004, the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) began digitising wills and probate files at the Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV). Digitised copies of these records can now be downloaded from the PROV website. To enable users to access these records online via a surname search, VAFHO members have undertaken to index these records. Leslie Berry, the Indexing Co-ordinator, led a team of over 100 volunteers from VAFHO member groups. The completed project is a wonderful resource for all Victorians and can be found on the PROV website

There is so much to discover regarding our ancestors, we have to keep looking all the time, happy hunting. Ed.

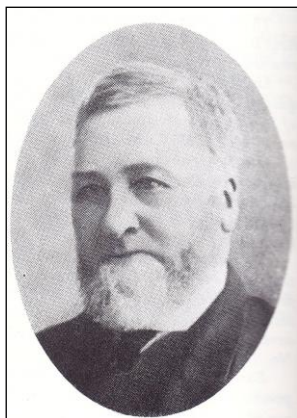
The Wesleyan (Methodist) Church in Melbourne.



Henry Reed (pictured) was a businessman and Methodist lay preacher in Tasmania. He visited Melbourne in 1835, soon after Batman and Fawkner arrived, and conducted the first worship service in the new colony. The congregation was five people: Batman, Fawkner, possibly William Buckley and three native servants.

Joseph Orton was a Wesleyan minister who had been imprisoned in Jamaica in 1828, because he had strongly opposed slavery and offered education to African slaves.

He was District Chairperson in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) 1836-40. He arrived in Port Phillip with the Batman family in 1836. On April 24, he conducted the first service by an ordained minister in the colony. He stressed that aboriginal people must be treated justly, and that substantial land must be reserved for their use.



After Orton's departure in 1836, Methodist laymen continued to hold prayer meetings at private dwellings. They met first at the hut of George Worthy, one of John Batman's shepherds. After Worthy was imprisoned early in 1837 for losing many of his masters' sheep, the Methodists began to meet in the wattle and daub hut of William Witton (1811-1886), a London-born carpenter and builder. The first two permanent Wesleyan missionaries to arrive in Port Phillip, the Revs Benjamin Hurst and Francis Tuckfield, spent most of their time

from 1838 onwards in Geelong and at Buntingdale Mission.

By 1838, there was a Wesleyan society of about 30 people, meeting in a small brick church on the corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Lane. They were led by lay preachers, including: George Lilley, an Irish settler who ran a small shop; Thomas Watson, a Waterloo veteran who ran a water-carting business; and William Witton.



The first Wesleyan Sunday School, above, was built at the corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Lane in 1838.

They soon outgrew the first chapel, and a second brick church, 47 ft x 57 ft, was built in 1841 on the corner of Collins Street & Queen Street. (pictured on the front page).

The organ installed in 1842, is now in the present church.

There is a lot to be more read about this story in the Historical Records of Victoria. Volume 3. Chapter 36.

Are you a descendant of an immigrant on the David Clark?

The David Clark was the first ship to bring assisted immigrants direct to Port Phillip in October 1839. All were Scots and many settled in the Kangaroo Ground and Heidelberg districts including the Bell family.

To mark the 180th anniversary, descendants of those passengers are invited to attend a reunion on Sunday 27 October 2019 at Gulf Station, Yarra Glen.

PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS GROUP INC – MEETINGS

Venue:	Wesley Hall. St. Andrew's Uniting Church, cnr Burke and Malvern Rds, Gardiner. 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.
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. Refreshments provided.
Next Meeting:	Saturday: 13 July 2019
Speaker:	Speaker: Trevor Cohen Topic: Michael Cashmore and the Solomon Family - Jewish Pioneers of Port Phillip, South Australia and other Australian Colonies

Upcoming Meetings:

Saturday, 14 September 2019

Speaker: Susie Zada

Topic: Point Henry - An Amazing Place

Saturday, 9 November 2019

Speaker: Jim Poulter

Topic: Batman's Treaty, The True Story

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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Representatives from other States/Countries:

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PPPG ENewsletter

If there are any members who would prefer to receive their PPPG Newsletter via email rather than by post, please contact Susan Grant at grantsv@bigpond.net.au.

Unless we hear from you, we will continue to send your newsletter via Australia Post.

**“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.”**