

~Clan~

TURNBULL EBENEZER



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A PEACEFULLY BEAUTIFUL SPOT on the HAWKESBURY RIVER in N.S.W.

Now including ALL TURNBULL families across AUSTRALIA.

VOL 7 – No 1

<<<<NEWSLETTER>>>>

March/April – 2015

It is almost 6 years since Percy and I began writing the Newsletters and every year I've not had a problem in writing an opening paragraph – but this year my mind is blank.

I'm having trouble asking people IF they had a wonderful Xmas and New Year (and I SINCERELY HOPE everyone HAD A GOOD HOLIDAY) because of the awful *LINDT CAFÉ seige occurred just days prior to Xmas. It's* with extreme sadness that I write of the loss of two innocent lives and families shattered by an act of terrorism. It ruined my peace of mind for weeks and I could not get it out of my head, my upper most thought was the fear it would happen again and when would it happen again? I guess I'm not alone with those thoughts.

Now, a couple of months later we are again threatened by terrorism, we thank our police for their alertness.

The WINDSOR BRIDGE fiasco is still on with no sign of the NSW Government changing their attitude, to pull down the old bridge and replace it with a new almost identical bridge, JUST A BIT NEWER LOOKING I guess to make our erstwhile

Baird Government “feel” good about their decision. Hopefully the Land and Environment Court decision to be handed down soon will go our way.

I seriously wonder WHAT exactly is going on in the mind of the Baird Government re the Windsor district - they are approving BY PASSES for regional and bush towns around NSW, but won't even entertain the **IDEA**, Windsor is desperately in need of one.

There's also serious unanswered question's about flooding in NSW. Specifically, if and when floods like the 1867 one may happen again. Our State needs to be prepared.

It's become a reality which is difficult to understand - most of the new Housing Estates built around the Hawkesbury and Western Sydney are on or near flood prone land. It could become a disaster when *governments* don't want to know, care or understand about our past and how many homes, people and animals drowned in past floods. It seems the mighty dollar comes before sanity and people's lives now. IF another flood like the early 1816 flood occurred many people's lives and livelihoods could be destroyed. It could happen at anytime and no one is being forewarned. New governments need to understand our country and they certainly DON'T at this time.

I've searched the Net for a copy of the planned site of the BADGERY'S CREEK Airport and I can't find one. Lack of a real plan has my suspicions aroused. Is Badgery's Creek Airport on a flood plain or partially on one. Someone involved in that airport had better know what they are doing or the Penrith/Nepean people are headed for a massive disaster if Badgery's Creek is the **WRONG** place for the Airport?

NOT only is flooding a worry.....there is so many “no's” and safety issues attached to building an airport at BADGERY'S that it should be scrapped immediately.

Badgery's Creek is so close to the river and the 'blue' mountains. I ask this government WHAT DAMAGE planes may do when taking off and landing, day in and day out and every night, to those two wonderful places?.



David and Alice, c1920. IN the March 2011 Newsletter I wrote about DAVID TURNBULL'S produce stall at Sydney Markets which were in Haymarket in the city. By the 1960's the markets had moved to Flemington. Because David knew farming so well and had easy access to farms owned by his family in the



Hawkesbury and Hunter regions, he opened his own produce stall in the markets in the early 1900's. He was such a successful produce merchant that a huge sign was soon erected outside the original markets promoting his produce stall within. However this huge sign, "as far as we know", has survived all the moves and in the 1970's was still hanging high in the street outside where the old Haymarket markets once were, but NOW it had become a valued sign from the past and the last anyone saw or heard of it was

as late as 2011, where it was **then** a feature inside the main foyer of the UTS building in Haymarket. **If anyone has seen it or been past the UTS in recent times and seen this sign there or any where else OR if anyone knows if it still exists somewhere in the UTS buildings, would you please let me know –if it hasn't disappeared I'LL have a go at CLAIMING IT.**

Recently a London newspaper wrote a wonderful congratulatory story about retir-



ing Honor (Godfrey) McCabe and her dedication as Curator of the Wimbledon Tennis Museum, adding she would be greatly missed. I have a great picture of the Queen pinning the MBE to Honor, but I can't imagine e-mailing the Queen for permission to use that photo, so I'll use this one ...

<<<< Honor McCabe showing her medal.

David and Honor McCabe are currently in Australia on a business/holiday trip. Their daughter Alice has been in Sydney for a few months, working in an architectural firm, but has since returned home.

I've just received a brief message from David, explaining their predicament since arriving in Sydney. On their first day in the city, Honor managed to slip off a kerb while visiting in Surry Hills and believed to have broken her ankle. There-after they

have spent their spare time in Sydney either in St Vincent's hospital or ferry riding on the harbour – no broken ankle, just badly damaged and unable to walk.

David's assistance in pursuing one of the John Turnbull's in London, when he really didn't have to do it, has been invaluable to my research. MAYBE I'll have a chance to meet them NEXT YEAR - when they plan to come back to Sydney.



Congratulations to Jill and Lester Vincent on the birth of their 2nd great grand son.....Remember *Elise*, their grand daughter, who won "Hot Seat" In January 2012 Elise married Scott Warters and they haven't let the grass grow under their feet.

1st gg'son JACK ALAN WARTERS born the 11/8/2013.



JACK IN A WOK



ALEX, 2 mths.

2nd gg'son ALEXANDER KEITH WARTERS born the 22/12/2014

IT'S INTERESTING to note – Jack and Alex are 9th generation grandsons of John TURNBULL of Portland Head and Stephen Tuckerman of Sackville which maybe unique in our history.

*The recently found family most likely to be related to us is Richard's from Orange, at least by a bentnose, (till proven otherwise) and Richard has been sending me some wonderful family pictures.

Gggrand father JOSEPH TURNBULL >>

Joseph was born 5/8/1809 and died 4/6/1889 in Scotland – he was the son of John Turnbull and Lillas Robertson. He was a DIRECTOR of TURNBULL & CO, wood distillers in Glasgow, Scotland.



Joseph Turnbull married Janet (Jessie) Stuart 1/6/1839 in Bonhill, DUNBARTON.

This small picture doesn't show the extent of the nasal bend in JOSEPH'S nose, clearly, Josephs nose had a similar bent to our late RUSSELL TURNBULL's.....

Note Scottish female Janet's became JESSIE's.

Was this how/why OUR John Turnbull's daughter was named JESSICA in 1800?

I've received two wonderful books since my last Newsletter. I thank Robyn Crossle from Armidale in NSW for her book on the Ebor Turnbull families and I also thank Rob McNeill for his book about the Daniels family which includes some ancestry details about one line of our Turnbull's as well as Fleming families.

I've looked for a connection to us via the Ebor family and found none, but there is a weak link in their ancestry where there's doubt about Andrew Turnbull the son of a Thomas Turnbull AND whether Thomas was actually a descendant of Sir Thomas Turnbull. There's an odd name in early 1700 in Andrew of Hawick's family. One of his sons was named NICOL. The Nicol name belongs in the Melrose Turnbull's ancestry in the 17th century AND they did move southward to Hawick/Minto at the end of the 17th century. NICOL born 1680 had a son named ANDREW who married the Greek girl MARCIA GRACIA RUBIN and went to America to live. *Once upon a time it was believed they belonged to our Turnbull's*, but it's long ago proven they are no connection to our Aussie Turnbull's at all. I will need time and patience to attempt to pursue the female lines of the Ebor family. It could be the answer to why my Dad looked physically similar to them.

I've not had time to look into the Fleming families in Rob's book, but I will get to them eventually.

Recently I came across a story about Russell Crowe which stated his grandmother was a Turnbull. If anyone knows about the connection, please let me know.

One last word on Prosper Tuckerman – UNCLE BILL once said that in the late 1800's, the ability of 6'7" tall, sandy haired and bearded Prosper Tuckerman was being talked about. Somehow the new University of Sydney had heard about him and pursued him, for months, to have his head examined. I can imagine what a modern day Tuckerman would have done and I'm sure Prosper did exactly that "ran a mile", but he was caught. I was quite young when I first heard of this and thought it a joke. After my dad died I was sorting through some of his things and an old dusty brief case caught my eye, but I put it aside till another day.

When that other day came *years later*, among documents in that old briefcase was the *test result from Sydney University on Prosper Tuckerman*, called A PHRENOLOGICAL CHART on the mental faculties of Prosper Tuckerman by Jesse Howard – Professor of Phrenology.

All the results were there, set out neatly and easily readable and understood. The results showed Prosper's mental faculties were nothing special Phrenologically. He was just another ordinary man.

very grateful for his attention.



A few years ago when I wrote the story about Dr. Harley Turnbull, I asked if anyone had or knew if a good picture existed of the doctor. At the time I had no response to the request and never received a picture, but recently I found this one of HARLEY amongst letters sent to me years ago. It was accompanied by the picture of Harley when a very young boy with his brother Dudley.



<Harley sitting and Dudley.

We should remember how great Dr. Harley Turnbull was as a doctor in WW2, and afterwards in private practice in Macquarie St. Sydney.



<<< *Please.....* This picture, according to my writing on the back, is of HARRY TURNBULL – but Harry Turnbull WHO? When I received this picture a long time ago, I didn't record the name and ancestry of Harry. Soooo if anyone out there knows who HARRY IS, please write and tell me so I *can record his details.....*

Thank You.

As children of the free settlers came to marriageable age, choices were limited. The London born Turnbull children became of marriageable age within 10 years of

arriving here and before long the Davis family among others became one of the families to whom the Turnbull's soon had a close friendship.

SARAH the daughter of Joseph and Mary Ann DAVIS became the first to marry a Turnbull it was William Bligh Turnbull in 1838.

There were other marriages between the families later, but one I particularly will write of was Elizabeth Davis, {g'daughter of Joseph, the older brother of SARAH} who married my grandfather Archibald George Turnbull in 1885, g'son of George Turnbull, born in 1806 AND brother of William Bligh Turnbull, born in 1809.

Oh no not again! - that web of intrigue continues to weave, to-day.

Archibald and Elizabeth Turnbull had three sons, but only one married. James Davis Turnbull wed Annie Maria Tuckerman in 1915 at Ebenezer and this is Elizabeth's story:

By their G'Daughter ELIZABETH >>



..... GEORGE EDWARD MITCHELL

.... SECOND WORLD WAR SERVICE – 1941 to 1946

George Edward Mitchell (16.12.1916 – 22.8.1994) was the youngest son Mr and Mrs George Joseph Mitchell, orchardist on Law's Farm Road, North Sackville. George served his country in World War II (1655 days) and suffered the extremes of slavery, barbarity and depavation in Changi Prisoner of War Camp and worked on the infamous Burma-Thailand (Siam) Railway.



<George Mitchell in 1941 when he first wore his uniform.

George enlisted in Paddington (Sydney) 21.7.41 at the age of 24 years and 7 months. On the 9th of December district residents turned out "en masse" to honour and farewell him at an evening organized by the Sackville Comforts Fund and the Ebenezer Patriotic Fund which involved speeches, presentations, music and dancing at the Sackville School of Arts.

Despite being admitted to hospital suffering bronchitis and pneumonia numerous times between August and November 1941 George embarked from Sydney 10.1.42 with 8th Division 2/20th Battalion. He was on “the seriously ill list suffering pneumonia” while on board ship and disembarked at Singapore Island 26.1.42 still very ill.

On the 7th December 1941 the Japanese commenced a surge southward, moving almost unchallenged until mid-January 1942 when Australian forces encountered the Japanese army on the Malay Peninsula. In January the Japanese unleashed a devastating aerial attack and by February they dominated the sea south of Singapore. A ceasefire on the 15th February 1942 left the Australian troops in a state of shock – the British Forces had surrendered. The Allied troops were marched to Changi (Selarang Barracks) as Prisoners of War (POWs).

Early in captivity the Australians realised that to survive they would need to outwit their captors and trade, barter, scrounge, manufacture or steal whatever they could. The first radio bought from the Chinese was smuggled into Changi camp concealed under a pile of fruit. George was ingenious and hollowed out logs or anything else that enabled him to sneak medical supplies, food supplies or radio parts back to and around POW camps throughout the 3 1/2 years he was a POW, often under the guise of collecting fire wood. Individual Australians began to sell their possessions to traders and used the money to buy food but George swapped his water bottle with an English POW, pulled his watch apart and hid its parts in the false bottom section, and moulded his signet ring around a back tooth (presents from his parents) to save his cherished possessions.

In March 1942 D Force endured train travel packed in steel rice trucks from Singapore to Thailand (Siam). Over 22,000 Australians were part of the slave labour force building a railway across 420km of some of the most difficult terrain in Asia designed to enable the Japanese to advance into British India. Within 6 months of surrender malnutrition was rife and pellegra, beriberi and famine oedema were common due to their inadequate, low quality rice diet.

The railway gangs worked from daylight to dusk through monsoon rains in damp rotted clothing, starving, suffering and dying from cholera, malaria, amoebic dysentery, tropical ulcer, scabies, tinea and other skin conditions, hook worm, jaundice, tuberculous, bronchitis, peptic ulcers, mouth ulcers, ‘happy feet’ beriberi, diphtheria, dengue fever and more, then marched kilometers back to camp each shift. They had to build their own camps with whatever material they could find – usually bamboo and jungle vegetation. At night they lay on bamboo platforms over a dirt floor, boiled their water and manufactured numerous gadgets to increase survival rates, sometimes from parts of downed aircraft. If any man fell behind in his work or on the marches he was beaten by the Japanese guards or beaten and left in the jungle, sus-

pected shot or bayoneted. More than once George was left to die in a 'death camp' with those too sick to work but he saved himself by knowing eatable weeds and even climbing and swallowing down birds eggs whole, out of the sight of the Japanese. The Japanese policy was that if a man was too sick to work then he did not require food. The Australians shared their meagre rations and tried to keep their spirits up with humour and the hope of returning home. The sick worked by cleaning, carting and boiling water and on other camp duties. George was reported 'missing' 16.2.42, believed to have 'been killed'.

The Australians had good leaders, mateship and 36 heroic doctors and medical assistants caring for the men in the camps along the Burma-Thailand Railway. Ingenious improvisations were made to assist the doctors such as bamboo intravenous drip and sterilization systems.

The POWs worked in pairs, employing the hammer-and-tap method when drilling holes in solid rocks into which the Japanese engineers placed dynamite charges. On the rock cutting called "Hell Fire Pass" they worked a 24 hour day – 68 men were beaten to death building that cutting because they were not working fast enough. George also spent time working on the log party gangs, men sent into the jungle to cut and retrieve large teak logs for use in construction and bridges along the railway route; this was to permanently damage his shoulders. Being a farm boy George was used to flies, mosquitoes, rats and snakes but elephants, yaks and scorpions and tigers were new threats.

In October 1943 two gangs – one having pushed south through Burma and the other north through Thailand – met at Konkoita completing the Thai-Burma Railway. The "speedo" had ended and 2646 Australians had perished. Some of the POWs who returned to Changi by train were worried for they had planted white ants and deliberate construction faults in the line, especially bridges. The POWs who did return to Changi were skin and bones dressed in rags.

On August 6th 1945 the Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, followed 3 days later by another on Nagasaki. George said the bombs saved his life for he only had enough strength to live a few more days. On the 15th August a cease fire with Japan began and on the 2nd of September the surrender was signed aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo bay. Of the 22,376 Australians taken prisoner of the Japanese, 8,031 died as prisoners, a death rate of 36% ("The Burma-Thailand Railway" G McCormack and H Nelson 1993 p162) and the Europeans and Asians had died in tens of thousands. Atrocities committed against them were part of a systematic policy of brutality towards POWs by the Japanese High Command.

George was not a big man, 5 foot 7 inches, but being an orchardist, a transporter of produce, a mechanic and an excellent all round sportsman he was strong of body, spirit and mind and

these qualities together with his love of family and Australia enabled him to endure unbelievable hardships and deprivation in order to return home.

On 3.9.45 George was reported “recovered from Japanese SIAM” and on 6.10.45 was flown from Bangkok to Singapore. He was very happy to have made it back to Changi for a medical examination, a place he had left over 2 years earlier. The next day he wrote to his mother, “it was great to be in a place of comfort once again good beds, white sheets and good food....I want you to have plenty of rations in when I arrive home. Once I ate to live but from now on I’ve decided on living to eat...I managed to get my watch and ring through the Japs all right. After going through these 3 1/2 years I’ve turned out an expert on concealing. As POWs we had to go through hundreds of searches. We were threatened with severe punishment if we did not hand in all kinds of valuables”. What wonderful news it must have been for his family when he wrote, “Please give my love to Dad, Reg, Ida, Roy, Marg and the young folk. Your Loving Son, George xxxx”.

Some Australians were flown home but George was very sick and opted to come home the slow way by ship so that he would look better when he met his mother. He embarked Singapore 29.10.45 and disembarked Sydney 20.11.45. On the ship George reshaped his signet ring, rebuilt his watch using a piece of windscreen glass from a downed plane and engraved a picture of the family farm on a small tin.

On 30.1.46 he asked for a discharge from the AIF on compassionate grounds, aged 28 years. For the rest of his life he was a master of invention who could make and fix everything needed, was a smart dresser, always attended ANZAC DAY services and was grateful for his freedom, the Salvation Army, the RSL and the mateship of fellow POWs like Tom Uren. He continued to suffer bouts of malaria and psychological trauma from being sent home and told to “forget about it and get on with your life”. The POWs did not talk about their experiences to protect their loved ones, but this didn’t work.

On the 14.9.46 he married Sadie Hope Turnbull who nursed him back to health for all of the remaining days of his life. They had a daughter Elizabeth Anne 24.2.51 (our author). GEORGE died 22.8.1994 following heart surgery, aged 77 years and was proud to be buried in the grave he designed at Ebenezer Uniting Church.....finis.

My small contribution to her story follows, which Elizabeth wouldn’t know about, until she reads this Newsletter.

In the 4/5 years leading up to the day Sadie died, as 1st cousins we had become close friends. Sadie said that ‘they’, Sadie and George Mitchell had been casual boy and girlfriend for a cou-

ple of years before George enlisted in 1941 – in fact Sadie said George only enlisted because (she had just begun her training as a nurse) she turned him down when he wanted a more stable relationship with her in a future marriage partnership, but becoming a nurse was very important to her, older sister Bessie was already a nurse and Sadie wanted to join her in the profession.

When Sadie learnt GEORGE was home from the war and very ill in hospital she immediately asked to be transferred to his hospital to spend her time nursing him back to health and eventually they married..... All's well that ends well.....



<Sadie (Turnbull) and George Mitchell on board the 'Fairstar' on a reminising tour of Singapore and Thailand.

On the 25th of April, Australia celebrates ANZAC DAY in memory of our 'diggers'. A commemoration we uphold each year to honour our men in WW1 at Gallipolli in 1915.

AND

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM – ALWAYS.

It is time again to *sign out* of this newsletter – it's much later than usual, but has been a very difficult copy to write – I thank Elizabeth for her story and others who helped with the preparation and writing of this copy.

I also wish all of those struggling with illnesses, all the best and to those with more recent health scares, I hope you receive good news with test results.

I wish the best for those in the family who for one reason or another have had to leave their homes to go into special 'care' – good luck and take care.

Marie Turnbull – email me: marie.clanturnbull@bigpond.com OR goose2fly@yahoo.com.au

Please don't hesitate to call - 02 4285 7495 - if necessary

HAPPY EASTER TO EVERYONE

