

The Skeleton

**A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUSTRALIND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
(INC.)**

Affiliated with WA Genealogical Society (Inc.)



This flag symbolises the care given by the English homes
to Australian servicemen during World War 1

*(From 1901 to 1954, the Red Ensign was used as the
Australian National Flag by state and local government,
private organisations and individuals)*

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THE AUSTRALIND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

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Annual Subscriptions: 1 Jan - 31 Dec

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Single Membership | \$35 |
| Joint Membership | \$45 |

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| Single Membership (Senior over 60) | \$25 |
| Joint Membership (Senior over 60) | \$35 |

LIBRARY HOURS

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Tuesday | 10 am - 5 pm |
| Wednesday | 10 am - 5 pm |
| Thursday | 10 am - 5 pm |
| Saturdays | by appointment - no extra charge |

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Non-member charges | |
| Use of library | \$5 per session |

A researcher is available to conduct
research on behalf of the Society

Contact Mr Alan Reynolds via the Library on
9796 1050 or email: alindfhs@iinet.net.au

Research

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Initial Fee | \$10 for 2 hrs |
| Additional | \$ 5 per hr |
| Photocopying and Postage | extra |



Your Contributions . . .

Please email articles for the next newsletter to the Australind website with
'Newsletter' in the Subject line or leave in the tray at the Family History
Library: alindfhs@iinet.net.au

Deadline for the receipt of articles for next edition of the *Skeleton*.



Disclaimer

The Society does not hold itself responsible for statements or opinions expressed by authors of papers published in this newsletter. The accuracy of offers, services or goods appearing here cannot be vouched for by the Society. The Editorial Team reserves the right to condense and edit articles to meet the approved size limits of our newsletter.

Message from the Editorial Team

Hello everyone

This edition of *The Skeleton* contains more stories from World War 1 and looks at what part women played during this period. It also covers two convalescent homes in England where Australian nurses worked, nursing the sick and wounded Australian soldiers. We hope you enjoy these stories as much as we did in researching them.

Since the last newsletter we have held a Sausage Sizzle at the new Bunnings' store in Treendale on Saturday, 15 August. We had a successful day at the new location and thanks everyone for their help.

At the beginning of September we hosted the Affiliated Family History Societies' Conference of WA. Everyone here at the Library worked really hard to make this event a success. We will tell you more in the next edition.

If you haven't been into the Library for awhile, we'd love to see you again. Why not call in soon!

Anne, Jayne & Ralph
The E-Team

DATES for your DIARY

On request we can arrange appointments for researchers to come into the Library on Saturdays (between 10am and 2pm).

Committee meetings: Last Friday of the month. 10am. AFHS Library.

WAGS Library open Mon 9:30 - 20:00
Wed-Fri 9:30 - 14:30 Sat 13:00 - 17:00
www.wags.org.au

TIP: *Don't forget to bring along your USB thumb drive to save files from your web research.*

AFHS SERVICES

Library Visit

Affiliated Societies - no charge (show membership card)

Non members - \$5 per visit

Membership

1 Jan 2015 – 31 Dec 2015.

Computer Use

Internet Access -includes Ancestry.com + Find My Past and many more.

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| All users | \$2 per hr |
| Printouts | 30c each |
| Burn CDs | \$1 each |

Micro Film/Fiche Readers/ Pro Scan

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| All users | \$2 per hr |
| Printouts | 30c each |

Photocopying

| | | | |
|------------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| A4 B&W single | 20c | Double-sided | 30c |
| A4 Colour single | 30c | Double-sided | 50c |
| A3 B&W single | 30c | Double-sided | 60c |

Ring Binding

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Up to 50 sheets | \$2 |
|-----------------|-----|

Laminating

Please ask at desk

President's Report

Hello to fellow members and researchers.

Welcome to another edition of *The Skeleton*, thanks to our hardworking E-Team.

On Saturday 15th August 2015 we held our annual fundraising event - a Sausage Sizzle at the new Bunnings in Treendale. It was a lovely day and we made a tidy sum to go into the Society's coffers. I would like to thank all the people who came along to help out on the day.

Everyone at the Library was kept busy preparing for the Affiliated Family History Societies' Conference of WA held here on Saturday 5th September 2015. People attended from Albany, Busselton, Collie, Mandurah, Rockingham and WAGS, Perth.

We have now received WAGS' raffle tickets and hope you will come in and buy some from us or help by selling them to your friends. There are some great prizes!

Now the weather is warming up, why not come in to the Library and see if our Librarians can help you knock down some of those 'brick walls' you may have come up against. We'd love to see you!

Enjoy reading *The Skeleton*

Kind regards Chris Shaw

On behalf of AFHS, we would like to send our condolences to Pam Ayers and Irma Walter on their recent loss of a family member. Our thoughts also go to Tom Lofthouse's family. Sadly Tom passed away on 14.6.15.

We extend our condolences to Jim Muir's family of Manjimup. Mr Muir passed away last week (25.8.15) aged 94 years.

OTHER SOCIETIES' NEWSLETTERS

We have recently received the following newsletters:-

Newsletter

"Belfast Genies" Newsletter from Port Fairy Genealogical Society

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Newsletter

The South - West Genealogist from The Warnambook
Family History Group

Pyrenees Pioneers from Avoca & District Historical Society

Issue

February and
June 2015

August 2015

August 2015

August 2015

*If you are interested in receiving a copy of any of the above please let us know
and we can email them to you.*

CONVALESCENT HOMES FOR THE INJURED IN WORLD WAR 1

Before the conflict even began, the English and Australian authorities searched for suitable properties that could be used as temporary hospitals if war broke out. This meant that as soon as wounded men began to arrive from abroad, the hospitals were available for use, with equipment and staff in place.

The authorities were inundated with offers of buildings for accommodation which ranged from town halls and elementary schools to large private houses. Two private homes which were deemed suitable have links with WA and their story is outlined below:-

BISHOPS KNOLL WAR HOSPITAL

Robert Edwin Bush, born in 1855 in England, was a pioneer of the Gascoyne District of Western Australia. His father Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bush was in command of a detachment of the Ninety Sixth Regiment, which did service in WA during the 1840s until its return to England in 1857.

Robert Edwin came to WA Australia in 1877 and went on to explore the North West of the state. He was amongst the many pioneers of the time including good friend Frank Wittenoom. The town of Wittenoom was named after Frank by mining magnet, Lang Hancock. Over the next ten years Robert bought Mt Clere Station and Clifton Downs Station. Through tough times of drought and the loss of his wife of three years, Robert continued farming these properties and became a successful and well-known pastoralist of the Gascoyne.

In early 1900s, Robert returned to England and bought a large elegant house, Bishops Knoll, near Bristol. He married a West Australian born girl, Marjorie, and took up his passion of playing cricket. Robert was a keen cricketer in his youth, having played with legendary Gloucestershire cricketer, W G Grace.



At the outbreak of WWI Robert offered his home to the military authorities converting it into a hundred bed hospital for sick and wounded soldiers. The hospital was open from August 1914 until February 1919. Not only did the family bear the cost of running the facility they devoted their whole time to the service of the wounded. Robert was the commandant and administrator, Mrs Bush and Miss Bush volunteered to do the menial work of the hospital kitchen.

"Mrs Bush has worked early and late and her unselfish and devoted efforts to one and all have perhaps helped more than anything else, towards the happiness and welfare of the hospital. She has the domestic arrangements entirely under her supervision and personally conducts the whole of the working kitchens taking a great deal more than her share of the cooking for the staff and patients."

When the Australians went into fight at Gallipoli, and wounded were sent to England, Bishops Knoll practically ceased to take men of the home (British) forces, becoming an Australian soldiers only hospital.

Extract of a letter home:-

"Although I am wounded do not the least worry about myself as I am getting treated well. It is almost like being at home. I never had such treatment and should not get a better place in Great Britain. Some of the lads here declare that it is absolutely the very best. I feel like a king in a mansion. I shall be well in no time and looking for a scrap. (The Brisbane Courier, 13 November 1916)



Of the over two thousand soldiers who were given exemplary care by the doctors, nurses and VAD nurses, few men died. For those that did not recover military funerals were given, the inhabitants of the city turning out in large numbers to pay their last respects. These soldiers occupy a corner, 'Soldiers' Corner' of the Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol.

No account of the work of Bishops Knoll is complete without reference to Mr A Powell, known as Archie, who was the editor of the hospital magazine *Coo-ee*. The magazine contained articles on various subjects, gossip notes, numerous illustrations and was written with humour. Not only was Archie the editor of the magazine, he was also the recreation officer, happily arranging outings for the boys, obtaining prizes for weekly billiards and card tournaments and organising local Bristol artists to give concerts at the hospital. Bristol residents and friends of the Bush family would often take soldiers on outings to Bath, Berkeley and other places where generous hospitality was dispensed.

"You ought to see my locker after they leave, it would do your eyesight good for it is filled with all manner of good things."

Coo-ee was produced each month until the shortage of paper ceased its publication. A bound volume is dedicated to the first thousand of wounded Australian soldiers who were patients of Bishops Knoll. The following forward is by Mr Robert Edwin Bush.

"It is not unfitting, I think, that the first volume of 'Coo-ee' should be dedicated to those brave men from Australia to whom it has been my privilege to minister. It has not only been a privilege, but it has also been a great joy to my wife and myself to do all that was possible to alleviate their sufferings and create a home-like atmosphere around these fine fellows, so many thousands of miles from their homes and loved ones. Amongst other distractions from the inevitable monotony of the hospital life, our magazine 'Coo-ee' has been one of the most successful, for I know that all the patients look forward to its monthly issue and many are enabled to forget their aches and pains while contributing to its pages. I should not like to close this brief forward without testifying to the patient courage and fine discipline of those Australian soldiers during the time they were in our care. Ninety-eight percent of them quitted like men, using the word 'men' in its highest and best sense and at the same time were almost womanly in the tenderness they showed to their more helpless companions in adversity. I hope that this volume of 'Coo-ee' will recall many happy memories of Bishops Knoll when in happier times old patients look through its pages."



During the many visits Robert made to Australia, his first activities were to renew acquaintances with as many soldiers as possible that had passed through Bishops Knoll. He and his family will be remembered for their kindness and hospitality to the thousands of Australian soldiers who fought in WWI.

*"Of all the bushes in our land
Where'ere we care to stroll
the best Bush that we have ever found
is here in Bishops Knoll
You know the dinkum squatter boys
the dinkum one and straight
The one who fills your heart with joy
And makes you a mate."*



HAREFIELD PARK - NO. 1 AUSTRALIAN AUXILIARY HOSPITAL



Charles A M Billyard was an Australian pastoralist who also offered his English home to the Australian Military Authorities for use as an auxiliary hospital for convalescing AIF soldiers. In late 1914, the offer was accepted under the direction of Australian doctors, nurses and a medical superintendent.

Charles Arthur Moresly Billyard was born in 1859 in New South Wales, Australia. His father William Whaley Billyard was a well-known solicitor of the NSW's colony, having arrived from England with his wife, Elizabeth, in 1847. Their son Charles took up farming, becoming a successful pastoralist in the Bowral District of NSW. In 1891, Charles married Miss Letitia Leake, a heiress from Tasmania and on his marriage assumed the name of Billyard-Leake. Some years later Charles and Letitia left Australia to settle in England. Their home was Harefield Park in the county of Middlesex, later known as Harefield Park Hospital.

With the offer accepted, Charles and Letitia vacated their home to personally oversee its transformation into a hospital. The hospital was officially opened in 1915. Over time Nissen huts were erected throughout the grounds of the property to cater for the increasing numbers of wounded from the battlefields, and in turn medical services increased to include operating theatres, radiology, ophthalmic, ear, nose and throat (ENT) and prosthetic departments. Charles himself had a prosthesis, and it was this that prompted him to establish the prosthetic section and to have the prosthetics manufactured on site.

By 1918 Harefield Park Auxiliary Hospital became a fully functioning General Hospital, with the capacity to care for and treat 1,000 patients. By war's end, over 49,000 wounded Australians had passed through the hospital.

Other amenities available for use of the patients were a billiards room, writing room, canteen supervised by Mrs Billyard-Leake, a Red Cross store and recreation hall. Regular film nights and weekly concerts were held here. Funds raised at the canteen were used to take patients on trips into London. London being only a short trip away. Both Charles and Letitia took a close interest in the patients, often visiting the extensive hospital wards, and for the wounded who were able to leave their bed, would take them on outings in the pleasant rural surrounds of Middlesex.

A monthly magazine published at Harefield, called *Harefield Park Boomerang*, was under the editorship of the study and recreation officer, Mr Archibald Gilchrist. Mr Gilchrist had been the editor of *The Northern Times* in Carnarvon, Western Australia, before enlisting in the AIF in 1915. It was a bright and witty magazine with articles submitted by patients and staff.

HAREFIELD PARK EMPIRE PARK LANE

*For one night only, at enormous expense
Starring an Important Engagement of*

SIGNOR IODINE

In his great Drama in one act

"THE YELLOW PERIL"

Mr STEEL FORCEPS, the Polished

Comedian, in extractions from his repertoire.

MISS CARRIE TUBE, in her famous song

"Lanoline" or "Squeeze Me and I'll Come Out"

MONS. EXXE RAEY (the Man of Mystery)

This Artist can positively see through anything!

*MDLLE. CHLORIE FORMME will positively sing
her well known ditty*

"Go to Sleep, My Little Picaninni."

At great personal inconvenience the

ANZAC STOCK COMPANY

will positively appear in the well known

Standard Play

"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER" or

"CAUGHT BENDING"

This humorous programme is from an
excerpt from *Boomerang* magazine

(*Camp Chronicle*, 6 September 1917)



Mabel Geddes-Scott
(née Rose)

An untiring volunteer at the Red Cross store was a Mrs Geddes-Scott (née Mabel Rose). Her husband, Dr John Geddes-Scott was in the RAMC and on service throughout the war. Mabel was born in Parkfield, Australind, Western Australia, to Charles and Madeline Rose, early settlers of the area. Her father farmed at 'Wilgarrup Station' and her mother opened a school in Bunbury for young ladies called 'Field Place'. Mabel was an accomplished pianist who was best remembered by the 'boys' at Harefield as the lady that played and whistled so well. On the eve of closing the hospital, Mabel wrote a message for the *Boomerang*:-

"This is the final issue so I can't wish the paper a long life but I do wish all good luck to those of my country men and women who have kept their end up so well."

Of the many Australians treated at Harefield Hospital, a large number recovered but 111 died including one female nurse. They are buried in nearby St Mary's Parish churchyard. The land for their burials was an extension of the churchyard provided by Sir Francis Newdegate, at no cost. Sir Francis Newdegate (the town Newdegate in WA takes his name) also paid all costs associated with their burials. Sir Francis traces his connection with Harefield back to the 15th century and the church of St Mary's has been for many years very closely associated with the family.

For those that died, a fully military funeral was given with a Union Jack flag draped over their coffin. The school children of Harefield named the flag 'The Cardigan'. After the war this flag was presented to Adelaide High School by Lieutenant Colonel Yeatman, the last officer to have commanded Harefield Hospital. The shared history of Adelaide and Harefield exists because of the work Adelaide High Schools Patriotic Fund had done in sending many relief parcels to Harefield Hospital during the war.



Unveiled in 1921, within the churchyard is a memorial obelisk erected by Sir Francis and Charles Billyard-Leake. The inscription reads:-

Front: *"To the Glory of God who giveth us the victory and in memory of brave Australian soldiers who after taking part in the Great War now rest in Harefield churchyard."*

Rear: *"This memorial is erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, KCMG now Governor of Western Australia and formerly of Tasmania, Honorary Colonel Eleventh Battalion Commonwealth Military Forces and Charles Arthur Moresly Billyard-Leake Esq of Harefield Park. AD 1921."*

The memorial obelisk takes pride of place in the centre of the churchyard surrounded by the many scrolled headstones, unique in their design, of those that died at the Harefield Hospital.

Every year since 1921, Harefield community has held a remembrance ceremony on ANZAC Day with the children of the village laying fresh field flowers on every Australian grave.

For the thousands who died on British soil many sleep their last sleep in little villages like Harefield and Bishops Knoll.



"REMEMBER THEM"

WORLD WAR 1 NURSES

"While the men fight one another, women tend the wounded, and there can be no doubt at all but that theirs is the noble part. Naturally enough the eyes of the world are on the firing line and sometimes the work of the nurses, from the very firing line to the hospitals is overlooked. It was ever thus. Those who scar the tree of life, a great thinker once said, are remembered by the scars, but those who water its roots have nothing by which they may be known. But theirs is the tree." (Christchurch Star, 3 November 1915)



The Australian nurses performed an important role when they served in World War I, but are we aware of what the nurses really did and how many different aspects of nursing they were called upon to do?

To begin with, the criteria required for them to enlist as a military nurse was:-

A candidate for enrolment as a Sister must be between 21 and 40 years of age, single, or a widow, and have not less than three years' training and service in Medical and Surgical nursing in a duly recognised civil General Hospital.

Trained nurses were only eligible to enlist and had to provide references recommending them for the military service. They had to pass a medical examination and answer to the same regulations as the average military officer. They also had to demonstrate general awareness that this environment would be physically and mentally tough. Nursing under fire required exceptional personal skills such as the nerve to carry on, and the ability to soothe and reassure bedridden patients. Most of the early nurses who enlisted had no military experience when they signed up for active service, but they quickly adopted the many changes in practice, and with the minimum of instruction.

The first enlistees left Australian shores in ships with the men from the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and were initially posted only to Australian and British hospitals. However, in the Gallipoli campaign in 1915 there was the need for nursing the enormous number of casualties there. Some nurses were sent to staff the hospital ships. It was difficult to nurse on hospital ships even in good weather. These conditions made simple tasks more complex and time-consuming. Sea-sickness was prevalent with both patients and staff. The hospital ships enjoyed the protection of the Geneva Convention.

The military nurses could be dispatched anywhere in the world, working in extraordinary conditions to save lives e.g. England, France, Egypt, Lemnos, and India. The weather conditions they had to endure could vary from hot to cold temperatures and this made a very demanding environment for nursing. Egypt had a variety of insect-borne diseases to fall victim to. Treatment of tropical diseases such as cholera, malaria, tick and fevers challenged nurses' skills and resolve, but was crucial to the soldiers' survival.

It was in Gallipoli and the Western Front in France that the casualty clearing stations (CCS) were first used. These stations were very close to the front and here they would treat as many of the wounded soldiers and return them to the battlefield. The more serious cases were evacuated by ambulance trains if there was a rail line nearby and taken to a base hospital or port. Nurses risked their own lives at these stations particularly from heavy aerial bombardment. The CCS would receive, operate and evacuate patients continually all day – then suddenly receive the order that the unit was to proceed to a more advanced area – so they had to pack up, move, and rebuild the hospital and be ready to receive patients again. The men came in from the trenches soaking wet or covered in mud, often cold and frostbitten, for treatment of 'trench-life' ailments like diarrhoea, coughs and colds etc.

WWI brought with it, new military weapons, aircraft, flamethrowers, barbed wire and machine-guns. Shrapnel was a by-product of warfare and the nurse's job was to extract pieces from the injured soldier's body. War wounds increased the number of tetanus cases and it became the practice to inject anti-tetanic serum even for the slightest wound. There were enormous numbers of casualties whose wounds became gangrenous, requiring surgery to amputate the infected flesh or limb.

Nurses also had to adapt to nursing under canvas in dreadful conditions. Tents had no windows and they were dark even in daylight. Also they were draughty and in some countries infiltrated with dust, bugs, and creatures such as snakes. Working in adverse conditions like these required survival skills, and wherever possible they had to use their own initiative by making do with whatever they had.

The convalescent hospitals were set up for the recuperation of soldiers and also required nursing staff. In England, the Australian auxiliary hospitals specialised in different treatment of particular problems. For example, the 1st AAH Harefield treated the blind and also operated as a centre for radiology and physiotherapy. There were also convalescent hospitals specialising in the treatment of shell-shock victims caused by stress, exhaustion, seeing friends killed, shattered nerves from noise of the front line. These patients required careful handling and endless patience from nursing staff.

The psychological benefit of having female nurses to treat wounded soldiers cannot be underestimated. Nurses reminded the men of the peace and safety of home and family life. Nurses gave soldiers comfort which was often the key to their survival. They gave patients sympathy, caring, compassion, boosted their morale, all of which amounted to a kind of 'mothering role'. They helped relieve loneliness simply by being available to talk to them. Nurses also read or played games with patients; they even organised birthday parties and concerts for them. Unlike the rules in civilian hospitals forbidding nurses to be familiar with patients, particularly men, the nurses held hands, massaged heads and kissed "their boys" farewell, both on departure to other hospitals and on death. Some of the nurses took it upon themselves to write letters informing their family if a soldier died. They also penned letters for patients who were unable to write home due to their injuries and these were a great comfort to 'a poor mother' back in Australia.

There was a language barrier to overcome by the volunteer nurses who were sent to foreign speaking countries. They were called upon to nurse the wounded of all countries, including those of the enemy. British Army protocol directed medical staff to nurse allied troops first, then enemy wounded. This adage was followed by most nurses:-

"Remember that a wounded man has no nationality for the time being, and once more do it as you would wish a German nurse to do it for your brother if he were a prisoner".

Inevitably, some of the nursing staff suffered from wounds or shock. The Australian Imperial Force (AIF) awarded a number of military decorations to the Australian nurses, including seven Military Medals for 'conspicuous gallantry', six of these for courage under fire in a CCS, for nurses who continued to look after their patients and carried them to safety. Another 183 nurses were mentioned in dispatches, although there are seldom sufficient details of the precise circumstances that led to these awards



Nurse with medals

We include the following three nurses from WA, being amongst the bravest that served in WWI:-

Nurse Kate Bruton - who had worked in Western Australia at the Bunbury Private Hospital prior to WWI, was one of the first Australian nurses to volunteer for service at the front in 1914. She served in Antwerp military hospital for 5 weeks and this newspaper article describes her wartime experience:-

Nurse Kate Bruton, of Bunbury, returned to London on October 8 from Antwerp, after having experienced the first few days of the bombardment. The British Field Hospital to the Belgians, to which Nurse Bruton is attached, received orders to leave for England when it became apparent that the Germans had decided to bombard the city, but after they had got all their patients to the railway station they were compelled to return, for some unexplained reason. Nurse Bruton, however, got away by the last boat. In a letter to friends in London she expresses her desire to lend further help to the wounded, if possible. (Southern Times, 12 November 1914)

Nurse Dorothea (Dorrie) May Craike - saw several years' active service with the Australian Imperial Forces. She departed from WA on ship *Orontes* in 1915. As well as serving in France she nursed at Harefield Park Hospital, England and the letter she wrote to her uncle describes her time at that hospital:-

My Dear Uncle,

*I really haven't time to write a letter. Have been at this place for 5 weeks looking after some of our brave Australian boys. Am very proud I am an Australian. They are all heroes. I really cried when I said good-bye to them today, as I am being sent to France tomorrow – and will have 'Tommies' to look after there. This place is 200 years old and owned by a Mr Billyard-Leake of NSW. We have 13 wards open, each with 21 beds. I will enclose a view showing three of them. The house is also fitted up for some patients. I loved it. The Matron is from Western Australia too. I worked under her for 10 months. She is a charming woman and works day and night. She asked for Miss Middleton and me to be left with her, but they would not allow it. I am sorry as we would have been promoted. The Hospital is all Australian and we are now under the Imperial Government, so I suppose that is the reason. But we will find plenty to do wherever we go. It is getting late and we have to catch an early train, so will say good-bye, with love to all, from your affectionate niece DORRIE CRAIKE
(The Burrowa News 27 August 1915)*

Nurse Craike sent a photo of Harefield Park with this letter. It may have been this photo:-



Nurse Ethel Gray - was the most qualified of all the nurses mentioned here who served in the Great War. In 1913 she was matron to Perth Public Hospital but left in 1915 from Fremantle to take up the job of matron of Harefield Park Hospital, England. In 1914, Harefield Park House in Middlesex was offered by Mr Charles Billyard-Leake for use as a Home for convalescent wounded Australian soldiers serving with the AIF. This was the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital and capable of holding 150 convalescent patients. Matron Gray had the job of setting up the hospital for its first intake of patients in June 1915. In December 1916 she joined the 2nd Australian General Hospital at Winnereux, France. It was particularly cold and bleak winter in 1916 and the hospital water pipes froze, and Matron Gray reported that "for weeks we had to get out water from the old water carts which were ranged up in the parade grounds. Even the medicine bottles and lotions froze." She served there until March 1919 when the hospital closed.

Matron Gray was the most highly decorated member of the Australian Army Nursing Service. She received the Royal Red Cross, was mentioned in dispatches in 1917 and 1919, appointed CBE and in 1919 awarded the Medaille de la Reconnaissance Francaise in 1920, being the only Australian woman to receive this honour.



Matron Ethel Gray on left at front of photo

Australian nurses developed an extensive range of skills through nursing casualties from the battlefield and the war sick. The post-war nursing profession benefited from this greatly. WWI revolutionised both medicine and surgery – e.g. anaesthetics, dressings, blood transfusion, x-rays, shock management, plastic surgery, the treatment of fractures and many more.

Without the care and dedicated service of the nurses and auxiliary staff during WWI there would have been a significantly different outcome in both recovery rate and servicemen morale. Many more of our loved ones would not have returned home to us in Australia.

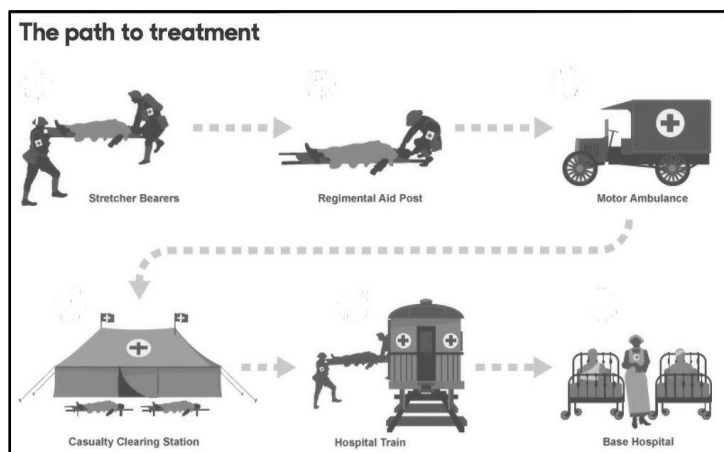
Refs: *More than Bombs and Bandages* book by Kirsty Harris, & www.trove.nla.gov.au

AN AMBULANCE TRAIN

The first ever ambulance train was used in South Africa during the Boer War (1899-1902). Not only did this train supply the wounded with clothing and toiletries, it transported more than 7000 injured soldiers to Cape Town.

Ambulance trains in WWI were specially fitted trains that were used to transport the wounded from casualty clearing stations to base hospitals and to ports. They were *hospitals on wheels* where dedicated nurses and doctors administered the medical care of the wounded and injured of France and Flanders. The jolt of the carriage must have been agony, but for some the thought of returning to 'Blighty' would give comfort after the horrors they had lived through.

Close to the rail lines were the casualty clearing stations where wounded soldiers were assessed and treated. Some were able to return to their unit and others were evacuated by train either to a base hospital or port. The principle port was Boulogne where patients were conveyed by ship to Dover or Southampton. Dover alone dealt with 1,266,506 casualties during the conflict.



The trains consisted of sixteen coaches including a pharmacy, two kitchens, personnel, stores and accommodation. Some trains even had an operating theatre. They could generate their own electricity for lighting and driving overhead fans and all carriages were steam heated. Patients were accommodated in a thirty-six bed carriage of ripple layered bunks either side of a narrow aisle. A middle bunk could be folded back to enable sitting patients to use the lower bunk.

A nurse's comment:-

"The twelve sitting up cases on each carriage are a joy after the tragedy of the rest. They sit up talking and smoking till late, because they are so surprised and pleased to be alive and it is too comfortable to sleep."

The trains provided a highly effective means of moving the many thousands of wounded and injured to base hospitals and hospital ships for repatriation to Britain.

****The high number of head wounds early in the War led to the Brodie Helmet being introduced as standard kit in 1915.***

NURSE SMITH OF AMBULANCE TRAIN NO. 41

Marion Leane Smith was born in Liverpool NSW in 1891. Her mother Elizabeth Leane (of indigenous Australian heritage) married an Englishman, George Smith and not long after Marion's birth they moved to England, until 1905, when they moved to Canada.

Marion undertook her nursing training in Boston after which she worked with the Victoria Order of Nurses in Montreal. In 1915 she volunteered for WWI service and became a staff nurse for The Queen Elizabeth Imperial Nursing Services. Staff Nurse Smith embarked for France on March 30th 1917, joining the No. 41 Ambulance Train. Working on the train meant dealing with debilitating injuries and men traumatised from their war experiences. Marion more than adequately met the challenge.



On a British Ambulance Train

Her service with the ambulance train expired in September 1918 and she moved to a military hospital in Southampton, England. She remained there until 1919 when she returned to Canada. Within a few years of her return, she met and married Rev. Victor Walls. Victor and Marion relocated to Trinidad where Marion was directly responsible for the introduction of the Canadian Red Cross. She was the Island's commandant during the Second World War and was awarded the Distinguished War Service Medal for this role.

Marion Walls passed away in 1957 in New Brunswick, Canada, where she and Victor had returned four years before.

Marion Leane Walls (nee Smith) is the only known Australian of indigenous heritage to have served in WWI.

This newspaper article refers to our earlier story in *The Skeleton on Harefield Park Hospital*:-

The Westralian Gift

Writing from Oxford, England, to Mrs George Tipping, Mrs Isabel Burrows says:-

"At last I am able to write that the very handsome quilt so generously sent by you for our wounded boys is safely landed at Harefield Park Hospital, Middlesex, and that the matron has written you acknowledging its receipt. I see your letter is dated 17th March, but it and the parcel reached me three weeks ago, showing how slowly letters and parcels travel. As there were a good many WA men here, I could not resist the great pleasure of taking it round to them, and I wish you could have seen the groups gathered about and almost saluting the Black Swan and Kookaburra. They picked out the various names, and called up the sisters and nurses to see the work an Australian lady had done and sent them. They asked me to thank you particularly. I like to think of the quilt being exhibited at Harefield, where there are so many of our magnificent men."

Matron C L Ross, AIF writes:-

"I beg to thank you for the beautifully worked quilt. I have had it hung in the Recreation Room at Harefield, where I am sure it will be of the greatest interest to all Westralian boys."

This quilt will be remembered by Bunbury residents. Mrs Tipping emblazoned on it the signature of Westralia's leading citizens, from the late Lord Forrest downwards.

Each citizen, who paid a fee, signed his name, and the deft fingers of the lady followed the calligraphy in different coloured silks. The swan and kookaburra, the Australian flag and many other patriotic emblems were worked in. (**Bunbury Herald 26 October 1918**)

ETHEL CAMPBELL - 'THE ANGEL OF DURBAN'

The little white figure which semaphored a welcome to the troopships, and sent a heartening message of farewell, was Ethel Campbell. Ethel was born in Scotland in 1886, but was living in South Africa with her family when war broke out.

After the loss of her fiancé early in the war, Ethel devoted herself to caring for the troops who visited the city of Durban.

Ethel was an expert signaller working for the YMCA when she began signalling to the troopships arriving at Durban Pier. The welcome message included an invite to the YMCA Hut, known as the 'Soldier's Rest'. Durban had a policy of closing all hotel bars while military ships were in port, therefore the invite to the 'Soldier's Rest' was much appreciated and welcomed after their long sea journey. The troops could relax here, have a meal and write letters home. The staff did all they could to make their stay a pleasant one none more so than Ethel, who became known as 'the Angel of Durban'.

Troopships returning with invalid soldiers would again sail into Durban; quarantine regulations would prevent the soldiers from disembarking; but Ethel would be there signalling a thanks for all their efforts and asking if there was anything they needed. The response was always a "Yes!" The items required were sought by Ethel and then dispensed on board ship. Items included toiletries, papers, magazines, cigarettes and baskets full of fruit, luxuries the men had not seen in months. A great cheer of "Thanks!" could be heard from all on board with the last thing seen on departure, 'the Angel' signalling goodbye and a safe journey home.



Ethel Campbell
State of Queensland Library

On behalf of many South West men, the "Bunbury Herald" tenders thanks to Miss Ethel Campbell, of Durban, Natal, for the care and attention she bestows on Australians passing through the port. Her figure is the first seen on the wharf when the ship arrives and she is down to wave farewell to the boys. Her car is always at their disposal and cigars, cigarettes and fruit she showers upon them. Sister from overseas, we greet you! (Bunbury Herald Wed. 22 May 1918)

In return for her kindness, Ethel received many gifts. Amongst those was a writing table of Australian maple, which she used regularly to correspond to the many soldiers and their families. Poetry was another passion of Ethel's, often eulogising the troops exploits. These poems were treasured by the troops and preserved in their dairies. Ethel's work was recognised in 1919 when she received an MBE for her service to the war effort.

In 1923 the Returned Soldiers League (RSL) of Australia invited Ethel and her parents to Australia. Ethel's father, Dr Samuel George Campbell, a well respected citizen of Durban had also been an advocate of the troops, regularly entertaining them at his home. The League arranged the family's itinerary and provided guides to help them on their journey. The trip began when landing in Albany to a semaphore welcome. Travelling throughout the country, Ethel was warmly met by large crowds and attended many functions in her honour. She discovered that the 'diggers' fondest memories of her were the signals of greeting and her poems. "One man could recite all the poems I had written about the diggers during the war... nineteen of them! I could go on and on for hours telling of the wonderful kindness and hospitality of the Aussies, of the flowers and the beautiful poems of welcome I got and gifts ranging from the most treasured relics such as a piece of the alter rail of the cathedral at Ypres, down to live wallabies and young kangaroos."

Ethel was held in high esteem right through to WWII when she repeated her work, although ailing health prevented her from visiting the ships as often. On these occasions troops would visit her at her home where she had built a thatched hut called 'little Australia'. Here the troops could have a sing-along, play two-up and admire the display of memorabilia. The grounds of the property were planted with Australian gums and shrubs and running amongst these was her dog called 'Digger'.

The news of Ethel's death on April 8th 1954 was received with great sadness throughout Australia.

"THE DIGGERS' FRIEND"

*Half a hundred troopships, swinging in from sea
Tell the same old story all of 'em agree,
"From London to Fremantle there was nothing half so dear
As the little lady waving from the Durban Pier!"*

*London lay behind us far across the foam
Nothing lay before us save the hope of home
Down across the harbour, dark and damp and drear
Then a lady waving from the Durban Pier*

*Lying in a long chair, hobbling on a stick
some of us were wounded, most of us were sick
But we got God's golden sunshine in the message cheer
From the little lady waving on the Durban Pier*

*Standing at the quay-side waiting all alone
She seemed the first lone outpost of the women of our own
And she sometimes made us Aussies feel Australia drawing near
Did the little lady waving from the Durban Pier*

*She didn't ask for flattery, she didn't ask for fuss
But we took her and we told her she was henceforth one of us
And there's not a dinkum Digger but would give a dinkum cheer
to the little lady waving from the Durban Pier*

*Half a hundred troopships rolling up the bay
Tell the same old story - listen what they say
"Oh we'll give a Digger welcome if she ever blows in here
To that little lass who met us on the Durban Pier!"*

(Daily News, Perth 29 June 1923) Author unknown.

**** WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS ****

| | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|------------|-----|--------------|------------|
| 656 | Dennis Herrick | Australind | 660 | Trish Bowden | Waroona |
| 657 | Claire McRae | Australind | 661 | Barry Bowden | Waroona |
| 658 | Catherine Oliver | Eaton | 662 | Bob Hearn | Capel |
| 659 | Jennifer Scott | Australind | 663 | Lynn Stamp | Australind |

****Of the casualties on the Western Front, 60% were caused by shell-fire.
There were also about 80,000 cases recorded that were due to shell shock.***

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

*The following list are from new members with the names of people they are researching.
Please check to see if you have any of these names in your family- you may have a common interest*

| Surname | State/County | Country | Period | Member No. |
|---------|-----------------|----------|----------|------------|
| DUFF | Antrim | IRELAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| DUFF | Inverness-shire | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| DUFF | Midlothian | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| ROSE | Inverness-shire | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| ROSE | Midlothian | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| SCOTT | Inverness-shire | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| SCOTT | Midlothian | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| MACKAY | Inverness-shire | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |
| MACKAY | Midlothian | SCOTLAND | Pre 1870 | 659 |

If so, please ring the AFHS Library on 9796 1050 to arrange contact with new members.

WEB CORNER

*** Remember to visit our own AFHS Website administered by Chris Riley***
www.australindfhs.org

National Library Ireland Catholic Parish Registers - For most family history researchers, parish registers provide the earliest direct source of family information. Unlike many other records, parish registers provide evidence of direct links between one generation and the next (via baptismal registers) and one family and another (via marriage registers). They are also, for the majority of Irish people who lived during the 18th and 19th centuries, the only record of their existence

www.registers.nli.ie

Billiongraves including countries like South Africa - Search thousands of cemeteries and millions of headstone records from all over the world

www.billiongraves.com/pages/search

BIRTHS AT SEA - Do you think that one of your pre-1837 ancestors was born at sea but can find no record? Then it may be worth looking at the parish records of St Dunstan Stepney. The Bishop of London, having jurisdiction over chaplains and English ships, was sent details of any baptisms carried out at sea and these were entered in the St Dunstan's Parish Register. It is also known as the "Church of the High Seas"

www.unlockyourfamilytree.co.uk/saint-dunstan-and-all-saints-parish-rec

AncestryDNA reveals your ethnic mix from past 500-1000 years, helping you to focus your search on the countries and collections where you're most likely to find your ancestors. And if someone who shares your DNA has taken the test, you could find yourself connecting with a 3rd or 4th cousin you never knew you had.

www.ancestry.com.au

Bunbury Oral History Group - search a list of over 500 recordings of local people, includes a synopsis of the interview and often photos.

www.bunburyohg.com

**The first blood bank was established on the front line in 1917.*

LIBRARY – LATEST ACQUISITIONS

Many thanks to the generous people who have donated books to the Library.

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Leave Granted. The Story of Joseph Buswell's Tribulations | Alison Martin |
| The Norrish Family. 1847 to 1979 | Alison Martin |
| Excellent Connections. Bunbury 1836-1990 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Fallen Timber A History of the Worsley District | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Mannings' Way of Life | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Gathered Fragments. Blog. Robert C Clifton 1854-1931 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| When Blue Was True. A brief history of Brunswick area | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Australind Jnls of Marshall W Clifton 1840-1861 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| They Made Their Destiny. Settlement Harvey 1829-1929 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Shire of Harvey 1895-1995. Centennial Book | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Heritage within the Harvey Shire | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Reflections with the Harvey Shire | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Day the Flames Came - Dwellingup 1961 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Memories of Mornington Mills | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Wellington Mills - a History | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Binningup - The History | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Chowerup Tonebridge Pioneers | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Memories of Yarloop Hospital 110 years | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Burekup - On the Henty | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Leave Granted - Joseph Buswell's Tribulations & Triumphs | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Follow that Bell! Bill Ipsen | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Reminiscences of a Rural Practice 1947-1999 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Bunbury Civilians in Wartime | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| A Trooper's Story. The 10th Aust Light Horse Reg't 1914-1944 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Manjimup-Northcliffe Railway Line | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Story of Wonnerup House | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Old Blythewood Pinjarra | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Australind Cemetery. Notes and History 1841-1977 | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Bunbury Heritage Trail - Bicentennial Project | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| The Picturesque South West (pamphlet) | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| LaPorte - A History of Australind Titanium Dioxide Project | Tom Lofthouse's family |
| Lost Your Block? The Origins of WAs Forest Block Names | Peter Vickeridge |
| Early Days 1-8 Vol 7 | Wendy Maslin |
| Seeds of Subiaco | Wendy Maslin |
| Diggers & Mates. WWI War Veterans' Biographies 1994 | Lola Levingston |
| The 'Rajasthan' Voyages to S.Aust. 1838-1839-1840 | Lola Levingston |
| Karkarooc - VIC Mallee Shire History 1896-1995 | Lola Levingston |

