U3A BENALLA AND DISTRICT

FAMILY RESEARCH GROUP – RESEARCH RESOURCES

ANCESTRY: https://www.ancestry.com.au/ There are a number of options for research on this platform. Subscriptions can be taken out for various periods and there are discount options offered from time to time. One advantage with Ancestry is that it is used by many people, and you may find that you are able to connect with other relatives who are researching their particular branch of the family, and you may be able to exchange information. One caution with Ancestry is the issue that some of the information shown may not be factual. There is a site that specialises in European family history called, Geneanet. https://en.geneanet.org/ This site was acquired by Ancestry in 2021.

MY HERITAGE: https://www.myheritage.com/site-126158601/australian-heritage This site is used by many researchers as it gives a broad span of locations for you to research. There are extensive lists of electoral rolls and other formal certificates. The majority of information on this website comes from official documents and is accurate 'as recorded'. You still need to be mindful of errors within the records.

SCOTLANDS PEOPLE: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/ A specific resource to trace Scottish ancestors. The Scottish records are perhaps one of the most comprehensive in the UK. It is suggested that you also attempt to validate records from a second source, as in the early days name spelling can be different, as the person making the record wrote down what they heard. Up until the early 1900's, up to 80% of the population were illiterate.

IRISH GENEALOGY: https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/ This site perhaps offers the most comprehensive records of family history in Ireland. Unfortunately many of the historic records have not been digitised and many are still held in hand written Parish records. The very early history of Irish families is very difficult to trace accurately. Some additional information may be found on Irish Townlands https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/ There is another resource which is run by volunteers who will do Irish research for you. It goes under the name of Ireland XO or Ireland Reaching Out https://www.irelandxo.com/

WIKITREE: https://www.wikitree.com/genealogy/AUST This site operates as a researchers 'notice board'. It could be a great resource for you to confirm certain facts that you have a doubt about.

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES: There are sites for these listings all over the world, you just need to select your country and state/shire. There is an additional resource called the Ryerson Index, which is a listing of Australian newspaper death notices. https://www.ryersonindex.org/

TROVE: https://trove.nla.gov.au/ Part of the National Library which has a significant collection of digitised newspapers. You can search news articles, death and family notices on this platform.

FIND MY PAST: https://www.findmypast.com.au/ This site contains the history of migrants of Irish and British descent that come to Australia.

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE: https://prov.vic.gov.au/ The official Victorian records site that contains a wide variety of official records. This site has some census records and more can be found at the State Library https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/earlycensus/findpeople

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT GAZETTE: https://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/ This site has official records from 1836 to 1997 and you can search by name for information.

GENUKI: https://www.genuki.org.uk/ This site contains information by regional location for the UK and Ireland.

TIPS AND TRICKS

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH SITES: There are numerous websites that offer research. The ones included over the page are those that have been used by U3A members and found to contain information that assisted them in their research. Some others that may be of assistance are: Find A Grave, the National Library of Australia, and one very good resource is the National Archives of Australia, which holds all of the records for military service personnel.

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE WEBSITE: When you log into the site there is a 'search' tab in the top right hand corner. If you type in the name of the person you are researching, it will bring up all of the records containing that name, 'with some variations'. But it makes it a lot easier than scrolling through pages of documents.

REGIONAL/LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES: There are numerous historical societies around the world, run by volunteers who may be able to help you. Just Google search the region, or location of the person you are researching, and contact the local historical society.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Facebook and other similar platforms can be used when you are searching for family members past or present. Just search for a community page for the region where you are searching, and simply list a search for members of the family name and have them contact you.

GOOGLE: Sometimes a simple Google search with a name and location may give you some additional information.

DNA: This may reveal some information about your connection to past family members, however it may also disclose some information that you do not want to find.

CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE: When you start your research it is advisable to set up a spread sheet and record dates and information sources for your research. This will help you navigate through the family history where particular first names are 'recycled' through generations. Having the event dates in order will also help you sort the 'facts from fiction'.

FACTS AND FAMILY FABLES: During your research you will receive verbal, and sometimes written information, that seems to have been handed down through the generations. Whilst many family members may have accepted this information as fact, it may not be so. Your research may find the facts, and all you can do is record the facts as you have found them. One example was from research into a local person who was said to have gone to Lima to work for his Uncle, but he did not like the climate. The facts were that he did go to work for his Uncle, in the Caribbean, and did not like the climate, and he went there on a ship called 'Lima'. The person had never been to Lima in South America.

VALIDATE INFORMATION: Where ever possible attempt to validate information from at least two sources. This is sometimes difficult, due to changes in the spelling of names in records. Many names can be spelt differently such as Baird, can be spelt Beard. Brown can be spelt with or without an 'e'. You need to be aware that up until the early 1900's 80% of the population were illiterate. You also need to be aware that some of the information on sites such as Ancestry is not factual. It is also difficult to get this miss-information removed. All you can do is post the substantiated facts as you have found them.

PRINTING/PUBLISHING YOUR RESEARCH: You can do this in many ways. You can email the file, or copy it onto a CD, and circulate it to family members that way. A U3A Family Research Group member has successfully had printed copies done by Benalla Printers at a reasonable cost. You need to check with them first, as there is a size/quantity requirement. The alternate is, if you have a large quantity to print, is to purchase a comb binder and do it yourself.

Version 1: Compiled by Barry O'Connor. 26th February 2024.