



**Altona Laverton
Historical Society Inc.**
PO Box 236 Altona 3018

NEWSLETTER

President's Report

Welcome to 2026 and another exciting year for our volunteers. We have already had many visitors to the Homestead and several residents dropping into chat about their ancestors, some of whom came to Altona over one hundred years ago. They have passed on stories and artefacts that we are now recording for future generations to enjoy. This year also makes the following anniversaries within the area. First Laverton land sales 140 years ago, Altona Life Saving Club and St Eanswythe's Church, Altona, who are both celebrating one hundred years. It is also one hundred years since the first electrified train operated on the Altona railway and two local groups, Seabreeze Quilters and Altona U3A are twenty years old this year.



Of course, our Devonshire Tea events are about to start, and our volunteers are looking forward to welcoming old friends and new to the Homestead where we can chat over delicious scones and tea, whilst enjoying the atmosphere that is the Altona Homestead. Our team of volunteers are now back with renewed vigour and fresh projects for the coming year. We are in the process of changing some of our displays, firstly looking at the introduction decimal currency in 1966, and we are looking to highlight other local milestones within our display cabinets, so look out for those during the year. We have almost completed the digitisation of the Around Laverton newspaper dating back to 1979 which contain some interesting stories, events, and personalities from the Laverton area. We are collaborating with community members of digitising and displaying items that are held by local company Qenos, which has been a part of the local landscape for many years. This is looking to be quite a sizeable piece of work and will provide an opportunity for our members and community members to learn new skills in cataloguing, digitisation, and research. Family Research is gaining increased interest with people across the breadth of Hobsons Bay who are calling in to chat about their family research stories, to find out research hints and gain insight, from our experts. We have commenced to publish articles within our newsletters that will provide hints and tips for genealogists of all levels. Our research team has been busy scouring through new materials that have been donated to the Society and discovering new stories about street names across the areas of Altona Meadows, Seabrook, and Laverton. These are being updated on our website continuously throughout the year. As a society we are looking forward to another exciting and challenging year with new opportunities to work with many wonderful groups across Hobsons Bay. We are a small but enthusiastic group of people who love talking about the history of the area and if you are looking to be a part of this dynamic group and want to learn new skills please contact us.

Seabreeze Quilters Inc Celebrates 20 Years

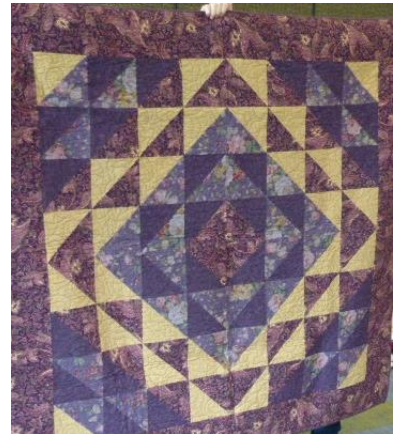


The members of Seabreeze Quilters celebrated its 20th birthday on 28 January this year, having formed in 2006 as a result of a likeminded group of ladies meeting and deciding that what Hobsons Bay area needed was a Quilting Group.

The group grew from its 31 foundation members to a strong and vibrant group where members not only practise their skills as quilters but also provide an avenue to socialise and support fellow members. They have also engaged with Hobsons Bay council and the other community groups to give back to their community through donations of funds and the provision of care quilts for those ill and in need.

A sample of their charity projects include making 450 gifts for locally run Meals on Wheels recipients, quilts for Legacy war widows, Women's Health West Crisis Accommodation Services, and many of the Victorian disaster relief efforts, supporting quilting groups in those areas looking to support their community.

In 2021, the group were recognised at the Victorian Volunteering Awards, receiving runner up, in the COVID 19 Support and Connections category, for their outstanding community work during the pandemic. During the pandemic, the committee realised that there was an opportunity and a need to stay connected with members, a chance to connect via zoom. What this did was make the group stronger during these troubling times by providing a venue to connect, talk and be creative.



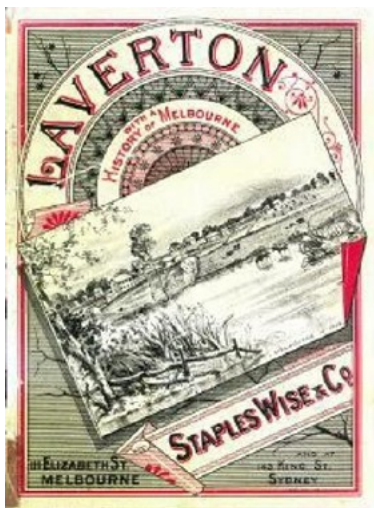
For its more than 100 members, it is an opportunity to socialise and develop new friendships, to challenge yourself by learning new skills all within a very supportive environment and at the same time supporting the welfare of the community in which they work and live.

The group is open to anyone wanting to join at any skill level and at any age and gender. If they were to have a motto it would go something like this – it is the small things that you do for others that create the big differences in the lives of others. It is these differences that bring joy to your life and work.

Seabreeze Quilters meet at the Lorraine Bedella Seniors Centre, 60 Walker Close, Altona North. Contact President Kim Reilly on 0409 383 510.

Laverton: 1886 to 2026

From humble beginnings on the grasslands, some 140 years ago, situated some twelve miles, west of Melbourne, Laverton has grown into an exciting, vibrant community. These lands were originally occupied and managed by the people of the Yalukit-willam clan whose lands extended from the Werribee River, across Williamstown, Port Melbourne, St Kilda and Prahran. They used these lands for hunting but during the mid 1800s European settlement began to fence off these lands for pastoral use, sheep, cattle and horses were introduced forcing the native wildlife to move away and the indigenous camps were broken up.



European settlement of the Laverton area dates from the early 1840s, with land used mainly for sheep grazing and small mixed crops. In 1844, a pastoral run was recorded in the Settler's Directory, naming Alfred

Langhorne as the occupier of a property named 'Laverton Estate' or 'Laverton Homestead'.

Alfred sold the property in 1874 to sheep graziers John Lecky Phelps and Joseph James Phelps, of New South Wales who continued farming the property until the death of John Lecky Phelps in early 1880s.



Alfred Thomas Clark

It was shortly after this event, that the Joseph Phelps decided to sell up and moved back to Ireland. In 1885, the purchaser, of a portion of the Phelps property, that made up Laverton Estate, was a consortium made up of Alfred Thomas Clark, John Morgan, William Henry Croker and William Henry Roberts. Alfred Clark, a politician and businessman, was born in London in 1845. In 1871 he resigned from this position and stood within the Victorian general elections to represent the people of Williamstown.

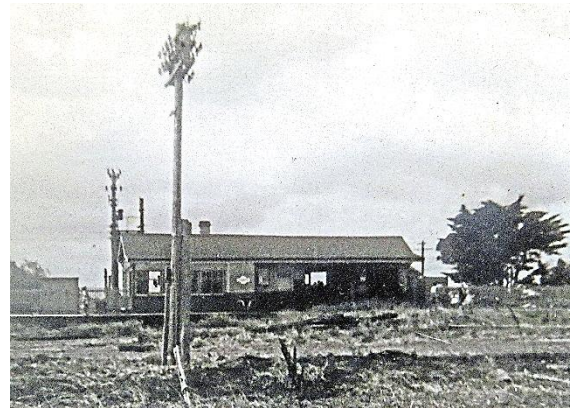
Alfred Clark had big aspirations for the expansion of Melbourne's suburbs westward beyond Williamstown, Footscray, Yarraville and Newport. Industry was growing in the area and he saw an opportunity. With his capital, necessary to buy land, he set forth to create a vision. He believed that with the railways expanding and the Newport Railway Workshop needing more workers, people would want to move away from the crowded inner suburbs out to where land was cheaper yet still being close enough to travel to Newport to work and then return home. He needed for his vision to become reality because the group had paid £165,000 for the land, some five times what the Phelps brothers originally paid to Alfred Langhorne.

reality because the group had paid £165,000 for the land, some five times what the Phelps brothers originally paid to Alfred Langhorne.

At public expense, he had persuaded the railways to build a railway station where he planned to sub-divide his land and set out his 'model suburb'. His problem was that he did not have a name for this suburb. His initial choice of Truganina was already taken and too far away from the station. As the land and railway station sat on the western edge of the Laverton Estate, he chose to call his new suburb 'Laverton'.

The firm of Staples, Wise and Co. oversaw the sales and promotion of the new estate and issued a booklet entitled 'Laverton: The New and Model Suburb' which incorporated a short history of Melbourne. The firm was established by Charles Raymond Staples and John Henry Wise.

Their booklet first dealt with the history and growth of Melbourne from its founding, through the gold rush and its own governance. It then shifted its focus to the virtues of Laverton's location and how it will

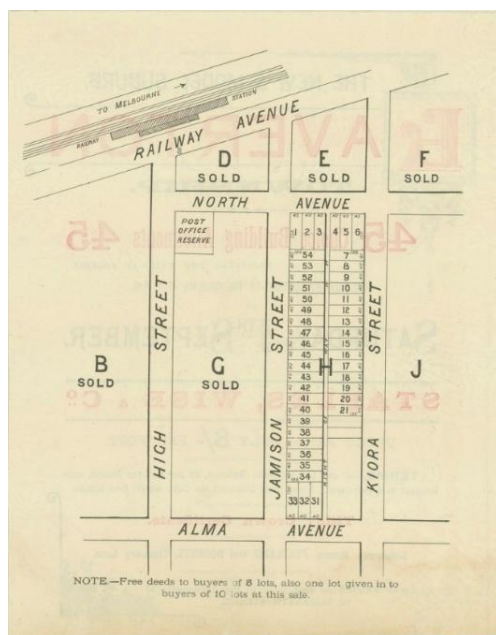


Early image of Laverton Railway Station

be laid out as a suburb. In 1886, Charles Staples commissioned the surveyors Bruford and Braim, of Melbourne, to design the layout of this new suburb. It was claimed that the suburb would have wide streets, land reserved for public buildings and over 25 acres allocated for parks and recreation reserves. Its other selling point being that the layout, of this new suburb, was based on most sanitary principles, which was, at the time, a surge of many of the overcrowded, older inner-city suburbs where fever and other illnesses were a constant threat to residents.

Staples also argued that Laverton was only a ten-minute train trip to employment at the Newport railway workshops, and therefore land in the area was bound to increase in value. He also bragged that the site of Laverton is an admirable one, commanding extensive views in all directions, comprising the Bay with its shipping, the Dandenong Ranges, Plenty Ranges, Mount Macedon, and the You Yangs—in fact, every prominent landmark within a radius of thirty miles is plainly visible.

On 10 April 1886 the following advertisement appeared in the Williamstown Advertiser: *Auction 17 April. Laverton: New and model suburb of Melbourne grand demonstration and opening of the railway station. Auction*



From the September 1886 Sale Brochure



sale of 66 choice township allotments adjoining the railway station. At the opening sale and as a guarantee that every lot will be sold at a price fixed at the nominal figure of 5 shillings per foot, our wonderful terms are £1 per lot deposit and the balance £1 per lot per month with interest at 6 per cent. However, buyers of 2 or more lots will not be charged any interest on the unpaid portion of purchase money. Purchasers of three lots get deeds free.

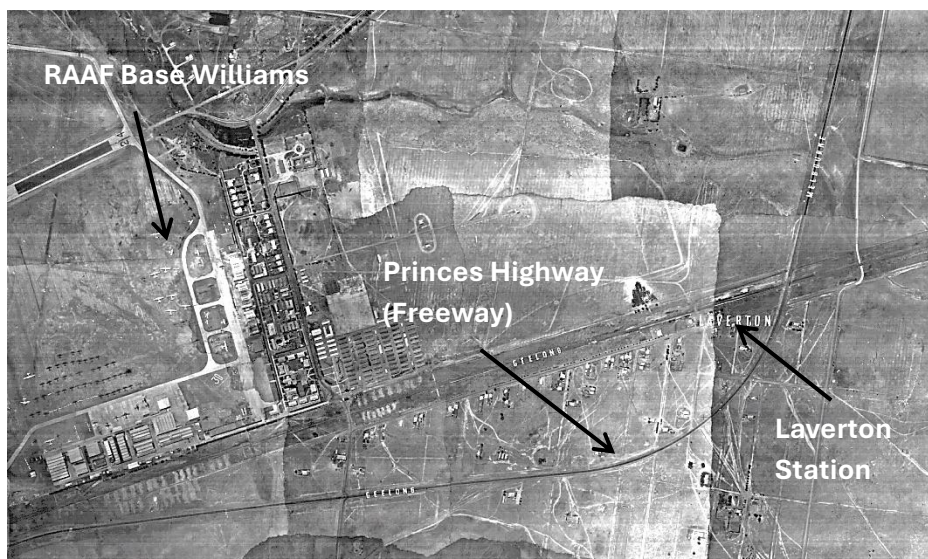
A second sale was held on 15 May 1886 when 50 allotments were put under the auctioneer's hammer. Then in September of

the same year a further sale of 45 lots was put under the auctioneer's hammer.

Whilst the above brochure/map appears to indicate a large portion of the immediate area, in the vicinity of the railway station had been sold, it did not translate to all these lots having a dwelling. However, there would appear to have been a sufficient influx of residents, to the new suburb, that by October 1886 the 'Laverton Board of Works' a type of progress association had been formed, and a daily mail service was being conducted.

If fact, within two years of the initial land sales, the Laverton primary school had been commissioned and built and had started teaching many of the local students and those that travelled in from the surrounding area. Werribee council, who controlled the area were certainly please with the rise in rates but in the early days collecting these rates proved tricky considering the difficulty in tracing many landowners.

The area's history has been strongly associated with the two RAAF bases. Firstly, with the Point Cook base before and during WW I and the establishment Base Williams



Laverton 1945 with RAAF Base on left and sparse housing south of the railway line and highway.

in 1920. In the period during and after World War II there was an increase in the residential development of the area, including housing constructed by the Victorian Housing Commission.

Around the time of World War II, the Princess Highway was redirected around the south of RAAF Base Williams which had the effort of

cutting the area in two. South of the highway remained as it was established with its straight roads stretching between Railway Avenue and Central Avenue, whilst north of the highway had a distinctive layout with its curving streets, courts and central open spaces, which was very common to other suburban housing estates of this era.

LAVERTON TOWNSHIP.
 COMPLETE PLAN
 FOR PRIVATE SALE
 BY
STAPLES, WISE AND CO.,
 111 ELIZABETH STREET,
MELBOURNE.

FREE DEEDS TO BUYERS OF 5 LOTS;
 ALSO,
 ONE LOT IN 10 GIVEN IN.
 COST OF DEEDS TO BUYERS OF
 LESS THAN 5 LOTS £2 10s.

TITLE: CROWN CERTIFICATE.
 Solicitors:
MESSRS. PENTLAND & ROBERTS,
 99 CHANCERY LANE,
 MELBOURNE.

ALL LOTS NOT COLOURED RED OR BUFF
 ARE
FOR SALE.
 PRICE £20 EACH. CORNER LOTS £200 EACH.
 TERMS: £1 per Lot Deposit; Balance 10s per Lot per
 Month, with interest at 6 per cent.
 Lots Coloured Buff may be Purchased at £20 each.
 Corner Lots £25 each.
 TERMS: £1 per Lot Deposit; Balance
 £1 per Lot per Month, with interest at
 6 per cent.
 THE RED DOTTED LINES ****
 SHOW THE DIVISION INTO SECTIONS

PORT PHILLIP BAY

Of the naming of the streets, within this new estate? Well, that would have been left to Staples, Wise & Co to complete. It appears that they tried an alphabetical approach, with a few exceptions as there are two A's, two B's, no I, and no W, X, Y or Z. Before you say, hang on what about Q, well there was one, but it was later changed to Hook.

They used place names from England, place names from New South Wales, prominent people, geographical boundaries and reference to the reigning monarch. Here is what we do know or recognise.

Ascot: after Ascot, England.

Balmoral: Scottish estate of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

Epsom: after Epsom, England.

Fitzroy: Sir Charles Fitz Roy, Governor of NSW.

Grace: Grace Staples nee Smith, mother of Charles Staples.

Jamison: Sir John Jamison, prominent NSW landowner and physician (1776-1844).

Linden: town in NSW.

Merton: Homestead of the same name in NSW owned by Commander William Ogilvie who served with Horatio Nelson.

Nicholson: Charles Nicholson, prominent Sydney physician.

Powlett: Frederick Armand Powlett, treasurer of Victoria who had leased Langhorne's Laverton Estate for a short period.

Hook: named after Royce Hook an early resident and cab driver. This street was originally Queen Street, but when this section of Central Avenue was renamed Queen Street one had to change names.

Rosebery: Earl of Rosebery who toured Australia in 1883/84 and became the British Prime Minister in 1894.

Talbot: the Talbot family of Shrewsbury England.

Victoria: named to recognise the reigning monarch, Queen Victoria.

Railway: due to its location next to the rail line.

North: this street was geographically the northern most street running east to west.

Central: was geographically the middle street.

Balaclava: great British battle.

Trafalgar: great British battle.

Nelson: Horatio Nelson who fought at the battle of Trafalgar.

South: this street was the geographically the most southern street running east to west.

Today, this older area, that was the original Laverton, is known as Altona Meadows.

References

- Altona-Laverton Historical Society archives, accessed 2025.
- Altona Star Newspaper, 25 November 1970, 2 December 1970, and 9 December 1970.
- Clarke, I (2001) The First People of the City of Hobsons Bay, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Deirdre Rofe, 'Clark, Alfred Thomas (1845–1888)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clark-alfred-thomas-3210/text4831>, published first in hardcopy 1969, accessed online 16 February 2026.
- Hobsons Bay City Council (2003) Heritage Study, www.hobsons.vic.gov.au/ Volume_1b_Thematic_Environmental_History.pdf
- Laverton, the new and model suburb: with a short history of Melbourne from its foundation to the present time, (1886) Charles Raymond Staples, Melbourne.

Citing your records and documents

By Graeme Reilly



Our third article, in our family research series, is all about citing records and documents you have collected/used within your family research. Now, before you start saying, sure but I am not writing a thesis or an article for a magazine or a book so why do I need to go to the trouble of citing references, let me explain.

While one of the aspects of citations is to add credibility to your research, the key reason is to enable others and yourself to retrace your steps as to how and where you found the information and allow others to reproduce your results in the future. Also, when someone else quotes a differing date or place you know where to recheck your research for its accuracy.

From experience, when you have added the four hundredth person to your tree and somebody then asks, "where did you find that date or that piece of information on a relative", you will be glad that you wrote down your reference sources.

I agree that including citations is not the most rewarding component of genealogy but believe me they are one of the most important future proofings of your research. For a few extra minutes of recording time, you will save hours of repeated research later down the track when you need to revisit an event.

In this article we will cover off on the key information that you should include when adding events, documents, records, images and research notes to your family tree. Whilst we have based this on a more formal style, I have simplified it slightly, to adapt it for your research notes and when adding items to your online family tree. So, what do you cite?

I believe that the primary elements listed here should be included in your citation:

- The author, editor or producer of the material
- The title of the book, material, article or image
- Date of the material or the date you accessed the material
- Page or Reference details
- Publisher, location or website

There is other optional information and notes you can include but this will depend on the item and how and where it is held. Remember what you are looking to achieve is a way to retrace your steps to relocate the item again or tell someone else how they can find the same item. Let's look at several common items that you are likely to find and how you might cite them within your family tree.

Books: Essentials to include are -

- Author/s or Editors name/s
- Year of publication
- Title
- Publisher
- Edition, series and volume number (if applicable)

Chapter within an edited book: Essentials to include are -

- Chapter author/s
- Chapter title
- Year of publication
- Book author/editor
- Book title

Journal Article:

- Author/s
- Article title
- Journal title
- Year of publication
- Volume number, issue number and page number

Archival documents: Elements to include are –

- Author
- Year
- Title of document and date
- Collection name
- Document reference number
- Name and location of archive

Newspaper Article: Elements to include are –

- Title of newspaper
- Full date of publication
- Author
- Title of Article
- Page number

Webpage: Elements to include are –

- Person or organisation that created the webpage
- Year of publication or last updated
- Page/item title
- URL and the date accessed

Note: With webpages, I always save a copy of the page as a pdf document as I have often found that when I go back to the web site a few years later, the article/page may no longer be there.

Maps: Essentials to include are -

- Name of cartographer or issuing body
- Year of publication
- Title of map

Films: You should include the following -

- Title of film
- Year of distribution
- Directed by
- Distributor

Social media & YouTube: Elements to include are -

- Author
- Year posted
- Title of post or video/programme
- Day/month posted
- Available at: URL (Accessed: date)

Thesis: Elements to include are -

- Name of author
- Year of submission
- Title of thesis
- Degree statement (eg PhD thesis)
- Name of the University
- If accessed online, then available at: URL and the date accessed

Public records of Victoria (PROV)

You should accurately cite public records that you refer to or reproduce accurately so that they can be easily found by other people. Example: Probate and Administration Files – Edith Emily Wallace.

PROV, Edith Emily Wallace, VPRS 28/P0006 Probate and Administration Files, 741/391, Grant of probate, 15/08/1972,
<https://prov.vic.gov.au/archive/3AA2C7AC-F281-11E9-AE98-A152F2F5D288/about>

NAA – It is recommended that you use the following abbreviated form of citation.

- The abbreviation 'NAA' for National Archives of Australia, followed by a colon i.e. NAA:
- The series number, followed by a comma e.g. B2455,
- The control symbol (also referred to as the item number) e.g. MCDONALD D

The complete abbreviated citation would be - NAA: B2455, MCDONALD D. This relates to WW1 service records for Donald McDonald.

Birth, Death and Marriages Victoria:

Birth certificate:

Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria¹, certificate number 12345/1900, birth of John Smith. Or Victoria State Government, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria. Richard Goodall Elrington. Birth.

Registration number 3218 / 1870. You could also provide a direct link to the entry.

Death certificate:

Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, certificate number 67890/1955, death of Jane Doe.

Marriage certificate:

Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, certificate number 591/1945, marriage of John William Brown and Kathleen Vera Bradley.

These citation examples can be used for any Birth, Death and Marriages office within Australia or Overseas.

What we have provided here are samples of the key references that you are likely to encounter within your family research and family tree.

If the source you want to cite is not listed in our article, then please consult the following publication: *Pears, Richard; Shields, Graham; 2022, Cite Them Right (12th Edition), Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, London*. Otherwise, refer to our samples and then record enough details that if you needed to locate the resource again, you could.

¹ Indicate the State, County or Country providing/maintain the record.

Farewell to Altona stalwart & supporter of our Historical Society: Kim 'Kimbo' Walsh (1951 – 2026)



Altona's Kim Walsh, and member of the Altona Laverton Historical Society, lived life to its fullest during his 75 years, before passing away, after a short battle with cancer, on 28 February. Kim was a lot of things to a lot of people and groups around Altona and in Williamstown, to his much-loved Williamstown Football Club.

He was a policeman/senior detective for some thirty-four years, president and committee person, justice of the peace, marriage celebrant, a driving force behind the Altona Village Traders Association and the Altona Market, 'Santa' to the team and clients of Latitude: Directions for Young People and a support to anything that put Altona on the map. More importantly, the driving force behind ensuring Altona maintained that community feel and connection.

All that new Kim have paid their respects to a genuinely respected community leader whose contribution will be sorely missed. He showed a genuine care and respect for people, organisations and businesses within Altona. The Williamstown Football Club paid tribute to Kim who served as their club president during the 1990's when they were almost forced to merge with Werribee. Kim then became a full director in 1992 and 1993 before taking over the presidency from Graham Osborne during the 1994 season. With Kim's determination and passion for the Club, the Seagulls survived and prospered winning two premierships (2003 & 2015).

The current president of the Altona Village Traders Association, Ilch Mickovski, summoned it up well in the short words - "Kim's contribution to Altona cannot be overstated." He was always looking out to link one or more local organisations with another, both in Hobsons Bay and within Buloke Shire.

Kim Walsh is survived by wife Sharon, sons Jason, Dean, Shaun and Shannon, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren.

Vale Kim 'Kimbo' Walsh.

Your Family Tree Rating

By: *Graeme Reilly*



Welcome to the fourth article within our series on researching your family tree. Like myself, a lot of you might be using the Ancestry site to not only record your tree but also undertake a considerable portion of your research.

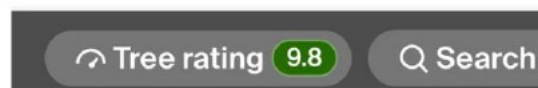
While I use it as a secondary listing of my family tree, I did not commence to use Ancestry until I had both exhausted my own family records and had, what I felt, was a sound understanding of who is who and what is what, going back to my great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers.

This was a personal choice, and it certainly helped me recognise pertinent hints that ancestry presented before I chose to accept or ignore them. Believe me, do the hints come thick and fast. However, with all the care that you do take with accepting hints, it is inevitable that some inaccuracies will sneak through. In my case, the key error was duplications of people through

married names – maiden names, nicknames, multiple spellings of first names (eg Ann, Anne, Annie). About eighteen months ago I noticed my Ancestry tree¹ had a rating and I needed to know what caused my rating to be at the level it was. It was 9.2 and I soon learnt that the rating was being scored from 1 to 10.

Although this article will concentrate on the rating provided by Ancestry, the details can be easily adapted to other search engines, such as FamilySearch, MyHeritage etc.

If you look at the right-hand side of your Tree page, you'll see a score rating the tree on a scale of 1-10 (trees with less than 50 people will not have a rating).



My very next question was – So, how is the rating determined?

I discovered that the tree rating is based on:

1. Possible duplicate people.
2. People without documentation.
3. People with only other trees as documentation.
4. People with other possible errors.

If you move your mouse over your rating and then select it, a 'Tree Checker' dropdown box will appear, and again if you click anywhere to the right of your rating, further information will appear showing the possible number of errors, breaking

¹ FamilySearch also has a Profile score.

these down into the four categories, listed above.

Now, before you start going “Oh my goodness” why so many errors, how do I fix this, these are **possible or potential** errors, just like hints are only possible hints and not all may apply to your tree.

At this stage my tree consisted of approximately 3,200 members, and I was less concerned about the actual rating score as I felt that a high score would not necessarily denote accuracy. I was more interested in identifying actual errors and making these right.

Here I went back to my first rule of family research – make an action plan, action, and then review all results. I know that Ancestry offers ‘Pro Tools’ at an extra \$15 per month, but personally I don’t feel it is worth this expense. So, he was my approach using the tools already at my disposal.

My aim was to identify real arrears and rectify these and identify people with no documentation and ensure that they do belong on my tree and, where I could, add any documentation that linked them to my tree and other relatives.

Ancestry advised that I had sixty-three possible duplicate people, and so I thought I would start here to eliminate all duplicates. My approach here was to select the **Find in Tree** icon and, then from the righthand menu select **List of all people**. This provided a list of everyone within my tree. My plan was to scroll through this and identify any obvious duplicates, any person where the surname

might have been entered as the married surname rather than the maiden surname. Also, possible first names where they might be spelt in various styles, e.g.: John or Jack, James or Jim, Helen or Ellen or Nellie. So, working through my list for obvious and not so obvious likely issues I would use the **Tools** menu and then the **Merge with duplicate** option.

Before you jump into action, let me point out that you tree, as with mine, will/may have quite a few family members with the same first and last names, because that was the nature of naming children in years gone by. Children were named after fathers, mothers and grandparents.

Also, where a child died in infancy or at birth, a child born a few years later might bear the same first name. One instance in my tree is that I have a relative named Arthur Dickman, who had two sons Arthur and Albert Dickman who each had a son named Arthur Dickman, both born in the same year, confusing, to say the least.

Whilst I was looking through my tree for duplicates, I also reviewed people who had no documentation attached or who were only within to my tree from reviewing someone else’s tree.

When I located someone like this, I would search through my own records for why they were attached to my tree and then research/locate evidence of their birth, death, marriage, burial, residence, etc. These I would then attach to my tree which I knew would in turn generate further hints. **Remember:** A hint is a hint and only becomes a fact when you accept it.

So, did it work? Well, within a month I had reduced my possible duplicates to eighteen, and people with absolutely no documentation to four.

I am still working through 'other possible errors' which currently has a count of eleven.

The consequence of this work meant that my tree rating shifted to 9.9, not the key motive of undertaking this effort, but a measure of progress, none the less. Incidentally, Ancestry updates your rating and possible error stats once a week, generally just after the weekend, so please don't expect to go in the next day and expect the rating to reflect the work you did yesterday.

What was key, for me, was that I gained more confidence that everyone that I had added to my tree belonged and that when I now discover their potential spouses, children or parents, I have a strong base on which to determine their place, alongside others, in my tree.

Additional, as you verify and attach documentation to your tree, the more evidence you have at your disposal to prove the appropriateness of further documentation or life events that you find or that Ancestry presents as hints.

I strongly believe that taking the time to review and update your family tree is a worthwhile exercise. It improves its accuracy, both now and when considering future additions and you certainly learn things that you may have missed when you first added that family member, and new places to search. It also allows you time to

discover the story behind each person, couple or family that your tree contains.

New information is becoming available all the time as more organisations undertake the digitisation of records that have been stored away for years. I would suggest treating the Ancestry rating not as a score but as a health check, a chance to check evidence, identify gaps, look for conflicting information.

A good place to start your review is with the first three generations of your direct line of ancestors to ensure that your tree has a solid foundation. Then extend out further, family by family assessing what you have included is correct and that you have the evidence to back it up. In a previous article I talked about the importance of citing records and documents, it is a good practice to get into.

Don't get over awed by the task, take a systematic approach and look at it as review or reflection time and you will be very surprised on how much you add to your tree and how much more you learn about individual family members.

For me, genealogy is more about the stories that develop. The journeys, hardships and celebrations. Their milestones, achievements and the esteem that their towns, suburbs, and in some cases, their countries held your family members in. Their story is the aim of why I research and build my own family tree.