



A.N.D.F.H.G. Inc. News Sheet

Issue 108 – Nov. 2020

ELECTED COMMITTEE 2020-2021

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TREASURER	Suzanne Smith

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	Helen Stein
	Ian Cowley
	Margaret Flaiban

APPOINTMENTS

AUDITOR	Shirley Bulley	FAMILY TREE MAKER CONVENER	Peter Applebee
		LEGACY USERS GROUP CONVENER	Shirley Bulley

From the Committee

Hello Members,

This is your last Newsletter for 2020 which is packed with lots of interesting information from a brilliant WWI left handed Artist to the updated newspapers and information from FindMyPast and The Genealogist. We do hope you enjoy reading the articles. There will be one more monthly Bulletin in November just before our Christmas break, which will be sent to those who have an email address. The calendar on our website www.andfhg.org.au will give you more details regarding activities and opening hours, so please have a look from time to time.

Our Christmas Break up barbeque and get together will be on Saturday 28th November, so we would like to see as many members as possible come along and enjoy the afternoon. We will be re-opening again at the beginning of February 2021 but a date will be decided at a later stage when the Committee meet again. As the saying goes "Watch this Space".

A big thank you to Colin Withall for stepping up last Saturday and giving us a talk on the pitfalls and fallacies of research. There is always something new to think about regarding researching any records.

Next year, we are hoping to have bi-monthly Speaker Days on our 4th Saturday meetings but we will let you know the Committee's decisions. If you have any ideas as to what you would like to see and hear next year, please let us know. We are always open to suggestions

The Committee would like to wish every one of our members a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. We hope to see more of our members in 2021.

Thank You.

Regards ANDFHG

Disclaimer

The Adelaide Northern Districts Family History Group Inc. does not accept any responsibility for the opinions or the accuracy of the information contained in this newsletter

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Donations by Shirley Bulley

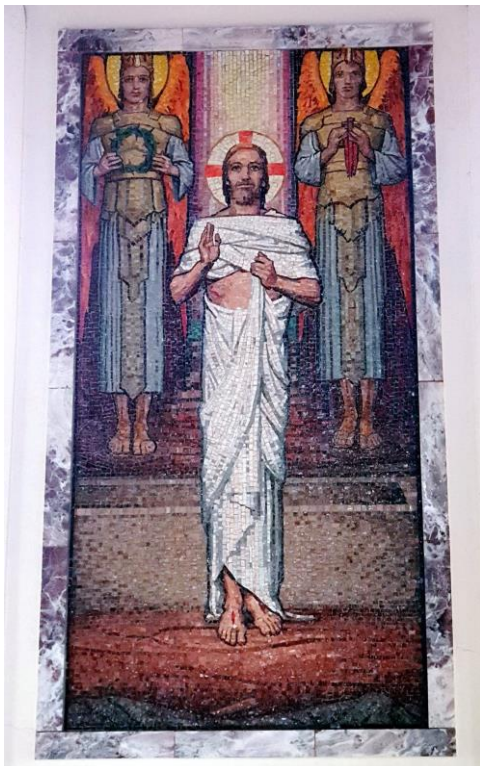
A CD regarding "A History of Ebberston" - a village near Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

"Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors" The essential genealogical guide to early modern Ulster 1600 – 1800 by William J Roulston (2nd edition).

Information Sheet on Scottish Clans and the interpretation of Highland Chiefs and Clans - reference sheet only.

North Road Cemetery

A HIDDEN GEM : MERVYN NAPIER WALLER



Over a century old, the Chapel of the Resurrection is a highly recognisable feature of the cemetery. It also houses a beautiful Venetian glass mosaic which was designed and constructed by Napier Waller.

Napier Waller was born in Victoria in 1893 and served in the First World War. During the fighting at Bullecourt, his right arm was so badly wounded, it necessitated amputation.

An artist pre-war, right-handed Waller was determined to paint again, and learned to use his left hand during his convalescence.

Not only was he successful with his painting, he also became proficient in the art of mosaics and stained-glass windows. Living in Melbourne, Waller proceeded to become





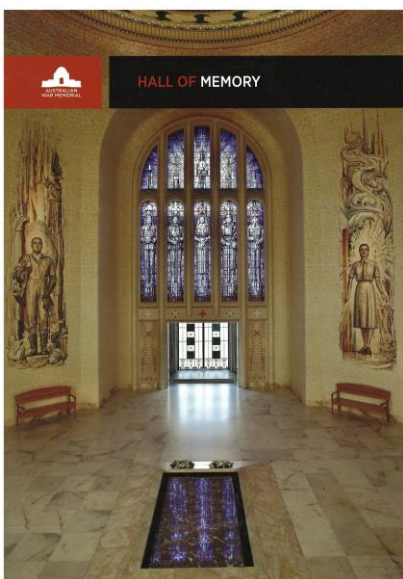
Melbourne's major mural artist, with some of his works adorning the Melbourne Town Hall and the Myer Mural walls on the 6th floor of the Myer Emporium store in Melbourne. His mosaics can be found all around Australia including the Collins Street Mosaic entitled "I'll Put A Girdle About The Earth", and the "Five Lamps of Learning" at the University of Western Australia.

His best-known achievement, however, would be the magnificent mosaics and stained-glass windows in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

The cemetery was very honoured when in 1963, following a bequest from Mrs Bohm, Waller agreed to construct a mosaic to hang above the altar in our chapel, aptly entitled "Resurrection". The cost of the original artwork was £450, which was fixed in place by Aldo Rossi, an expert from Sydney at the cost of £83. The marble surround added to the cost, which totalled £810/1/0



The mosaic has become the focal point of the chapel interior, and draws many comments from visitors.



Napier Waller died in Melbourne in 1962 at the age of 71. He has left a remarkable collection of artwork throughout Australia. Napier Waller is remembered at the War Memorial through a \$10,000 art prize named in his honour.

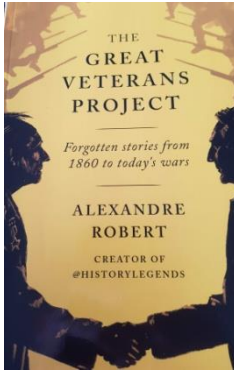
Helen Stein

Historian North Road Cemetery

“The Great Veterans Project”

Story 28 UNITED KINGDOM

Fred Wren



Prior to the war my great-great grandfather Fred Wren lived in London working as a photographer and errand boy. He grew up and lived not far from his friend Sidney Bell, whom he became quite close and with the eventual start of “the Great War”, Fred along with Sidney answered the call for King and country. My great-great Grandfather served first in the Yorkshire Light



Infantry and subsequently as a Driver, 2nd battalion, Machine Gun Corp. Sidney enlisting as a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery, A Battery, 311th Brigade

The 311th crossed over to France in January of 1917, though prior to this in June of 1916 Sidney marries his sweetheart Mary Nevard. With the eventuality of the division crossing the front Sidney asks his close friend Fred to fulfill one promise. That if anything should ever happen to him, to take care of Mary.

“A Battery” from the start of 1917 is almost constantly in action, supporting the opening phase of “The Battle of Arras” and subsequent attacks. On June 5th the Brigade diary reports “very heavy shelling of battery position by enemy”. By the 22nd December 1917, almost a year after being sent to France Sidney is wounded, entitled to wear a “wound stripe”. A few months later though, on the 5th July 1918 as the division continue fighting in Flanders Sidney is killed in action, his record simply stating Western Theatre, France and Flanders. He died at the age of only 23.

At wars end Fred returns home and after two years on 3rd April 1920 Fred marries Mary Bell at St Michael and All Angels Church, London. The same church Sidney had married Mary only four years prior. Fred after all these years kept his promise. Today, Sidney is buried at Dainville British Cemetery, France. I’m often taken back at how four generations of my family have come to be due to Sidney’s sacrifice and the promise kept by my great-great grandfather. A promise that was built and kept good by friendship. Today I hope to fulfill and keep my own promise to Sidney and visit his burial site in France.

After publication of the story, following further research we discovered Mary and Sidney had a daughter, Lily Mary Bell born in 1917. Unfortunately, Lily died in April 1918; Mary had in that one terrible year lost her husband and her child.

Submitted by Rosemary Ward, written by her grandson, Daniel Cardone.

Findmypast's Newspaper Archive Goes Global

[Findmypast](#) and the [British Newspaper Archive](#), have today announced a major new development in their project to digitize the British Library's vast collection of historical newspapers.



Following the recent addition of brand new titles covering Canada and British India, including some of the first English language-newspapers ever to be printed in these regions, Findmypast will continue to add thousands of pages from a variety of Commonwealth publications throughout 2020.

[Findmypast's newspaper collection](#) now contains over 36 million pages from over 1000 [titles](#) covering England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and beyond. Spanning over 300 years (1708 – 2009) years of local, national and world history, it contains over 3.2 billion names found within notices of births, marriages and deaths, obituaries, advertisements, letters, news reports and much more.

In the coming months, newspaper enthusiasts can expect to see a variety of new additions from Canada, India, Pakistan, Jamaica, and Barbados added to the collection. Researchers will soon have the ability to instantly access millions of articles in titles such as the Toronto Daily Mail, Hamilton Daily Times, Times of India, Calcutta Gazette, The Jamaica Mercury & Kingston Weekly Advertiser and more.

This exciting development marks the latest step in Findmypast's drive to help researchers across the globe transform their understanding of historical events both great and small, while adding color, context and depth to their family history research.

The past 12 months has seen a dramatic increase in Findmypast's rate of newspaper digitization, with over 5.9 million pages containing roughly 533 million names made available to search online since January 2019.

Today's announcement builds on Findmypast's historically strong coverage of the UK and the millions of pages recently added from Scottish and Irish titles.

Tamsin Todd, CEO of Findmypast, said; *"We are delighted to be working with our partners at the British Library to welcome these new international titles to our collection. Newspapers supplement the facts of our family histories with rich stories – in them we might find a picture of the place an ancestor lived or worked, or what was happening in sports and politics and entertainment on the important days in their lives. With its new international reach, the British Newspaper Archive is becoming an ever more useful source for the social historian and family researcher alike."*

Updates from The Genealogist

New Second World War Casualty Lists Released



TheGenealogist has added to its Military Records collection with the release of more than 1 million entries for people recorded in the Second World War Casualty Lists. Sourced from collection WO 417 held at The National Archives, these documents contain records from the war years of **1939 to 1945** and list casualties sustained by the British Army during the Second World War. There are volumes for Officers and Nurses, with separate volumes for Other Ranks. The Casualty Lists were compiled from daily lists that had been prepared by the War Office Casualty Section and cover the

various expeditionary forces deployed in different locations across Europe, Africa and Asia as well as for personnel at home.

2. Home and Stations Abroad (Contd.)		Previous List No.	Date of Casualty
<u>Home (Contd.)</u>			
<u>Died</u>			
Royal Artillery	W.	G Bty Depot	24. 9.44.
576563 GUNNILL	W/Par.	1 Field Hold. Pl. Bty.	15. 9.44.
974985 ROBERTSON	Car.		
<u>South Lancashire Regiment</u>			
3650672 WILLIAMS	Pte.	R.	26. 9.44.
3. <u>At Sea</u>			
<u>Previously reported Missing 7.8.44. now reported Wounded and Missing</u>			
<u>4th Bn. Dorsetshire Regiment</u>			
658698 HITCHINGS	Pte.	L.G.	1953 7. 8.44.
(previously shown with Army No. as 658698)			
4. <u>Prisoners of War</u>			
<u>Previously reported Prisoner of War now reported Wounded and Prisoner of War in German Hands (Germany)</u>			
<u>Royal Army Service Corps</u>			
1166615 BRAVER	C.Q.M.S. A.	951	Cyrenaica
<u>Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands (Germany) Now Not Prisoner of War</u>			
<u>2nd Bn. Northamptonshire Regiment</u>			
5885091 KNIGHT	Pte.	J.E.	400 France
5885206 SMITH	Pte.	A.	460 "

WW2 Casualty Records will give family history researchers details of ancestors' names and regiments as well as ranks and service numbers for those recorded. The World War 2 casualty lists contain more detail than their WW1 counterparts and often list the date of the casualty (as well as the list date), plus other information such as the unit a soldier had been serving in at the time.

Included in these lists are those who had been **unaccounted for by the military**, were **dangerously ill or injured**, were captured as a **Prisoner of War** or **died**. The records include troops who had been serving in a number of places across the world, but also cover personnel who had lost their lives, were injured at home or were serving at an overseas station outside the theatres of war. Updates and corrections appear in the records as new information was received by the War Office.

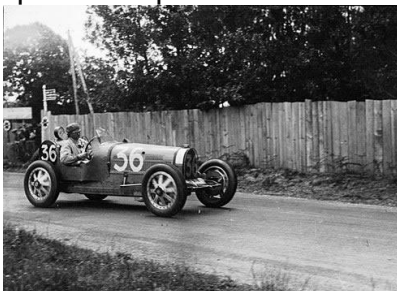
Motor racing aces executed by the Nazis

The Grand Prix driver William Williams was only 42 when the Nazis executed him in 1945. He had been born to a French mother and an English father on 16th January 1903 in the suburbs of Paris. His father, a horse breeder named Frederick Grover, had moved to France from England and then fell in love and married Hermance Dagan, a French woman. The family grew to have four children and after the First World War the Grovers moved from Paris to the stylish riviera where they set up home in the Principality of Monaco. One of their sons, called William Charles Frederick Grover at this time, gained his driving licence in Monaco and began racing motorcycles. It is said that he had adopted the pseudonym W. Williams so as not to alert his family that he was participating in the dangerous sport of motor racing.



William Grover-Williams at the 1931 Grand Prix de Belgique. When the mysterious W. Williams won the inaugural Monaco Grand Prix in 1929 while driving a dark green and privately owned Bugatti T35B, he came to the attention of motorsport enthusiasts. Racing a number of Bugattis he went on to get another seven Grand Prix wins under his belt between 1928 and 1933, establishing himself as a top Grand Prix driver. In the 1930s, however, he

had effectively retired from the sport and now lived a comfortable life in France with his wife out of the danger that he had once faced on the track. Then war broke out! The Grand Prix driver William Williams was only 42 when the Nazis executed him in 1945. William fled to England when France fell to the Germans in World War II, where he joined the British Army and was commissioned into the Royal Army Service Corps. With his skill in the French language and his knowledge of the country, he worked as an agent for the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Returning to France as an undercover special agent, he organised and coordinated a network of operatives in a secret circuit named Chestnut. Being friends with fellow racing car driver Robert Benoist, he recruited him to join the SOE and they established sabotage cells in their region, as well as reception committees for Allied operatives parachuted into France.



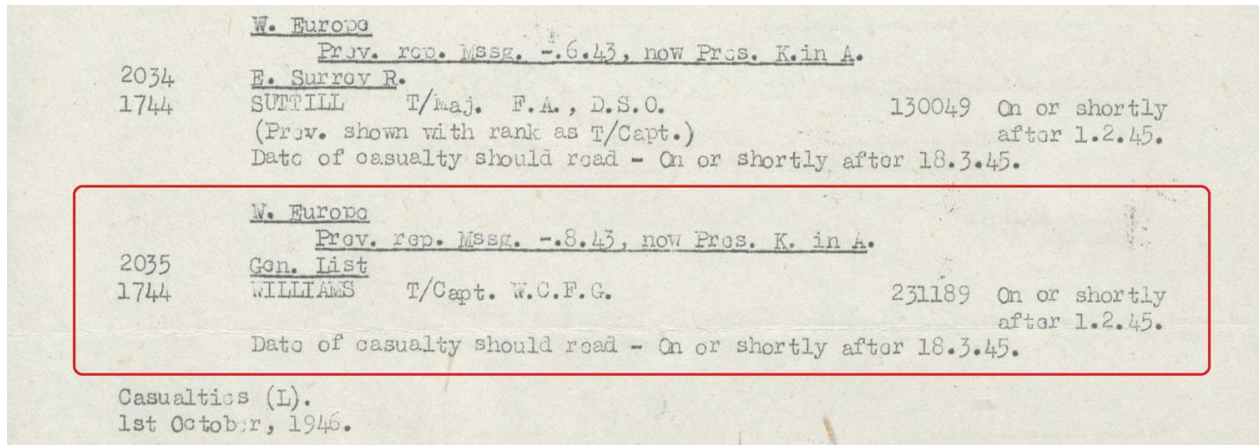
William fled to England when France fell to the Germans in World War II. In England he joined the British Army and was commissioned into the Royal Army Service Corps. With his skill in the French language and his knowledge of the country he was an obvious candidate to train to work as an agent for the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Returning to France as an undercover special agent he organised

and coordinated a network of operatives in a secret circuit named Chestnut. Being friends with fellow racing car driver Robert Benoist he recruited him to join the SOE and they established sabotage cells in their region, as well as reception committees for Allied operatives parachuted into France.

Captured and interrogated

In August 1943 the former Grand Prix driver turned SOE Captain suffered a turn in fortune. His luck ran out and he was captured by the Nazis and shipped off to Berlin

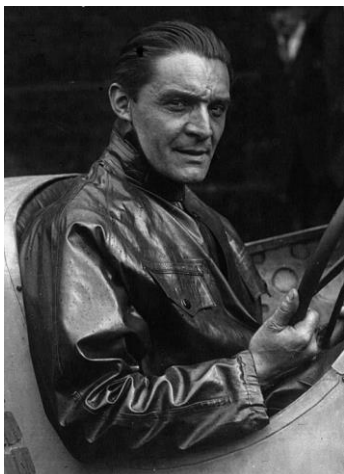
for questioning. The Germans interrogated him for a time before imprisoning him in Sachsenhausen, a concentration camp 22 miles north of Berlin. This camp was a place where many executions took place throughout the war, but it would not be until the spring of 1945 that Grover-Williams's time would finally run out. The one-time racing ace and brave SOE agent was executed at the concentration camp in Germany sometime in February or March 1945. The official Casualty lists that have been released on TheGenealogist tells us that at first he was reported as "Missing". Then the British authorities changed his status to one of "Killed in Action" on or shortly after 1 February 1945. Eventually, this was modified once again to be on or after 18 March 1945 reflecting that the intelligence London received was not precise.



T/Capt W.C.F.G. Williams now presumed Killed in Action in the WO417 records on TheGenealogist. While this is in line with the accepted story of his death, and in reality the probable truth a tale emerged that claimed he didn't die in the concentration camp. According to Wikipedia and Motor Sport magazine from the time, the tale says that Grover-Williams may have actually survived the war and then lived out his life under an assumed identity back in France. Not in secret, however, but as Monsieur Georges Tamba - the man who after the war lived with Grover-William's widow!

Looking at the recent records released on TheGenealogist, and sourced from the WO 417 series at The National Archives, we can find T/Capt W.C.F.G. Williams in the list of casualties. The official record is a little coy about his membership of the SOE and that his death was as a result of execution at the hands of the Nazis, preferring to list him as being on the General List. A further search of TheGenealogist also returns him listed in a General Register Office (GRO) death index record for war deaths and his name is found carved on one of the memorial plaques on the Brookwood Military Cemetery, which can also be seen on TheGenealogist. So if the account about him surviving WWII is true then some effort has been entered into building a backstory of his demise. The truth behind this story will always remain a mystery.

The French Champion racing driver, Captain in the British Army and SOE agent



Also found in the WO417 records and on another panel of the Brookwood Memorial is Grover-William's racing driver contemporary, Robert Benoist. While Grover-Williams was half French/half English, his compatriot was a Frenchman. Robert Marcel Charles Benoist had been born near Rambouillet, Île-de-France in France as the son of the gamekeeper to Baron Henri de Rothschild. When he was a young man, Benoist had joined the French infantry to serve in World War I. With the introduction of aeroplanes he had then become a fighter pilot in the new Armée de l'Air and ultimately progressed to become a flying instructor. After WWI the thrill seeking Benoist went into motor racing and in 1927, driving a Delage 15-S-8, he won the French, Spanish, Italian and British Grand Prix races for the French

car marque. He then joined the Bugatti team and before the Second World War he had risen to run the company's racing department.

Robert Benoist behind the wheel at Monza, 1927. With the German occupation of France he too escaped to Britain where his old friend, Grover-Williams recruited him into the SOE. Benoist was commissioned as a Temporary Captain in the British Army and then joined the secret organisation.

The Motor Sport magazine in 1945 revealed that during the war Benoist had been dropped by parachute many times behind German lines and was able to carry out major disruption at Caen on D-Day. He escaped from the occupying forces twice: once, having been caught by the Nazis he was being transported to be interrogated by the Gestapo when he managed to leap from a moving vehicle and make good his escape. He was able to get back to Britain, with the help of the French Resistance, but then duty called again and he took up another mission in France lasting from October 1943 to February 1944. This was followed by a short period back in London before returning to France in March to carry out further SOE work in the Nantes area. This time, however, his luck ran out and Benoist was arrested on 18th June 1944 and shipped to Buchenwald concentration camp. Interrogated by the Gestapo, it was here that he was executed three months later on 9th September 1944. The next year, in August 1945, Motor Sport magazine reported: "Sportsmen all over the world will have read with sadness the news that the Germans did to death Robert Benoist, following his prolonged and heroic work for the Allies during the war." The contrast of the language used with the official casualty list report of "Died Whilst Prisoner of War in German Hands" is profound.

1. Additional Prisoners (Contd.)	Previous List No.	Date of Capture	2. Prisoners of War (Contd.)	Previous List No.	Date of Capture
(a) Western Europe (Contd.)			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
1. Intelligence Corps MAGALFRESH A/Capt. 257470			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
2. Home and Antiquarian Ground			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
(a) Home			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
No casualties have been reported.			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
(b) Abroad			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
No casualties have been reported.			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
3. At Sea			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
No casualties have been reported.			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
4. Prisoners of War			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		
No casualties have been reported.			Previously reported Prisoner of War in German Hands		

T/Capt R.M.C. Benoist reported as Died Whilst Prisoner of War in German Hands in the WO417 on TheGenealogist - actually he had been executed as an agent by the Nazis.



There had been a third motor racing driver, Jean-Pierre Wimille, who had also joined the SOE like his Bugatti colleagues Grover-Williams and Benoist. Of the three pre-war drivers though, he was the only one to survive the war as a SOE secret agent. But having come through the conflict, fate decided that he would not have a long life to live. His death occurred in a crash in the practice runs of the 1949 Buenos Aires Grand Prix behind the wheel of a racing car, doing what he loved to do: driving a Grand Prix racing car.

The Brookwood Memorial on TheGenealogist where close ups of the panels reveal both Grover-Williams and Benoist's names recorded for posterity.

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