

Bagpipes from Edinburgh to Brunswick

Scottish born John Center had three passions in life: family, photography and bagpipes. John and Jean Center lived in Aberdeen and later Edinburgh, raising ten children and building successful businesses.



John established a solid reputation for making high quality bagpipes as well as running a portrait photography studio. His

photographic calling cards, or 'carte de visite', were used by many of the gentry in Edinburgh. When aged around 50, still living in Edinburgh, John closed his photographic business and focussed solely on making high-quality bagpipes.

After Jean died, John and many of his family migrated to Australia, settling in West Brunswick around 1908. Although he was in his 70s, John and his sons set up a new factory and continued to make bagpipes that fetched high prices.

John was also an excellent bagpipe player. It was often said that when he brought out his bagpipes, closed his eyes and played from memory, he became carried away and his hat would fall over his eyes. An Edinburgh pipe major once composed a tune called 'Center's Bonnet' about this habit.



The family lived and worked together in West Brunswick until John died in December 1914. He was 83 when he was buried in Coburg Cemetery. His bagpipes live on and are cherished by players and fans across the world, fetching high prices and taking pride of place in Scottish museums.

Based on research by Jan Penny and Friends of Coburg Cemetery

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A Word from the President

Hello FOCCers! Well, yet another strange and 'unprecedented' year has almost slipped by! For some of us it's been a real drag, for others it's been just awful and, believe it or not, some have hardly noticed there's a global pandemic on! Cancelling cemetery tours has been disappointing as I think it's one of the most enjoyable things FOCC does. Never fear! We will be back! All that research members have done towards new and interesting tours won't be wasted.

We've still managed to engage more and more people in learning about the people buried at Coburg through Facebook posts and adding biographies to the website.

Lee has been busier than ever responding to grave search requests during periods of lockdown and movement restrictions. I suspect that many people are spending all this extra time at home working on family trees, not just making sourdough or building chicken coops. With more dog walkers and kids on trikes using the cemetery, plus the increase in bird sightings and the growth of newly planted trees along the Booth Street perimeter, 2021 hasn't been a total write-off!

Best wishes to you all, may your year end with laughter as we look forward to a not-so-socially-distant 2022.

Julie, November 2021

The Chinese in Coburg Pine Ridge Cemetery

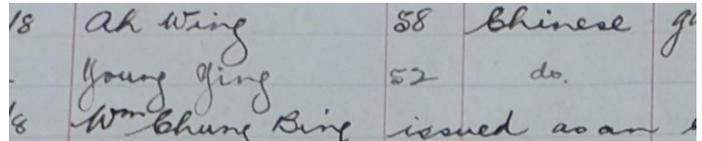
This article by Terry Young of the Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria (CAFHV) outlines an amazing indexing project that he and others in his group have developed. We hope you find it as fascinating as we did when Terry told us about it.

The following material appears on the CAFHV website and is reproduced here with Terry's permission.

I grew up in Coburg and during those 20 years I never visited the local cemetery. The Coburg Pine Ridge Cemetery in Bell Street, Preston is one of the oldest in Melbourne dating back to 1856.

Recently I made a decision to visit the cemetery to investigate the Chinese who were buried there. My research tells me that there are about 130 Chinese buried in the Other Denominations section dating from 1907 to 1937. Many of these graves are unmarked.

On this visit I came across the headstone of Young Ying who died 29 December 1919, aged 54.



Young Ying's gravestone at Coburg Pine Cemetery, 2021.
Photographer: Terry Young

Using the Victorian CEDT Index, I searched for Young Ying and found the following information.

3090 Young Ying Chinese 44 Market
Gardener North Carlton 1910
5492 Young Ying Chinese 49
Gardener Brunswick 1915
7153 Young Ying Chinese 52
Gardener East Brunswick 1919

At first I thought this was not the same person as he returned to China in 1919 (see above). A closer look at the actual register page image tells me that the CEDT was cancelled as it was not used within three years of issue. It was not used as he had died in December 1919 as identified on the headstone.

If I had not looked at the register page I would have assumed this was not the same person.



Index entry for Young Ying, 1919, Register 2, p. 43, Victorian CEDT Index, <https://www.cafhov.com/vic-cedt-index/> (original data taken from 'Register of Certificates Exempting from the Dictation Test, 1915-1933', National Archives of Australia: B6003, 2)

This is an example of how the Victorian CEDT Index can help provide more information and support family history research.

The index is able to provide information about 262 Chinese who resided in Coburg from 1904 to 1955 or you can browse through those from other suburbs here – <https://www.cafhov.com/vic-cedt-index/browse>

Terry Young, June 2021

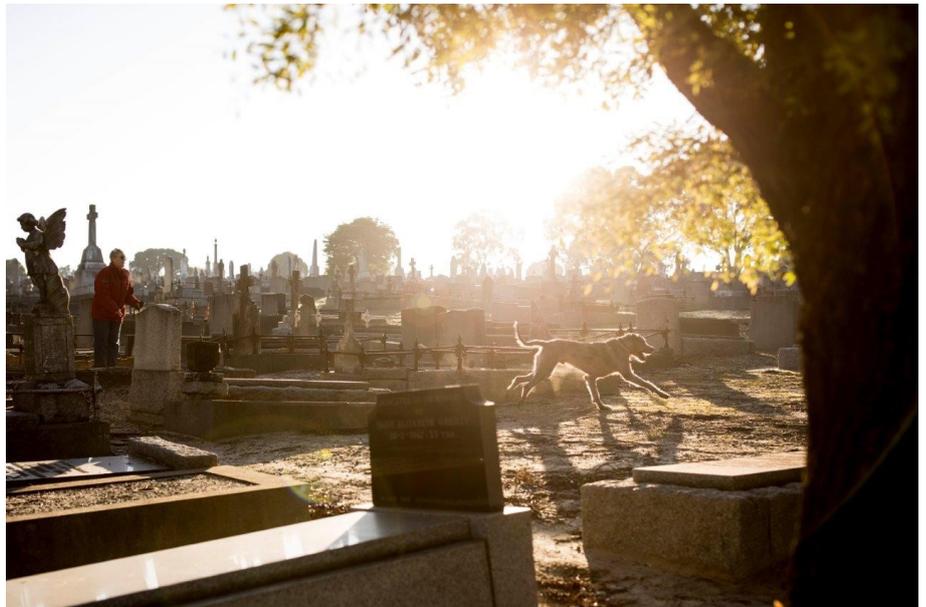
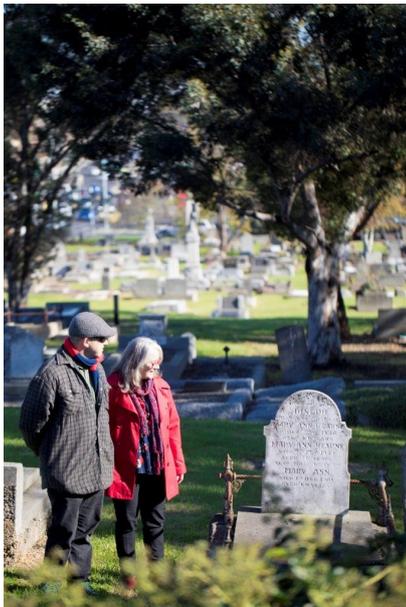
The Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria Inc. provides a forum for people undertaking research into aspects of Chinese Australian history and culture. It promotes increased understanding and appreciation of the legacy of Chinese Australians and cooperates with a range of culturally diverse groups and events. <https://www.cafhov.com/>

Chinese Australian Family Historians Win Local History Prize

Awards:



Congratulations to the Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria (CAFHOV) whose *Victorian CEDT Index* won this year's Local History Project Award winner in the Victorian Community History Awards.



Around the Cemetery



Join FOCC and get involved!

We are a small group with some big ideas! If you'd like to get more involved in FOCC activities we are always looking for more members and people who can research, write stories, take photos, present on tours, hunt up funding sources and promote FOCC activities. Contact us to find out more: focc.group@gmail.com

Not everyone died on the battlefield — a WW1 story

One of the most poignant images I've seen is this one. It shows Louis and Matilda Rauert at the grave of their son, 1122 Private Sydney Charles Rauert of C Company, 21st Battalion, at Coburg Cemetery.

The following information comes from Sydney Rauert's dossier, available online at the National Archives of Australia.

Twenty-two year old Private Rauert enlisted on 7 April 1915 at Nhill in Victoria's Wimmera, but soon after arriving at the Broadmeadows Camp contracted measles, which in those days was a serious, often fatal, illness. Admitted to the Melbourne Hospital on 7 May, he was soon returned to Broadmeadows by horse ambulance.

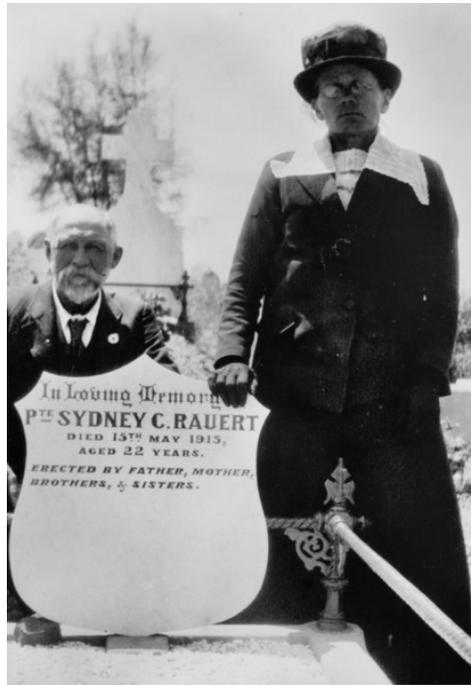
I can imagine the shock his parents must have suffered, having travelled the 360 kilometres from Kiata East (near Nhill) thinking that they were going to say goodbye to their son as he sailed off to war – he was due to sail out with the 6th Brigade on 9 May. Instead, they learned of his illness and despite his worsening condition, were unable to visit him because he was infectious and in quarantine. In the end, they had to make the long journey home without seeing him.

Sydney developed bronchial-pneumonia and died of heart failure on 15 May 1915, four days after his parents returned home. Thankfully, his brother Percy, then in camp, was by his side until his death. Percy went on to serve on the Western Front with distinction, attained the rank of Lieutenant and was awarded the Military Cross.

To add to his parents' distress, the details of Sydney's dying days became the subject of an official inquiry in November 1915. It's likely that his brother instigated the complaint, given that he had visited Sydney every day. Firstly, it was claimed that the Department had not supplied Sydney with a change of clothing and Percy had to give his brother his own clothes and find new ones for himself. However, that was not the worst of it:

He was in an iron room with about 15 others and attended by camp orderlies with no technical knowledge. There were no comforts and no clean towels. The lad complained of the medical attention, his dying words being 'they are absolutely doing nothing for me, they are letting me die like a dog.'

Percy must have been outraged in late August 1915 when a member of the Military Police at Seymour was



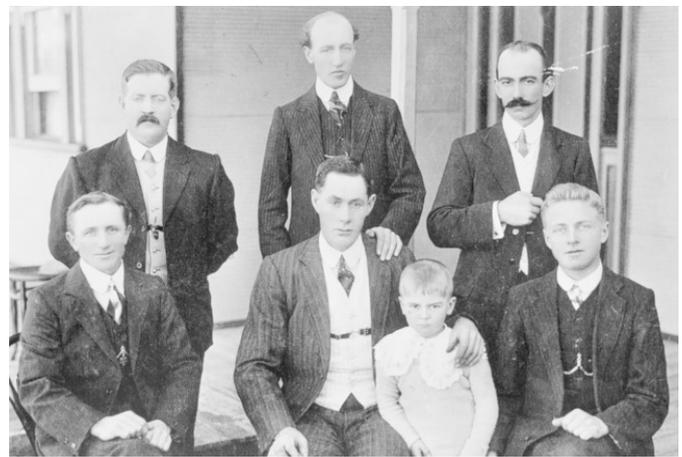
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P07586.003

Image courtesy Australian War Memorial.
Image number P07586.003.

sent to arrest him for supposed desertion. It transpired that it was actually Sydney they were there to arrest, for desertion from Broadmeadows on 8 May, at a time when he was lying in his iron room at Broadmeadows, dying.

When the *Nhill Free Press* published Sydney's death notice on 18 May 1915, it made reference to him dying at the Broadmeadows 'concentration camp'. Although this term has a very different meaning for us now, it was used then to mean a camp where many men were concentrated. Given the terrible conditions under which Sydney Rauert died, it could be claimed that his treatment at the Broadmeadows Camp was closer to our modern understanding of the term.

Cheryl Griffin



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P07586.002

Image. Rauert brothers just before Sydney's enlistment in April 1915. Back row: all unidentified. Front row, left to right: Sydney Charles Rauert; unidentified; Norman Alfred Rauert (served in WW2); and Percival Louis (Percy) Rauert. Image courtesy Australian War Memorial, image number P07586.002

Friends of Coburg Cemetery Inc.

www.friendsofcoburgcemetery.com Established 2011
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