

## BOOKS TO READ

There are a number of books of relevance to our family history. If these are not on your local Library shelves, you could always ask the Library to get these for you. Librarians are often receptive to requests for purchase of books requested by borrowers.

### **Brendan James, *The Whitest Flower***

A book about the Irish famine, published in London by Harper Collins, 1998. This is a beautiful account of the rigours of a family living in the West of Galway, about 60 k NW of Fanore. It particularly highlights the struggle of a family to survive, when constantly harassed by the Agents of the Landowners. We follow the experiences of the mother of a poverty stricken famine, first to Australia and then, via America to her return home as a prosperous migrant, only to find she has been betrayed by those she trusted.

### **Jill Bree, *Brigid***

All interested in the background of the life and times of the Carrucans in West Clare should read Jill Bree's recent book "Brigid". Jill is a Ballarat Historian with family roots in Ballyvaughan, the neighbouring Village to Fanore (15k distant). She writes a gripping novel in which she reveals the effects of life on the coast through the parlous times of the famine and highlights why so many migrated to North America and Australia. You are encouraged to read Brigid:- Jill Bree, Melbourne, Indra Publishing, 1999.

### **Christopher Koch, *Out of Ireland***

From the pen of Christopher Koch, author of *The Year of Living Dangerously*, comes a political study about the about the Young Irishmen.. These were educated members of a protest group, comprising young intellectuals, both English and Irish, who were sent, in the late, 1840.s as political prisoners, not convicts, to Bermuda and/or Port Arthur. *Out of Ireland*, an account of real events and is historically accurate. It is about the trials, the imprisonment and highlights a dramatic escape to America. All the main characters are faithfully drawn from life, published in 1999.

### **Peter Cuffley, *Family History Comes to Life***

Peter Cuffley <sup>1</sup> has written *Family History Comes to Life*. - An introduction to Genealogy, Melbourne, Lothian, 1999. This is an extremely valuable introduction to how to go about discovering your ancestors. It has many references to the Sweeney family, which is linked to ours. It is a book for general reading, not merely the specialist genealogist - one of the best yet!

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<sup>1</sup> Bridget Carrucan & John Coleman were married at Eltham, in the home of Peter Cuffley's Great Grandfather, Thomas Sweeney, in turn, Thomas' grand-daughter Mary married Mick Carrucan, son of Patrick and Mary nee O'Brien. So Peter is kith of ours.

## **Mick Woiwod, *The Last Cry***

*The Last Cry*<sup>2</sup>, a recent historical novel by Mick Woiwod.. The author writes of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Wurundjeri people and Kulin nation who were the occupiers and traditional owners of the land that now comprises Eltham District, and surrounds, prior to European settlement.

The story is set in the 1840s in this homeland, which extended to the crude township of Melbourne on Port Phillip Bay to the upper reaches of Birrarung, the aboriginal name for the Yarra River, District of the Colony of New South Wales. English, Irish and Scottish free settlers, soldiers and pardoned convicts arrived daily to begin life anew in the untamed bush spreading east along the Yarra River.

The narrative is a stunning tale of intrigue and war, of friendship and hope when Europeans forged a new life in a strange, harsh land and discovered others with stronger bonds to the land than they could have imagined.

Ngayuk was a proud Aboriginal Wurundjeri, totally at home in his Birrarung world of valleys and hilltops, planning to marry and raise his children in the ways of his Dreaming. But then came destruction of his hunting grounds and death and Jaga Jaga.<sup>3</sup>

Ngayuk learned quickly and horribly of what these white-skinned newcomers were capable, yet throughout his life he consulted and maintained his trust in his creative beings and a firm belief in the rightness of his own path. With this understanding, came peace to his heart.

Although the book is an historical novel, the author draws upon live contemporary characters. One such is Thomas Sweeney.<sup>4</sup> Of particular interest is the account of the relationship between Ngayuk and Thomas Sweeney, a former convict, one of the earliest settlers in Diamond Creek, as Eltham was earlier called. In the Sweeney.s humble home, Culla Hill, which was built with assistance from the Wurundjeri [probably in 1841], Bridgid Carrucan and John Coleman were married in 1856 in the living room. One Sweeney daughter and one grand daughter married Carrucans.

*The Last Cry* is a brave book, its author a white man driven by his historical research to explore a relationship which today is the very watershed of Australias social and economic future.

Mick Woiwod lives in Wurundjeri country and has become deeply interested in the story of the land before white settlement. He has consented to speak to us as part of the Sesquicentenary Reunion Programme

## **Thomas Keneally, *The Great Shame***

Thomas Keneally, once again has produced a monumental tome in *The Great Shame*. This is also an historical novel, but true in its historical detail. One of Australias greatest authors, Keneally traces a family of emancipists into the depths of the Monaro Tableland in NSW, modelled on the experiences of his own forbears. He then interweaves the great themes of Irish migration to the Americas and Australia. Best read a section at a time. Of all of Keneally.s works it is his greatest yet, immensely enjoyable, in small bites. Published , London Sydney, Chatto & Windus UK Edition Random House Australian Edition, 1998.

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<sup>2</sup> From the publisher, Tarcoola Press, P.O. Box 370, Kangaroo Ground, Vic. 3097. (\$A19.95 plus \$5 p&p 03 9712 0532). Based upon Vicnet Australian Book Outlines [home.vicnet.net.au/~ozlit/minirevs.html](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~ozlit/minirevs.html)

<sup>3</sup> The all perceptive elder.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Cuffley, historian of the Sweeney family attests to the strong relationship, which existed between the original inhabitants, the Wurundjeri people and his great grandfather.