

Anne Grant

Not too many Australians can say they were born in Tasmania of a series of nine convict families. But Anne Grant can say it with authority, and she does so. During her childhood it was emphasised that there were NO convicts in the family, but although the 'cover ups' started very early, she says, to be fair, that she doesn't think the family really knew.

She was educated in Hobart at both church and state schools and later qualified as a state registered nurse and midwife. She came to Victoria in 1966 and married Iain, a western Victorian, moving to Portland in 1970 where their two sons were born. A favourite line is that she 'followed the Hentys' from Tasmania to Portland.

During the 1980s she worked as an industrial nurse at Borthwick's meat works where, in view of the fact that it was the town's largest employer, she fast acquired a considerable knowledge about Portland and its families. In 1980, following a conversation with a woman who, like herself, was tracing her family tree, the two called a meeting which resulted in them becoming original members of the Portland Family History Group. In 1985 the group became the tenant of History House (the former Town Hall overlooking the harbour) where it continues under the auspices of the Glenelg Shire Council.

Anne Grant remains a leading member of the Group which has established a high reputation in the field of local, regional and general geneological research. Over thirty years the group has acquired a research library of genealogy and history books, maps, CDs and DVDs in addition to Portland newspapers in continuous runs from 1842 to this week. Additional to its custodial role it provides public access to the group's resources and expertise for 363 days a year. And as often as not, Anne Grant will be there to provide a helping hand and give advice founded on her deep and comprehensive knowledge of local history.