

Association News

HASSALL FAMILY REUNION

Kenilworth and Brisbane

5th – 7th July 2024



Plans are being finalized for the Association's first event in Queensland. The get-together in Kenilworth and Brisbane intends to acquaint descendants of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall with the aims, purposes and projects of the Association; to learn about the contributions made by Hassall descendants to Queensland history (social, economic, educational, religious, artistic, sports, etc); and to promote the preservation of such family items as letters, photos, and other relics and artifacts.

Historians estimate that there are more than 20,000 descendants of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall in Australia and New Zealand. Many of them lived/live in Queensland and remain to be discovered, contacted and linked. The venues for the reunion - St Matthews Anglican Church, Sherwood, and the town of Kenilworth – are associated with the first Hassall family-lines in Queensland, namely: (1) the Rev. James Samuel Hassall (son of Thomas and Anne Hassall, and author of *In Old Australia*) with his wife Frances Dixon; and (2) James Cusack Hassall (1858-1936 – son of James and Cathryn Hassall) together with his wife Francis Percy Faris.

At the time of writing 50 participants are registered for the event. You can register online at: <https://www.hassall.net.au/events-list/qld-reunion-2024>

Draft Program

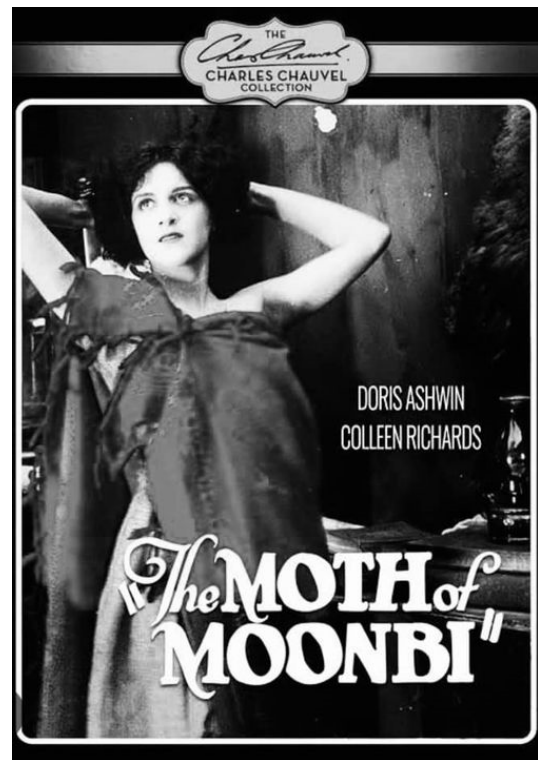
The confirmed program will be emailed to registrants. The program in draft is as follows:

Friday 5th July – Kenilworth and District Historical Museum

09.30 AM	Registration
10.15 AM	Introduction to Hassall Family History Association – <i>Graham Hassall</i>
10.45 AM	Welcome to Kenilworth Museum – <i>Lenore Meldrum</i>
11.00 AM	James Cusack Hassall and Frances Percy Faris - <i>Neil Sutton</i>
11.30 AM	The children of James and Frances - <i>Roseanne McGreevy</i>
12.00 PM	Stories from the Thomas and Anne Hassall line - <i>Evan or Jim Bancroft</i>
12.30 PM	Tour of Kenilworth Museum – <i>Lenore Meldrum</i>
02.30 PM	Cemetery tour – led by <i>Neil Sutton</i> - Old Nambour Cemetery and Gheerulla cemetery
06.30 PM	Silent Movie "The Moth of Moonbi" – with <i>Dr. Andrew Best</i> and <i>Jim Bancroft</i> . at Kenilworth Roxy (tickets: https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1237572?)

Saturday 6th July - St Matthews Anglican Church Sherwood (Brisbane)

- 08.30 AM Registration
- 09.45 AM The Hassall Family History Association - *Graham Hassall*
- 10.30 AM Frances Hassall: the 'Matriarch of Matakai' - *Ann Webster*
- 11.15 AM Hassalls in Queensland – the Black Sheep and the Lost - *Ann Brockhurst*
- 12.00 PM Group Photo
- 12.30 PM Lunch (Family Line round-tables)
- 02.00 PM Introduction to HFHA projects Part 1:
- Genealogy – *Richard Clarke*
 - Transcription – *Alison Shaw*
- 03.00 PM Hassall Family Pageant: *The Triple Wedding* – *Andrew Hassall*
- 03.45 PM Afternoon tea - Wedding reception
- 06.00 PM Silent Movie "The Moth of Moonbi" - with *Dr. Andrew Best* and *Jim Bancroft*.
- 08.00pm Close



(purchase "The Moth of Moonbi" tickets at: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1237574?>)

Sunday 7th May - St Matthews Anglican Church Sherwood (Brisbane)

- 09.00 AM Morning service (including celebration of first rector James S. Hassall) - *Rev Ian Moore*
- 10.30 AM St Matthews Anglican cemetery tour - *Phillip Tainton*
- 11.30 AM The family of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall: an overview - *Graham Hassall*
- 12.30 PM Lunch
- 01.30 PM Thomas and Anne Hassall– *Alison Shaw*
- 01.45 PM James and Catherine Hassall - *Rowland J. Hassall*
- 02.30 PM Introduction to HFHA projects Part 2:
- The Hassall Family and First Nations
 - Hassall Heritage
 - Research
- 04.00PM Close



Articles

THOMAS HASSALL'S ALMA MATER - DIOCESAN COLLEGE - UNIVERSITY OF WALES, ST DAVID TRINITY, LAMPETER, CEREDIGION, WALES

Don Wotton

These images of the Diocesan College, University of Wales, St David Trinity, Lampeter, Ceredigion, Wales, were kindly taken by Don Wotton during a visit in 2017 at the behest of a former colleague and Hassall descendant, Ross Brown. Don was walking the Welsh Coast Path from Chester to Chepstow and Lampeter was a detour on his itinerary which occupied a rainy day that would otherwise have slowed his trek. Don and Ross have shared interests in genealogy and colonial Australian history. Although Don is not a Hassall descendant his forebears settled at Berrima and Narellan in the 1830's and have a long association with the Southern Highlands' communities of NSW.



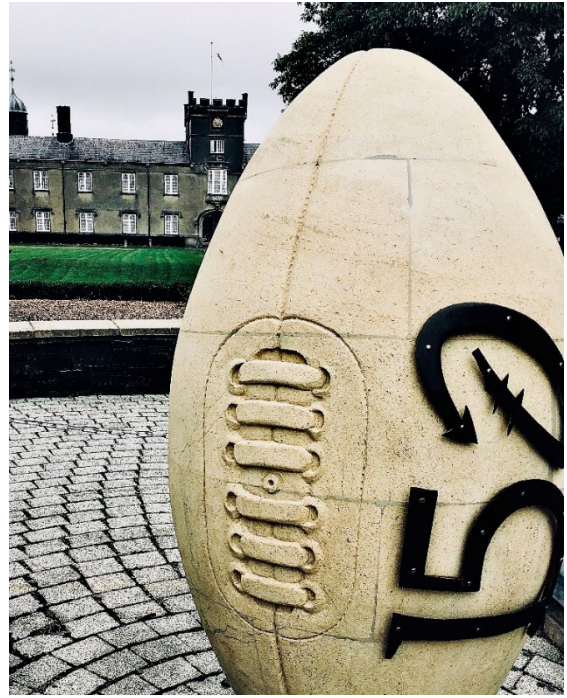
Lampeter, population 2,500 (2024) is a small and remote village located in central southern Wales, most easily reached from the coastal town of Carmarthen along the A485 arterial road. A local bus connects Carmarthen with Lampeter on weekdays. A less trafficked route of 20km connects Lampeter with the blissful town of Aberaeron on the west coast of Wales. Lampeter village is relatively compact and structurally little has changed since Thomas' residency.



The Diocesan College (now incorporated within the University of Wales), Lampeter was the setting for Thomas Hassall's theological studies. The small campus' buildings are little changed from the 1830's. While the foundation stone of the original St David's College was laid 1822 and post-date Thomas' attendance by twelve months, he likely found academic accommodation in temporary buildings erected earlier on site. Enquiries at the University library revealed that it does not hold records of enrolments from Thomas' days as a student. For historical references,

pertaining to student enrolments during the early 1800's, it may be necessary to consult national archives in either Cardiff or Kew (London). Undoubtedly Thomas was a visitor to Lampeter's St Peter's Anglican Church and also enjoyed the odd pint and bite to eat with fellow students at the Black Lion Royal Hotel.





Projects

Hassall Heritage

1. Meeting with Thomas Hassall Anglican College Principal Karen Easton



On Wednesday 1st May 2024, Hassall descendants Alison Shaw and Jane Miura had the privilege of meeting with Karen Easton, new Principal of Thomas Hassall Anglican College, and school administrators Carmen Pasapera and Rebecca Clarke. Ms Easton's enthusiasm and passion for leading the youth of today is very evident and she is keen to carry on the valuable working relationship with the Hassall Family History Association.

The college will continue to be part of our HFHA communication network through continuing to provide postage distribution for a number of HFHA Newsletters. The college leaders are eager to discuss how and which Hassall history stories could be used in nominated projects or in parts of their curriculum.

At this stage there are two main events in which the college would like to include the Hassall Family:

- i) a whole school relay race, "*The Hassall Gift*", being part of Year 12's final day celebrations in September 2024, and
- ii) 25th Anniversary of the Thomas Hassall Anglican College, May 2025. Discussions on how the Hassall family can be involved have begun.

After the 2023 Hassall Family Reunion Alison and Jane are delighted to have been part of the 2024 discussion on continuing the positive connection between the Thomas Hassall Anglican College and the Hassall family. They wish to thank Karen Easton and team for their warm hospitality and interesting Hassall conversation.

2. Reverend James Hassall Portrait in Hassall Family papers

Series 2: Sub-series 3: correspondence, volume 3, pp. 1203-1832, 1822-1828. File 4. A 1677 / 3/p.4091a online at

<https://fromthepage.com/statelibrarynsw/hassall-family-papers-1793-2000/file-4-hassall-family-correspondence-volume-3-pp-1833-7031-1828-1888/transcribe/32223480>



3. Volunteering opportunities

Members can volunteer to assist with any of the Association's projects. We would particularly welcome any offers to help set up a simple website. We welcome additional help with developing our genealogical tables and with transcription of the Hassall Family Papers held by the State Library of New South Wales.

Bibliography

The Association maintains a bibliography of publications relevant to the family's history. The following titles have been added to the Hassall Family Bibliography since the last Newsletter.

Benson, Jean Caswell. "A Wide Spectrum: A Picture of the Times from 1828 to 1937 as Seen by My Forebears - the Stacy, the Caswell, the Shelley and the Harris Families." J. Benson, 1987.

This book provides glimpses of the life of Rowland and Elizabeth's daughter Susannah, who married William Shelley Jnr. Shelley partnered his brother George in establishing properties near Goulburn and Tumut before dying age 41 in 1844. Susannah passed away in 1890.

Casey, Mary, editor. *Breaking the Shackles: Historic Lives in Parramatta's Archaeological Landscape*. Parramatta Heritage Centre and Casey & Lowe, 2009. Online at https://caseyandlowe.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/breaking_the_shackles.pdf

This valuable publication describes the archaeological evidence from Rowland and Elizabeth's home at 109-113 George Street Parramatta. Extracts of the report are included below:

About 1803, Rowland Hassall began building a house in George Street. The only building dating to this period is identified by the post holes of a timber structure, probably a wattle and daub hut, possibly the initial house built for Reverend and Mrs Hassall. This was probably a hut provided by government. The footprint of this structure was quite small, 4.3 x 3.5m (14 x 11.4ft). The typical convict hut was 12 x 24ft (3.7 x 7.4m) which is almost twice as long. Therefore this structure is the equivalent of a room of a small timber structure. No other archaeological evidence is thought to date to this occupation.

About 1814 Rowland Hassall was appointed Superintendent of Stock, this is when it is likely that the two-storey house was built. It is modelled on the Hunter's Government House but had only four bays not five and is therefore not symmetrical which is unusual for this period. It also had an unusual roof line, mostly because of the incorporation of an attic into the roof.

Hassall's house in Parramatta became a base for the missionaries of the London Missionary Society when they visited Parramatta. In many ways, his home became a pivotal point in the religious network of the colony. Not only did he preach there, he offered hospitality to the visiting clergy and missionaries. In May 1813, his son, Thomas Hassall, opened the first Sunday School in Australia in his father's barn.

The house was described as having 13 rooms, an attic and cellar with outbuildings: a kitchen with one room behind and two above, a dairy, a schoolroom and one or two other rooms. This suggests a group of four or possibly five structures with 22 or 23 rooms. As the house was sold for demolition most of the structure was recycled, therefore little remained of the building other than the lower level of the cellar, a brick well, footings of a possible dairy, and another odd structure to the east of the house, possibly the school room with a fireplace or hearth. Other than slate/mudstone footings of the cellar and part of the possible school room, the surviving

footings were made of sandstock brick. Among the other remains was a timber-lined pit, possibly used as a compost pit.

Jones, A. and K.K. Jenkins. *Tuai: A Traveller in Two Worlds*. Bridget Williams Books, 2017.

This book narrates the story of Tuai, a young Ngare Raumati chief from the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, who departed Australia in 1817 aboard the *Kangaroo*, bound for England. This of course was the same boat that Thomas Hassall travelled on to commence his clerical studies. The authors make considerable use of Thomas Hassall's journal in telling the story. The book is out of print but available as an ebook.

Willis, Ian. "'Just Like England', a Colonial Settler Landscape." *ISAA review*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2016, pp. 5-18.

The Cowpastures aristocracy had links to the remainder of Sydney's Cumberland Plain, the emerging provincial centre of Sydney, the controlling metropole of London and beyond. The self-styled elite developed a transnational network that had a global reach with Camden Park estate firmly at its centre. They were the southern extremity of a network of powerful colonial patriarchs that spread out across the Cumberland Plain. By 1840 they had built themselves impressive homes and large landholdings, some supported with convict labour. In the Cowpastures they included George Macleay's Brownlow Hill, John Oxley's Kirkham and Elderslie, Alexander Riley's Raby, Edward Lord's Orielson, William Howe's Glenlee, Thomas Hassall's Denbigh, Garnham Blaxcell's Curtis Park and William Campbell's Oran Park. This set established a social and economic hegemony over the region that persisted into the 20th century. (p.10)

Local villages characterising Hawdon's Cowpastures landscape were probably best typified by Reverend Thomas Hassall's Denbigh. In the 1820s, according to James S Hassall's *In Old Australia Records and Reminiscences from 1794*, Denbigh resembled 'a scattered village' with a carpenter, blacksmith, shoemaker, dairyman, gardener, brickmaker, schoolmaster and a number of assigned convict servants. Reverend Hassall's Heber Chapel, which he built in 1828 on his Pomari Grove property, became the centre of the 'village of Cobbitty' downstream from Denbigh. Just north of Hawdon's Elderslie, along the Cowpasture Road, the village of Narellan was laid out in 1827 adjacent to William Hovell's 1819 grant of Narralling. While in the government reserve the village of Cawdor started to take shape on the Great South Road with government buildings, a stockyard, a magistrate's bench and land for a church and a school. (p14)

"Tahiti Records." *Cairns Post* 08 February 1935, p. 12. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4153625715> April 2024.

Mrs. Orsmond died on January 6, 1819. The Mitchell Library has a letter written by Mrs. Mary (Hassall) Lawry to her brother Thomas Hassall (then in Wales), dated February 23, which establishes the fact that Mr. Orsmond was desirous of obtaining this daughter of Rowland Hassall as his second wife. "The good people (at Tahiti) sent him (Mr. Orsmond) to look for me," she remarked, "but he came too late, for which I did not at all feel concerned but pleased. He has taken poor Isabella, the Sunday School teacher. . . Ann Hassall, her sister, went into further details in a letter written the following day:

"Mrs. Orsmond, of Tahiti, died about a year ago, and he came up ... to get another wife, but he said all the flowers are culled because Miss Mileham, Miss Rouse and my sister were to be married in a few days after he came, and he was a good while choosing, but when Christmas Day came was joined to Miss Nelson, and has taken her away. The Sunday School has lost in her a sincere friend and a good teacher . . ."

Research and publication

4. A history of aboriginal Sydney

Thomas Hassall is mentioned in the following article found on the site “History of Aboriginal Sydney has the following item:

Annual Conference with the Natives

Sydney Gazette 9th Jan 1830 page 3 Annual Conference with the Natives.: “The weather on the morning of Wednesday last, being rather unfavourable, the number of visitors to Parramatta, to witness the interesting scene which is annually presented at the conference held by His Excellency the Governor with the native Chiefs and tribes, was not so numerous as on former occasions. About 12 o'clock, the Governor, attended by the Hon. Alexander McLeay, the Venerable the Arch Deacon, Colonel Shadforth, Captain Dumaresque, the Rev. Samuel Marsden, the Rev. W. Cowper, the Rev. C. P. N. Wilton, the Rev. Thomas Hassall, Major Innes, Lieut. Darling, W. Lithgow, Esq. W. Lawson, Esq. Major Lockyer &C, proceeded to the Market-place, where 269 Aboriginal natives, including women and children, were assembled to partake of the usual treat of roast beef and pudding, &c, with which they were plentifully supplied, together with a reasonable quantum of grog. The ground was roped in for the occasion and decorated with a profusion of shrubs. The chiefs of the tribes were noticed in the kindest manner by His Excellency, who placed a badge of distinction on the neck of one of them, and personally took care that their wants were supplied with everything which had been provided for the feast. At the conclusion of the repast, blankets, hats, handkerchiefs, jackets, trousers, and tobacco were plentifully distributed; and after The Governor and his immediate attendants had retired, Lieut. Darling prevailed on the blacks to indulge the spectators with a dance, or corrobora, which ended the day's amusements. Particular notice was taken of two Aboriginal native boys and a girl who were brought up in the house of the Rev. W. Walker at Parramatta, and accompanied him to the meeting. These children have made a very creditable progress in reading and writing, and are excellent house servants, a proof that the intellect of the natives is not so debased as to be incapable of cultivation if judicious measures be adopted.”

<https://www.historyofaboriginalsydney.edu.au/search/node/hassall>

5. Portrait of Thomas Hassall c.1818

A watercolour portrait of Thomas Hassall is held in the State Library of New South Wales. (Call number MIN 28). The catalogue description reads: “1 watercolour & pencil drawing in rectangular black wooden frame with glass front and rim painted gold. At centre top is a metal clasp and two loops for hanging. - 7.1 x 5.6 cm. (image, sight) ; 14 x 11.6 cm.

Titled from handwritten inscription on backing paper of reverse of frame, "Revd. Thomas Hassall / taken in Wales - England" Beneath the above text in a different hand "about 1818"

Accompanying the portrait is a non-contemporaneous bakelite rectangular label with black print, "Rev. Thos. Hassall. / Presented by / T. Hassall Esq. of Brisbane, 1918



Transcription

6. Digital Volunteers Backstage Tour May 2024, 12.30 – 1.30pm

Alison Shaw

On Wednesday 22nd May 2024 a group of nearly 30 Digital Volunteers were guided through the seven underground levels of the State Library. The State Library (as opposed to the Mitchell Library) was opened, fairly recently, in 1988 by the Queen.

In their own time and at their own pace Digital Volunteers work on one or both of two digital platforms – either *Fromthepage* - written transcription or *Amplifier* - audio transcription. For this tour I was lucky enough to meet up with another Hassall transcriber, Ros Vaughan. Our tour guides were very keen to chat with us as the Hassall Collection is the largest collection to be transcribed, reaching around 8,000 pages.

Our large group of volunteers was taken to most levels below ground and shown samples of precious historical documents, such as papers (letters, accounts, etc.), books, diaries, art works, building and town plans. Guided through the myriads of stored items (mainly paper) by our three passionate and knowledgeable State Library employees, we learnt about what type of items are stored, how the items are stored, the cataloguing system they are stored under, and how they are cared in normal circumstances and in crisis situations. The care and storage of these historical paper artefacts is a precise art and they are all treated with absolute respect. Large and valued artefacts are generally housed elsewhere in Sydney.

Naturally, AI was mentioned ... how will we humans be working with it? – or vice versa! Our guides are keen for volunteers to work with them on the researching of the AI function over the next two or so years. Surprisingly, we were treated to the State Library choir rehearsing on one of the levels underground and with wonderful acoustics their sound was sublime.

In 2019 the State Library of New South Wales made its collection of Hassall Family papers available for transcription. The project is described at <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/blogs/hassall-family-papers-made-available-transcription>, since that time, a small group of volunteers has meet online almost every week to participate in this work.

7. How Artificial Intelligence can work with us

Alison Shaw

On Wednesday, 12th June 2024, I attended the first Artificial Intelligence (AI) public workshop at the State Library, with David Judge, on how AI can be used in Transcription. The purpose of the meeting was to learn and understand how the AI tool can “help” with transcription.

FromThePage is free software that allows volunteers to transcribe handwritten documents online. It is an installation that is hosted by the University of Texas Libraries and is used throughout the world.

Artificial Intelligence is found in most facets of living in the 21st century and it is about machines becoming expert in a function. It is with us, everywhere we turn. AI is an “assist” feature for Transcription, i.e. for deciphering handwriting. At this stage we would like to understand how accurate the machine’s reading of handwriting is. So...with human feedback the program can be re-assessed in order to proceed effectively.

During these winter months of 2024 about 11 current transcribers, from various collections, will check the accuracy of AI’s ability to recognise handwriting from a “not yet public” Library collection. First, samples of the author’s handwriting will be machine learnt, then the machine will transcribe some selected pages. We human transcribers will then check AI’s transcription accuracy so

that appropriate changes and advancements can be implemented. It is planned that transcription within *FromThePage* will become a slick and well-oiled AI “machine”.

Reason for Hassall involvement: there are 8000 pages in the Hassall Collection in the State Library of NSW. The Hassall Collection is one of the largest collections in the State Library and so assistance, both human and AI, is welcome.

If you are interested in learning more about being involved in the **Hassall Transcription Project** please contact Graham Hassall for details.

8. Archival archaeology project: A spatial reading of the archives of labour and industry in early convict Parramatta

We have received the following message from the Digital Volunteering desk at SLNSW:

“Dear Digital Volunteers,

As key contributors to the Hassall Papers Collection, we would like to make you aware of an exciting research project being undertaken by Library Fellow [Dr Caitlin D’Gluyas](#) that is utilising parts of this collection as a key resource. The project is an exploration of labour and industry in early colonial Parramatta and aims to present a visual spatial history of the area. More details can be found in the attached document.

To assist in this important research, we are inviting our Digital Volunteers to turn their efforts to the [Parramatta Store Sales Book](#) (Series 07 and 08)¹ as transcribing these works is essential to this project. You will note that these two series are unique in that they are in tabular format, so the transcribing process does differ from the usual works on From the Page. Whilst all the transcription work is valuable, this is an opportunity to see the application of these results in real-time so we hope you can be a part of this crucial research process.”

The screenshot shows the 'FromThePage' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo, 'Find A Project', 'Dashboard', and 'Signed In As ghassall'. The main content area is titled 'Hassall family papers - Series 07: Rowland Hassall, Parramatta store day sales books, 1803-1804, 1809-1812 - Part 2'. Below the title are tabs for 'Overview', 'Statistics', 'Review', and 'Works List'. The 'About' section contains text about the collection and links to other parts of the series. The 'Works' section features a 'Start Transcribing' button and a preview of 'File 2: Rowland Hassall, Parramatta store day sales book, 1809-1810'. On the right side, there are search bars, buttons for 'Pages That Need Transcription' and 'Pages That Need Review', and a 'Recent Notes' section with a note about rations issued for Mr. Marsden's workers.

<https://fromthepage.com/statelibrarynsw/hassall-family-papers-store-records-sales-books-ledgers-part-2>

¹ These resources are online at <https://fromthepage.com/statelibrarynsw/hassall-family-papers-store-records-sales-books-ledgers>

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The **Hassall Family History Association** fosters and disseminates research on the life and heritage of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall and other members of the Hassall family and encourages historical research on other early settler families - particularly those with whom the Hassalls are related or with whom they share historic experience in early Australia. Membership is open to all. Donations are welcome to cover the group's activities. Newsletters are published three times each year (approximately February, June, and November) and are distributed by the Association's webmaster.

Life Members: Sally Anderson, Joseph Gordon, Adrian Hassall, Craig Hassall, David N.H. Hassall, Gavin Hassall, Graham Hassall, Frank and Rosemary Hassall, Jonathan Guy Hassall, Rowland J. Hassall, Naomi Lewis, Jane Miura, Alison Shaw, Jean Stewart OAM, Joyce Warn, Ross Whelan, and Robert Wiles.

Honorary Life Members: Huon and Fran Hassall, Ian and Susie McIntosh, Ross Whelan.

Website

<https://www.hassall.net.au/>

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Please notify the secretary of changes to your contact details.

Subscription renewals and donations: Direct Deposit to the Hassall Family History Association Account:

BSB: 062 575

Account: 10248050

(include your name in the reference box so that we know who has paid).