

ROBERT NASH

Title

Across the centuries – the Huguenots and their Australian descendants. 'Reaching out to almost-forgotten Huguenot ancestors, a guide for Australians.'

Summary

Who were the Huguenots? This talk will explain the story of the Protestants of France, how many of them fled persecution, and how their descendants have spread all over the world, including Australia. It will give some practical advice on genealogical research for anyone who thinks they might have some Huguenot ancestry lurking in their family tree.

Abstract

The purpose of the talk is three-fold

- (i) To give a short summary of who the Huguenots were, why and how they were persecuted, and why so many of them left France, where they went, and what they did. It will mention briefly all the important countries of refuge, including England, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, America, South Africa etc. It will also show that Huguenot descendants have come to Australia from all these places.
- (ii) It will explain how and when Huguenot descendants came to Australia, starting with the First Fleet in 1788 (convicts e.g. Jacob Bellett, a Spitalfields silkweaver) and carrying up to the present day. It will look at the many fields in which they have contributed to Australia e.g. the military (Sir Harry Chauvel) business (the Perdriau family, Robert Champion de Crespigny) the arts (Charles Chauvel, Harold Cazneaux, Louis Buvelot, Benjamin Duterrau) conservation (Minard Crommelin) sport (Roy Cazaly) and government (Sir Bruce Lefroy).
- (iii) Finally, it will explain how people can go about finding if their ancestors were of Huguenot origin, and how Huguenot research can be done in Australia. This will start with establishing if the ancestor is a Huguenot or of Huguenot origin, and then go on to show how Huguenot research can be done in libraries and family history societies here. It will look briefly at internet resources on the subject, and consider which ones are trustworthy and which not.

Audience

Beginner