

## Oral History

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### My trip to Wales in 2007 – my Scott ancestors in Wales

I must start at the beginning. In about 2004 two deaf bowlers asked me to coach them, later that year they were going to be representing the city deaf bowlers playing against the country deaf bowlers, an annual event. In 2005 they were asked to try out in South Australia for selection in an Australian team, which would be playing in an International Tournament in Wales in 2007. Somewhere along the way I was asked to be the coach of the Australian team. When they were selected, they asked me to go to Wales with them; unfortunately I didn't have the money.

My father had passed away in 2000, he owned a unit in a retirement village, which was to be sold, and these things take time. Next the unit was sold; my sisters and I received money from the sale, I am now booking my trip to Wales, dad would have said go, he is paying for my trip to Wales.

I left Australia on the 31<sup>st</sup> August for Wales as the coach of the Australian Deaf Lawn Bowls team, twelve players, myself and two supporters, for the 5<sup>th</sup> International Deaf Bowls Championship, to be held in Llandrindod Wells, Wales. When I first knew I was going to Wales I had no idea this tournament was being played about 10 miles from where my great grandmother Mary Scott was born. We flew to Heathrow, changed planes, and then on to Manchester, this is really what led to the following events.

Upon arrival at our hotel in Wales we found no one had any luggage, which we were without for 4-5 days, a few of us had a change of underwear and toiletries in our hand luggage. The word about our lost luggage had spread around the town, everyone knew who we were, we stood out like sore thumbs, in our green and gold Australian track suits, the people were so nice, they would stop us in the street and have a chat.

No one wanted to spend a lot of money, so we went to two opp. shops to find some clothes, I bought a pair of slacks, a blouse and something to sleep in, walking back to the hotel I needed to buy a needle and cotton to take the slacks up, I saw a shop called "Bon Marche", just for a laugh I said, I have to shop there, purely because when I as a child we had "Bon Marche" in Melbourne.

When I went in, the owner started chatting to me about various things then asked if I had any connection with Wales, I told her about Mary Scott my grandmother being born in Rhayader, she became excited, her father was too, she then said I'll see if Ruth is home, she actually lived above the shop, I had no idea who Ruth was, she in fact was very much into genealogy. What transpired when I met Ruth, she was so interested and excited, I was invited upstairs and asked questions about my Scott family, and then she said, "I'll see what I can find".

Now the championships had started, and I was very busy, often when arriving back at the hotel in the evening, there would be a note under my door from Ruth, giving me information or asking me to pop in to see her. She was wonderful.

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Before leaving Australia I had booked a hire car to be delivered the morning after the championships had finished, my friend Heather and I had decided to spend five days having a look around Wales. As soon as the car arrived, we were ready and on our way to Rhayader, our first stop. We went to St Brides church, which was the Scott family church, this was where many of them were baptised, married and buried.

We found my ancestors' graves, I can't describe how it felt, I couldn't believe I was standing there reading their headstones. I wanted to find out more about the graveyard and church, I didn't know how or where, at that moment I saw a lady walking through the church grounds, I approached her, and this is what happened. (At this time, she did not know the name of the family I was looking for.)

1. I asked a question, she was not sure
2. She went home and brought her husband back, they lived next door, and he was not sure.
3. He brought his car to the church, and told us to follow him; we had no idea where we were going.
4. We arrived at the Minister's house, he was not sure, he said take us to Lloyd's house.
5. We arrived at Lloyd's house, at this point I had no idea who he was, he asked what family name, I said SCOTT, he said he went to school with some Scott boys, I thought "Oh yes". Scott is a common name, (apparently not in Wales).

I told him my name and that I was from Australia and descended from Mary Scott, I was stunned, he must have been too, it was the same family. He produced an enormous Scott family tree, he had tracked them to America, Canada, England and Wales, the only information he had about Mary Scott was her birth date, he could not find any other information about her, I appear on his doorstep descended from the only Scott he has been unable to trace, he now has the Scott family connections in Australia, he has found the "lost" Mary. He gave me a copy of the Scott family tree.

Lloyd drove us to "Tymwar Farm" the original Scott family home, and then along the Elan Valley to see a couple more Scott farms. While driving along the Elan Valley, I saw where part of the movie "The Dam Busters" was filmed, when the bomb was bouncing on the water before hitting the dam wall. I was only in Rhaydar for twenty four hours, the next morning before leaving town he took us to meet (someone), who happened to be Mary, the great granddaughter of Andrew Scott, Mary's brother, and I am Mary's great granddaughter.

Two weeks after arriving home I received an email from Roger Scott Lewis who lives in Canada, welcoming me to the family; it seems he visited Lloyd one week after I had been there.

June (Evans) Hall