



# THE CAMDEN VALLEY VOICE

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The Camden Area Family History Society Inc.

P.O. Box 679. Camden. NSW. 2570

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## ***From the Editor***

Following on from the AGM last month and the election of the new Committee for 2017-18 the positions were filled as follows:

President – **Ray Herbert**. Vice President – **Barbara Sully**. Secretary – **Cathy Shepherd**  
Treasurer – **Barbara Sully** Membership Officer – **Beverly Booth** Research Officers – **Fred Gibson & Cathey Shepherd** Library Coordinator – **Tony Jackson** Editor – **Warren Sims**  
Asst Editor – **Anne McIntosh** Committee Members – **Neil & Pat Patterson** and **Robert & Margaret Wheeler** as well as Public Officer – **Rex Dowle**

Congratulations to all elected officers and I look forward to working with you all for another successful year.

As indicated last month in the Valley Voice the Committee are looking for ideas for tours, activities and training opportunities that you as members may be interested in. Currently we are investigating a guided tour of Rookwood Cemetery and a visit to State Archives at Penrith. Keep an ear out for progress on these and other initiatives we are working towards.

## **Camden Area Family History Society Inc. Research Room, Library/Museum Complex, John St. Camden**

The research room is currently open

**Thursday 10:00am to 3:00pm**

**Friday 10:00am to 3:00pm**

**Saturday 9:30am to 12:00 noon**

**There is a charge of \$10.00 per session for non-members to use our resources,**

There is a volunteer on duty whenever the research room is open. They are only too happy to assist with any inquires.

**If you would like to volunteer to assist in the research room please contact the Library Co-ordinator Tony Jackson on 4655 1098 letting him know when you are available.**



*Happy Birthday  
To the following members  
for September 2017*

*Margaret Battam  
Andrea Herbert  
Robert Lester*



## MEETINGS

Our meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month (except January) at 7:30pm in the Meeting Room of the Library/Museum Complex, John St. Camden.

To help cover the cost of supper we ask for a gold coin donation.

*Visitors most welcome.*

## MEMBERSHIP

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE

Normal	Pensioners/Concession
Single \$30	Single \$25
Couple \$35	Couple \$30

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS –**

For any members who have not yet renewed their membership, renewals are due from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. Please see Barbara or Beverly to renew for the 2017-2018 financial year. Members can collect their receipts at our Rooms or alternatively you may provide a self addressed envelope with stamp to mail a receipt back to you.

## **CAMDEN AREA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY General Meeting**

At this month's meeting we will be addressed by Alan Murrin who will be talking on using the Family Search software and how to make the most of the wealth of information it contains. Our next monthly meeting will be on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, and our next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday 26th September, both of these meetings will be in the Camden Museum in the Library complex and all members are welcome at both meetings

## **CAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY General Meeting**

This month at the Historical Society Meeting on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September, President Dr Ian Willis will talk on ..."going to the movies in the Macarthur district"... and also about many movies and TV series that have been filmed at local properties in the Macarthur area. Also member Sharon Greene will be launching her new book '**Nepean River County Council: the Power and the People**'



The Friends of Linnwood invite you to

**OPEN HOUSE**  
**at Historic Linnwood**  
25 Byron Road, Guildford



**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**11.00am – 4.00pm**

**\$3 Admission**

**(Children under 5 years Admitted Free)**

**Mustang Owners Club**  
**“Show & Shine”**



Photo courtesy of Mustang Owners Club



**Friends of the  
Parramatta  
Female Factory**

**Arts & Craft Stalls  
Western Sydney Woodturners**

**Linnwood**  
Listed on the  
NSW State Heritage Register

**Plus**  
**A variety of other  
American cars**



**City of Holroyd Brass  
Band**

**Smocking Arts Guild  
of NSW Inc**



Photo courtesy of Smocking Arts Guild  
NSW website



**“Brislington”  
Medical & Nursing  
Museum - Parramatta**

**Sausage Sizzle  
Devonshire Teas & Cakes**  
(Sandwiches no longer available)

**Further information:**  
Dorothy – 0412 606644  
Helen – 0409 227679



**Bridging the Past & Future**  
**SYDNEY 2018**

Congress 2018  
15th Australasian  
Congress on  
Genealogy and  
Heraldry

Friday 9 - Monday 12 March 2018 • International Convention Centre, Sydney, Australia • [congress2018.org.au](http://congress2018.org.au)

**Hosted by the Society of Australian Genealogists**

**Friday 9 – Monday 12 March 2018**  
at the International Convention Centre,  
Darling Harbour, Sydney

**Registrations are now open and places are filling fast,  
so reserve your place as soon as possible.**

- ✓ Hear 6 keynote presentations
- ✓ Choose from over 50 sessions on Australian & Oversea topics
- ✓ Catch up with new and old friends at the Welcome Function & Congress dinner
- ✓ Browse exhibitor stalls & get research help
  - ✓ And talk family history for 4 days!

Follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/Congress2018](http://www.facebook.com/Congress2018)  
and Twitter @Congress\_2018 #Congress\_2018

[www.congress2018.org.au](http://www.congress2018.org.au)

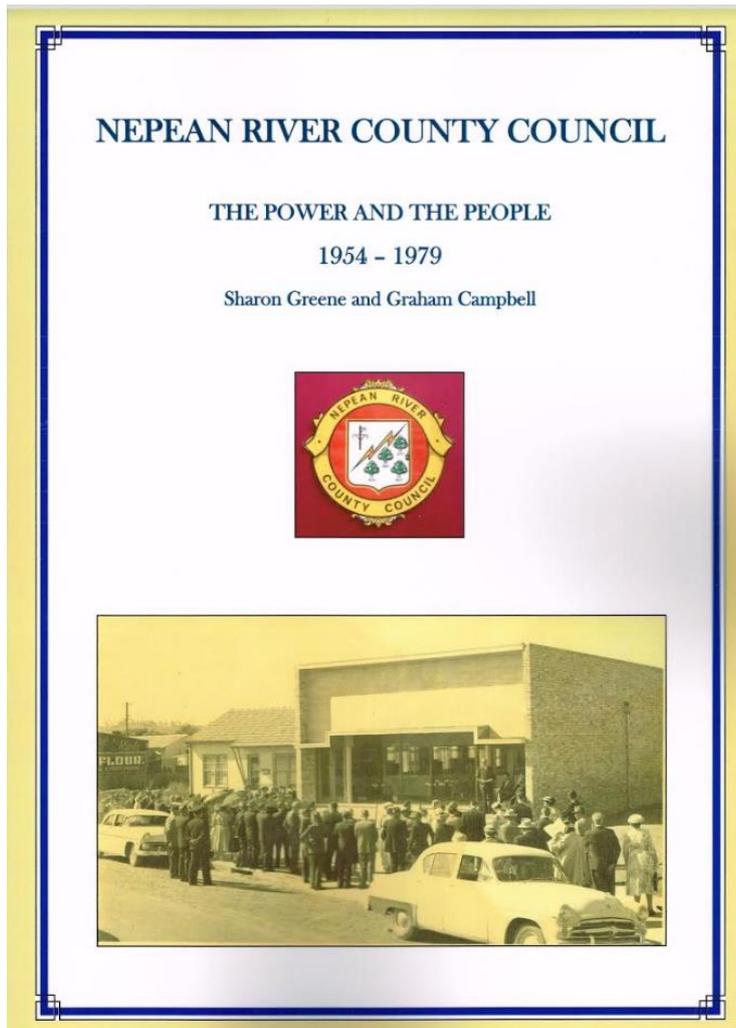
 

Congress 2018 is being held at the new International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour, Sydney from Friday 9 to Monday 12 March 2018. Congress is the largest family history event in Australasia and is held every three years under the auspices of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO). Early Bird registrations open on 31 May 2017 and the full speakers' program will be released at that time. Follow the announcements at [www.congress2018.org.au](http://www.congress2018.org.au) and [www.facebook.com/Congress2018](http://www.facebook.com/Congress2018), and on Twitter @Congress\_2018 #Congress\_2018



CAFHS Member Sharon Green will be presenting a copy of her and Graham Campbell's new book **"Nepean River County Council : the power and the people"** to the Family History Society at our Tuesday meeting in appreciation of their support for our project.

'**Nepean River County Council : the power and the people**' is a book about a regional electricity supplier (the dry facts), that functioned very successfully for twenty-five years.



Stocks are limited ... cost \$30 (plus P&P).

With stories written by more than twenty five people that worked there: telling about the good times, bad times and some sad times (the stories from real people). With a listing of over 680 employees (a great reference) of those that worked there and that made it work so well.

The book is written by two former employees and genealogists, along the lines of a 'family history' it tells the story of a great local organisation covering the heart of the Macarthur area in NSW. The book started with a small funded grant from the NSW Arts Council, quickly became a labour of love and finally printed to perfection, with lots of photographs.

The Book will be officially launched at Camden Historical Society meeting on Wednesday 13 th September 2017 at Camden Museum, 7.30 pm. Available now 'for sale' from the authors or at Camden Museum following the launch. See our website for further details [www.nepeanrivercountycouncil.com.au](http://www.nepeanrivercountycouncil.com.au)

Definition of family: Family: A social unit where the father is concerned with parking space, the children with outer space, and the mother with closet space.  
~Evan Esa



**Club Menangle invites you to save the date Tuesday 31st October 2017 for our Beersheba Day Breakfast to commemorate the centenary of the history changing Australian Light Horse charge that occurred on that day in 1917 and the unveiling of the Beersheba Centenary wall.**

Menangle Park was a training ground and camp for the Australian Light horse. From here many young riders, bonded to their trusty Walers, would leave our shores for the battle lines not realising the magnitude of their destiny. It is to these gallant men and their steeds that we wish to pay tribute.

The Beersheba Day Breakfast commemorative service will reflect on the battle as we highlight the importance of preserving the history, tradition and customs of Light Horse Regiments for future generations. Club Menangle is also proud to be involved in the formation of the 7th Light Horse Regiment Menangle Historical Troop and they will present their activities and role in the community.

**Tuesday 31st October 2017, 6.45am start at Club Menangle, Racecourse Ave, Menangle Park. \$45 per head full buffet breakfast, or table of 10 for \$400**

**For reservations, table bookings and enquiries please email [info@clubmenangle.com.au](mailto:info@clubmenangle.com.au) or call the office on 02 4645 2200**

## ***Beersheba Day – Menangle Paceway***

At 4pm on October 31, 1917 Beersheba lay 6 km across an open plain protected by 4,000 entrenched Turks with guns, artillery and German planes. Now daylight was fading and the weary, thirsty troops desperately needed to capture the town's abundant water wells. 800 Light Horsemen lined up for a do or-die charge. The ANZAC soldiers' successes in the World War 1 Palestinian Campaign remain largely unknown, overshadowed by the lives lost at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. This website hopes to change this. The victory at Beersheba was one of the pivotal events that turned the tide of history for the Middle East. The daring and adventurous spirit of the ANZACs brought the breakthrough that ultimately defeated the same Turkish armies that had annihilated them in Gallipoli.

## **The Battle for Beersheba**

In desert warfare, it is all about water for horse and rider. To break the defence line, when the opposition has the water and you do not, means you have to win, you have to win quickly and you have to capture the water supply intact. British scouts went ahead, surveyed wells and marked maps with the quality and amount of water they could



supply. Beersheba was marked 'unlimited'. At the ancient wells of Abraham lay the elusive water they craved, but it needed the courage of David to defeat the entrenched Goliath to capture the city. In preparation for the troops, engineers had located, cleaned up and prepared available wells along the route through the dry river bed of Wadi Ghuzze. It was now the end of the dry season.

General Allenby conceived a plan, to deceive the enemy that they would be attacking Gaza while the main force was to take Beersheba in the east before cutting across behind Gaza. Gaza was heavily bombed from the sea for a few days before the attack. They had also deliberately dropped a note detailing the impossibility of an attack on Beersheba due to lack of water, which the Turks 'found' and believed.

The troops set off at night from Shellal with three days' supplies and tried as best to hide and rest by day. After three sleepless nights trekking through the desert with little water (many horses went 48 hours and some up to 60 hours without water), they arrived at Beersheba. The bombardment started at dawn with three British divisions attacking the Turkish trenches on the southern side



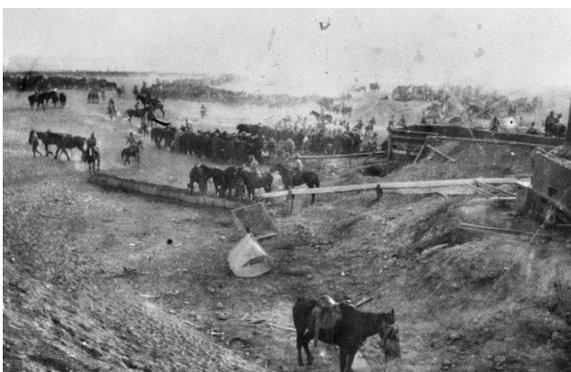
They fought hard and by early afternoon they had had captured their given objectives, suffering 1,151 casualties in the process. Meanwhile, the 2nd Light Horse Brigade successfully blocked the Hebron road to the north to cut off the escape route and prevent reinforcements arriving.

However, the high hill of Tel el Saba – the original site of the ancient city – was still in Turkish hands allowing the snipers to rain bullets down from above. Capturing this was vital for what was to follow. The New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade, with some Australian Light Horse reinforcements added later, fought hard on foot through the Turkish defences from mid-morning until Tel el Saba was finally captured in mid-afternoon about 3pm.

It was crucial to have the city by nightfall and time was running out. General Chauvel, now overall commander of the Desert Mounted Corps, needed to take decisive action. There was only about an hour of daylight left. As Gullett says, "surprise and speed were their one chance"<sup>1</sup>. He ordered the ANZAC 4th Brigade to line up and charge. Nothing else could work at this late stage. This had never been attempted by Light Horse. As the jacket cover for The Light Horsemen movie says, "They did not know it was impossible, they just obeyed orders."



The 4th and 12th Light Horse regiments (800 horsemen), with the 11th following in reserve, set off across 6 km of open ground in the full face of Turkish artillery and rifle fire, first at a trot, then a canter and finally a full-blown charge. They wielded their bayonets and yelled as they went. The Turkish gunners had their guns set for 1,500 metres but were ordered not to fire until the troops dismounted, as they always did – at least up till now. Faster and faster the horses approached. By the time the Turks realised that the horses were not going to stop, they could not wind down their heavy machinery fast enough. The shrapnel flew over their heads and exploded behind them. The British artillery took care of the source of those initial machine guns. Of more concern were the bombs dropped from the German aircraft above. With bombs exploding and rifle fire pinging around them, now in a total adrenaline rush, many riders simply jumped the trenches and continued on into town. Never had any of them experienced a ride like this one! Some dismounted and began fighting hand-to-hand with the stunned Turks in the trenches. Some were hit and fell to the ground, injured or dead. The New Zealand Mounted Rifle Brigade and the British Yeomanry Brigade provided back up and other reserve troops began swarming on the city. The impossible breakthrough was accomplished, but the danger was not yet past.



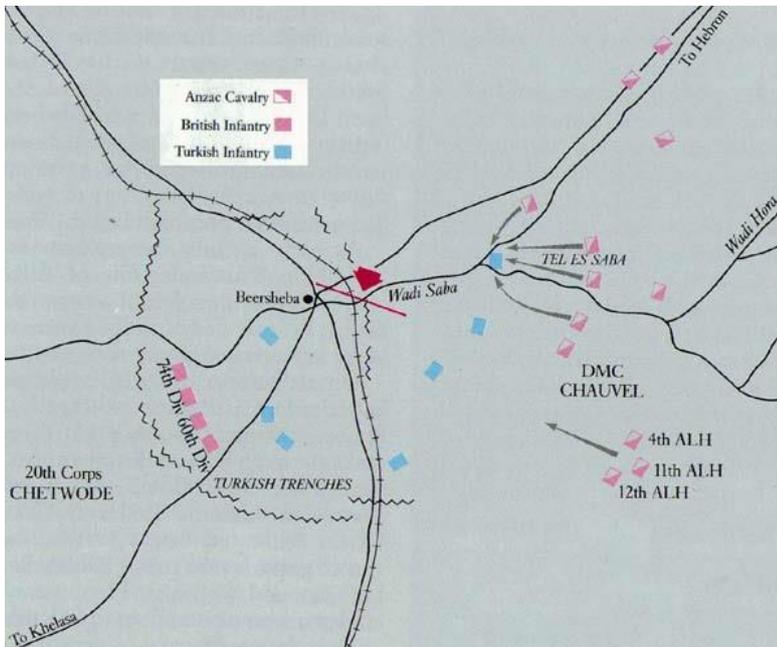
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P06548.001

The precious water wells had been mined and the German officers were in the process of blowing them up. They might yet just have the last laugh. Trooper 'Scotty' Bolton managed to follow the wires, stop the German officer at the switchboard and save all the wells except two or three. By 7 pm 60,000 men and 100,000 animals had descended on Beersheba. They needed 1,800,000 litres of water! It would just take great patience for all the parched animals and humans to drink their fill.



The gamble had paid off. They had captured the life-giving ancient wells and were now in a strategic position to move on to Jerusalem. It was not only a military victory; it was also a morale booster for the Allied troops and a demoralising defeat for the Turks. The upper hand was now plainly in Britain's favour.



Ion Idriess, from the 5th Light Horse, who watched the scene unfold, describes what he saw that day:

Then someone shouted, pointing through the sunset towards invisible headquarters. There, at the steady trot, was regiment after regiment, squadron after squadron, coming, coming, coming! It was just half-light, they were distinct yet indistinct. The Turkish guns blazed at those hazy

horsemen but they came steadily on. At two miles distant they emerged from clouds of dust. Squadrons of men and horses taking shape. All the Turkish guns around Beersheba must have been directed at the menace then. Captured Turkish and German officers have told us that even then they never dreamed that mounted troops would be madmen enough to attempt rushing infantry redoubts protected by machine guns and artillery. At a mile distant their thousand hooves were stuttering thunder, coming at a rate that frightened a man – they were an awe-inspiring site, galloping through the red haze – knee to knee and horse to horse – the dying sun glinting on bayonet-points. Machine gun and rifle fire just roared but the 4th brigade galloped on. We heard shouts among the thundering hooves, saw balls of flame amongst those hooves – horse after horse crashed, but the massed squadrons thundered on. We laughed in delight when the shells began bursting behind them telling that the gunners could not keep their range, then suddenly the men ceased to fall and we knew instinctively that the Turkish infantry, wild with excitement and fear, had forgotten to lower their rifle-sites and the bullets were flying overhead. The Turks did the same to us at El Quatia. The last half-mile was a berserk gallop with the squadrons in magnificent line, a heart-throbbing site as they plunged up the slope, the horses leaping the redoubt trenches – my glasses showed me the Turkish bayonets thrusting up the bellies of the horses – one regiment flung themselves from the saddle – we heard the mad shouts as the men jumped down into the trenches, a following regiment thundered over another redoubt, and to a



triumphant roar of voices and hooves was galloping down the half-mile slope right into town. Then came a whirlwind of movement from all over the field, galloping batteries – dense dust from mounting regiments – a rush as troops poured from the opening in the gathering dark – mad, mad excitement – terrific explosions from down in the town.

There were 31 Australians who died in the charge of Beersheba, another 36 were wounded and 70 horses died. They captured over 700 prisoners. The son of a World War 1 veteran told me that his father was a farrier by trade. He prided himself in always being in command of a horse – except for one day. At the battle of Beersheba, his thirsty horse smelled the water and there was no way he could have stopped, even if he wanted to.

## Endnotes:

1. Gullet. H., Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. Vol V11, Sinai and Palestine. Angus and Robertson, 1923, 395
2. Idriess, I., The Desert Column, The Discovery Press, 1932, 251-252

## Pictures:

1. View from Tel el Saba (Tel Sheva) across the plains the ANZACs galloped – Jill Curry
2. Disputed picture of the charge at Beersheba (or re-enactment) – Australian War memorial  
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/A02684/> It was probably taken when two regiments of the 4th Brigade, Australian Light Horse, re-enacted the charge for the official photographer Frank Hurley, at Belah on 7 February 1918.
3. Watering horses at Beersheba – Australian War Memorial  
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P08548.001/>
4. Map of Beersheba – [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Beersheba\\_\(1917\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Beersheba_(1917))
5. Abraham's Well tourist site (before renovations), Be'er Sheva – Jill Curry



## How would you be at identifying family relationships...

### QUIZ – FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

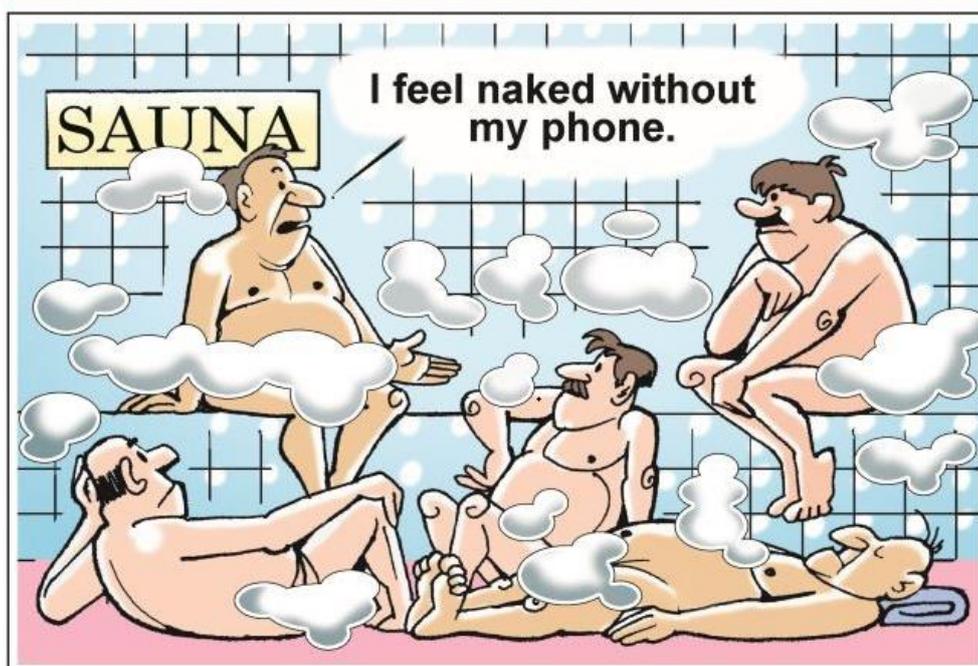
Starting with the straight-forward and moving to the more complex, test your ability to describe the web of family relationships.

1. My mother is my father's \_\_\_\_\_.
2. My cousin's mother is my \_\_\_\_\_.
3. My brother-in-law is my husband's \_\_\_\_\_.
4. My brother-in-law's son is my \_\_\_\_\_.
5. My step-brother is my mother's \_\_\_\_\_.
6. My sister-in-law's daughter is my \_\_\_\_\_.
7. My son's grand-daughter is my \_\_\_\_\_.
8. My grandfather's son is my \_\_\_\_\_.
9. My nephew's son is my \_\_\_\_\_.
10. My uncle's grandmother is my \_\_\_\_\_.
11. My husband's sister's son is my \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The daughter of my mother's cousin is my \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The granddaughter of my mother's cousin is my \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The daughter of my husband's cousin is my \_\_\_\_\_.
15. My mother's great-grandson is not descended from me, and is my \_\_\_\_\_.

For answers, see overleaf

iToons

Sunil Agarwal & Ajit Ninan





## ANSWERS

1. Wife (assuming that your parents are still married)
2. Aunt (assuming that your cousin's mother is the sister of one of your parents)
3. Sister (Of course, if your brother-in-law was married to your own sister, in addition to your own brother-in-law, he would be your husband's brother-in-law by marriage)
4. Nephew (assuming that your brother-in-law is still married to your sibling or your husband's sibling)
5. Step-son (assuming that it was your mother who married (or had been married) to your step-brother's father. If your step-brother was the son of your father's other wife, he would not be related to your mother)
6. Niece
7. Great-granddaughter
8. Uncle (assuming that he is not your father.)
9. Grand-nephew
10. Great-grandmother (assuming that your uncle is the brother of your parent)
11. Nephew (in-law / by marriage)
12. Second cousin
13. Second cousin, once removed
14. Step-cousin, once removed
15. Grand Nephew