

Me - Norman James Penny

Norman 1948 - 20xx



Norman with satchel

Born, at cost, in Inverness on 11th April at a private nursing home - Rossal, 31 Island Bank Road - 3 months before the introduction of the UK National Health Service.



"Rossal" was built in 1888-89 for Thomas Edward Buckley, a wealthy English gentleman. Same surname as my mother's maiden name - but not a relative!

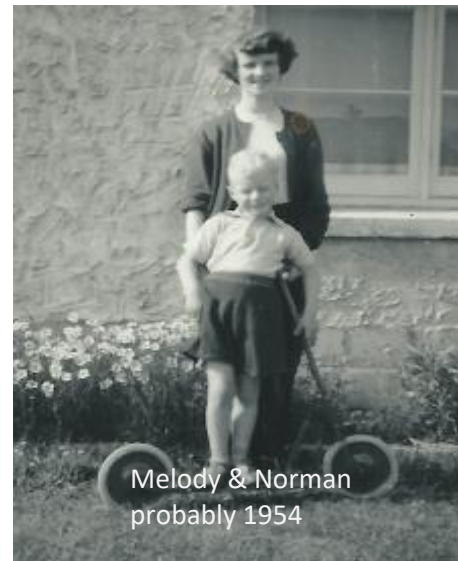
Mr Buckley's wife, Mary, was born in Sutherland and named the house after Rossal a hill near the River Naver. Another odd coincidence as my mother's ancestors were from Golspie, Sutherland.

Photo courtesy of Am Baile, the Highland Council's web site.

Photos of me in 1948 at end of this web page.



Grandma Penny, Mum (Phyllis) myself - Duthie Park, Aberdeen. Probably 1951.



Melody & Norman probably 1954



July 1948 - Melody, Phyllis (mum) & myself

Strange coincidences have featured all the way through my ancestry expedition. Finally reading a copy of Alexander Penny's "Reminiscences" book then finding a copy on an internet site; another Google search found the trade card from Alexander's business over a hundred years ago in the US; contact with distant family members distantly and nearby - one whose EM address includes glaikitquine - is connected back 7 generations; whilst driving near where my paternal grandmother was born Balgaveny croft was for sale; I found a note about a cake my step-grandfather (Grampsie) had made for me at Liverpool Road, Watford - my elder daughter, Tara, was born in Watford we lived at the time in Bushey (where Grandma Kitty and Grampsie once lived; discovering that I went past Mum's Gillingham school by train very frequently; etc...

When in 2009 I started this family research, I Googled the name and author of this book that I have relied so heavily on as a source of information. To my amazement there was a copy for sale in the US - duly bought and filed away. After re-reading my original copy I flicked through the additional one - first page in has hand-written "*To Mr Howard Gentles from the Author Christmas 1923*". So I have purchased a copy that ended up in the hands of a member of Alexander Penny's partner's family - one of the Gentles.



After several drives around the Longside area I finally found Nether Kinmundy Home Farm, knocked on the door and introduced myself to the owner, Jennifer Bain. She made me very welcome and told me about some of my ancestors - she too was also seeking out Penny roots.

Compare this with the picture on the "Alexander" page - not too different at all. Apart from double glazing and solar panel not too much different from this photograph I took (with permission of the current owner Jennifer Bain) in April 2011.

Employment for me started with a BT apprenticeship in Inverness in 1965, working for an X-ray company in Cincinnati then BT in Stanmore, London, Inverness and Canterbury in technical and managerial roles followed by global tasks in BT joint ventures with much time spent in the US. Since 1981 I have been involved with the Institution of Engineering and Technology and predecessor organisations as a professional registration assessor, two years as Chair of Council and membership of various committees. Thoroughly enjoyed it all.



My main post-retirement pastime (well obsession) has been researching two quite different topics - the main one being Pictish Symbol, or Standing, stones the secondary a religion or belief set called Mithraism. By a chance visit to London Museum I saw several Mithraic statues then came the realisation that the Symbols on the Pictish Stones are arguably Mithraic. A broader interest running in parallel has been family history and an urge to seek our roots as far back as possible - hence this set of pages. A DNA test from Oxford Ancestors showed my paternal clan to be the same as 40% Iran and 30% Lebanon. So for me there is a potential broad and lengthy thread from current time via ancestors that touches or encompasses many of my interests. My research resulted in Austin Macauley publishing Pictish-Mithraism the Religious Purpose of the Pictish Symbol Stones and self publishing pamphlets on specific stones e.g. Tillytarmont and Dandaleith and, this year, a booklet Pictish Stones - a Shared Space for Different Beliefs?

My research and propositions are in:-

www.pictish-mithraism.com

and

www.pictishsymbolstones.com

This "Roots and Branches" journey has taken me backwards in time and geographical order, over 11 generations from:-

Buchan to Margate, Westgate, Birchington, Herne Bay, Inverness, Watford, Gillingham, Argentina, Aberdeen, London, Australia, Ireland, Golspie, Cornwall and Buchan.



36 Broadstone Park, Inverness - where I first stayed after leaving "Rossal".

Finding this on Street View (thanks to Google) prompted a re-look at 1948 family photos - I then realised they were taken by the front door and in garden of No 36. The door may be an exact replica but the door push seems to be the same!



← 36 Broadstone Park, Inverness - Grandma Penny (front door) and ↑ Melody (back garden) June 1948

Grampsie, Melody & Norman 18 Aug 1948





Norman's Christening - 26 Sept 1948



Christening cake made by Grampsie

← Mum

Melody →



All outside the bay window of 36 Broadstone Park, Inverness

← Godfather - Jack Penny

Godmother - Katie Muirden →



Dad usually missed out on being in photos - largely because he was behind the camera - here are a few shots that other's took!



Dad & Grandma Penny - Duthie Park, Aug 1950



Jim & Norman Jan 1951



Dad - Loch Duntelchaig 3 June 1951



Nairn beach - 1949 (Norman 16 months)



Mum & Norman - Near Dores, 18 May 1953



Norman in play pen aged 13 months



Still have the basket - 9 May 2021 - 68 years later!