

Catherine Solomon was born in 21st October 1846 in Sydney, the 7th child and 4th daughter of Mordecai and Elizabeth. She married Isaac Barnett on 3rd March 1869 at the home of Sarah (her oldest sister) and George Myers place in Strawberry Hills (618 Elizabeth Street) by Rev Davis. "The Great Synagogue" hadn't been built at that stage hence the reason for a marriage in a private residence. Isaac presented Catherine with a set of prayer books at that time, neatly inscribed by Isaac with a message to Catherine and the date of their wedding. Maybe not what every bride was looking for but perhaps a tradition at the time. Fortunately I inherited these prayer books and they were very helpful in kick starting me with research into family history. I noted that the inscription was inside the left cover, rather than the right cover where most inscriptions would be in books written in Hebrew.

Isaac was born in London in 1837. He was the oldest of 11 children. His father (Asher) was a baker in London but in the late 1850's his business took a turn for the worse he decide to head for Melbourne with 3 of his children. His wife and the rest of the family stayed behind in London. Asher's other 2 brothers were already in Melbourne. Isaac went into business with his father but unfortunately that didn't work out. Asher went back to London and left Isaac to sort things out which didn't go very well.

Isaac eventually arrived in Auckland in 1862 where he started business as a grocer. Not your corner grocery store but an importer distributor of many products to do with the grocery business. He went into partnership with Barnett Levy and the business "Barnett & Levy" was formed. The business went exceedingly well and my research shows that "Myers & Solomon" also had a presence in Auckland. It wouldn't be hard to imagine that Isaac become with the Solomon family and talk of marriage and a suitable wife may have been a topic anyway as mentioned Isaac must have met Catherine, they married in March 1869 and he promptly returned to Auckland with his bride.

In the years 1870 - 1877 they had 7 children, wow!! ... but whilst all that was happening Isaac was planning his next move. Barnett & Levy's business premises in Queens St was located next to the Theatre Royal. In 1876 Barnett & Levy bought the Theatre Royal and totally rebuilt it into "the first theatre of any note and one of the largest and best in the colony"..... so said the newspaper reports. The opening was a huge success ... it help up to 1,800 people.... but one

year later the banks put the squeeze on them, I believe as a result of the "long depression" of 1873-1879 in North America and Europe. They had liabilities of over 20,000 pounds which was well covered by their assets, but when the asset values dropped they were forced into receivership. Following this event and I think because of it, the entire family moved to Sydney and lived in Paddington. Isaac started in business again and there followed the birth of another 7 children from 1878-1889. Of the 14 children 13 survived to adulthood.

Catherine died in 1896 and Isaac lived until 1912

Today we have present descendants of 4 (George, Esther, Monty and Harry) of those 13 children. Descendants of a further 2 (Sarah and Frances) of those 13 were contacted but couldn't be here. It is interesting to note that 3 (Sarah, Esther and George) of the 13 settled in New Zealand. Monty also lived there for a while but then returned to Sydney.

*** = not present but will be at Sydney Rowing Club

Harry Barnett

- granddaughter - Gae Noakes and her husband Barry
- her daughter and husband Deb *** and Alan Hill ***
- their daughter Gemma Hill ***
- Gae and Barry's son Wayne Noakes

- great great granddaughter Susan Domann and her husband Brad
- their daughter Charlotte

George Barnett

- grandson Gerald Barnett

Monty Barnett

- grandson Graham Barnett and his wife Wendy
- their son Tristan

Esther Barnett

- grandson John Shrimski and wife Jacqui
- my daughter Sandi Shrimski and son Andre ***
- my brother Richard Shrimski (from NZ)

- nephew Geoff Shrimski, his wife Liz and their children, Nati and Zoe