## **HEUMANN, Gustav Adolph**

Gustav’s Certificate of Naturalization dated 18th October 1900 states that he was aged 33 years, living at North Sydney, a native of Saalfeld, Saale, Germany, was an importer, and had arrived in N.S.W. in 1886 aboard the ship *Chimborazo*.**1**

Gustav’s father may also have been named Gustav Adolf Heumann.

He may have been connected with the importation of F. Heumann’s No. 1 finest white starch, advertised from the 1870s.

On 27th December 1890, at Sydney, on board the *Elbe*, German Imperial mail steamer, 4107 tons, Captain Carl Halenhorst, for Southampton and Bremen, via ports.

Passengers - For Bremen: **Mr. G. A. Heumann**. He arrived back on 8th June, aboard the vessel *Hohenzollern*, from Bremen.

On 13th January 1892, at St. Peter's Church, Woolloomooloo, Gustav Adolf Heumann was married to Alice Maude Foster.

Alice, born 1867, in Sydney, was the second daughter of Henry W. & Emma A. Foster, of 144 William-street, Sydney.**2**

Children of the marriage were:

* Alice Maude Wilhelmine, born 1893, district of Springwood [died 1893]
* Doris Hilda, born 1895, district of Annandale [died 1967 - unmarried]
* Ethel May, born 28th September 1896, district of St. Leonards, baptised 22nd November 1896, [married 1918, died 1970].

[Father’s occupation on baptism at St. Thomas Anglican Church, North Sydney, is given as fancy goods merchant.]

* Gustav Adolph, born 30th January 1899, district of St. Leonards, baptised 19th March 1899; [sailed with mother to Germany in March 1907 where he probably died]. [Father’s occupation on baptism at St. Thomas Anglican Church, North Sydney, is given as toy merchant.]
* Vera Muriel, born 18th December 1899, district of St. Leonards, baptised 4th March 1900 [died 1946 – unmarried – also went by surname of Hoyman].

[Father’s occupation on baptism at St. Thomas Anglican Church, North Sydney, is given as merchant.]**3**

On 21st January 1893, at “Chatsworth”, Springwood, Blue Mountains, the wife of G. A. Heumann gave birth to a daughter (Alice Maude Wilhelmine) who died on 5th November 1893, aged 10 months, of convulsions, at Forest Lodge, Sydney.**4**

On 24th January 1896, Mr. and Mrs. Gustave Heumann and infant [Doris Hilda) were aboard the *Oldenburg*, German mail steamer, 5818 tons, Captain Heintze, for Bremen, via Melbourne. The Heumann family were destined for Genoa. Mr. Heumann and family arrived back from Genoa on 27th July 1896, on board the vessel *Darmstadt*.**5**

On 31st December 1898 Mr. Heumann sailed for Genoa aboard the vessel *Reimkasten*. On 30th April 1899 he returned from Genoa to Sydney about the vessel G.M.S. *Stuttgart*.**6**

On 21st February 1899, at 109 Falcon-street, North Sydney, the wife of G. A. Heumann, gave birth to a son (Gustav Adolph).**7**

In January 1902 Mr. Heumann sailed on board the vessel *Freidrich der Gosse* for Genoa. He returned in June aboard the vessel *Oldenburg*.**8**

By December 1902 Mr. G. A. Heumann, was residing at the corner of Ernest & Miller streets, North Sydney, where he became a new telephone subscriber.**9**

In 1905 his interest in birds led him to export 24 cages of birds to San Francisco.**10**

In January 1907 he sailed aboard the vessel *Barbarossa*, for Bremen, Germany. In March his wife and son Adolph sailed to Bremen aboard the vessel *Bremen*.**11**

In March 1909, at the Aquarium Society of N.S.W., he displayed a living specimen of the Tilapia fish, from Egypt. In 1911 he was on the council of the Society.**12**

In March 1910, at the N.S.W. Ornithological Society Bird Show, he won many awards for his cage birds - finches, budgerigar, honey eater, Waxbill, Silver Bill, Java sparrow, Weaver, Whydah, parakeet.**13**

The association with the Society would continue for some years.

On 7th October 1911 the “Ramona Estate,” Beecroft, was auctioned on site.

This comprised 34 villa sites, frontages 56ft to 75ft, depths 264ft, including, “RAMONA,” a brick bungalow villa, 10 rooms and offices, wide verandahs and outbuildings, with about 2 acres, the residence of Mr. G. R. Harrison.

Auctioneers were Hardie and Gorman, acting under instructions from the Intercolonial Investment Company, Ltd. There was a large attendance, and 21 allotments, together with the well-known residence “Ramona” were disposed of at prices ranging from £1 12/6 per foot to £3 2/6 per foot. Totals sales, £5907 17/6.**14**

The residence “Ramona” was purchased by Gustav Heumann.

May 1914 – ‘One New South Wales naturalist at least has found out how to keep Australian birds so that they will breed and are not caused to pine by their restricted liberty. He is Mr. G. A. Heumann, of "Ramona," Beecroft, and what he is doing may be done by others. The old zoo idea of keeping the feathered creatures of the wild in whitewashed prisons is dying out slowly, and one of the enthusiasts to give it a death blow is Mr. Heumann. He has aviaries, of course, but they are of such a size that small trees and shrubs grow in them and the birds build in them when they want to. Lazy little things many of them; they prefer to accept the artificial bark-covered nesting places put in for them by their host rather than build for themselves. It takes money and brains, and, above all, patience and kindness, to run a set of aviaries such as Mr. Heumann possesses, but the expenditure of all these has its rich reward in satisfaction and in results. If one wants to see a thoroughly happy man he should gaze upon Mr. Heumann while he has a blue-tongue lizard balanced on each shoulder and a few birds picking mealy worms out of his fingers or making themselves comfortable on the top of his old Panama hat, while they keep a sharp look-out for the reptiles just below them.’**15**

In May 1914 Mr. Heumann and his two daughters, Ethel & Hilda, sailed for Europe as saloon passengers, aboard the vessel *Gnelsenau*.

The First World War began on 28th July 1914. He sailed from Rotterdam, Germany, destination Sydney, in November 1914 via New York with his daughter Ethel. His occupation is given as importer.**16**

In 1918 Ethel M., daughter of Gustav and Alice Heumann, married Albert Ernest Wright De Berri Wachsmann, of Beecroft.**17**

In 1920 Mr. Heumann applied for a Certificate of Title for his property at the intersection of Ernest-street and Lytton-street, North Sydney, 28 ½ perches.**18**

In Mar 1922 he began to export birds to London. From 1926 to 1928 he exported birds to London on many occasions, notably parrot finches, parakeets, parrots, lowries, sparrows, galahs and cockatoos. On one occasion he imported a box of African birds.**19**

May 1927 – ‘Mr. Heumann also breeds a few canaries, and in his bird room I saw quite a number of that beautiful, but little-kept variety, the lizard. Both silvers and gold were being bred, and they were of exceptional size and beautiful markings.’

‘Mr. G. A. Heumann, of Beecroft (Sydney), who has seen a good deal of the beautiful little mistletoe-bird, is inclined to disagree with those correspondents who have suggested that other birds assist in the spread of the mistletoe plant, now so abundant in the vicinity of Sydney. In Mr. Heumann's opinion, the reason for the spread of the mistletoe around Sydney lies in the fact that from year to year more and more gum trees disappear, whereas the mistletoe-birds have increased to a marked extent, probably because food has been more abundant during the last few years.’

‘During a recent trip to Sydney I had the pleasure of visiting the homes and aviaries of a few of the keen aviculturists there. These were situated on the northern line in the charming districts of Beecroft and Cheltenham. These suburbs are in hilly and rugged country, and the vegetation and undergrowth is very dense. The trees are really fine, and for picturesqueness this locality is one of the most charming of Sydney's very numerous enchanting suburbs.

The first aviaries visited were those of Mr. G. A. Heumann, of Ramona, Beecroft, whose name in the bird world is almost as well-known in Europe as it in Australia. Mr. Heumann has a number of large garden aviaries in which trees, shrubs, and grasses grow almost wild, and in such ideal surroundings it is not surprising that he has so many breeding successes to his credit. During the many years in which he has kept birds it is difficult to mention a variety which at one time or another he has not kept.

He has always been singularly successful with soft-billed birds, and practically all our native honey eaters, flycatchers, and fruit-suckers have been inmates of his aviaries for lengthy periods. Owing to indifferent health during the last few years Mr. Heumann's activities in the bird world have necessarily been very much restricted, but he always has something of interest to show the visitor. One of his most fascinating pets is "James," a male kagu (or cagou, from New Caledonia), that simply adores his master, and is always ready to display his beautiful plumes for the benefit of visitors. At the time of my visit his mate was busily engaged sitting on her egg, one egg comprising the clutch. It is rarely that kagus can be induced to breed in captivity, but "James" and "Mary," his wife, have reared quite a number of youngsters at various times. In an adjoining enclosure are some Cape Barren geese, which rear broods of young each season. An African grey parrot is another interesting member of this bird family, and is a most fluent speaker, although still very young.’

‘I was much interested to learn lately that the remarkable and now very rare Cape Barren goose is being reared by Mr. G. A. Heumann, of Beecroft, N.S.W. This big bird was certainly on the "doomed" list, but there should be no danger of extinction now that it has been proved that it breeds well as a domestic goose. Writing of his own birds, Mr. Heumann says: “The site selected for the nest is beneath a bush, and it is interesting to see the hen breaking off branches, putting them all in a heap, and then using them when she wants them as foundation and for the sides of the nest. It is not a big structure but looks cozy enough after she has plucked herself of the down in which she completely buries her eggs. The incubation lasts 40 days and is only carried out by the goose; the gander generally stands near by to see that nothing interferes. Both birds are very pugnacious during this period and will attack anything most viciously. A stray fowl quickly becomes a dead bird.’**20**

On 9th August 1930, Gustav Heumann, died at his residence, “Ramona,” Beecroft. Probate was granted to Alice Heumann and Robert Clisdell senior, the Executrix and Executor.**21**

There was no obituary printed.

In 1933 it was noted that ‘Mr. G. A. Heumann, of Beecroft (N.S.W.) had reared the now rare Cape Barren goose without difficulty. This, the largest and strangest of all our Australian native geese, seems to be very rapidly approaching total extinction, so that it is interesting to find an enthusiast successfully domesticating it.’ **22**

On 11th October 1945, at a private hospital in Manly, occurred the death of Alice Maude Heumann, widow of Gustav Adolph Heumann. Privately cremated.**23**

On 7th November 1946, at St. George District Hospital, occurred the death of Vera Muriel, youngest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs G. A. Heumann, of Beecroft. Privately cremated November 8, 1946, at Woronora [no further details available].

Vera Muriel Heumann (generally known as Vera Muriel Hoyman) was late of 124 Grand Parade, Brighton-le-Sands. Probate was granted to the sole executor William Howe.**24**

In 1952 a parcel of land, with an area of 10½ perches, in the parish of Willoughby, said to be in possession of the estate of the late G. A. Heumann, was resumed by the North Sydney Municipal Council.**25**

In 1967 occurred the death of Hilda Doris Heumann (birth registered as Doris Hilda), in the district of St. Leonards [no further details available].**26**

**Bibliography**

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24 Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 9 Nov 1946; Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 26 Nov 1946

25 Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales, Fri 13 Jun 1952

26 NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages