CV
Matthew Bode
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Born in Margate, South Africa in 1996, I moved to the Wild Coast (Port St Johns) in 1999, where the better part of my childhood was spent. I was shipped off to boarding school in 2006 for three years, before emigrating to Australia in 2008 at the age of 12. Completing high school in Victoria in 2014, I began working for the Costa Group, using my earnings to travel at every opportunity. In December 2019 I graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Tasmania where I'm now busy with an MBA. After completion, I hope to pursue an MSc (majoring in Genealogical, Palaeographic & Heraldic Studies) at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland.

My passion for genealogy was ignited at the age of eight, when I received a mini family tree from my mother's first cousin, a document I perused often. My paternal grandfather, having recognised this precocious curiosity, encouraged me to write to a first cousin of his, Graham Bode, a school principal and ardent genealogist. While beginning to exchange epistles, photographs, documents and the like, we still communicate to this day.

On completion of high school, I made it my life's mission to find my illegitimate grandmother's father and his family. In 2016, with the seal of a DNA connection, I was able to prove my grandmother's paternity. Importantly, my grandmother, having been raised in the belief that she was an only child whose father had perished in the war, was astonished to learn that she was in fact the eldest of six children on her father's side.

I am acutely aware that genealogy is a rather unusual pastime for a person of my age, and to be so heavily involved in. However, there are more young people pursuing this enriching hobby than one might realise. Our generation is sorely lacking when it comes to finding a sense of identity, purpose and belonging – ergo, appealing to this aspect of genealogy could go a long way to enticing more youngsters to explore their roots.