



## KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

Including: Ku-ring-gai Family History Group • Patron: The Mayor of Ku-ring-gai  
Affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society, The National Trust of Australia (NSW),  
The Society of Australian Genealogists, and the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies, Inc.  
P.O. Box 109, Gordon, NSW 2072 • Phone (02) 9499-4568 • <http://www.khs.org.au> • [khs@khs.org.au](mailto:khs@khs.org.au)  
Research Centre: 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon, NSW 2072 • [research@khs.org.au](mailto:research@khs.org.au)

### MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER VOL. 38 NO. 2

#### SATURDAY MARCH 7

##### 11.00am FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

###### *Understanding the English Census*

**Presenter: Jenny Joyce**

The census is a vital source for UK research. Learn what censuses are available, how to access them and how to interpret them.

##### 2.00pm FAMILY HISTORY MEETING,

###### *Oops I should have checked the Original*

**Presenter: Angela Phippen**

Using examples from the “Letters of Rachel Henning”, Angela will show how selective, but deliberate, editing of a source record can result in an inaccurate and misleading transcription and why, as researchers, we should always check the original.

**Rachel Biddulph Henning** (1826–1914) was born in England. In 1854 she went to Australia but returned to England two years later due to homesickness and the hot climate. However, in 1861 she returned to Australia, where she settled permanently. She first lived with her brother and sister on their property in Queensland, but married in 1866 and later moved to a property near the New South Wales south coast.

*Rachel's 176 descriptive letters, mainly addressed to her sister in England, provide a detailed account of nearly 30 years of pioneering life in Australia. The letters were first published by The Bulletin in 1951 and 1952. In 1963, they were collected in book form and published by Angus and Robertson, with a foreword and illustrations by Norman Lindsay.*

*Literary critic Debra Adelaide writes that "they are valued for their vivid portrayal of station life in the second half of the nineteenth century and for her own humour and frankness about the life she led."*

*The Letters of Rachel Henning is one of the best examples in English of the way in which letters can overlap with fiction Dale Spender, courtesy Wikipedia)*

*The letters present shrewd, if not always charitable, observations on people, they have both charm and humour. (Courtesy: Australian Dictionary of Biography)*

Angela Phippen is a Local Studies Librarian with a Sydney Suburban Council; prior to this she was the Librarian at the Society of Australian Genealogists. She has diverse research interests; including Divorce in NSW, Chinese Market Gardeners, War Memorials and the life and work of the stained glass artist George Hedgeland.

**Visitors Welcome**

**Afternoon Tea Available**

**Please note a late change in speaker for our March General Meeting. We thank Margaret Cameron-Ash who replaces Catie Gilchrist at short notice.**

#### SATURDAY MARCH 21

##### 2.00pm GENERAL MEETING

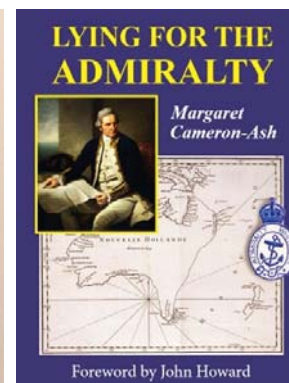
###### *Lying for the Admiralty*

**Presenter: Margaret Cameron-Ash**

Margaret Cameron-Ash's latest book sets out to explain how Captain Cook's inexplicable blunders overlooking such obvious features as Bass Strait and the entrance to Sydney Harbour could have occurred.

The author makes the case that Cook didn't miss these key coastal features at all. Rather, he obfuscated them, obeying secret orders from the Admiralty to hide discoveries of strategic importance from Britain's rivals – in particular the French.

The evidence is found in the author's forensic examination of manuscript maps and journals, revealing Cook's tell-tale changes: the crossings out and corrections, the drafting and redrafting, his first thoughts, second thoughts and self-censorship. Still more lay ahead when these original and corrected manuscripts were handed to the Admiralty. Comparisons of the documents show that the blue pencil was liberally used prior to publication of the authorised version, while the originals were filed away for 200 years.



Margaret Cameron-Ash is a lawyer, a former visiting fellow at the University of NSW and the author of *Supreme and District Courts Practice* (1982, Law Book Co). After working and lecturing as a lawyer in Sydney and London, she widened her area of research to include early Australian history, with a special interest in cartography. She has published numerous papers about Captain Cook.

Her highly successful book is now in a second printing.

**Visitors Welcome**

**Afternoon Tea Available**

## **FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP**

**Saturday February 1, 11.00am**

Jenny Joyce opened the meeting with 18 members present. She made several announcements: there are new records on the Biographical Database of Australia; WW2 Australian service records are being digitised; a four-day conference, Family History Downunder, will be in March, 2021 on the Sunshine Coast; Congress will be in July/August, 2021 on Norfolk Island; and that Dight House in Richmond is under threat due to one of the proposed routes for a new Richmond by-pass.

There election for the Family History Group Committee will be the at the March 7 meeting.

Jenny then reported on the RootsTech Conference in London in November, 2019. It began with the Ancestry Breakfast where details were given about new additions to the Ancestry site including WW2 Artillery Regiment Records, Bristol Records and more for European countries including Norway, Finland and France. Brad Argent, Head of International Programming, Ancestry, also reported that new on Ancestry DNA was searching by surname, updated regions and communities, and an updated reference panel (now with 60 groups). 15 million people have now tested with Ancestry making it the biggest DNA database. He then announced that a new search experience is coming!!

The MC for the main presentations was Nick Barratt from thr early series of 'Who Do You Think You Are?' Speakers included Brad Argent, on making connections between people; Dan Snow, TV presenter, who became interested in family history through his maternal grandmother, and who had an ancestor who was a general in WW1; and Donny Osmond, the Peter Pan of Music, who at 21 was told he was a has-been in the music world; advice he ignored so he is still performing at 62.

In the Exhibition Hall were information tables from many different countries as well as UK. There were also many free talks. Some of the talks will be available later on the RootsTech website.

## **FAMILY HISTORY MEETING**

**Saturday February 1, 2.00pm**

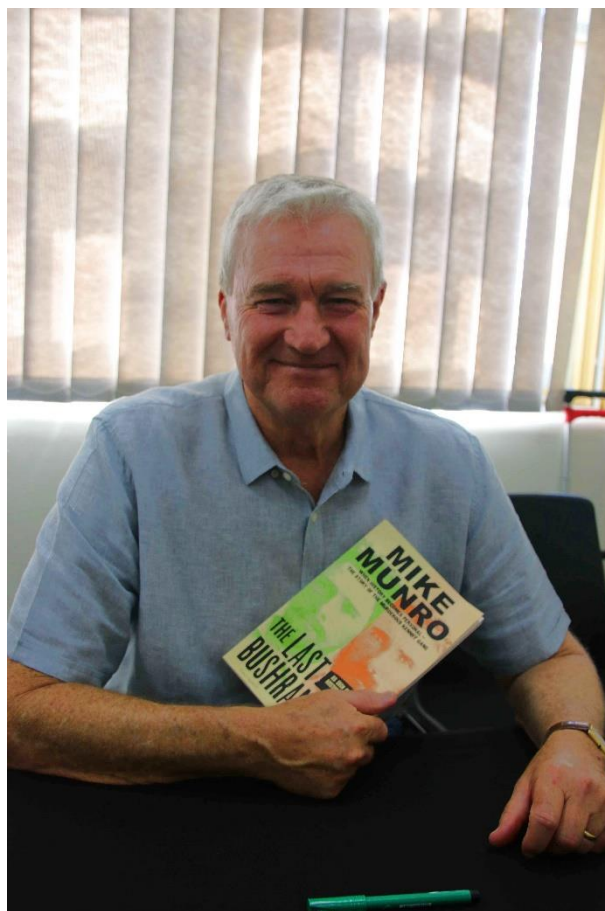
Jenny Joyce opened the meeting, welcomed everyone including several visitors and the afternoon's speaker, Mike Munro, and repeated the announcements from the morning session. Neil Falconer reported on future outings, details of which are on page 5.

### **Speaker**

Jenny Joyce then introduced Mike Munro, well-known TV presenter and investigative journalist. He spoke about his book, 'The Last Bushrangers' which details the careers of his relatives, the Kenniff brothers and their controversial trial. Mike had been brought up by his mother who worked as a housekeeper in a monastery. She had left his father because he was 'no good'. She was well-read, hardworking but an alcoholic and Mike stayed with her, taking her to AA

meetings and rehabilitation until he was 21.

By then he had become a journalist on her suggestion and was working for the Daily Mirror. Mike later met up with his father. When he was 30, and his father was on his deathbed, his father told him a 'terrible secret'; that his father had changed his name from Kenniff to Munro to escape the shame of being related to the notorious Kenniff bushrangers.



Mike then began his own research into the Kenniffs, who originated in Tipperary, Ireland. At some point the family moved to Australia. The bushranger brothers, Patrick and James, were born in NSW but moved to the Carnarvon Ranges in Queensland, where the family had bought land. There they operated as bushrangers, free from the restrictions of the fenced land in NSW where they had started.

Their practice was to capture cattle and wait for the calves to be born which they then branded with their own brand. They also stole horses.

They were finally caught, removed to Brisbane for a trial that was controversial because it was the first time that a black man's evidence was accepted in a court of law in Australia. Mike gave the audience a lot more detail but if you would like to hear the whole story you will have to read the book!!

After questions Neil Falconer proposed a vote of thanks and made a presentation to the speaker.

### **Raffle**

The raffle winners were Joan Stebbing and Heather Stevens. This was followed by afternoon tea.

## GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 18

### The James Craig Story

Beverley Dunstan introduced Trevor Richardson who was to take us through a journey of the history, recovery and restoration of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century barque, James Craig. Now restored at a cost of \$30 million she is the only 19<sup>th</sup> Century ship in Sydney.

The James Craig was built in 1874 in Sunderland, England and originally named Clan MacLeod. The ship, 180 feet long, could carry 1,500 tons of cargo and never carried passengers. She sailed 25 voyages around the world, 23 of them around Cape Horn. From 1900-1911 the ship was owned by Joseph James Craig in New Zealand, and renamed James Craig in 1905. The ship carried cargo between New Zealand and Melbourne until 1911 when it was sold and used in New Guinea as a coal hulk. The ship was then bought by Henry Jones & Co (the jam manufacturers IXL).

The ship was abandoned in Recherche Bay in southern Tasmania in 1932 and in a storm drifted out to sea but when the tide came in the ship drifted back. As it was thought to be a hazard it was beached and the hull dynamited.

The ship was “rediscovered” in Recherche Bay in 1965. The Sydney Harbour Fleet (which restores and operates historic vessels) went down to see it in 1970 and had it refloated in 1972 and towed to Hobart. In 1981 it was then towed to Sydney.

In Recherche Bay water and sludge had to be pumped out of the ship until she floated again and holes in the hull patched with whatever could be found in the area. When she reached Hobart she sank as there were lots of little holes, so the hull was lined with concrete.

The ship was towed to Sydney by tugs that were used in the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. The tug crews agreed to tow it back provided they did not have to pay for the fuel. Ampol were approached in this regard and gave them the fuel.

A floating dock was built and the ship taken to Cockatoo Island dockyards. The temporary concrete was jack hammered out and all holes sealed up. In a workshop at Rozelle new ribs were made, plates were made to replace some old plates, and 50,000 rivets were made.

Back at Cockatoo Island masts were made and lifted into place. Block and tackles were also made as well as two lifeboats, sails, crews’ quarter, galley, etc. The ship now has the original bell from Clan MacLeod and the wheel is from the Jenny Craig, a sister ship.

The James Craig is now a working ship taking people around Sydney Harbour, from Sydney to Melbourne and Melbourne to Sydney.

There was so much more to the story of the James Craig than can be told here. Sitting, listening to Trevor Richardson and looking at photos on the screen brought the whole story to life, particularly his description of the 3 Ps – ie: Perseverance (that of the restorers), Persuasion (getting the ship towed from Hobart to Sydney) and Perfection (ending with the acquisition of the wheel from the Jenny Craig).

Thank you Trevor for a most enjoyable and educational hour. (Notes: Marilyn van Eerde)

### GERMAN SIG MEETING

The KHS German Special Interest Group (SIG) met on Monday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 with 13 members present. Items discussed were:

**GAGHA update** - Tony Karrasch briefed members on the outline plan for the visit to Australia by Dirk Weissleder (General Secretary of the World Federation of Genealogy and Heraldry) during April/May 2020. His visit does not include, at present, any planned activities in Sydney.

Tony also briefed the members on significant German genealogy Facebook posts including research threads on internment camps 1914 – 1919 and the *Jennings German Story*.

He then gave an overview of RootsChat, which claims to be the busiest and largest free family history forum site. RootsChat was the subject of further discussion later in the meeting. Tony also provided a useful handout from his research entitled *How to find German Church records on the Internet*.

**Progress reports** – Frank Olivier described the significant progress made with discovering the final resting place of his father. Short of a miracle, Frank believes he has reached the practical end of the evidence remaining to be discovered especially considering the chaos prevailing in Gdansk, Poland during the final weeks of WW2.

Christine Edwards reported on the progress made with her German ancestors which clarified a number of leaves on the family tree.

**Potential for RootsChat as a German family history research resource** – Tony and Christine briefed members on their experiences using RootsChat. The dynamic and responsive nature of this interactive Internet forum was emphasised. After discussion and numerous questions members endorsed the proposal to hold a practical, hands-on, workshop-style session on RootsChat at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting is planned for Monday April 6 at 1.30pm in our rooms.

(Notes: Peter Stehn)

## *Letter to the Editor*

from Ray Hollings AM

Reading how the RTT volumes are now available in London reminded me of a trip my wife and I made in 2003 to the Bernafay Wood British War Cemetery to visit the grave of my maternal uncle 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut, William Ralph who was killed in action in 1916. Our Bartlett's Battlefields tour guide, Ben Armstrong, included the following poem in a folder full of information about Ralph's army service. By the time Ben came to reading aloud the last verse, we were all in tears. Lest we forget.

### **The Visitors**

*I half awoke to a strange new calm  
In a sleep that would not clear,  
For this was the sleep to cure all harm  
And free us all from fear.*

*Fire had come from left and right  
With shrapnel shell and flame,  
To turn the sunlit days to night,  
Where no one now would know my name.*

*Years passed me by as I waited,  
Missed the generations yet to come;  
Sadly, I knew I would not be fated,  
To be a father, hold a son.*

*I heard again the sound of War  
When twenty years of sleep had gone,  
For five long years or maybe more,  
Until peace at last, once more had come.*

*More years passed, new voices came,  
The stones and trenches to explore.  
But no one came to call my name  
As I waited and waited evermore.*

*Each time I thought, perhaps, perhaps,  
Perhaps this time, they might find me,  
But they only came for other chaps,  
No one ever came to set me free.*

*Through lonely years of vigil kept,  
To look for me they never came,  
Nobody searched or ever wept,  
Nobody stayed to call my name.*

*Until that lovely summer's day,  
Heard voices soft and strained with tears,  
And then I knew that THEY had come,  
To roll away those wasted years.*

*Their hearts reached out to hold me,  
To make me whole like other men,  
For they had come just to see me,  
And take me home with them.*

*Now I'm at peace and free to roam  
Where ere my family call my name,  
Today my soul was called back home,  
For today my family came*

Mike Edwards, author of the poem, published it in the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1999, edition of the English newspaper, 'Horncastle News', for Remembrance Day (11<sup>th</sup>)

## *Letter to the Editor*

from Evelyn Wyatt

In RTT Vol IV there's a description of Lady Davidson Private Hospital. As a volunteer there I wanted to let members know that on July 7<sup>th</sup> this year the hospital will celebrate its centenary. Among planned offerings will be an information booth and afternoon tea.

Back in 1920 the hospital was established as a restful place for soldiers to recover after returning from WWI with TB. Over the intervening years, the hospital's role has evolved. Today it is recognised for its specialisation in Orthopaedic, Neuro-Spine, and Cancer rehabilitation.

In 1918 the Defence Department bought 52 acres belonging to Guy Du Faur and Mary Ann Edward. Nobody wanted consumptive men in Ku-ring-gai and while protest meetings were held and letters written to the local Member, Prime Minister "Billy" Hughes, three wards were built in 1919 to accommodate 75 men. Another ward was added in 1921, more in the 1940s.

The Sphinx was carved in the 1920s by a stonemason patient William Shirley at the suggestion of the Medical Superintendent. Money for the tools was donated by a Newcastle lady. It remains a War Memorial.

For 77 years the hospital was under Commonwealth Repatriation then Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) control, although the Red Cross managed it for the first four years. Until 1960 the patients were essentially ex-servicemen with TB, not local residents. In 1961 Lady Davidson Home became a Rehabilitation Hospital associated with Concord Hospital. Physiotherapy and occupational therapy units were established. Chronic TB patients were moved to the country and ex-service women and war widows admitted. The Medical Superintendent selected patients at Concord who would benefit from physical therapy. These were orthopaedic, general surgical patients, and amputees. Medical patients had chest, cardiac conditions, strokes and other neurological problems.

In 1976 a new physiotherapy gym, occupational therapy unit and X-Ray department were opened. The chapel and war memorial were built thanks to a bequest. Lambert Ward was built in 1981.

In the 1990s DVA began divesting its medical institutions and Lady Davidson was sold on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1997. Many buildings were demolished and much land sold for retirement village development. The last 22 years has seen several owners. Australian Health Care was responsible for building three new wards, an administration area and conversion of occupational therapy into a hydrotherapy pool. Today Lady Davidson continues under Healthscope as a private rehabilitation hospital with 115 beds. Many Ku-ring-gai residents use and appreciate the facilities.

Please mark July 7 on your calendars.

## **FUTURE PENRITH TOUR NO. 10 - April 30**

Recently, the Tour Team visited the Penrith precinct in Greater Sydney and were very impressed with what was on offer in the area. There is even an indoor, state of the art, vertical wind tunnel skydiving facility that is obviously not on our list but which highlights the variety of venues available. We selected the following venues and there are several more that we have held over for a future date.

Our tour, by bus, is planned for **Thursday April 30** a date that is not in school holidays!

We will leave our favourite spot, Bannockburn Oval, in Bannockburn Road at 8.45am and travel to Emu Plains, our first stop being the Arms of Australia Inn where, after morning tea (included in tour cost), we can discover local history, photos and much more from our guide. The Inn was once the staging post for travellers making the trip from Sydney to the goldfields.

We will then travel to nearby Emu Hall for lunch (at own cost) which is adjacent to the Yandhai Nepean Crossing, a really interesting pedestrian bridge across the Nepean. Emu Hall is a historic house situated on the riverbank. The Estate was originally established in 1854 and developed by James Tobias (Toby) Ryan who was born in Penrith and ultimately became involved in politics.

After lunch we will travel to the famous Museum of Fire in Penrith where we will have a guided tour of this outstanding facility which stands in honour of the dedication and courage of those who answer the call to protect our lives and the community daily. We expect to return to Bannockburn Oval around 4.30pm.

With two guided tours our cost for members (excluding lunch) will be \$52 and non-members \$62. This tour opens for booking on Saturday March 21 (Booking information is on the back page of this newsletter).

### **FUTURE TOUR DATES**

**Thursday March 19** – Tour 9: Wicked Waterfront Walking Tour plus, with Judith Dunn. Bookings opened Saturday February 15

**Thursday April 30** – Tour 10: Penrith Fire Museum and other attractions. Bookings open Saturday March 21

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Trish and Peter de JONG, Killara

## **EDITOR'S GOODBYE**

Over the last two years many people have helped me bring our monthly newsletter to life. Our country is rich with historic drama and young enough for researchers to have a wealth of accessible resources and records to investigate. I've been amazed at how much learning about our early days has been made available in the newsletter pages. Sincere thanks go to all those who have offered pieces for publication.

Way behind the scenes three dedicated and patient proof readers – Jo Harris, Susan Alder and Sue Holmes – toiled with draft copy to identify and replace American spelling, grammar, and terms in order to preserve local idioms and style. They often had to work with last minute changes and tight deadlines, always being aware of the time difference between Sydney and Seattle where I live. I am indebted to them for their sharp-eyed suggestions which always enhanced the final presentation. I'm also aware that they never tried to exercise any censorship over newsletter content, despite the fact that they may well have disagreed with some of my inputs.

At the start of my editorship I received two sage points of advice. The first was to include bigger pictures, the second was to minimise edits on submissions.

With many seniors in our society's membership, larger images make viewing a little easier. Most images now tend to be full column width and those that offer intense detail are often reproduced in high definition on an external website.

The monthly newsletter is the heart of broad society communication, especially for the hundreds of members who for various reasons don't take tours or attend group presentations, or have no need to visit the society's rooms to engage in research. For all members the newsletter is both a source of entertainment and a vehicle to communicate leadership views, policy, and activities from the main committee and the FHG committee.

From a personal perspective, publishing the newsletter over a two year period has been immensely rewarding and enriching, as has been the associated interaction with great people unconditionally providing input so hundreds of members know what our Society is about.

I'm sure my successor will make changes to the newsletter as the society considers greater use of social media to get its message out and recruit new members. The electronic age is upon us with its bright new options. I hope you all revel in it, but keep reading and participate in tours and meetings if at all possible. And keep those 'Letters to the Editor' coming. Au revoir.

## DIARY DATES

### MARCH

- Saturday 7 11.00am Family History Workshop  
**Understanding the English Census**  
Presenter: Jenny Joyce
- Saturday 7 2.00pm Family History Meeting including  
Family History Group elections followed by  
**Oops I Should Have Checked the Original**  
Presenter: Angela Phippen
- Thursday 19 Tour 9: **Wicked Waterfront Walking  
Tour plus**
- Saturday 21 2.00pm General Meeting: **Lying for the  
Admiralty**  
Presenter: Margaret Cameron-Ash

### APRIL

- Saturday 4 11.00am Family History Workshop  
**Share Memories of the 1970 Bi-centenary  
of Cook's Discovery of Botany Bay**
- Saturday 4 2.00pm Family History Meeting  
**The New South Wales and Tramways  
Roll of Honour Board, Central Station**  
Presenter: Bill Phippen
- Monday 6 1.30pm German Special Interest Group  
Meeting
- Saturday 18 2.00pm General Meeting:  
**Three Vietnam Wars from 1954 to 1975**  
Presenter: David Wilkins
- Thursday 30 Tour 10: **Penrith Fire Museum and other  
attractions**

### MAY

- Saturday 16 2.00pm General Meeting:  
**Finding Sanity – An Australian Story**  
Presenter: Greg de Moore

#### How to book a tour

The tour booking table opens at 1.30pm before the start of the KHS General Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month (except December). Bookings can also be made for a short period following the meeting. Payment on the day is by cash or cheque. If you are unable to attend at that time then please contact Yvette **after the weekend of the booking** at [yreeve@optusnet.com.au](mailto:yreeve@optusnet.com.au) or phone 9987 0904 or 0414 249 737 to check on any vacancies. If there are none, you could list on the Expression of Interest form in case of future vacancies. If there is a vacancy, payment can be made by EFT, details: BSB 032-083, KHS Account No. 248971, indicating your name and tour number. Yvette will note your booking and send you an important Tour Information Sheet.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Income for the 3 months to January 2020 amounted to \$3,855. Most of this income came from bank interest received in November and December 2019 and tours. Expenses for the same period were \$2,072 giving us a surplus for these months of \$1,782. There was not much activity in January 2020 due to the holidays.

## ADMINISTRATION

President	Lorna Watt	9440 8010
Vice President	Annet Latham	9440 3998
Treasurer	Marilyn van Eerde	0418 269 126
Secretary	Judith Godden	0408 967 937
Immediate Past President	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
Committee	Neil Falconer	9488 7293
	Morrison Hammond	9449 7447
	Geoff Little	9449 3131
	Jean Lucas	9449 5706
	Yvette Reeve	0414 249 737
Family History	Lorraine Henshaw	
Group Committee	(Leader)	0418 22 1354
	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
	Yvette Reeve	0414 249 737
	Jean Smith	9498 4468
	Elaine Turnidge	9899 2635

### Appointees

Accessions	Jennifer Wallin	9983 1871
Book Sales	Margaret Holland	9488 5452
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Curators	Ann Barry	9144 6480
	Jennifer Harvey	9489 6390
Built Heritage Group	Jennifer Harvey	9489 6390
Historian Editor	Lorna Watt	9440 8010
Indexing	Beth Facer	9988 0823
Newsletter Editor		editor@khs.org.au
Media Liaison	David & Jan Hellstrom	9416 6039
Public Officer	Helen Whitsed	9416 5825
Research Team Leader	Joan Stebbing	9489 6476
Tour Contact	Yvette Reeve	0414 249 737
Speakers Programme	Beverley Dunstan	9419 8526
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Webmaster	Peter Stehn	9489 9488
Welfare Officer	Jill Nicholson	9144 6948

### **Research Centre Hours**

The Society's Research Centre is at 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon, adjacent to the Ku-ring-gai Library. The Centre is open to the public from 10.00am to 2.00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday (except the first Saturday of each month when members have a Family History meeting).

### **Newsletter Deadline**

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