



# KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Incorporating the Ku-ring-gai Family History Centre • 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.

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Monthly Newsletter

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Rooms: 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon Meetings held in the Gordon Library Meeting Room - 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon

## *The rise and fall of Cobb & Co.*

The speaker at February's General Meeting, Sam Everingham, spoke to us about the rise and fall of Cobb & Co. He became interested in the story when his godfather showed him a bundle of letters kept by his great-grandmother, Bella Whitney, who ended up running Cobb & Co.

Cobb & Co. had been founded in Victoria in the 1850s, the time of the Gold Rush, by Freeman Cobb and three other Americans. They used Concord coaches imported from America, which were made for rough roads and could travel very fast. Cobb ran his coaches at twice the speed of his competition, an important advantage during that time, when speed to get to the diggings was a great advantage. He achieved this by setting up stations to change horses every 10 to 20 miles, galloping them hard in between stations, and charged high prices for this service.

The company was eventually taken over by James Rutherford and others, amongst them Walter Hall and Frank Whitney (Bella's husband). They expanded the services into NSW and later Queensland. This was fortuitous, as the coach services stopped earlier in Victoria than the other states owing to the enormous growth of the railway, with which the coaches could not compete. In NSW and Queensland, Cobb & Co's routes went where the railways didn't, and to towns not directly connected by the railway.

Cobb & Co. started building their own coaches in Australia. One of them was the aptly named "Leviathan", which could carry 89 passengers, and ran between Geelong and Ballarat. But pulling it was very hard on the horses due to its great weight, and it could only travel on flat ground, could not manage hills, and could only be driven by one driver who used small stones to signal the lead horses where to go, since whips were not long enough to reach them.

Frank Whitney died in the 1890s, which was a time of drought and financial collapse. His will had directed that all his assets be sold, but his wife contested this as she felt that if they sold the company at that time there would be nothing left for her children. This necessitated a Private Members Bill in the NSW Parliament. She took over control of the company, and the letters revealed her difficulties with Rutherford, who she felt was 'mentally unhinged'.

Cobb & Co. was a huge company in its time, and needed lots of infrastructure to support its operations, especially as a ticket on a Cobb & Co. coach included your meals and accommodation. Not only did they carry parcels, people and post, but they also made coaches, bred horses, invested in mines and owned many sheep and cattle properties. Eventually the motor car (and QANTAS) tolled the end of Cobb & Co., which did not want to expand into those areas, as well as the fact that after World War I the mail routes were given to returned servicemen.

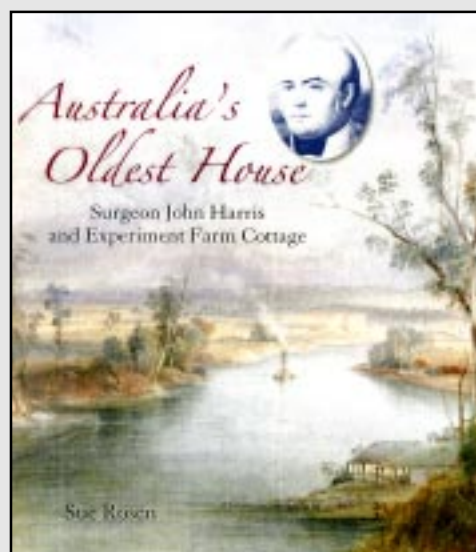
*Jenny Joyce*

## Coming Meetings

(Gordon Library Meeting Room)

### General Meeting

Saturday 16 April at 2 pm



**Australia's Oldest House?** If you thought you could easily name Australia's oldest surviving house, last year's controversy may have left you wondering how expert opinion could claim vastly different dates (1790s or 1830s) for Surgeon John Harris' Experiment Farm Cottage.

Come and hear the story from our speaker, author Dr Sue Rosen. Sue is an independent historian who specialises in heritage assessment work

**Afternoon Tea will be available.**

**Visitors welcome.**

## Next Family History Meeting

Saturday 2 April

**11 am** "New Resources on the intranet"

**2 pm** General Meeting

"Why did your ancestors leave their homeland?"

Members talk about their own research

**Afternoon Tea will be available.**

**Visitors welcome.**

## ***Society Tour***

### ***Convict Women's Trail, Parramatta***

Tuesday 24 May

Departing approx 8.30 am, returning approx 4.30 pm, Bannockburn Oval, Pymble.

Escorted by Judith Dunn of Past Times Tours, we will follow the footsteps of convict women from arrival at Parramatta Wharf to the first and second Female Factories (convict women's gaols). View the orphanages where their children were placed and the oldest cemetery in Australia, where master and servant lie side by side in their final resting place. Very story oriented, this tour explores the lives of women noted as "these most licentious women, the very dregs of society". Was this a valid description? What were their choices?

Lunch at Rose Hill Bowling Club will be included.

Cost \$30 members, \$40 non-members. Booking sheet in KHS rooms, payment with booking.

## ***Mac Users Group***

Monday 11 April at 1.30 pm in the Research Rooms

An informal gathering and discussion about any and all things Mac.

We can discuss things like genealogy programs, software selection or problems, photos, technical issues, etc. We're not experts but hopefully we can help each other out.

If you have any specific questions, please email them in advance so they can be circulated to the group for answers ([jackievb@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jackievb@optusnet.com.au)).

Even if you are just thinking about purchasing a Mac, come along and see what all the fuss is about. No need to book, just turn up with your laptop if you have one.

## ***March Activities***

March was a very busy month. Perhaps it's a bit of a pity when so many events fall in the same month!

The Society took part in events related to the International Womens Day, Gordon; Senior Community Living Information Morning, Turramurra; and Seniors Expo, St Ives. We ran 5 workshops during one week late in the month, plus gave out-reach talks to Probus and Computer Pals.

Our thanks go to all who assisted. We are fortunate to have a great group of people willing to help when needed!

## ***China's Entombed Warriors***

*A glimpse of the KHS Tour - February*



## ***Society Tour Report***

### ***Visit to The Hills District Historical Society and Powerhouse Discovery Centre***



photo: Martin Brannan

On 9 March a bus-load of KHS members and friends set off from Bannockburn Oval, Pymble, for the Hills District. First stop was the *HDHS*, housed on the site of the former William Thompson Masonic Schools. These residential schools were erected by the Masonic Lodge post-WWI to educate and care for children of Masons who had perished during the war. The Schools were built on 168 acres which had originally been granted to and farmed by ex-convict George Best (arrived per *William & Ann*, 1796). The Masonic vision for the Schools was no minor undertaking, with as many as 33 buildings, including classrooms, residential cottages for staff and students, hospital, laundry, assembly hall, etc.

We were met by Keith, a former student, who gave us an excellent insight into student life during their time there, and even beyond that, as students went on to trade training, university, etc.

During WWII the Schools were made available to the Army as a military hospital. The Schools were re-established after the war, but student numbers fell and around the 1970s the Schools were closed. The site was purchased by the Hills Shire Council, which now maintains it to provide a valuable range of community facilities.

After a tasty lunch at the Bull and Bush Hotel, we next visited the Power House Museum's *Discovery Centre* at Baulkham Hills. Chock-full of exhibits for which there is no space in the Museum's Ultimo facility, we quickly found that an hour was not enough to enjoy the range of interesting and surprising exhibits, and many resolved to return to the Centre in their own time to make a more thorough exploration.

All in all, a most enjoyable and successful outing.

*Graham Lewis*

## ***Can You Help?***

"In an article published in March 2009 you had a story on Lottie Lyell having a Roseville connection.

My father, Francis Albert Boyce, was photographed with Lottie Lyell as a baby for the 1923 movie "An Australian Mother". My father, aged 85, is living in Caloundra Qld.

He lost the actual photo many years ago, and I would love to get a copy for him. You may have readers who can help me."

*Brian Boyce 0754935047*





Ku-ring-gai's State heritage listed house museum, *Tulkiyan* will be open to all comers during the National Trust Heritage Festival. The Friends of Tulkiyan volunteers will run guided tours all day, showcasing the original architecture and furnishing style, maintained through 80 years of occupation by the Donaldson family. The extensive collection of family artefacts illustrates the family's origins, life and times.

**Sunday, 3 April, 2010**

**707 Pacific Hwy, Gordon 2072 (south of shops)**

**The house can only be seen by 1-hour guided tour.**

**Tours will run throughout the day from 10 am.**

**Last tour starts: 3 pm.**

**No bookings taken. No disabled access.**

**Entry: Adult \$10, Conc \$8 - includes refreshments.**

Parking: Pacific Highway, or train to Gordon Station.

For information about visiting Tulkiyan:

friendsoftulkiyan@kmc.nsw.gov.au or 02 9498 3754.

## ***Recent Acquisitions***

Some of the interesting acquisitions this month were:-

\* *'Huguenot Ancestry'* by Noel Curren-Briggs & Royston Gambier reprinted 2001, ISBN 1 86077 173 4 with 150 pages. Concentrates on British research sources and research in France, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland.

\* *'Australian Houses of the Forties & Fifties'* by Peter Cuffley published 2007, ISBN 978 1 74178 389 6 with 200 pages. Mainly black and white illustrations with some colour. Some of the chapters are "The Post-war Housing Boom", "Architects and their Work", "Defining the Styles" and "Renovations and Colour Schemes (with a colour chart).

\* *'The Australian House and Garden in New South Wales – an index of architectural articles, photographs, plans and illustrations in the Australian House and Garden magazines Vol. 1 No.1 (December 1948) to Vol. X11 No.12 (December 1960) by Dr Zeny Edwards February 2010 with 80 pages. Has a list of architects, builders and designers in the index.*

\* *'An illustrated guide to traditional domestic skills - Forgotten Household Crafts'* by John Seymour published 1987, ISBN 0 207 15608 5 with 192 pages. Has sections on kitchen crafts, dairy crafts, laundry crafts, around the home, textile crafts and decorative crafts – if you want some idea of how your ancestors may have lived, check out this book.

**Bruce Robinson**

## ***Congratulations Doug!***

Doug Milne (right), our KHS Treasurer for the past 14 years, was recently presented with the NSW Seniors Week "Achievement Award" for Education and Lifelong Learning by Prof. John Yeo (*photo: Jackie van Bergen*).



## ***Lady Game Drive story***

Whilst on duty in the Historical Society rooms recently, I answered a phone call from a gentleman who was enquiring about Lady Game Drive: is it in the Municipality of Ku-ring-gai, and did I know it?

I informed him that I had lived quite close to it for 53 years (I have since moved) and it ran from Millwood Avenue and the end of Fullers Road in the Willoughby Municipality, to Ryde Road in the Ku-ring-gai Municipality.

He then took me back 50 odd years by asking if I was ever aware of a couple of elderly ladies living in an old shack close to the side of that road around the mid-fifties. I answered that I did remember them but not in a shack, they were just living in the bush near the side of the road, part of the National Park with only small umbrellas for shelter. The weather was quite wet at the time, and they were visible from the bus which ran between Chatswood and West Lindfield. One day one of them hailed the bus to be taken up to West Lindfield shops. The driver was not amused.

Nobody seemed to know who they were, and wondered if they were sisters. From what I remember, they were there for several days - nobody knew why, and I always hoped they were re-housed somewhere.

I have asked some of my former neighbours if they knew of the outcome, but they did not. I also contacted the State Library in case I could look for an article in the former weekly local paper, "The Clarion", but was told they had no record that far back for that paper.

Can anyone throw a little more light on the subject?

Strangely, at the time I was reading a book about Sir Philip Game, Governor of NSW in the 1930s, after whose wife, Lady Game, this road was named. Sir Philip was the Governor who dismissed Premier Jack Lang in 1932. I feel it was fortunate that I answered that phone call, as I was the only one in the room who could have answered the caller's questions, and I was really taken back several years.

**Marie Rumsey**

## ***Quiz Answers (see P. 8 for Questions)***

**See the display cases outside our Research Centre!**

1. c) Killara – Abbotsholme College was in Greengate Rd.  
2. a) Lindfield – Lancaster House was situated in Grosvenor Rd. and later in Wolseley Rd.  
3. c) Turramurra – Highfield College was in Kuringgai Ave.  
4. d) Wahroonga – Eltham College was situated cnr. Burns & Grosvenor Sts.

# FAMILY MATTERS

## **March Family History Meeting**

### *11 am Session*

This was attended by about 40 members when Jenny Joyce presented "The ins and outs of GOOGLE". She covered the basics of searching, filtering techniques, advanced search, gave examples using her own family names, and recommended the book "Google Your Family Tree" by Daniel Lynch. Watch for a further session, as there was too much to cover in one morning.

### *2 pm Meeting*

Jo Harris chaired the afternoon meeting when about 40 were present. On this day in 1788 there were heavy squally southerly winds with thunder, lightning and rain, temperature was 74°F (23°C). The men from the 'Sirius' hauled the net and the ship's company had a meal of fish. Arthur Phillip explored Broken Bay 2-9 March. George Howe, Government printer and ex-convict, published on this day in 1803 the first issue of the weekly Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser.

### *Coming Events*

16-18 Sept. Annual State Conference of the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc. at Inverell.  
*Election of Leader and Committee*

Jo Harris was re-elected Leader of the Family History Group with the Committee for the forthcoming year comprising:

Jenny Joyce  
Beverly Robinson  
Jean Smith  
Elaine Turnidge

*Australian Family Tree Connections* magazine, March issue, available in the rooms, has items in the Computers and Genealogy section about Cyndi's List, Unusual Epitaphs, South African research, hunting Kiwis.

Jo reminded members about publications sent regularly to us by other societies, and that thanks go to Jackie van Bergen for putting many newsletters on the computers.

### *Book Acquisitions*

Who's Who 2000  
Forgotten Household Crafts  
Australian Houses in the 40s and 50s  
The Australian House and Garden in NSW  
Huguenot Ancestry

### *Book Reports*

Oceans of Love - by Melanie Oppenheimer, about WWI nurse Narrelle Hobbes  
Exiled - on Tas. convicts  
Naval Pioneers of Australia  
Potty, Fartwell & Knob - on surnames

*Guest speaker* and member Nola Bramble gave a detailed talk about the life of Eliza Davies, an indomitable and independent woman of the 1800s who was a pioneer educator in Australia and member of Charles Sturt's expedition. Eliza was born in Paisley Scotland in 1821 as the only child of Matthew Arbuckle and Mary Smith, a very hard and unloving

mother, so Eliza was glad when she found good friends in the Baptist Church in Glasgow. She came to Australia when 17 with a Baptist couple, was taken in by a family named Cooper, through whom she met Charles Sturt. She went to Adelaide with the Sturt family and joined Charles' expedition at the end of November 1839 to explore the Murray by boat. They suffered great privations and returned to Adelaide in 110°F heat.

Mrs Sturt arranged a marriage to William Davies, a wealthy dissolute rake, who was very cruel to Eliza.

Ultimately he went to New Zealand and Eliza moved to the Illawarra area of NSW where she set up a school, the first of many she established. She travelled widely in Australia, back to England and Scotland, then to the USA, had audiences with Governors and met many influential people.

Eliza was a personable and adventurous woman. For a single woman in the 1800s to have achieved what Eliza did took a great deal of determination, faith and intelligence. She died aged 67 and is buried in Lexington, Kentucky, USA.

A vote of thanks was given by Angela Lind who presented Nola with the book 'A Lady's Visit to the Goldfields'.

The mystery raffle (The Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser, Vol.1 1803) was won by Valerie Cartwright.

*Based on notes by Stella Green*

## ***Have you ever wondered why they left their homeland?***

I hadn't wondered why my ancestors came to Australia, until one day I typed in the name of the town in London, where my grandfather was born. It was Lambeth, a village which is bordered by the river Thames, just across the river from St. Paul's Cathedral. The road where they lived is still there but one side is a green embankment now, Belvedere Road, Lambeth.

When I read an article about London floods it became clear. It was written in the year they came to Australia and described the state of the houses where the water had come halfway up the walls. Their furniture and clothing was saturated every time the river rose, children became sick and died.

No wonder that out of ten children that my great grandparents had, only four survived to come to Australia.

This article was so graphic, because the man who wrote it, went from house to house. He interviewed the people. He described in detail their utter despair, their constant anxiety and poverty. He even photographed some of them, so that I could see quite clearly the people of my great grandparents time.

To get a greater perspective, of your ancestors lives before Australia, type in the village of their birth and the year they left.

You just may be surprised what is available, and hopefully their employment and history of the region/town, will open up a lot more information to add to their story.

*Beryl Whatson - Wyong Family History Group*

## New on Ancestry.com

Ancestry has recently added the enumerators' books for the 1891 and 1901 NSW Censuses.

These are not the returns filled in by each household, which do not survive, but are just a summary showing the name of the head of the household, how many males and how many females are in the household, and whether anyone is of Aboriginal or Chinese ethnic origins. You will also be able to see where the person lived, although in the country that may only consist of the name of the town.

The greatest value of these censuses is for confirming that a person was living in a certain address at the time the census took place (5 April 1891 or 31 March 1901).

*Jenny Joyce*

## Gordon Gains

"Quite fifteen years ago, when inquiring about the prospect of Gordon for one who even in those days was a strong admirer of the district, we were told that Gordon was to be the Strathfield of the Milson's Point line. To-day there seems to be some likelihood of the rise into prominence which our informant expected. Gordon is now moving fast. The big railway yards will help her into the position her wellwishers would like her to hold. The near future will see great strides made. And no one will be more pleased than ourselves. We look to see growth in every center, and are always delighted to know that men and women are making homes on any of the beautiful locations which center within our Shire. Gordon's gain is yours and ours. We are one people though we live in different ridings. Any favour that falls to the lot of one locality reflects credit on the whole."

from *The Kuringian* April 8, 1911

## Links with history...



Prudence, Luke and Joshua Silver - great, great, great, great, great grandchildren of Richard Porter, who owned Pymble Hill and the PLC area, and built many of the buildings on Pymble Hill. The children were photographed by the headstone of Richard Porter at St Anne's Ryde

## BUILT HERITAGE

### 1 Alison Street, Roseville



No. 1 Alison Street is listed on the NSW Heritage Office website for its architectural and municipal significance. The house was built for Ian Aubrey Wilson Dye and his wife Jean Mabel nee Kemp who had married in 1948. Dye had purchased the land, measuring  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre, from Harry Herrmann, and later bought the adjoining plot, increasing the area of his land by  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre. The street frontage is wide (almost three average blocks), and the house, rectangular with low-pitched roof, is set with the long side parallel to the front boundary. A verandah runs along the entire façade.

Building application records for 1949 of Ku-ring-gai Council show JW Daubney applied for permission to build a brick dwelling for Dye. It appears this application was cancelled (or perhaps withdrawn), but by November 1954 the house was completed. The Dyes named it *Bali Ha'i*. Dye's property was re-subdivided in early 1958 but sold in its entirety to Dr George Jacob Schiller and his wife Patricia of Vaucluse.

Dye was a metallurgist. The firm AW Dye & Co had been established by his father Aubrey in 1914. Assayers, analysts and metallurgists, they had premises on the corner of Elizabeth and Bathurst streets. The Sydney Hallmark Co was officially launched there in 1923. In later years AW Dye was involved in forensic police work and analysis of horse swabs for the NSW Owners and Trainers' Association.

For the first few years after their marriage Dye and his wife Jean lived with his parents and sister Molly at 44 Martin Road, Centennial Park. Most of our readers would remember Molly Dye: an author and journalist, she worked for the *Sunday Telegraph* as 'the household-hints queen' whose column ran from 1954 until her death in 1984.

John Walter Daubney was an architect. Prior to his service during WWII he spent 8 years as senior draftsman with Copeman, Lemont & Keesing 'notable designers of hotels for Tooths in the interwar period'. In 1946 Daubney won £500 in a competition for the Sydney headquarters of Legacy. His design was for a multi-storey building costing £140,000. At the time Daubney was assistant to Lemont & Niblett, and also associated with them as a practising architect. Had he designed Dye's house by himself or in association with Lemont & Niblett? By 1954 the partnership of Lemont, Niblett & Daubney had moved to Crows Nest.

In 1951 Daubney's own house, 9 Dumaresq Street, Gordon, was featured in the *Australian Women's Weekly*. T-shaped in plan, terraces ran along two sides, the kitchen overlooking both. Each of the three bedrooms opened onto one terrace, the combined living-dining room, the other.

*Kathie Rieth*



## Copy for Newsletter

General copy for publication should be lodged with the Editor, Bob Barry (bob\_barry@optusnet.com.au), **as early as possible** but no later than the 7th of the month (except November and December), unless otherwise arranged. Copy lodged before that date **will receive preference**, all things being equal. Copy is to be submitted on the understanding that the Society has editing rights and that readers can reproduce it in whole or part with acknowledgement. Material should preferably be in electronic form.

## Family History Course

Starts Monday 11 April with 8 sessions over 10 weeks, teaching how to use the resources on our computers. Each week a different type of resource is investigated. There will be copious notes included. For further information and booking, contact Jo on 9489 4393.

Total cost including course notes: \$120 and \$150 for non-members.

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to members who have recently joined the Society:-

Judy Allan	Wahroonga
Lorna Buining	Turrumurra
Richard Cannon	Hornsby Heights
Helen Foster	Waitara
Barbara Jones	Mt Kuring-gai
Sue Newlands	St Ives

We hope you find your membership rewarding, and look forward to your participation in our activities.

## Quiz on Schools (answers P. 3)

1. ABBOTSHOLME COLLEGE was situated in?  
a) Roseville b) Lindfield c) Killara d) Gordon
2. LANCASTER HOUSE was situated in?  
a) Lindfield b) Killara c) Gordon d) Pymble
3. HIGHFIELD COLLEGE was situated in?  
a) Wahroonga b) Warrawee c) Turrumurra d) St Ives
4. ELTHAM COLLEGE was situated in?  
a) St Ives b) Pymble c) Lindfield d) Wahroonga

## 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 am to 2 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (except the first Saturday of each month when members have a meeting). It is closed over the Christmas period and on public holidays.

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## Diary Dates

- Sat 2 Apr** **Family History Meeting**  
**11 am** "New resources on the intranet"  
**2 pm General Meeting**  
"Why did your ancestors leave their homeland?"
- Sat 16 Apr** **2 pm Society General Meeting**  
"Australia's Oldest House?"  
Historian Sue Rosen defends her claim that Experiment Farm Cottage dates from the 1790s.
- Sat 7 May** **Family History Meeting**  
**11 am** "Let's talk about Victoria"  
**2 pm General Meeting**  
The research behind the books & CDs: 'The First Title Holders of Land of the 19 Counties of NSW - with reference to Gordon Parish in Cumberland County'. Speaker: Geoff Cannon
- Sat 21 May** **2 pm Society General Meeting**  
Brian Boettcher: **The Battle for Milne Bay**. What really happened during the Japanese attack in 1942.

## Administration

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	Jennifer Harvey	9489 6390
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Family History Leader	Jo Harris	9489 4393
Family History Committee	Jean Smith	9498 4468
	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
	Beverly Robinson	9988 3775
	Elaine Turnidge	9899 2635

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