

KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

(Including *Ku-ring-gai Family History Group*) • Patron: *The Mayor of Ku-ring-gai*

March 2014

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 32 No. 2

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One small step out of the village....

Gordon Mar, our speaker for the January general meeting, is an *ABC*, an *Australian Born Chinese*, one of 8.2% of Sydneysiders who claim Chinese origins. Justifiably proud of his Chinese heritage, Gordon showed his family tree for 27 generations! But he is equally proud to be Australian, with his family's Australian connection back to the late 1800s when his great-grandfather arrived here. Gordon, a local lad, was a primary student at the old Gordon School before going on to Knox. He was a lively speaker, peppering his story with many humorous asides about being Chinese. For example 'how *we* European "Barbarians" all look alike to the Chinese'.

Gordon gave us an insight into the Chinese village, walled for protection against bandits, and populated by kinship members speaking in a dialect much different to that of neighbouring villages. He described how Chinese were brought here as indentured labourers after the cessation of convict transportation in 1840. Then, with the discovery of gold, young single male Chinese were sent at the expense of rich patrons as an investment – the worker being expected to send money back to the village.

Almost all of these immigrants came from the same part of China – from the province of Canton where the British and Portuguese had established the trading ports of Hong Kong and Macao. This is why Chinese food in Australia was always Cantonese, in spite of China having a very wide culinary variety.

As we know, the early influx of Chinese labourers, prepared to work for a low wage and live under the most primitive conditions, upset the white settlers. There was agitation to keep the Chinese off the goldfields, and in 1861 the government was forced to introduce a poll tax of £10. In 1888 this was increased to £100 in an effort to 'stop the boats'. And then the final indignity, the very first act of the new Parliament, *The Restrictive Immigration Act 1901* – the White Australia Policy – aimed directly at the Chinese. This was dismantled by the Menzies government in 1949.

It was possible to avoid the £10 tax by landing in South Australia, where it was not applied. As many as 16 000 landed at Robe S.A., and walked the 500 km to the Victorian goldfields. Many died along the way.

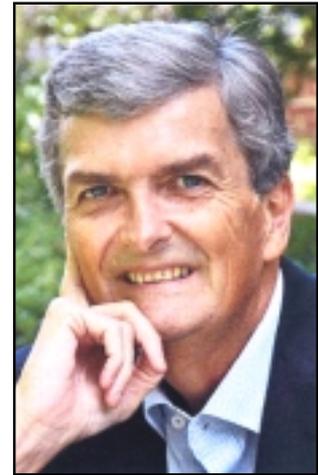
Gordon described how the Mar family came to Australia, retaining their heritage but still integrating into the community as a good Christian family. He spoke of their success as merchants in the Sydney fruit markets but, like many Chinese families, it was education that led to the professional achievements of his generation. But it was Gordon, an accountant, who had to manage the fruit business on his father's retirement, because his brothers were practicing as doctor, dentist and architect.

Altogether a fine talk, sprinkled with humour!

Doug Milne

General Meeting

Saturday 15 March 2.00 pm



Andrew Tink

Andrew Tink: *Air Disaster Canberra.*
The story of the 1940 plane crash that destroyed the first Menzies government.

**Afternoon Tea will be available.
Visitors welcome.**

Family History Meeting

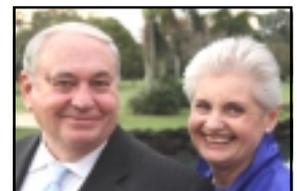
Saturday 1 March

11.00 am Discovering "Old Registers" and other early documents.

2.00 pm **General Meeting followed by: "Transcribing Births, Deaths and Marriages" and research skills required.**

Speakers: **Allan and Joy Murrin.**

Joy has over 20 years' experience as an Accredited Transcription Agent. Together Joy and Allan will demonstrate how to more fully utilise the NSW BDM Index – how to use details and how to search for missing items – and lead us to appreciate that we are living in the best of times for family history research.



**Afternoon Tea will be available.
Visitors welcome.**

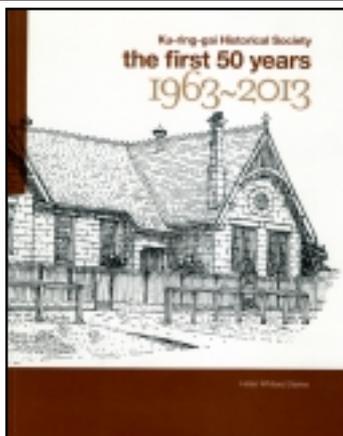
KHS History

Ku-ring-gai Historical Society – the first 50 years written by member **Helen Davies**.

Each membership is entitled to a free copy, which is available from our rooms.

If you would like it posted please send a cheque for \$5.

Extra copies are available at \$20 each.



Computer Resources added or updated

- Added *Bradfield Park RAAF Station* – from the Ku-ring-gai Council – The opening of the memorial October 2006
- Updated *The Pathfinders* – An archive of those Surveyors who assisted in the development of New South Wales since 1788
- Updated *Perfect Pictures* – a major overhaul of our valuable image collection of over 10 200 images, eliminating numerous formatting and linking problems. The task is ongoing.
- Added *Emigrants from Hamburg to Australasia 1850–1879* – this database provides an index to 40 857 passengers departing from Hamburg for ports in Australia and New Zealand between 1850 and 1879. This is an important resource for family historians with an interest in migration from Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Italy and other European countries through the port of Hamburg.

Peter Stehn

Quiz Answers (see p. 8 for Questions)

1. (b) De Burgh – the bridge is one hundred yards long and a hundred feet above the level of the water. Opened 23 February 1901 and named after the engineer.
2. (c) Gaukrodger Bros. In the early days their butcher shop was on the Lane Cove Road at Bannockburn Rd, Pymble.
3. (a) Pymble Hotel. The first weatherboard was called the "Gardeners Arms Hotel".
4. (c) "The Pymble News". Vol. 1. No. 1 was published Thursday 7 February 1901.
5. (b) A racecourse. Quote "the Cup was won by Mr. Richard Porter's grey mare, other winnings going to Mr. Robt. Pymble's bay horse "Tommy". Occasionally the main road between Fiddens' Wharf Road and Traveller's Rest (Carter's Hotel) was used as a racecourse, but almost invariably races were held at Cook's Flat, a piece of fairly level land a short distance south of Fiddens' Wharf Rd and a mile from Gordon Road."
Question content from "THE PYMBLE NEWS" March 7 and March 21 1901.
Further information may be found in copies of "THE PYMBLE NEWS" at the KHS Research Centre.

Special Interest Groups

Mac Users Group: iPad afternoon

Mac Users Group: Genealogy Programs

Our next meeting will be held on **Monday 3 March at 2.00 pm** in the Research Centre.

Do you have a Mac and can't decide what program to use? Do you have a program but feel you aren't getting the most out of it. This meeting will focus on Mac genealogy programs and iPad genealogy and research apps.

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)

No need to book, just turn up. Bring your laptop or iPad if you like.

Jackie van Bergen

German Research SIG

See next page for report on last meeting.

The next meeting of the German SIG is planned for **Monday 14 April 2014 at 1.30 pm** in our rooms.

Peter Stehn

Irish Research SIG

On Friday 8 February a small group of descendants met at the rooms to discuss the future format of our meetings. A decision was made to embark on a learning program of "Basic Irish" so that we all have a common base for future discussions and research.

The first topic to be discussed at our next meeting on **Friday 14 March at 1.30 pm** will be: Irish History as it relates to Genealogy.

We meet on the second Friday of each month. All welcome.

Ric Hall

Technology SIG

Our next meeting will be held on the third **Thursday, 20 March at 1.30 pm**. All are welcome to come along with tech questions and problems

Jill Ball

New Zealand SIG

There is some interest in starting a new SIG for New Zealand in the near future.

We need to know how many are interested. If you are interested, please phone Jo Harris 9489 4393 or Morrison Hammond 9449 7447.

Family History Course 2014

Expressions of interest are sought for an 8 week Family History Course, to be held later this year, probably starting in May. The course will cover the use of books and resources on the intranet and internet. There will be a lecture each week followed by an assignment.

For further information please ring **Jo Harris 9489 4393**.

German Research SIG report

An enthusiastic and spirited meeting of the German Special Interest Group was held on Monday 10 February with 13 members attending. Some of the discussion threads from the meeting were:

The German/English Dictionary, kindly donated by Les, was shown to members and discussed. This is an excellent research resource. Many thanks again Les.

Tony described two books he recently acquired, which provided good background:

Bismarck: A Life, by Jonathan Steinberg; and

An Uncommon Woman – The Empress Frederick (daughter of Queen Victoria) by Hanna Pakula.

Leonie described and passed around two “Family Books” (Familien) – an important and valuable resource if you can locate those relating to your family.

The availability of German maps was raised again. Useful map sites from previous discussions (kindly resurrected by Tony) were:

<http://www.feefhs.org/maplibrary.html> and <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wggerman/map/index.htm> – both good resources.

However, Jan and Tony Spargo took the “prize” of the meeting with their animated and entertaining description of their initiative to tap into the memories and experiences of the residents of retirement homes, particularly in the North Turrumurra area. Both Jan and Tony were modest in their admission that luck played a large part in their success in locating contacts with roots from the same geographic area of Germany. We are all positively green with envy. Please see Jan and Tony for hints on how to emulate their unusual, but extremely effective, research techniques. **See p. 6 story.**

Several members had questions about German emigration and shipping to Australia. The application *Emigrants from Hamburg to Australasia 1850–1879*, published by the Queensland Family History Society, was proposed as a possible solution to the deficiency. Members unanimously endorsed the requirement. Subsequent to the SIG meeting: on Monday evening the proposal to purchase this resource was put to the KHS Committee, who approved the purchase.

The application was purchased, delivered by post on Thursday 13 February, to be installed on our Intranet. The application contains full details of 40 857 emigrants from many European countries (not just Germany) plus details of the ships and the voyage. The application is relatively easy to use.

The resource will be demonstrated and discussed at the next German SIG meeting.

The next meeting of the German SIG is planned for **Monday 14 April 2014 at 1.30 pm** in our rooms.

Peter Stehn

Have you lost a plate?

Three very nice plates have been left at the Society after Afternoon Tea.

If they are yours, please ask the Room Volunteer to retrieve them from the Hall cupboard. If they are not collected we will put them into use.

Old characters of the Hawkesbury

Long time Brooklyn resident Bob Davis, author of *Growing up in Asquith*, entertained a packed November general meeting with tales of characters who had lived on the Hawkesbury River. Few of us would have imagined that there are as many as seventeen men living in caves and shanties in the bush behind Brooklyn, people who, for the most part, had dropped out of society.

Bob, a marvellous raconteur, sprinkled his stories with appropriate actions, painting a picture of the way his characters spoke and behaved rather than how they dressed. There were too many stories to report here. However, a few stuck in my mind.

Trevor Brown had the longest-lasting private business in Hornsby Shire – Brown’s Boatshed. Together with his deckhand Fred Tuckerman they operated *Surprise*, the last cargo boat servicing farms on the river. Bob told a story about one of the many floods the river had endured, a flood so high that two coffins were washed out of the Ebenezer cemetery. Trevor and Fred found them floating, so tied them to a tree. The police came and collected them but as Trevor said “We never got our rope back.”

George lived in a corrugated iron hut near the little Wondabyne railway station. One day he felt that he should lock up his hut, so he went to Hornsby to buy a lock and chain, then, worried that he might lose the key, he bought a combination lock instead. But worried that he might forget the combination, he made it 321! Going home on the train he fell asleep and thinking that he might have repeated the combination “321” in his sleep, he returned the lock and chain and got his money back. He used to go to his ‘Winter Residence’ at Oberon doing odd jobs for the local priest. One Friday the priest called him in for lunch, ‘I have some nice potato pies.’ George cut one. “Father you’ve been tricked, these are **meat** pies!” “Ah well now I’ll just say a little prayer to Him up there and it will be alright.” George reported that the Friday pies were nice.

Bob told of Ollie and her husband Reg who repaired wharves along the river. When she was dying in a nursing home it was suggested that Reg would be up there waiting. ‘That’s no good – I’d just get settled in and Reg would want something!’

And then there was Sid and Aunty Shirl. Sid got a young lad, an art student, to excavate the clay under their house. By the time Sid returned the student had carved a nude woman in the clay. Unfortunately Shirl saw it and made Sid break it up. “Before I even got my camera out too”.

There was the story of *Jeffery*, an old lady’s dog. But unfortunately I haven’t space here to repeat it or any more of Bob’s wonderful stories. As they say, a good story is in the telling, and I could never do justice to Bob Davis’ tales – he is a master storyteller and a stand-up comic. In all it was a very pleasant last meeting for 2013, and now we are waiting for Bob to write it all down.

Doug Milne

Visit by a Dux of Gordon Public School



Recently Warren Dent, who was Dux of GPS in 1955, visited the KHS Research Centre. Warren has lived in the USA for the last 45 years. He was impressed with the resources available to members and visitors. He enjoyed seeing the Museum and has since sent many class photos to add to our collection. He has written many Australian historical books, and the book in progress concerns the Jamison Family and Warren's convict ancestor who was assigned to Sir John Jamison at "Regentville".

Bradfield portrait

Mr James G Bradfield, (pictured below) came to the rooms to install a plaque on the portrait of his father, which hangs in the hall near the Society's rooms. Many people had enquired whose portrait it was, so now it is clearly identified as that of an illustrious resident of Ku-ring-gai.



DR K.N.E. (BILL) BRADFIELD OBE,
D.Phil (Oxford), B.Sc, B.Eng (Sydney), FIE Aust.
25 December 1910 - 12 June 2006
Gordon Public School 1916 - 1921
NSW Rhodes Scholar 1935
Benefactor of the Gordon Public School
Headmasters Office Museum

Jo Harris

Recent Acquisitions

The following is a selection of acquisitions. Please check the fireplace shelf. If they have already been sorted into the reference library you will need to use the sort code to locate the book that interests you: e.g. CEM/2315 – filed under Cemeteries and then 2315, the postcode of the cemetery. If a locality interests you, then obtain the postcode and search the catalogue: e.g. 2031/CUR – in this case it is filed under Sydney Places. It is also wise to check nearby postcodes in your search as only the postcode most suited to the book is allocated.

Burial records from Logan Funerals of Moree 1900–2010 was published by the Central Coast Family History Society Inc in 2011; 276 pages but no illustrations. There is a gap in the records from c.1979 to c.1999. CEM/MOR

The war at home, Australia 1939–1949 by Daniel Connell was published for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in 1988 and has 144 pages with some black and white illustrations – ISBN 0 642 53054 8. Material for the book comes from interviews and letters collected for an ABC Radio series in 1986. It is not an official history but a collection of people's experiences with comments that would not appear in official histories. There is not a subject index so I looked in the Contents and was able to find some interesting snippets on the impact of rationing. This book was donated by Shirley Luttrell. MIL/CON

Narrabri on the Namoi, Courthouse Death Records was published by the Central Coast Family History Society Inc in 2009 and has over 200 pages with a number of black and white photographs – ISBN 978 0 9751184 4 3. The book includes Narrabri Courthouse records 1856–1975 and Wee Waa Court House records for 1970–1974. The postcode for Narrabri is 2390 and Wee Waa is 2388. Please check the catalogue to locate the book.

New Zealand Shipwrecks 1795–1970 by C.W.N. Ingram. This fourth edition was published in 1972, ISBN 0 589 00715 7 and has 448 pages with a number of black and white photographs. The wrecks have been arranged in date order with an alphabetical index provided. OVS/NZ. This book is currently going through the acquisition process, please check the catalogue.

Officers died in the Great War 1914–1919 New Enlarged Edition Including Indian Army. Part 1 is Old and New Armies, Part 2 is Territorial Force and Part 3 is Indian Army 1914–1920. Appendices 1 and 2 are additions to the original publication. This edition was published in 1988 by J. B. Hayward & Son ISBN 0 903754 40 1. This book is not very user friendly (you appear to need to know the unit the officer served with and then do some searching). It does not cover the Australian involvement. This book is currently going through the acquisition process, so check the catalogue.

Australia's First Parliament, Parliament House New South Wales was first published 1987 by the Parliament of New South Wales and edited by Maisy Stapleton – ISBN 0 7305 3183 X. The book has 176 pages with an impressive array of colour photographs and outlines the history of Parliament House and the legislative functions it houses. It tells of changing parliamentary practices and functions. There is a chapter on the parliamentary collections of memorabilia accumulated over the years and a chapter on the works of art acquired in recent times.

Bruce Robinson

Ku-ring-gai Heroes of World War I ***Sister Katherine Minnie Donaldson*** ***(née Porter), RRC***

Katherine Minnie Porter was one of the first nurses in NSW to volunteer for the Australian Army Nursing Service. Just four days after her enlistment on 24 November 1914 she embarked from Sydney with the 2nd Australian General Hospital (2AGH) for Egypt, arriving in time for the allied preparations for the invasion of Gallipoli. Nurse Porter was detached for duty with the British hospital ship *Gascon* on 16 April as part of the support fleet for the Gallipoli campaign. The *Gascon* held off Anzac Cove at 7 am on 25 April, the day of the Anzac pre-dawn landing, in readiness for the expected casualties. Within hours it was steaming off to Lemnos with 548 casualties from the action. Nurse Porter remained with the *Gascon* for its many trips from Anzac Cove and Cape Helles to various medical facility destinations, including Malta, Mudros and Alexandria. She was promoted to nursing sister on 1 December 1915. Following the Gallipoli campaign she was detached from 2AGH to serve with the 14th British General Hospital in Boulogne, France from 13 June 1916, but the following month she obtained leave to England where, on 8 July, she was married. The writer is unsure just when Katherine first met her future husband, Captain John Donaldson, possibly in Egypt in the months before or after the Gallipoli campaign. Whenever it was, by 1 April 1916 they had a very special relationship, and possibly were even engaged to be married, because by then John had made a will bequeathing to Katherine all his money in his Anglo Egypt bank account in Cairo. Tragically, soon after their marriage, Captain Donaldson, of *Woodlands* in Kintore Street, Wahroonga, was wounded in action at Pozieres on 26 July. He died two weeks later. A year earlier, his brother Charles had been killed in action at Gallipoli. A third brother, George, was wounded but survived the war, and was decorated with a Military Cross. In a sad letter from their mother, Grace, to the authorities when asking for a memorial scroll, she said, 'My three sons went; only one came back, and he was five times wounded.'

The widow Katherine Donaldson had her service terminated and returned to Australia later that year. However on 11 July 1917 she re-enlisted in Sydney and on 3 September 1917 returned to the war effort to serve with the 14th Australian General Hospital at Abbassia outside Cairo.

Following the armistice Sister Donaldson departed Suez for Australia on 5 February 1919. Later that year her 'conspicuous and valuable service' was officially recognized when she was awarded the Royal Red Cross 2nd Class, a highly esteemed decoration.

In about 1925 the widow Katherine married her brother-in-law, George Donaldson MC of Wahroonga. It must have been one of the few moments of joy for George's mother, Grace, who had lost a husband and two sons in three successive years.

Katherine Donaldson RRC is commemorated on the Wahroonga War Memorial.

David Wilkins

WWI Researchers and Writers

The WWI researchers and writers group meets every 4th Saturday from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm. At least two of the subcommittee are there each month to help.

The next meetings is on **Saturday 22 March** 2014. If you would like to join us researching and/or writing, please contact Kathie Rieth on frithie@netdata.com.au

We have some great resources and an eager team to help you too.

KHS Seniors Week Program 2014

In the Meeting Room. Morning tea provided.

Booking essential. FREE.

WWI Memories and Mementos

Monday 10 March 10.30 am – 1.00 pm

As we near the centenary of the commencement of WWI, come along and share your family WWI stories. Bring and show photos and other mementos of WWI. Learn where all the memorials are in Ku-ring-gai and how to find out more about your family member's involvement in WWI.

Sharing your story in small bites: write a blog

Wednesday 12 March 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Learn from one of Australia's foremost bloggers, Geniaus (aka **Jill Ball**), how you can use blogs to preserve your stories, record your travels, share your recipes, or as a journal. Examples of different types of blogs will be provided.

Stories of early Ku-ring-gai

Friday 14 March 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Jo Harris will take you on a journey through the development of Ku-ring-gai, from Captain Arthur Phillip's overland expedition, to the timber-getters, then the orchardists; to land grants in 1816 for the first school and church at Gordon; and then agitation by residents resulting in the North Shore railway line.

How to Research your Family History

Monday 17 March 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Vice-President of Ku-ring-gai Historical Society and leader of the family history group, local identity **Jo Harris** will give a highly entertaining presentation on getting started with researching your family history.

How to Research your House

Tuesday 18 March 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Talk by members of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society's Built Heritage team covering the basics of how to research the history of a house. This will be followed by a discussion over morning tea, with the opportunity to seek assistance from volunteers of the team.

Free Websites for Genealogy and History

Wednesday 19 March 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Interested in delving into the past, locating your ancestors and finding family stories? In this presentation, genealogist **Jill Ball** will share details of her favourite free genealogy websites as well as a few general sites that will help researchers locate their ancestors and organise the information they find about them.

FAMILY MATTERS

February Family History Meeting

11.00 am Session

Jo Harris opened the first meeting in the Research Centre for 2014 and welcomed the 17 attendees for the session "Help with my Holiday Brick Walls". With Jo on her laptop, the screen down, holiday brick wall questions were asked, and led to a most successful morning of interesting discussion and guidance, so 2014 was off to a good start. Towards the end of the session Jo showed the "Biographical Database of Australia" and later Angela and some attendees went to the Library to see Parish Records.

2.00 pm Session

Jo Harris opened the session in the Meeting Room, welcomed the 45+ attendees, including members, new members, 6 visitors, and some members of "The Arthur Phillip Chapter of the First Fleeters". A special welcome to Michael Flynn, today's Guest Speaker, and to Jenny Joyce after her recent spell in hospital.

Jo reminded all to check the SIG groups as per the Newsletter (Leonie Stumbaum can assist with German translations).

Have you seen the empty glass cases sitting in the hallway? – Jo advised that one is for Family History and asked for a volunteer to organise displays for the cabinet – please consider this special request.

New or interesting websites include:

- Genuki – Counties of England, Wales and Scotland prior to 1974 Boundary Changes www.genuki.org.uk/big/Britain.html
- Jamaican Family Search <http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/>
- Jewish Surnames explained http://www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2014/01/08/ashkenazi_names_the_etymology_of_the_most_common_jewish_surnames.html
- Discover the origin of local placenames from Northern Ireland www.placenamesni.org/index.php
- UK Placename Finder www.digital-documents.co.uk/archi/placename.htm

It was suggested to book accommodation for the September Family History Conference to be held at Fairy Meadow, Illawarra even though Conference details tba.

A reminder re the many publications sent regularly to the Society – catch up with the latest *Family Tree Connections* each month. Jo thanked all who help with Family History Group, the FHG Committee, Jill Nicholson and her catering team and the writer of this report and closed the meeting. Lucky Door Prizes were won by Marie Rumsey who chose *The Earth Abideth Forever 1851–1888*, a History of Australia by Manning Clark, and Carol Earl chose *North Shore Sydney – from 1788 to Today* by Les G Thorne.

Jo introduced Michael Flynn, our Guest Speaker, who lives in Sydney, has a BA from the University of NSW and an MA from The University of Sydney. Michael has worked as a historical researcher and writer since 1985 and spent four years compiling *The Second Fleet*. Seven of his ancestors were convicts transported to New South Wales prior to 1836 – Jo asked if anyone attending had more convicts, and Carol Earl had nine. Years ago when a similar question

was asked of the group, Gwen Knox had 10 (I think), someone said "she was greedy", that someone was jealous as they had none! Michael spoke about "Researching the people of the First and Second Fleets" and more.

Points from Michael's very interesting talk – Michael was 20 when his grandfather died in 1979. Family members were farm labourers, Church of England Ministers and a mix of religions – one a convict. Paddy Flynn stole a loaf of bread but actually was an assisted immigrant. Six convicts were on his mother's side; some arrived in 1818 on the *Scoutamore*. Michael researched each trial, double-checking information in 1989–1990 for the *Second Fleet* and in 2010 began revising it – lots of notes and sources to be included, expects there will be 3 volumes, footnotes will be on a future website. He plans to take time off later in 2014 to finish the biographies to be included. Michael has also researched Arthur Phillip – August 2014 is the 200th year of his death in 1814 – and found his will at Kew showing the Coat of Arms. Mystery of which side of the now Circular Quay did Phillip plant the flag on 26 January 1788; Michael believes that it would have been George Street side, just behind Cadmans Cottage. Many questions were asked, and Richard Facer thanked Michael for his most interesting address and presented him with the book *Almost Like Home* in a KHS bag. These special KHS bags are available at meetings and during opening hours in the Research Centre.

Based on notes by Elaine Turnidge

German Family History Research Some fortunate coincidences

Since Jan and I started to investigate our family history several years ago, we have been trying to find out more about her German great-grandfather, Wilhelm Sauerbier, without a great deal of success.

Wilhelm, a master baker, arrived in Melbourne from Hamburg in 1853 on the *Wilhelmsburg*. He travelled to Sydney shortly afterwards and set up shop in the city, his bakery being at various times in George Street, Park Lane, and Margaret Lane off Yurong Street. He married Annie Catherine Schaffel in Scots Church, Sydney in 1858. The ceremony was conducted by Rev John Dunmore Lang under Lutheran rites.

In the 1840s to 1860s, five or more Sauerbier men immigrated to Australia, some accompanied by wives and children. Most, if not all these men were bakers, and besides Wilhelm, there are records of three others with bakeries in the city of Sydney, at least until the 1880s. Several of these Sauerbier immigrants later moved to Adelaide, and gave rise to many descendants in South Australia. One of these descendants, because of the anti-German sentiment during World War 1, changed his name to Aberfoyle after the place in Scotland where his father had sojourned for a time after leaving Germany, before coming to Australia. The Adelaide suburb of Aberfoyle Park is named after him.

It seems apparent that all these people were related somehow. To back this up there is a very large family bible which contains only one written note concerning the death of an August Sauerbier shortly after his birth in 1874. This

BUILT HERITAGE

The Sphinx, North Turramurra

individual was the child of one of the other Sauerbiers mentioned above, but we have not yet been able to establish the relationship of his father to Wilhelm. That Jan's father was in possession of this bible means that these families must be connected.

The first hurdle was to find out more about Wilhelm's origins. His marriage certificate stated that he was born in Darmstadt, his father's name was "G", and his mother's name Dorothea. From the German Special Interest Group (SIG) we found out that one could view Address Books in the Darmstadt University website. However, we found that there appeared to be no-one of the name of Sauerbier living in the city of Darmstadt between 1820 and 1860. We then realised that Wilhelm had simply recorded the State in which he was born, so we still needed to find out the town or village. The only clue was that all of the other Sauerbier immigrants had been born in the town of Butzbach in Hessen-Darmstadt, but we did not know how to investigate further. At this stage Margaret Gribbin and Leonie Stumbaum offered to help us to further our search. Margaret, with her well-known researching skills, found, in the Hessen-Darmstadt Archives, a list of documents from the early 1800s referring to "Sauerbier" in some 20 instances, as well as other names which we recognised as being connected with this family. Leonie then translated the basis of the documents, which covered such matters as the distribution of deceased estates, and registrations of marriages, giving names of parents of the parties, which was very informative.

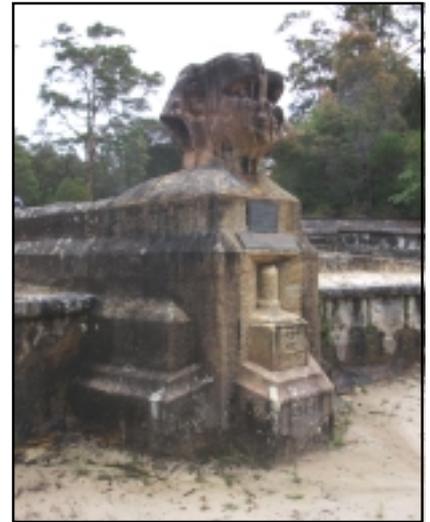
At this point, Jan happened to be talking about this to a friend of ours from one of the retirement villages along Bobbin Head Road and wondered if, amongst all the skills and life experiences of many of the retirees, there may be some of German origin. Sure enough, our friend knew a German lady, whom she would speak to about our family search. We provided a copy of the list of documents from the archives mentioned, and when this lady (we shall call her "Eva") saw the list she became very excited. Not only was she herself born in the town of Butzbach, but she was familiar with the family Sauerbier and many of the other families mentioned.

Eva still has relatives in Butzbach, so she contacted her brother there to see if he knew anyone interested in family history who could help us. He, in turn, made contact with an acquaintance of his cousin, a lady who works in the archives at the Butzbach city museum. What is more, he found that this lady is married to a Sauerbier! Very shortly an email arrived from Germany with an attached copy of a page from the Butzbach Family Book, confirming our suspicion that Wilhelm was born there, and giving us all we needed to know about him, his parents, and siblings! Also noted was the fact that he had migrated to Australia and his date of departure.

Even with all this information, we still do not know how Wilhelm is related to the other Sauerbier immigrants. Tantalisingly, parts of other family entries on the page we received show details of the emigration of several other members of the clan. So, still more to be discovered, but we have made a big and very lucky advance with these recent items of information.

Tony Spargo

If I said to most people that I was going to visit the Sphinx this morning they would think I'd completely gone round the bend. But I can. I can drive along Bobbin Head Road, turn right just after the toll booth into Ku-ring-gai Chase and there I am. Our very own, very special Sphinx!



News of its being built had spread as far as Tasmania – in June 1924, the Launceston Examiner reported: "At the Lady Davidson Home for TB soldier patients at Turramurra, near Sydney, Mr WT Shirley... a stonemason before he went to the war, is carving out of a huge rock a model of the Great Sphinx at Giza, in Egypt."

William Thomas Shirley, aged 39, had enlisted in January 1916 and left Sydney in early May with the 13th Infantry Battalion for the Western Front. By the end of April 1917 he had been evacuated to hospital in England suffering from pleurisy. Assessed as medically unfit, he returned to Australia in August 1917 and was discharged from the AIF. In early 1924 he was admitted to Lady Davidson Home suffering from TB. Restless at the enforced inactivity it was suggested to him by Dr FR Featherstone, Medical Superintendent, that something could be made of an outcrop of rock near the hospital grounds.

"To Shirley the suggestion was a blessing and led to his taking upon himself a task which must stand out as one of the most notable feats ever inspired and accomplished by a sick Digger. For about two years, his daily labors limited by his ill-health, Shirley toiled masterfully on the rough stone, until, at last he had completed a perfect replica, built to a one-eighth scale, of the Great Sphinx of Egypt. The nature of the rock formation made the work extremely difficult, yet, undaunted, and with the patience of a hundred Jobs, he wielded his dexterous tools... on August 27, 1929, three years after completing his handiwork, Shirley died. The "Sphinx" was then handed over by the Kuring-gai Chase Trustees to the charge of the TB Sailors and Soldiers' Association of New South Wales, which organisation spared no effort in attending to the frontal aspect. The simple inscription *To my glorious comrades of the AIF* which appears on the front base of the Sphinx, reflects his modest character and the sincerity of his code of comradeship."

The Sphinx was unveiled by the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Philip Wilcott Game, on Sunday 3 May 1931. You can read more on Shirley in the excellent article by KHS member Jenny Joyce, *The Myth of the Sphinx*, published in the KHS Newsletter of April 2008.

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 15th of the month (except November and December), unless otherwise arranged. Copy is accepted on the basis that the Society has editing rights and that readers can reproduce it in whole or in part with acknowledgement. Material should be in electronic form if possible.

New Members

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

Charmain Boyakovsky	Pymble
Laurel Cameron	Turrumurra
Lyn Payne	St Kilda East, Vic

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

Quiz (Answers p. 2)

- Which bridge, opened in 1901, was described as an American undercrust built at a cost of 4000 pounds?
a) Fuller's? b) De Burgh? c) Lovers Jump? d) Rosebery Rd suspension bridge?
- Pymble Butchery, Est.1893, Telephone 101 Wahroonga and delivering to all parts of the district was owned by?
a) Savage? b) Hammonds? c) Gaukrodger Bros? d) Elliotts?
- In 1901 this advertisement appeared: "A Newly-erected Modern Residence, Comfortable Accommodation. Only five minutes from the Station. Terms on application to Mrs MULVEY Proprietress". This establishment was?
a) Pymble Hotel? b) Hazeldeane boarding house? c) Green Gate Hotel? d) Cooinoo boarding house?
- The subscription for a local newspaper in 1901 was "One shilling for six months – Sixpence per quarter, or one penny per copy, payable in advance". The publication was?
a) North Shore Times? b) The Kuringian? c) The Pymble News? d) The Historian?
- Reported in 1901: 'Only once was Pymble's Paddock used as a ?'
a) Sunday School Picnic Ground? b) Racecourse? c) Outdoor Church Service? d) Cricket ground?

Jo Harris

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 10.00 am to 2.00 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (except the 1st 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 1 Mar Family History Meeting**
11.00 am Discovering "Old Registers" and other early documents.
2.00 pm General Meeting followed by Allan and Joy Murrin Transcribing Births, Deaths and Marriages and research skills required.
- Sat 15 Mar 2.00 pm Society General Meeting**
Andrew Tink: Air Disaster Canberra. The story of the 1940 plane crash that destroyed the first Menzies government.
- Sat 5 April Family History Meeting**
11.00 am WWI Research
2.00 pm General Meeting followed by Members' stories of their World War I non-Ku-ring-gai ancestors.
- Sat 12 April Note change of date for Easter**
2.00 pm Society General Meeting
Andrew Deasey: Australia and the Boer War. The history and myths of our first national war, in which 16 000 Australians served.

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