

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
The NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc.

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MARCH 2017 NEWSLETTER VOL. 35 NO. 2

SATURDAY MARCH 4

FAMILY HISTORY MEETING
11.00AM WORKSHOP

Using the LPI website.

Presenter: Lorna Watt

Lorna will be demonstrating use of the *Land and Property Information* website.

NSW Land and Property Information (LPI), is a division of the Office of Finance and Services, it's the key provider of land information services in New South Wales.

NSW government land management has a long history dating back to the earliest days of the colony - from 1788 to the present.

2.00PM FAMILY HISTORY MEETING followed by

Can the Royal Australian Historical Society Collections Help Your Research? presented by Donna Newton, DipLibInf., Royal Historical Society Librarian.

The C.H.Bertie & Hugh Wright Memorial Library contains a valuable research collection of more than 60,000 items on Australian history. The collection includes publications, photographs, manuscripts, press clippings, ephemera, maps, journals, newsletters of our affiliated and other societies, a complete set of the Society's Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, as well as Sands Directories and the NSW Statistical Register.

Collections are on First Floor, History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Visitors Welcome

Afternoon tea will be available.

SATURDAY MARCH 18

2.00PM GENERAL MEETING,
followed by

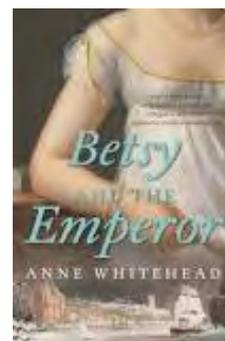
Napoleon Bonaparte and a House in Wahroonga - The Intriguing Link:

Betsy and the Emperor

Subtitled "The True Story of Napoleon, A Pretty Girl, a Regency Rake and an Australian Colonial Misadventure."

Presenter: Dr Anne Whitehead

Author Dr Anne Whitehead's biography of Betsy Balcombe covers the family's connections with St. Helena during the time of Napoleon's exile there, and their later lives in Australia. A surprise guest with Balcombe connections to The Briars at Wahroonga is expected.



Dr Whitehead was awarded an Australia Council Literature Board Fellowship for the book which became *Betsy and the Emperor*. In 2012 she was awarded a NSW State Library Honorary Fellowship by the Library Council of New South Wales for research on this project.

Visitors Welcome

Afternoon tea will be available

FIRST GENERAL MEETING FOR 2017

A Narrative History 1901 - 2001



Dr Andrew Tink, a visiting fellow at Macquarie University Law School, talked about the major events for the first century of Federation based on his fourth book: *Australia, 1901 - 2001: A Narrative History*.

I have read Andrew's book, and having lived for 70% of this period, I found that it not only refreshed my memory of events but also gave me snippets of new information - an excellent read. Of course in the time we give our speakers, Andrew could barely summarise his book, as indeed the book in turn summarises the first century of federation.

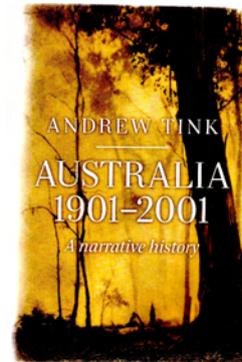
Andrew detailed how the book was commissioned by New South Publishing (UNSW), and their requirements. He outlined how he decided what to include and what had to go because of space, how he tackled the strict writing regime demanded by the time limit and of his dependence on Trove for access to on-line newspapers.

Andrew then went on to tell how Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* may well have influenced Prime Minister Barton to fulfill his promise to extend the vote to women, to Cathy Freeman lighting the cauldron at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, with many more stories in between: How Sir Frank Packer wanted his Channel 9 to be first on television - a studio was hastily constructed and Bruce Gyngell, appeared "squeezed into little more than a broom cupboard", the first Vietnamese refugee, Lam Binh, who sailed to Darwin using only a school atlas and, of course, Mabo with all its subsequent implications. He told of his decision to include either the Azaria Chamberlain story or the Port Arthur massacre - Andrew finally chose the latter because it led to important changes to our gun laws.

Whilst most chapters covered a decade or so, only one chapter was devoted to just one special year, 1942 - *Australia's Darkest Year*

with the Japanese push down the Malay peninsula, the fall of Singapore and the internment of 15,000 Australian troops, Curtin looking to the US rather than the UK for protection, the bombing of Darwin, the threat of invasion in the north and the midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour. [Refer to February Newsletter for details of the attack.] But then the year ended on a better note with the Japanese defeat on the Kokoda Trail and the 9th Division's key role in running Rommel out of North Africa.

There were so many enticing tit bits in Andrew's talk, leaving many listeners to put this, his fourth history book, on their 'must read' list for 2017.



Doug Milne.

AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD 2017

Each year Ku-ring-gai Council runs an Australia Day ceremony at Bicentennial Park, in which they give a number of awards to recognise the work of the unsung heroes of our community and then invest many new Citizens of Australia.

The ceremony started with a welcome by the Mayor, followed by a talk by the Australia Day Ambassador, Dr Cindy Pan, on the immigration experiences of her parents' families. The awards were then announced.

This year the award for "Outstanding service to the Ku-ring-gai Community by a Group" was awarded to the World War I Writers' Group from the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society. Kathie Rieth and David Wilkins accepted the award on behalf of the writers' group. The award consists of a certificate and a mini-esky full of Australian goodies. Congratulations to all who contributed to make this project such a success.

After the awards were announced the Citizenship Ceremony took place, and a large number of Ku-ring-gai residents became new

Australians. The day then continued with entertainment, displays and stalls.

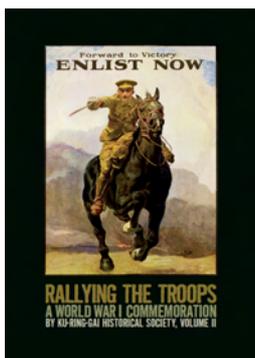


Award Recipients. Kathie and David on the right



The citation reads " for Outstanding Service to the Ku-ring-gai Community (Group)"

RALLYING THE TROOPS



The books may be purchased at the following prices:

Volume I: \$40

Volume II: \$35 (\$30 if Volume I already purchased)

Both Volumes I & II: \$70

P&P within Australia is: 1 book \$15; 2 books \$20; 3 books \$20.

SENIORS' WEEK ACTIVITIES

War Memorabilia

The World War I Writers Group is hosting a free Seniors "Show and Tell" on Saturday 11 March 1.30pm to 4.30pm in Meeting Room No 1 in the Old Gordon School.



Christine Yeats, Senior Vice President of the Royal Australian Historical Society will talk about the care of memorabilia and what types of memorabilia various archives will accept. If there is time, Ms Yeats has offered to advise on particular items.

Book early, preference for inspection of items will be given in order of booking.

Contact:

Kathie Rieth at frithie@netdata.com.au , or 0427 214 827, KHS on 9499 4568. Afternoon tea will be served.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

John Cran, Gordon.

Alison Nowland, Killara.

Carmen Stewart, Lindfield.

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Congratulations to Susan Lesley Nurse, OAM, for service to the Uniting Church.

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Family History Meeting – 4th February 2017

11.00am Session

Lorraine Henshaw opened the meeting and welcomed all, with a special welcome to Peter Stehn, who presented the Intranet Workshop. Peter indicated that the original Intranet was built in 2008 and is no longer supported by Microsoft. The new Intranet is edited by Expression Web 4 (free from Microsoft) and should remain compatible, for the immediate future. It is relatively easy to use, and is also used for building and maintaining our KUPEDIA and the draft Gordon School History application. There are more than 970 KHS resources, only accessible via a KHS computer. There were 32+ members present

who shall have much to search when in the Research Centre. Thank you Peter for your detailed presentation.

Lorraine indicated that there have been more resources added to the Biographical Data Base. Jo Harris told us about researching an 1852 family named "See" with wife and four children, which has been the most difficult to research.

2.00pm Session

Lorraine Henshaw opened the meeting and welcomed members, new members and visitors. Apologies as in the Attendance Book. Special Dates for 4th February: 1938 – the release of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (the first full length animated movie); 1961 – Sputnik 7 was launched into Earth Orbit; 1902 – birth of Charles Lindbergh, American pilot; 1923 – birth of James Dibble, ABC newsreader and Australian journalist; 1894 – death of Adolphe Sax, the Belgian instrument maker who invented the Saxophone.

Lorraine invited reports of books, visits etc. to be given. Jo Harris showed the book "Panorama"; Shirley Morley visited the Sydney Museum.

Lorraine gave a special welcome to Nathan Tilbury, the Guest Speaker, who spoke about his book "Man made the Cities, but God made the Bush."

Lorraine introduced Nathan Tilbury who has been a Hornsby Shire Councillor since 2012. He was born in Hornsby and grew up in Berowra. In his mid-20s, he left the area to reside in South America, returning in 2005. Nathan lives in Berowra Heights with his partner and two young daughters where they enjoy the unique bushland, proximity to the city, a strong sense of community and sense of safety.

He was part of the original committee responsible for delivering the Hornsby Kuring-gai Women's Shelter (HKWS), which opened in January 2015, and is currently on the Board as Chairman of the HKWS Fundraising Committee.

He is VP of Hornsby Historical Society and his first book was the "History of Berowra Cricket Club", soon to celebrate its Centenary.

Nathan found TROVE an excellent resource for his research. The name Berowra was

originally thought to have derived from an aboriginal word meaning "place of many winds or clean air". "Bera – shell – ra" (plural), would appear to be more appropriate as there is evidence of many shell middens on Berowra Creek. There is an ancient Aboriginal Art Gallery of carvings 2000 years old in the Muogamarra Reserve off Peats Ferry Road, just north of Mt Ku-ring-gai Railway Station.

Early explorers included: 1789 Captain Hunter; 1829 Surveyor Govett traced the ridge between Cowan Creek and Berowra Creek; 1853 George Peat; various bushrangers. In the 1890s Edward Windybank, a boat builder but also building the railway north, looked over the ridge, saw water and decided that this was where he wished to settle, on Cowan Creek. On his gate were the words "Man made the Cities but God made the Bush" which Nathan decided were the perfect words for the title of his book.

Mary Wall (considered to be Berowra's Grandmother) was granted 60 acres on the grounds that she worked on it one day a week. She had a guest house and put in a school for children of the railway fitters and her own grandchildren. In 1883 George Collingridge (Collingridge Creek) started the first newspaper in the area. Eliza Stewart, owner of Hillcrest Farm, won world class records as a poultry farmer. Eliza wrote a book but her husband James was shown as the author. In 1906 C J Turner, who was considered a visionary poultry farmer, located his poultry farm where the Village Shopping Centre, Medical Centre and Crossroads Park are today. Nathan answered several questions and kindly donated a copy of his book as first raffle prize, which was won by Edie McDonald. Barbara Brannan and Gavin McDonald also won prizes.

Neil Falconer gave Nathan our vote of thanks and presented him with a KHS bag and three of our Society's publications. Neil also spoke of forthcoming tours.

Lorraine closed the meeting and afternoon tea was enjoyed by all attendees.

Notes by Elaine Turnidge.

JOHN LITTLEJOHN NICOL

As we prepare the third volume of Rallying, the stories that emerge are often heartbreaking. But some more so.

One relates to George Revans Nicol, a Mayor of Ku-ring-gai who on 7 November 1963 chaired the inaugural meeting of KHS and was president from 1963 to 1969.

George was the second son of John Littlejohn Nicol who died in France on 23 October 1917 leaving a wife, Flo, and five children.



John Littlejohn Nicol (1881-1917), father of founding KHS President

John, an engineer and optician, was born in Balclutha, New Zealand in 1881. When he enlisted in April 1916, he and Flo were living in Middle Harbour Road, Lindfield.

John served with the 1st Pioneer Battalion landing in France on New Year's Eve 1916. By the third week of May 1917 he was billeted in Dernancourt, a small village in the Somme region.

It was here that his engineering skills were to bring joy to the villagers. The 200 year old church clock had been silenced when Dernancourt was occupied by German troops. John approached the Curé, volunteering to repair the clock and, having received permission from his commanding officer, began work.



Dernancourt Church

It took some time but, as he wrote later, it was 'a labour of love' and 'How that bell will ring when peace is declared and when the weary soldiers come home again.'

It was not to ring on Armistice Day. On 4 April 1918, the village of Dernancourt was completely destroyed by the German Army. And John was not to come home. Just before the Second Battle of Passchendaele he was mortally wounded. He died later that day and was buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery.

The Ku-ring-gai community rallied around Flo and her children. In 1919 she moved to Howard Street, Lindfield to a house built for her by the Lindfield Voluntary Workers Association. Flo named the house *Balclutha* after John's birthplace. This was George Nicol's home until his marriage in 1935.

Now, 100 years after John Nicol spent two happy months in the small village of Dernancourt, we are in touch with its present mayor Lionel Lamotte. The people of Dernancourt have never forgotten the Australians who spent time in their village, who in April 1918 tried to save it from obliteration and who after the war provided funds towards its rebuilding. Every year they commemorate Anzac Day, the children laying flowers on the graves of our soldiers.

Kathie Reith

TOUR DESK

Important – Our tours are becoming more popular and it is important to make your booking as early as possible. In cases where the tour rapidly fills, and the venue has a limit, please complete the Expression of Interest form in the tour folder, and if there are sufficient numbers we can organise another visit. For those venues that do not have a limit we can attempt to organise a larger vehicle. In both cases, we rely on the expression of interest form.

The Booking process includes a Tour Description sheet for each tour that outlines timing, any special requirements and the pick up site.

Tour bookings can only be made by visiting the Research Centre rooms, and by completing a booking and a (new Blue - once only) indemnity form, if you have not previously completed one. This includes an opportunity to identify dietary requirements.

There are now two separate **GREEN BOOKING FOLDERS**: one for Exploring Ku-ring-gai Tours, and one for General Tours. The Booking system is the same for each type of tour.

Payment is due when making your tour bookings, please bring the correct amount or a cheque to cover the planned cost. Change is not always available. **Bookings are not confirmed until they are paid for.**

Wednesday 15 March, Kamay, Botany Bay National Park and Cape Solander.

The visitors centre features an art gallery, theatre and historical exhibition covering aspects of European arrival and local Aboriginal history and of course Captain Cook's landing in 1770.



Monument marking Capt. Cook's landing

Our tour guides will be local historians.
Picnic lunch included. Travel by bus.
Cost:\$45; includes a picnic lunch and travel by bus.
Bookings open Monday **27 February**.

The 1 April Family History Meeting will be followed by *Men of the Endeavour - the story of Captain Cook*. Presenter: Patrick Dodd.

Friday 21 April, Coal Loader, Balls Head and Saw Millers Reserve.



The tour will take us to the centre at Balls Head which showcases innovation, and enables hands-on learning about sustainability

in everyday life. The tour will also discuss the ex-industrial site.

There will be a picnic lunch at Balls Head Reserve overlooking Sydney Harbour. Travel by bus.

Cost: \$40.00.

Bookings open: **20 March**.

Exploring Ku-ring-gai in 99kms, tours will be on, 13 March, and 10 April. Get acquainted with your environment. Tour booking forms are available in the Special Green Tour Folder. Lunch at a mystery location included. Cost: \$45.00.

VOLUNTEERS' ORIENTATION DAY

There will be an Orientation Day for volunteers on Thursday March 23, commencing at 10.30am in the Research Centre.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, come along and find out what is involved. Remember training is given.

PRESERVATION WORKSHOP

We are fortunate to have obtained the services of Christine Yeats, formerly of the State Records of NSW and now Senior Vice President of the Royal Australian Historical Society, to run a Preservation workshop for us on Wednesday 5 April from 10.30am to 3pm.

Christine will help us learn about the correct way to handle, store and preserve an archive. This applies just as much to your personal archives at home as to the Society's Archives. All members are welcome.

The workshop will be free, and a light lunch will be provided, but bookings are essential for catering purposes. Please book by Friday 31 March at the latest by filling in the booking sheet in the Research Centre. Bookings can be made by phoning the Society on 9499 4568.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our rooms were closed for part of January so our income for this month was low – only \$303. Our operating expenses continue regardless and they amounted to \$909 creating a deficit for the month of \$606. We also paid our annual subscription of Ancestry in January amounting to \$3,320. Currently our funds going forward for this year are \$5,637.

SIGS

Mac SIG

The group looked at Treeview (see later item) at their February meeting and were impressed. No meeting in March.

Irish SIG

1.30pm March 10, Looking at latest resources for Irish research, and share successes and setbacks.

German SIG

Twenty 22 members of the German Special Interest Group met on Monday 13 February, including two new members. Items discussed were:

Leone Stumbaum reported on progress on the group project German Ancestors of Ku-ring-gai Residents especially the recent additions and difficulties encountered.

Tony Karrasch provided an update on progress with the German Australian Genealogy and History Alliance (GAGHA) (<http://germanheritage.org.au>). Of particular note was the list of eight useful German genealogy web sites and Facebook identities.

Tony Spargo briefed the meeting on the Knabenschuh Family Chronicles, available for download through the Books section of FamilySearch.org.

Christine Edward presented the first of a series of German ancestor stories about her GRUNOW great grandfather.

Tony Karrasch gave the first of a series of presentation called Show and Tell based on an object of interest relating to German ancestry.

In the absence of a suitable authority on reading and understanding German script, a suggestion was made that a possible way ahead was to run a collective online tutorial from the Family Search collection. All members endorsed the trial of the first of these tutorials at the next meeting.

The meeting concluded with much fruitful discussion.

The next meeting is planned for Monday 10 April 2017. Susan Moore volunteered to give a Show and Tell. Kate Tytherleigh volunteered to present a story from her German ancestry.

NEW FAMILY HISTORY SOFTWARE

Treeview is the first family history software that operates under Windows 10, Mac, iOS and Android. It has a range of innovative aspects and can link to the internet. With it comes: Cassell's Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland 1893, Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography, English, Scottish and Welsh Landowners 1873, and Irish Landowners of 1876. A review in the April *Newsletter*.

WHERE IS IT?

February Answer:

"Claude Cameron Grove" is at the corner of Kintore Street and Westbrook Avenue, Wahroonga. Brigadier Claude Ewen Cameron, MC & Bar, OAM, was born in Sydney on 13 September 1894. He was the second son of Reverend Ronald John Cameron and his wife Lilly Wafford Dempster. Educated at Shore, Claude served in WWI at Gallipoli, Menin Road and Amiens and in WWII in the Huon Peninsular campaign. Returning to civilian life he was appointed managing director of Sydney Harbour Transport Board from 1951 to 1964.

On 14th August 1924 he married Aline Vindin at St James' Church of England, Turramurra, where his father had served as Curate from 1911-1914 and as Rector from 1914-1949. Claude was elected Mayor of Ku-ring-gai in 1936. He died 10th September 1982.

For further information and photographs see: KHS archives, AWM and the Internet.

This month's "Where is it?"



Newsletter Deadline

Please send email copy for publication to editor@khs.org.au as early as possible, but no later than 13th of each month.

Items will only be accepted from members of KHS.

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If possible, material should be in electronic form, with as little formatting as possible, e.g. no bullets, coloured type, indenting or styles.

DIARY DATES

March

Saturday 4, 11.00am Family History Workshop. *Using the LPI website*, Presenter Lorna Watt.

Saturday 4, 2.00pm Family History Meeting, followed by: *Can the Royal Australian Historical Society Collections Help Your Research?* Speaker: Donna Newton.

Friday 10, 1.30pm Irish SIG

Monday 13, Tour: Exploring Ku-ring - gai.

Wednesday 15, Tour: Kamay, Botany Bay National Park and Cape Solander.

Saturday 18, 2.00pm General Meeting, followed by *Betsy and the Emperor*, Speaker: Anne Whitehead.

Thursday 23, 10.30am Volunteers' Orientation Day.

April

Saturday 1, 11.00am Family History **Workshop:** Paul Parton, *Using the FamilySearch website*.

Saturday 1, **Family History Meeting** followed by *Men of the Endeavour - the story of Captain Cook*. Presenter: Patrick Dodd.

Monday 3, 2.00pm Mac SIG

Wednesday 5, 10.30am **Preservation Workshop.**

Monday 10, German Special Interest Group

Saturday 15, 2.00pm **General Meeting**, followed by *Life and Times of Sir John Monash*. Presenter: John Malmberg.

May

Saturday 6, 11.00am **Family History Workshop:** TBD

Saturday 20, 2.00pm **General Meeting**, Followed by: *The Paul Brickhill Story*. Presenter: John Ramsland.

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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 Family History meeting).