



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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Newsletter

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PO Box 109 Gordon NSW 2072 • Ph: (02) 9499 4568 • www.khs.org.au • email: khs@khs.org.au

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

Lithgow's Small Arms Factory turns 100

Our July meeting was addressed by Tony Griffiths, electrical engineer and author of an extensive history of this institution, where his father worked through both World Wars. The talk outlined the SAF's variable fortunes through its century of operation, celebrated this year, and its considerable social impact upon the local community.

Lithgow has been home to coal mines, iron and steel works and woollen mills, all supplying the military. The Small Arms Factory was established in 1912 subsequent to the Boer War. Initial tooling was done by US firm Pratt & Whitney, who also supplied the first manager, and by 1913, .303 Lee-Enfield rifles, pistols, and bayonets were in production.

Sporadic production requirements caused housing and staffing problems for the SAF: the startup workforce of 300 (mostly male) grew to 1600 during WWI. Skilled tradesmen came in by rail, while locals took general jobs. Many shift-working employees crowded small houses; government housing at Littleton opened, too late, in 1921. After WWI employment shrank, and house building ceased.

WWII saw a massive increase in SAF personnel to a peak workforce of 5,700 in 1943. Many families were accommodated in tents in the nearby pine forest and at the Showground, with communal bathrooms, and outdoor cooking. More women (often relatives of male workers) took clerical jobs, and later replaced men recruited by the army. Trained artist Heliodore Hawthorne ('Brendora' for the Bren guns she made there during WWII) painted her workplace – the National Gallery, Australian War Memorial and Lithgow Council now hold her works.

Social change came with the increase in female workers. Local guest houses were taken over to house them, and a women's hockey team was formed. Occasional drunken women were seen on the streets. Schools ran after-hours childminding for working parents, whose children became more precocious. The unions insisted women be paid as men – so that they could be replaced when the men returned.

The SAF wound down after WWII, and its feeder factories closed. Production came to include Pinnock sewing machines, sporting guns and golf club heads, made by a declining workforce which nevertheless saw its first female apprentices appointed in 1975.

In the 1980s the Factory ran at a loss; now operated profitably by French company Thales, the Factory also mounts its own museum.

Helen Davies

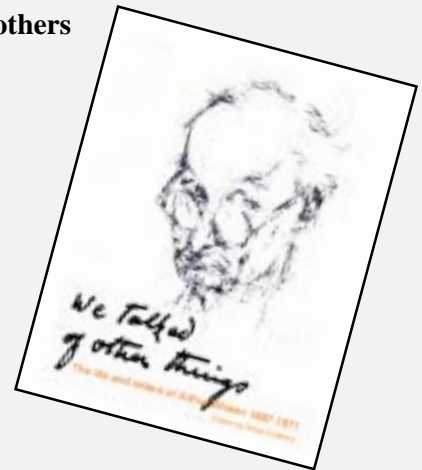
General Meeting

Saturday 15 September 2.00 pm

*followed by
The Letters and Life of
Arthur Wesley Wheen*

Speaker: **Tanya Crothers**

Tanya will speak on the life of this little-known World War I hero, linguist, artist and writer (and former Gordon Public School pupil) whose *Two Masters* was one of the few contemporary anti-war books.



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

Family History Meeting

Saturday 4 August

11.00 am Forum "My Brick-walls" Q & A Session

2.00 pm General Meeting

Speaker: **Geoff Hammond**

From North Shore Family Butchery to??



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

New KHS Committee

At the Society's Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 18 August 2012, the following members were elected:

President: Jackie van Bergen

Vice Presidents: Jo Harris and Graham Lewis

Treasurer: Peter Stehn

Secretary: Trish Thomson

Committee: Jill Ball
Helen Davies
Jennifer Harvey
Lorna Watt

Social Media at KHS

The Society has entered the world of social media via Blogger (kuringgaihs.blogspot.com) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/kuringgaihs).

In its first week our blog had over 500 visitors from Australia and overseas.

Jill Ball

Society Workshop

“Blogs and Facebook” FREE!

Join KHS bloggers, Jackie van Bergen and Jill Ball, for a workshop on **Friday 28th September** from **10:30 am until 12:30 pm**.

You will learn about our Blog and Facebook pages and how to access them. We will also take a peek at some other interesting blogs. Please bring along your questions and we will endeavour to address them.

Bookings are essential: by email to khs@khs.org.au, by phoning the room, or dropping in to fill out the sheet with your name and contact telephone number.

New and updated computer resources

The following new resources have been added to our Intranet recently:

- 1882 NSW Government Gazette in two volumes – January to June and July to December.
- New Synagogue Records London – Contains four documents – Introduction, birth records 1771-1838, marriages 1791-1823 and New Synagogue Ketubah 1819-1832.
- Bourke Historical Collection – A collection of Bourke Historical Society Papers.
- Anna Bay Lawn Cemetery – Headstones, inscriptions and photographs.

In addition, the 1913 NSW Telephone Exchanges List of Subscribers has been updated with a new version.

Peter Stehn

Can you help?

Are you a teacher or retired teacher?

We are looking at running a project linked with our 50th anniversary that will require us to liaise with schools, and possibly prepare some handouts.

Can you help us? For more info contact Jackie on jackievb@optusnet.com.au

Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Inc

COMMITTEE REPORT, 2011-2012

The rate the year passes seem to be accelerating each year. Looking back, we have achieved a great deal, but there is always more to be done.

Committee Membership: One new member, Lorna Watt, joined the Committee at our last AGM. Lorna has been a major contributor to our journal *The Historian*. The Committee held monthly meetings, and all Committee Members have attended regularly, except when ill or travelling. A few changes will occur for the coming year. Ann Barry will retire as President after 4 years, and Doug Milne will step down after 15 years as Treasurer – a marathon effort! Jenny Joyce will also leave the Committee after a much-valued 5 years of contributing to a broad range of areas.

Society Membership: Over the past year our numbers have increased from 569 to 622.

Volunteers: The greatest asset this Society has is its large number of Volunteers – they make things happen. Without them we could not achieve our high level of organised activity. We have fallen short in one area – running Volunteer information sessions; we hope to improve this in the coming year.

The Research Centre: Our research centre is in full use much of the time, with research, workshops and Meetings. We have continued to open the Centre on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with the number of people entering the Centre increasing monthly. We have been able to continue this service to the Community only through the commitment of our loyal Room Volunteers.

The Centre is closed to the public on Wednesday when the Preservation group works on the Collection.

Computer System: Our computer system is outstanding, thanks to Peter Stehn, who dedicates many hours to the smooth running of the system. Many new resources have been added, and we have extended our Find My Past subscription to include Ireland.

Display Cases and Headmasters Museum: Jocelyn Brennan-Horley has maintained the display cases in the hallway. What a great job she has done! She is currently collecting information for a display on *Masons in Ku-ring-gai*.

The Museum: not a lot of work has been done in the Museum, but Annet Latham and Peter Stehn have completed the enrolment database and the next job is to include some class photos and publish them on our system. We continue to have ex-students visit, and they occasionally donate class photos for copying.

Training Courses & Workshops: Jo Harris has run another 8 week course this year. We have also continued to run workshops on various topics, although fewer than last year. We need some new topics and people to run these sessions. The Special Interest Groups have continued, with the addition of Scottish and Irish Groups.

General Meetings: All General Meetings this year have been run on Saturday afternoons. Most of our General Meetings have been very well attended, some with more than 70 people. Beverley Dunstan has continued to organise

our Speakers Program, with a very interesting range of speakers. Sue Dunston works away in the background organising publicity for our meetings.

Catering for Meetings: Jill Nicholson continues to take responsibility for morning and afternoon teas, always adding her special touch. There is always a group of people willing to assist, and this is greatly appreciated by all our members.

Finances: We are introducing an accounting program to help us with reports and budgeting. Peter Stehn, with advice from Annet Latham, has set up the new program. The Society owes a debt of thanks to Doug Milne for the many years he has been our Treasurer.

Grants: Jackie van Bergen has been writing our Grant Applications for the last four years. She has been very successful with these applications, and the Society is most appreciative of her efforts.

Outreach: Jo Harris has been our main outreach speaker, with engagements most months speaking to many different groups. Jenny Joyce has also given a number of talks. We took part in the Seniors Week information session at St Ives. It would be great if we could again organise sessions at St Ives and Gordon Shopping Centre, but we need someone to take on organising these displays.

Council Committees: The Society continues to be represented on the Heritage Committee by Jennifer Harvey, and the Community Reference Committee by Ann Barry.

Groups

Family History: The Family History meetings have been very well attended. Speakers have been organised for most of the afternoon sessions.

Built Heritage: This energetic group meets every Tuesday, and works on articles for *The Historian* and to assist people with building or land enquiries. Enquiries about houses have been increasing.

Preservation: Wednesday, our Preservation day, is always an enjoyable day with 6 to 13 volunteers and lots of activities – lots of work on typing, photo scanning and storing, vertical files, archive boxes, admin files and cataloguing.

Research Team: This small team, led by Bruce and Beverly Robinson, handles all enquiries that come through our website. The numbers continue to increase, from 66 last year to 78 this year.

Publications:

The Historian: *The Historian* was again an excellent publication with high quality research. We owe many thanks to Jennifer Harvey, Kathie Rieth, and the team. Judi Oliver has retired from the major indexing task, after many years of service, and Beth Facer has completed the 2011 issue. The 2010 and 2011 indexes should be on the website soon.

Newsletter: Ten issues of the *Newsletter* have been published over the last year, varying from 6 to 8 pages depending on material available. The occasional contributions from members are much appreciated. The volunteers who proof-read and assist with mail-out are greatly valued. Thanks go to our Editor Bob Barry.

Website: Our webmaster Graham Lewis has maintained our website, and continues to add and update material, keeping the site at a high standard – thank you Graham.

Blog and facebook pages have recently been added.

Book: *Almost like home: Living in Bradfield Park* was published by the Society and launched by the Premier, Barry O'Farrell on 26 April. This was a major KHS event for 2012, with around 150 people attending. The Committee is grateful for the enormous amount of work put in by our volunteers in supporting this event.

Kupedia: Another of our on-going initiatives is a project called KUPEDIA, which is a web-based almanac of cross-referenced articles on people, places, events and facts relevant to the history of Ku-ring-gai. It is presented as a self-contained internal web site and consists, at present, of articles drawn mainly from early *The Historian* articles. KUPEDIA is a work-in-progress with new articles added each week – the aim is to eventually make all our historically significant articles available through this fully-searchable web interface.

Looking forward

Society's 50th birthday: In November 2013 our Society will celebrate its 50 year anniversary. Plans are underway to mark this special occasion. However, we are in need of your ideas and assistance to mark this event properly.

After four years as President it is time for me to step aside and allow another person to take the Society forward. I have enjoyed this time as President, and thank the Committee, all our Volunteers and Members, for their support.

Ann Barry, President

On behalf of the Committee, August 2012.

Research Team report

The KHS Research Team had 78 enquiries in 2011/2012 an increase of 18% over the previous year. The enquiries are mainly to do with Family History, and Property relating to Ku-ring-gai, and come from within Australia and Overseas and members of the Society.

It has been an interesting year for members of the Research Team, Jo Harris is primarily doing genealogy and her knowledge of Ku-ring-gai is invaluable. Jennifer Harvey and *The Historian* team, including Kathie Rieth and Trish Thomson, are experts on the many aspects of property and related topics. Max Farley, who has had many years of experience with researching all aspects of the history of Ku-ring-gai, has an invaluable database, Search Ku-ring-gai on the Intranet in Local Resources.

Members of the Team search in all nooks and crannies on the Intranet, the Society Library, biographical and place files, *The Historian* and *Newsletter* to help answer a wide range of very interesting enquiries, with some quite remarkable results – a very rewarding experience.

Bruce Robinson

Titbit

Did you know that *artists* once competed for medals at the Olympic Games?

According to the Smithsonian, 'For the first four decades of competition, the Olympics awarded official medals for painting, sculpture, architecture, literature and music, alongside those for the athletic competitions.'

Special Interest Groups

Mac Users SIG

The last meeting was on Monday 20 August. We talked about Mountain Lion, genealogy charts when you have a complicated family, and various other tips and shortcuts.

The next meeting is on **Monday 24 September at 2.00 pm** in the research rooms.

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

Scottish Research SIG

The last Scottish SIG attracted only 6 people. We looked at Prison records from 1800 on the National Library of Scotland site. We also looked at 'The Scots magazine Vol 50' 1791 on Google books – this took us onto archive.org for more books and Google images.

It has been decided that we will not hold meetings every month as it does not give people enough time to discover new things. Our next meeting is to be **Monday 22 October at 1.30 pm**, and it is hoped that members will bring along all their new discoveries for discussion.

The Scottish SIG is looking for a volunteer to act as the new email co-ordinator, as I can no longer do it.

Bev Jach

Unknown landscape



This photo was recently donated to the Society, but we don't know where it is. Is it in Ku-ring-gai? There are two quite distinctive houses. Can you help?

Willoughby Museum

Did you know that Willoughby Historical Society has a museum?

It is housed in a 1913 Federation Cottage, *Boronia*, at 58 Johnson Street, Chatswood. This is within easy walking distance of the Railway Station.

Open each Sunday 1 to 4 pm. There is an admission fee.

Further details www.willoughbyhs.org.au

Bert Oldfield of Killara

The National Trust will be opening three Killara houses to NT members on Tuesday 9 October. One of these is *Poitiers*, No 66 Springdale Road, that for many years was the home of cricketer Bert Oldfield and his wife Ruth.

Chatting in the rooms one day with Bob Gowing he mentioned that his family home backed onto the Oldfields and he had many fond memories of Bert and Ruth. Here they are!

Kathie Rieth

"Bert is considered one of the best wicket keepers in the game of cricket that Australia has produced. He was a man who suffered horrendous injuries at Polygon Wood, near Ypres, on the Western Front in 1917, and nearly died.

William Albert Stanley Oldfield lived at "Poitiers", 66 Springdale Road, Killara, as I grew up. He was commonly and affectionately known by everyone as "Bertie". He lived there from long before the war until he died on 10 August 1976. His widow, Ruth, lived there for a while longer. My parents lived in one of the houses in Arnold Street that backed onto it. I was fortunate to live back to back with the Oldfields for the first 29 years of my life, until a few months before he died.

Bertie was born in Alexandria in 1894. He attended Cleveland Street and Forest Lodge public schools. Just prior to World War I he played two first grade matches for Sydney's Glebe Cricket Club as a wicket keeper. He was so outstanding that on the strength of those performances he was sought out to keep wickets for the Australian Infantry Forces team to tour Britain in 1919 as a replacement for the injured Ted Long, who had been the New South Wales 'keeper before the war. On seeing the calibre of Oldfield, Ted Long declared he was not needed, but remained with the team as the reserve 'keeper. Bert then made it into the Australian cricket team. He was the Australian wicket keeper for much of the 1920s and 1930s.

Mum often recalled, as an only child, her father taking her to the Sydney Cricket Ground during those years. Her father played first grade for Balmain in the 1880s and 1890s, so was a keen follower. When she was married, Bertie became her neighbor. She often described how she had been amazed as a young girl as he ran all over the field behind the wickets with great agility and energy, waiting to catch or stump a batsman and stop runs. She said he never stood still.

I often heard that he had a reputation for only appealing for a batsman to be out if he was absolutely sure. And when he was knocked unconscious and had to be carried from the field with a broken skull in Adelaide during the obnoxious Bodyline test series in 1932/3, he blamed himself for not ducking from the ball!

Bertie was a perfect gentleman. For as long as I am able to remember he was the nicest person one could meet. Everybody said the same thing. I had more opportunities than many others, as he was just over the fence, and I often climbed over it, hoping that the horse would not hurt me! He knew everyone in the district, and appeared to know

nearly everyone in the world – from sportspersons, to politicians, and other celebrities. He seemed to attend so many functions!

I recall the tennis court, stables and horses under the huge turpentine trees in his large back garden, which has now been subdivided. My father built a grass tennis court in about 1950 at the rear of our property. The day after the posts were positioned to support the net, we awoke to find a brand new net rolled up alongside one of the posts. We were mystified as to where it came from. It turned out to be a gift from Bert and his lovely wife, Ruth. How generous!

About ten years later, when I was getting a cricket bat of my very own, Dad and I went to the WA (Bert) Oldfield sports store in Hunter Street, Sydney. It was on the hill between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets, on the southern side. After fitting me out with the latest Norm O’Neil bat (which I still have) we seemed to have been swept out of the store before Dad had paid.

On saying that he needed to pay before we left, Bertie insisted that the account would be forwarded in the mail. It never arrived, and Dad followed it up further, but was never issued with it. Dad found this strange and embarrassing, and we agreed that we could never buy anything from there again, as he seemed to give the goods away and not make any profit.

As youngsters, my friends and I sat on our back fence waiting for Bertie to come by, as he related the most wonderful cricket stories. We were able to perch on the rails on our side of the fence. I cannot now remember a single one of his stories about Bradman’s matches, and the likes of Woodfull and Ponsford, and the other great players of the 1920s and 1930s. That would have been a goldmine of information to have now.

He told us of his latest schoolboy tours to far-flung countries such as Ethiopia or the United States. The way he related these stories was superb. The local churches, Red Cross, Progress Association and other organisations had a large audience when they advertised that Bertie was booked to give a talk. He usually did it after each trip – often to watch overseas test matches. The way he described things was magnificent.

He loved to promote the game of cricket to schoolboys, and was always out and about, and travelling interstate and overseas, to do so. He had daughters and no sons. As children we always asked him how to become a wicket keeper, thinking that we would be playing for Australia before long if we received his advice and coaching. He always cautioned us that the great players were born with their skills, and that the most stringent coaching and practice would make one competent, but not necessarily great.

He never missed a test or Sheffield Shield game at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) almost up to the day he died. I remember seeing Ruth filling up their car at Fulton’s Service Station at Lindfield a few months before he died. They were on the way to the SCG. He was so indisposed that the front passenger seat was right back and he was almost lying

down, but it was important to be at the match to see his old pals, meet new ones and generally encourage the game of cricket.

In 1973 I was living in London, and was invited to a nearby country home for tea one Saturday afternoon. I was chatting to one of the neighbours who said she had been to Australia. As one does, I asked where she had visited. She said she had stayed in a house in Sydney. I asked where, but she could not remember, as she was only four years old. She and her mother had been evacuated from Singapore in 1942. After some thought, she did mention that it was the house of Oldfield the cricketer, but could not remember where. I told her that I had lived all my years in a house that backed onto the Oldfields at Killara. As soon as I said Killara, she remembered.

I was puzzled, as I knew Bert and Ruth had lived in their house for many years before I was born, and I wondered how another family could be living in it. I immediately wrote back home, as one had to do in those days, and asked Mum how this could be. She wrote back, saying that Bert and Ruth stayed in their holiday house at Clareville during the war, and allowed refugees to live in “*Poitiers*”.

Many years later, I was at a funeral wake in the country for a relative of my wife’s. All the relatives knew one another well, and being an outsider, I did not wish to intrude. I saw another woman, also an outsider, and for something to talk about, I related this story of England. She immediately said what a co-incidence, and that she grew up living next door to Bert and Ruth in “*Poitiers*”.

My immediate recollection was that this was not possible, as I knew everyone in the surrounding area as I grew up, and did not know her. On collecting my thoughts, I realised that this woman had lived in a front house with a battle-axe behind. Battle-axes were very rare in those days, and I had forgotten that one side of Bertie and Ruth’s house had two houses in tandem to the street. I realised that I never knew the people who lived in the front house, because it did not back onto our house, or any of the Arnold Street neighbours.

Some years later I was at another event, and the conversation came around to chance meetings, so I related this story, and someone in the group said that she had lived in that battle-axe block next to “*Poitiers*”. After about forty years, I had just not recognised her. So this was another meeting with a person from the past who had known Bertie first hand.

What a string of co-incidences arising from living back to back with the Oldfields!

It was a privilege to have been a neighbor of Bertie’s, and for him to have spent time with me and my friends, and to have had that contact with such an astute, upright and perfectly-mannered person. I still often recall the happy times I had with Bertie.”

Bob Gowing, August 2012

Bibliography: The Bradman Years, by Jack Pollard
The Australian Dictionary of Biography
Personal recollections

FAMILY MATTERS

August Family History Meeting

11.00 am Session

Jo Harris opened the meeting and welcomed the 20 attendees, including two visitors. The Intranet is within our Society and a printout of what is available on the computers can be purchased for \$5.00 (Pay when name is placed on the worksheet. The printout is placed in the To Be Collected box and your name is notified on the white board at the entrance to the centre.)

Jenny Joyce showed NSW Old Registers 1 to 9. These are the Registers of Assignments and Other Legal Instruments of NSW, and date from 22 January 1794 to 15 May 1824 – remember, these dates only. Important to read “Instructions on how to use” contained in the “Introduction”. Jo then continued with the 1788-1843 Historical Records of Australia (HRA) – there are 26 volumes of Series 1 and remember those dates – “*You don’t have to know what you are looking for – You just have to look*”. Amazing and interesting resources, should you be lucky!

2.00 pm Session

Jo opened the meeting and welcomed approximately 30 members and visitors.

On this day in 1906 Central Railway Station in Sydney was officially opened. It is the largest railway station in Australia, servicing almost all of the lines on the railway network in Sydney. This was the third station on the southern Sydney site and was built on land previously used by the Devonshire Street Cemetery, a convent, a female refuge, police barracks and the Benevolent Society. The first train at the new station was the Western Mail train which arrived at 5.50 am on 5 August 1906. The 75 m Gothic revival clock tower was added to the north western corner of the station in 1921.

Murrin Transcripts \$18 for full transcript. Price increases for BDMs: ACT \$48; NSW \$31; NT \$26; QLD \$39; SA \$43.50; TAS \$40.32; VIC \$20; WA \$31. BDM “Certified” copies do not show ‘spinster’, ‘father unknown’, ‘bastard’ or ‘illegitimate’.

Internet News: 1940 US Census: www.familysearch.org/1940census; ‘findmypast for 2 million more Welsh Parish Records: Baptisms 1538-1912; Marriages 1539-1927; Banns 1603-1927; Burials 1539-2007 – www.findmypast.co.uk/search/parish-records/baptisms - ROOTSWEB: Mailing Lists ..remember these.. many people are having great success with these lists: e.g. lists include “The Alfred Hospital, Melbourne”, Nationality of Surnames, Immigration to NSW, and many more <http://lists.rootsweb.com/index/intl/AUS/GENANZ.html> - ROOTSCHAT: easy to use messaging forums available www.root.or.forschat.com – ARMIDALE & NEW ENGLAND: Aboriginal History – and people wanting to confirm family stories www.armidalehistory.com – Other sites include: Family names in the Netherlands; Norway Baptisms 1643-1927; Spain Baptisms 1502-1940; Sweden Baptisms 1611-1920 and Switzerland Marriages 1532-1910 – Of course there are also sites sponsored by companies who require you to subscribe or purchase credits.

Annual State Conference of the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc. is to be held at Gympie in September, hosted by the Botany Bay FHG.

Jo then introduced our Mystery Man – Gordon Station – who recognised the photo on the Newsletter? Gordon, wearing his GORDON tee shirt, congratulated Jo for her good taste in asking him along to entertain us. He is a retired TAFE teacher of Graphic Design and Internet, came from the southside of Sydney, father and grandfather were Wharfies; on his mother’s side her father was Russian and her mother was from New Caledonia. Gordon’s grandmother died in childbirth, sadly the child, his father, became an alcoholic. No showbiz in the family, but from age 5 he stated “I wanted to be a showoff with a great sense of humour, selfish, self centred and painful”. Robert Smith, alias Uncle Bob, Bobby Dazzler and now Gordon Station!! Why Gordon Station? Because when travelling along Mona Vale Road he saw a bus going to Gordon Station – what a good name for an Entertainer – and entertain us he did, with his humour and his guitar. He has played at over 2,300 gigs, some paying – first gig was playing at the Heathcote Services Club, for the Deaf Society, with microphones facing the floor which vibrated allowing the patrons to enjoy dancing. Having descended from wharfies, he sang us “The Hungry Mile” which he had written. On Australia Day in 1985 he managed to spill a beer on the singer Fabian. We joined with singing “Always Look on the Bright Side of Life”. Gordon has played at Tamworth Music Festival; met a fellow who looked more like Elvis than Elvis, but who could not sing like Elvis, so the music was blended to suit the occasion; has played at The Greengate and Blue Gum Hotels.

Jenny Joyce thanked Gordon and presented him with “Almost Like Home–Living in Bradfield Park”. As he left, one member told me how pleased he was that he (the member) had attended, and stated “this man not only listened but he also heard”, and wanted to know if there was a possibility to ask him to entertain his own Probus Club. I think we all would agree – we left with smiles on our faces.

Based on notes by Elaine Turnidge

Quiz answers (see p. 8 for Questions)

1. (d) Dalcross Hospital, name changed when the hospital was bought by the McIntosh family in 1923. Dalcross originally started as a maternity hospital in Pymble in 1920; Olive McIntosh remained as Matron until her retirement in 1961. All establishments from Q 1 are or were situated in Killara. 2. (c) Blairholme Private Hospital, name changed when Mrs Johanna Beveridge conducted the 10 bed general hospital from 1955 to 1965. All establishments from Q 2 are or were situated in Gordon. 3. (a) Airlie Nursing Home. Weeroona originally opened in 1955 as a post-operative care hospital with 12 beds, closed in 1966 and then reopened as Airlie Nursing Home. It was purchased by the Seventh-day Adventists in 1985. All establishments from Q 3 are or were situated in Wahroonga. 4. (d) Cherrywood Private Hospital, started as a hospital in 1953. Most of the patients were poliomyelitis sufferers and by 1959 there were 17 beds. It closed in 1963 and became a nursing home. All establishments from Q 4 are or were situated in Turramurra.

A cautionary tale –

don't believe what is forged in brass!

A long term project of a dear friend, Ross Thorne (son of Les), has been the life and works of Henry Eli White, architect for the State Theatre in Market Street, Sydney and a host of other theatres and large buildings in New Zealand and Australia. I hope he can find a publisher, for it is a tale most interesting and often perplexing. A challenge has been to find what really happened, because the trail has been full of red herrings.

In an attempt to provide one more piece of the jigsaw, I offered to take photos of White's memorial at Northern Suburbs Crematorium. Armed with an A4 size plan with the location, BM 25, somewhat ambiguously marked, I took myself up there the other afternoon, thinking – five minutes, should be a breeze. No, t'was not! Apart from the fact that the general location – stone terraces, no railings, lots of steps and flagstones heaving and cracking from invasive tree roots – the signage left a lot to be desired. I could find the A, C, D, E and F sections, and the BZ, but no BM where it was supposed to be. Trudging around and around, up and down, thinking if I fell I wouldn't be found for days (had unwisely left the mobile in the car), or I'd flush out a snake (had left the dog at home), I eventually gave up and headed for the office, which is, of course, now way over the other side of the complex.

A kind staff member, Andrew, volunteered to help and off we took in the buggy, beetling around corners and jiggling over road bumps, me trying hard not to laugh with delight (it was fun), particularly as we passed a very large and sombre funeral party. Then, when we got to the marked location, Andrew strode off, map in hand, disappearing amongst the shrubs and walls for what seemed ages. Eventually, shaking his head, he returned. Let's walk a bit further, says he. Which we did.

At least 200 metres away from the marked location, along the exit road, he found section BM and White's plaque. Leaving me to take photos, he took off, bip-bipping happily with success. But, that wasn't the end of the story.

The plaque read:

“Henry Eli White, beloved of his wife, Margaret and his sons, Norman & Edric, born Dunedin NZ 1887, died Sydney 3.3.52.”

White's name, the family's names, his place of birth and date of death were certainly correct. However, the circumstances were somewhat different.

He had been separated from his wife for nearly twenty years, and had a new partner in life, and to all reports he was estranged from his sons.

The most glaring mistake was the year of his birth, 1887, not 1876 as is recorded on his birth certificate.

He married Margaret in 1900. We've all heard of child brides but as Ross said, that would have made him a 'child groom'! *A first!*

Kathie Rieth

BUILT HERITAGE

Ravenswood's new Library

Love it or hate it, the new library building at Ravenswood is eye-catching. It certainly caught the eyes of the Institute of Architects, for it has won BVN Architecture the 2012 Sulman Medal for public architecture, 'the state's most prestigious public architecture award'.

The Institute's citation reads: 'The Mabel Fidler Building at Ravenswood School is an exemplar for advances in the relationship between education environments and contemporary learning. This addition transfers the centre of the school to a new hub. Building on the traditional masonry character of the existing school, BVN have introduced a new language for the library and senior learning centres. These solid forms are suspended in the most translucent of structures. The double skin façade construction confers energy-saving benefits and allows a poetic play of light in its surfaces. In its elegant planning, the sheer delight of the library space, and strong sculptural presence – we believe the Mabel Fidler Building expresses the aspirations of a community and is a fine model for a school of the future.'

Built at the corner of Henry Street and Ravenswood Avenue, and presenting a spectacular new entry for students approaching from Gordon railway station, it is the fifth Sulman Medal awarded to BVN Architecture. BVN's principal credits the school for 'allowing the students to be the building's designers and clients'. Apparently students, parents and teachers were involved in the entire process. Ravenswood's principal states the project was 'a true partnership between ourselves and the architects' and 'represents the cutting edge of contemporary learning'.

The school's selection of one of Sydney's top architectural firms follows a long tradition of employing some of the state's finest architects. In 1903 James Peddle designed the first school hall; his name continues to this day in the firm Peddle Thorp & Walker Pty Ltd, architects for the AMP Building at Circular Quay, completed in 1962 and the first office building in Sydney to break the 50 metre height limit imposed in 1912. A recent project for the firm was the Water Cube, the National Aquatics Centre in Beijing. In the 1920s and 1930s additional classrooms at Ravenswood were designed by Arthur W Anderson, who, in 1908 in partnership with Arthur McCredie, designed the Mark Foy's Department Store, now the Downing Centre. Anderson also served a prominent role in architectural associations in the state, was made a Fellow of the RIBA in 1928, and a Life Fellow of the RIAA in 1937.

As Bob Ross notes in his article on Ravenswood for the forthcoming *The Historian*, 'Mabel Fidler's choice of motto – Semper ad meliora, 'always aiming at better things' – has proved to be appropriate'.

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 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.

New Members

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

Beatrice Collingridge	Chatswood
Lloyd Curtin	Hornsby
Joanna Greenwood	Gordon
Robert & Megan Jordan	Killara
Lorrie Loving	Lane Cove
Vivian Power	Terrey Hills
Sandra Simpson	Turrumurra
Elizabeth Tomlinson	Killara
Bruce and Rosemary Watson	Gordon

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

Medical Establishment Quiz (answers p.6)

1. *Chesalon* was the original name for which Hospital?
a) Strathlea. b) Southdean. c) Bangalore. d) Dalcross .
2. *Tardebigge* was the original name for which medical establishment?
a) KiaOra Private Hospital. b) Lissington Private Hospital. c) Blairholme Private Hospital. d) Ballina Convalescent Nursing Home.
3. Weeroona Private Hospital was the original name for which medical establishment?
a) Airlie Nursing Home. b) Braemar Private Hospital. c) Redleaf Convalescent Hospital. d) John Williams Memorial Hospital.
4. Maneera was the original name for which medical establishment?
a) Strathallen Hospital. b) Rotherwood Convalescent Hospital. c) Northaven Nursing Home. d) Cherrywood Private Hospital.

All questions are based on *The Railway Came to Ku-ring-gai* by Kerrin Cook, published in 1991 (now out of print). Please take time to peruse this book at our Research Centre to learn more about our area.

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 Sep** **Family History Meeting**
11.00 am Forum "My Brick-walls"
2.00 pm General Meeting
 Speaker Geoff Hammond "From North Shore Family Butchery to??"
- Sat 15 Sep** **2.00 pm Society General Meeting**
The Letters and Life of Arthur Wesley Wheen. **Tanya Crothers** will speak on the life of Arthur Wesley Wheen, World War I hero, linguist, artist, writer.
- Sat 6 Oct** **Family History Meeting**
11.00 am "More Intra/Internet Resources"
2.00 pm General Meeting
 Speaker: Geoff Cottee "The story of Arthur Phillip Bricks from Hampshire."
- Sat 20 Oct** **2.00 pm Society General Meeting**
A Woman's War: The Life of Wilma Oram Young AM. Do you remember the radio serial *White Coolies*? Then come and hear the story of a POW nurse and survivor of the Bangka Island massacre.

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