



# 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.

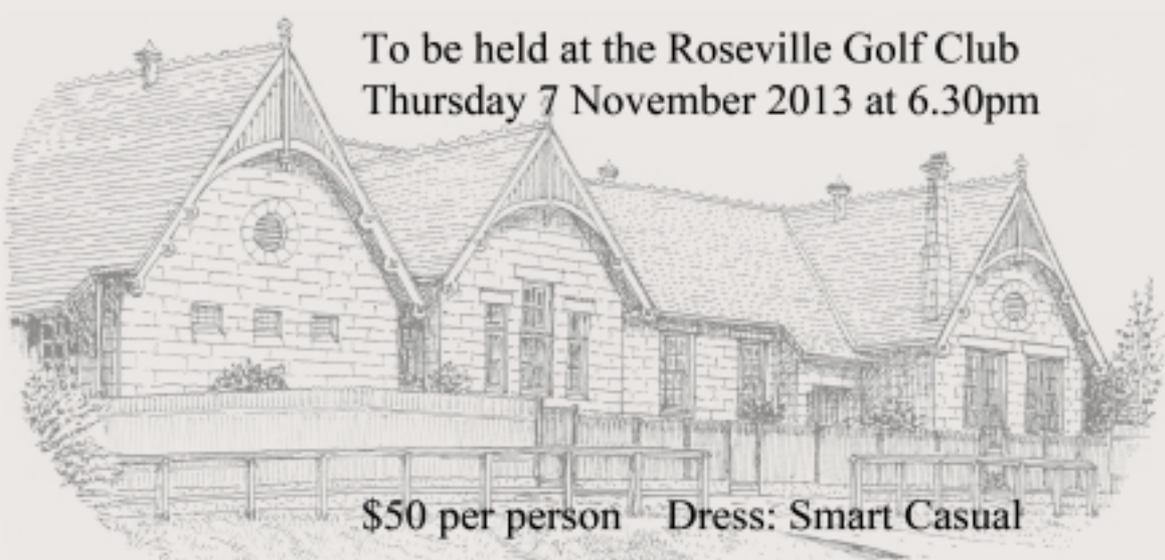
September 2013

Newsletter

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

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



50th Anniversary Dinner

To be held at the Roseville Golf Club  
Thursday 7 November 2013 at 6.30pm

\$50 per person Dress: Smart Casual

CELEBRATING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

## Invitation

Members and friends are invited to join us for our **50th anniversary celebration dinner** at 6.30 pm on **Thursday 7 November 2013** at the Roseville Golf Club, 4 Links Avenue, Roseville.

Enjoy a complimentary drink on arrival as canapes are served. This will be followed by a two-course meal. Drinks will be available at bar prices. Please advise any dietary restrictions when you book.

Our guest speaker is Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker, President of the Royal Australian Historical Society.

We will be launching our latest publication *Ku-ring-gai Historical Society – the first 50 years 1963-2013*.

Tickets are \$50 per person and bookings are now open.

Bookings can only be made in the Rooms with payment to a room volunteer (see the specially labelled folder in the Rooms). Cash or cheques are acceptable. If you wish to pay by EFT, please contact our Treasurer, Peter Stehn in the KHS Rooms on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm on 9499 4568, or email him at [khsinc@tpg.com.au](mailto:khsinc@tpg.com.au). Enquiries to Don Nicholson at [dinner@khs.org.au](mailto:dinner@khs.org.au) or 9144 6948.

You may book as an individual, a couple, or a group of people. You may ask to be seated with other people or you may book a whole table (8 or 10). Numbers are limited to 150, so book early to ensure that you don't miss out.

Bookings close on Thursday 10 October and your booking will only be confirmed once you have paid.

**Let us know if you will have trouble getting to the dinner and we will arrange transport for you.**

## New KHS Committee

At the Society's Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 17 August 2013, the following members were elected.

President:	Jennifer Harvey
Vice Presidents:	Jo Harris and Lorna Watt
Treasurer:	Peter Stehn
Secretary:	Trish Thomson
Committee:	Jill Ball, Ann Barry, Helen Davies, Annet Latham, Graham Lewis

On behalf of the Society, the Editor congratulates the Committee on their election, and looks forward to their further development of our Society over the coming year.

## What do we do on Wednesdays?

Wednesday is the KHS Preservation Day, and the Centre is closed. That's because we use most of the available table space, and sometimes all the computers.

We do the background work required to keep the collection organised and available: management of our assets, cataloguing archive boxes, maps and administration files.

There is always typing to be done from hand-written documents, and small printed items about Kuring-gai, currently from the *Sydney Mail*. Many weeks have been spent working through letters between John Laing and Sophia Brown, which one of our group is preparing for publication. Another project is re-typing old articles from *The Historian* and entering them into the KHS web-based *Kupedia*.

Photos are an on-going project. One of our members donated hundreds of Kuring-gai photos taken over a number of years, and a current project is to enter these into our photo management program, *Perfect Pictures*. We are also scanning our entire collection of large images so they can be entered into this program.

It's a good working group, and always enjoyable. Hot chips for lunch are the order of the day!

*Ann Barry*

## Quiz answers (see p. 8 for Questions)

1. (c) Belgium Ave. Primus St earlier was an angled extension of Belgium Ave, which was named for Belgium's involvement in World War I.  
2. (d) Bannockburn Rd. Earlier, about 1880, there were many Irish settlers living in the section along this road.  
3. (a) Bushlands Ave. Name changed after the Penfold family came to the area. Mrs Penfold did not like the name Gertude, and was instrumental in having the name changed.  
4. (c) Boundary St. Marks the boundary between the holdings of Mathew and Archbold. Who WAS Albert?  
5. (b) Bareena Ave. Who WAS Hilida? Bareena - various origins for the name, Irish (meaning "little hill top") or Russian (meaning "ram"). Unable to find an Aboriginal derivation.  
Extra information about our streets may be found in the book *Streets of Kuring-gai* at the KHS Research Centre.

## Special Interest Groups

### Mac Users SIG

At our last meeting we learnt how to make photo books and calendars from iPhoto. And yes, there is an iPhoto app for the iPad.

The next meeting will be on **Monday 2 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](mailto: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

A well-attended, spirited meeting of the German SIG was held on Monday 12 August with ten attendees.

Some items of interest from the discussions were:

- Ros gave a brief overview of her recent trip to Germany especially from the family history aspects;
- Leone described an online Gothic script tutorial (<https://familyhistory.byu.edu>) (please see Leone for further details);
- Tony recommended a book entitled "Geebung Story" by Kath Ballard, which contained numerous details of German settlers in Queensland, especially Brisbane; and
- three web sites were reviewed

<http://bavarica.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/fs1/search-simple/static.html>

<http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/>

<http://www.apgen.org/>.

The next meeting of the German SIG is planned for **Monday 14 October 2013 at 1.30 pm** in our Rooms.

*Peter Stehn*

### Irish Research SIG

On Friday 9 August, Irish descendants gathered at the rooms to talk about their Irish family history. We discussed a number of searching ideas and looked at various websites. We all learnt a bit, shared stories and had some fun. The meetings are on the second Friday of each month.

Our next meeting is **Friday 13 September at 1.30 pm**. All welcome.

*Ric Hall*

### Technology Users SIG

The initial meeting of our new Technology Users SIG will be held in the Society Rooms on **Thursday 12 September 1.30-3.00 pm**. Bookings are not necessary.

We will meet on a regular basis in collaborative sessions to learn from each other about how to use technology to enhance our research. Please consider coming along to share your technology tips and troubles.

Should you have any questions or topics for discussion please contact me by email at [jillballau@gmail.com](mailto:jillballau@gmail.com).

*Jill Ball*

### New Zealand SIG

There is some interest in starting a new SIG for New Zealand, possibly in September.

If you are interested, please add your name to the booking sheet in the Rooms.

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## ***The ones who got away***

Whilst convicts of the first fleet expected and dreaded the conditions prevailing in English prisons, they found the NSW Colony completely different. For the bulk of the convicts, Sydney was an open prison where they worked and moved with comparative freedom – a prison without walls save the impassable bush and the fear of Aborigines. Still, a few did try to escape. At our July general meeting Murray Radcliffe gave a very interesting talk on convict escapees from the Sydney Colony.

The first escape was actually from the *Alexander* when the first fleet was at anchor in the Canary Islands. Convict John Powers simply slipped over the side into a dingy and rowed quietly ashore. He was soon captured and continued his transportation to Sydney.

Then in the very first week after landing in Sydney Cove a group of convicts walked the 12 kilometers to Botany Bay where La Perouse's expedition was at anchor. They unsuccessfully sought asylum with the French – they were given food and sent back to Sydney Cove. But convict Peter Harris was probably luckier in a way. French-speaking, he was smuggled aboard one of La Perouse's ships. Unfortunately, they were wrecked in the New Hebrides with no survivors.

No doubt many tried to escape. Some died of starvation, were killed by Aborigines, or returned to the colony. But there was one successful escapee worth noting: John "Black" Caesar, a huge West Indian who absconded with a musket and ammunition. He survived by stealing food not only from the settlers but also from the Aborigines – by scaring them away from their kill, with his musket. Eventually Gov. Hunter put a price on his head (five gallons of rum!) and he was shot dead near Liberty Plains.

Murray Radcliffe suggests that John Wilson was another successful escapee. But Wilson, a first fleeter sentenced to seven years, actually served his sentence. He then joined an Aboriginal tribe where an old woman believed he was the spirit of her dead son. He was given the name Bunboee, and for the next four years roamed the bush for perhaps a hundred miles around Sydney. On returning to civilisation he was sent exploring by Gov. Hunter. Now mainly forgotten, in 1798 he explored southwest of Sydney almost to Goulburn. In 1800 he was killed in a fight over a native woman.

Murray concluded with the story of Mary Bryant, undoubtedly the most familiar and most successful escapee. Mary married Will Bryant, a fisherman, who because of his skills was given the use of the Governor's cutter to fish. But Will sold some of his catch on the black market and was given a hundred lashes. This solidified Will's determination to escape. In March 1791, the colony was left without a ship to give chase, and taking advantage of this, the Bryant family and seven other convicts scrambled into the 20-foot cutter and rowed out through the heads. Murray described in detail the ordeal that left Mary a widow. Reaching London, she was regarded as a heroine having survived cannibals, coral reefs, wild sea and uncharted waters. The lawyer/diarist Boswell took up her cause, secured a pardon and settled on her an annuity of ten pounds. She returned to Cornwall – the most famous convict who got away.

*Doug Milne*

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## **Society General Meeting**

**Saturday 21 September 2.00 pm**

### ***Storms across the North Shore***



A meteorologist's insights into extreme weather conditions that have periodically devastated parts of the North Shore.

Speaker: **Richard Whitaker**

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

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## **Family History Meeting**

**Saturday 7 September**

**11.00 am** "Family Search" Workshop + Q&A

**2.00 pm** General Meeting



Three speakers from *The Arthur Phillip Chapter of The Fellowship of First Fleeters.*

Alan Beresford – "John Beresford"

Nan Boslet – "Frederick Meredith"

Wilma Townsend – "Edwin Goodwin"

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

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## ***Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Inc.*** ***Committee Report 2012/2013***

The last 12 months have been an interesting and productive period for the Society.

On 7 November 2013 the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society will celebrate 50 years of continuous activity. We have grown from 38 members in 1965 to 614 members today.

To co-ordinate the Society's 50th Anniversary, a sub-committee was formed under the leadership of Don Nicholson, which held a very successful *Writing Ku-ring-gai History Competition*, and published a book of the entries. One positive outcome has been the feedback from the schools about bringing groups of students to visit the Society and Museum.

We published a second book, this one on the 50-year history of the Society. It has been written by committee member Helen Davies and will be launched at our upcoming 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner.

**Committee membership:** Three new members, Jill Ball, Annet Latham and Trish Thomson joined the Committee at our last AGM, with Trish agreeing to fill the role of Secretary. Owing to the resignation of the President, Jackie van Bergen, on 18 February, Jennifer Harvey was appointed by the Committee to fill that position on 25 February 2013.

**Volunteers:** Our volunteers are our most important asset. Without them the Society could not function as efficiently as it does. Two volunteer information sessions were held on 5 and 22 April, and the Volunteers Guide is now in the process of being updated. To celebrate Volunteers Week, the committee hosted a luncheon for our volunteers on 18 May 2013.

**The Research Centre:** Our research centre is crowded much of the time, with researchers, workshops and meetings. The centre is open to the public on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Wednesday the rooms are closed to allow the Preservation Group to work on the Collection. We have been able to continue this service to the Community only through the commitment of our loyal room volunteers.

**General Meetings:** All General Meetings this year have been held on Saturday afternoons. Most are well attended and we have had some interesting speakers. Beverley Dunstan has very efficiently continued to organise our Speakers Programme. Sue Dunston works away in the background organising publicity for our meetings.

**Catering at General Meetings:** Jill Nicholson continues to take responsibility for the catering, always adding her special touch. Margaret Holland stepped in when Jill was unable to attend, and there is always a group of people willing to assist, which is greatly appreciated.

**Headmaster's Office Museum:** At our recent Presentation night the Museum was open and many of the families from various schools visited it. A new volunteer, Anne Reddacliff from the State Library, has been cataloguing the items in the museum.

**Display Cases:** Jocelyn Brennan-Horley has continued to maintain her well-researched displays in the hallway. The subject is always interesting and well-presented, and these exhibits help promote our Society to the general public.

**Computer System:** Our computer system is outstanding, thanks to Peter Stehn, who dedicates many hours to the smooth running of the system. It is very user-friendly and many new resources have been added. We now have a network of 13 computers providing access to more than 700 computer-based resources.

**Kupedia:** Another of our projects, initiated/managed by Peter Stehn, is *Kupedia*. This is a web-based program containing articles on people, places and events relating to Ku-ring-gai. *Kupedia* now contains 277 articles extracted from *The Historian* dated 1972–1996. Our thanks to Jill Armstrong and Lorraine Swalwell for their sterling work on this project.

**Finances:** The Treasurer's Report sets out the detailed accounts of the Society. Peter Stehn, with advice from Annet Latham, has instigated new accounting programmes to help us with reports and budgeting.

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

### ***Publications***

**The Historian:** *The Historian* was again an excellent publication, containing well-researched articles on the Killara area. Thanks go to Jennifer Harvey, Kathie Rieth, and the very dedicated team of researchers, indexers and writers.

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

**Book Publishing:** The Society has published two high-quality books this year, related to our 50th Anniversary: *Writing Ku-ring-gai History Competition* and *Ku-ring-gai Historical Society – the first 50 years 1963-2013*.

**Website:** Our webmaster Graham Lewis has maintained our website, and continues to add and update material, keeping the site at a high standard. The majority of our research enquiries come through this site. It also provides access to many of the entries to our anniversary competition.

**Social Media:** Twelve months ago the Society entered into the world of Social Media. One cannot know whether this initiative has brought new members to the Society, but it has certainly brought the Society to the notice of individuals and organisations here and internationally. Our thanks go to Jill Ball and Jackie van Bergen for initiating and maintaining our Blog and Facebook page.

### ***Groups***

**Family History:** Led by Jo Harris, this active group's Family History meetings have been very well attended, with

speakers organised for most of the afternoon sessions.

**Built Heritage:** Every Tuesday the Built Heritage group assists residents, researchers, architects, etc. with building and land enquiries. Jennifer Harvey continues to co-ordinate this enthusiastic group.

**Preservation:** Wednesday, our Preservation Day, is always enjoyed by the group. This team of volunteers, led by Ann Barry, type, scan, sort, file and organise our records. We now have a number of people who are working independently on databases and other computer input.

**The Special Interest Groups** now include: Scottish Group initiated by Jenny Joyce; Irish Group co-ordinated by Ric Hall; German Group co-ordinated by Peter Stehn; Mac Users Group co-ordinated by Jackie van Bergen; and the WWI group co-ordinated by Kathie Rieth and David Wilkins.

**Research Team:** Bruce and Beverly Robinson co-ordinate a small group of researchers that handles enquiries that come into the Society. The majority of these are generated via our website.

**Workshops and Training Courses:** There has been a full programme over the last year. We have continued to run workshops on various topics, such as: *Blogs and Facebook* – Jill Ball and Jackie van Bergen; *Hands on with Trove* – Jackie van Bergen; *Land Research* (using the Land & Property Information website) – Lorna Watt and Ric Hall; *Using 'Ancestry'* – Peter Stehn; *DNA for genealogists* – Kerry Farmer; *Stories of early Ku-ring-gai* and *How to research your Family History* – Jo Harris; *Computer security and backup* – Peter Stehn; *Social Media Q&A* – Jill Ball; *Picasa* – Jill Ball and Tony Prince; and Jo Harris is in the midst of presenting a *Family History Course*.

**Outreach and Tours:** Our thanks to Jo Harris, who has been our main outreach speaker, bringing our Society to the notice of a large number of groups. She also instigated a tour on the Hawkesbury River, and a tour of the Army Depot at Suakin Street, Pymble.

Many of our members have received awards for their contributions to the Society and Community at large. Congratulations to them all on a job well done.

The past 50 years have seen many changes in the Society. However, our aims remain virtually unchanged – we still undertake research, collect, preserve and record local historical information.

The committee would like to thank our members and volunteers for their support over the last year.

*Jennifer Harvey, President*

*On behalf of the Committee, August 2013*

## **Family History Conference**

29th Annual Conference of NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies will be in Canberra on **21 and 22 September 2013**, with a Family History Fair on **September 20**.

See <http://www.conference2013.org.au/>

## **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, obtain the postcode and search the catalogue e.g. 2031/CUR – in this case it is filed under Sydney Places.

*Local Newspapers 1750-1920 England and Wales, Channel Islands, Isle of Man: A Select Location List* second edition (2002) compiled by Jeremy Gibson, Brett Langston and Brenda W. Smith and published by Federation of Family History Societies – ISBN 1 86006 157 5. The Contents provides a list of pre-1974 counties. Newspapers which lasted less than four years generally have been omitted (use the catalogue in [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk) to search for these). Only from the mid-eighteenth century did local events start to appear in the provincial press. OVS/UK

*Goldrush Doctors at Ballarat* by Keith Macrae Bowden, published by the author in 1977, traces the fortunes of a number of medical practitioners on the Ballarat goldfields between the years 1850 and 1860. The book has 125 pages and a few illustrations – ISBN: 0 9599703 2 0. GOL/BOW

*The Phillimore Atlas & Index of Parish Registers* 3rd edition edited by Cecil R. Humphery-Smith, reprinted 2010, ISBN: 978 1 86077 239 9. The publication, 297 pages, covers England, Scotland and Wales, and shows pre-1832 parochial boundaries, including starting dates of surviving registers and other information. You need to check this book out to appreciate its value. OVS/HUM

*Biographical Register of the New South Wales Parliament 1856-1901* by C.N. Connolly, published in 1983, ISBN: 0 7081 1176 9. The book is as the title suggests; it does not have any illustrations and is 372 pages. BIO/CON

*Biographical Register of the New South Wales Parliament 1901-1970* by Heather Radi, Peter Spearritt and Elizabeth Hinton, published 1979 with 302 pages, ISBN: 0 7081 1756 2. The book is as the title suggests – it does not have photographs of any of the members, but it does have maps showing the party result of the 1932 election and the electoral boundaries in 1971 (map detail is limited). BIO/RAD

*General Musters of New South Wales, Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land 1811* edited by Carol J. Baxter and published by ABGR in association with the Society of Australian Genealogists 1987. The book has 192 pages and the information provided includes status (convict/free), name, ship of arrival, trial date, trial place, and sentence. In the appendixes you may find additional information such as alias, colonial convictions, and some analysis of the data. CEN/1811

*Bruce Robinson*

## **Researching a WWI Ku-ring-gai soldier?**

If so, please talk to the coordinators of our WWI Writer's group about your research. We're working on Ku-ring-gai WWI soldiers for a KHS publication, and would love to have you join us.

We have some great resources, and an eager team. So, if you are researching or writing, or would like to, please contact Kathie Rieth on [frithie@netdata.com.au](mailto:frithie@netdata.com.au)

# FAMILY MATTERS

## August Family History Meeting

### 11.00 am Session

This was held in the Research Centre and 17 people were present.

The topic was 'House of Commons Parliamentary Papers' and it was presented by Jenny Joyce. She distributed a guide sheet that explained how to access the site through National Library of Australia or eResources at State Library of NSW. This site contains information for England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and the Colonies. It has an eclectic mix of information, dating in some areas up to 2005. Topics of special interest for NSW are: Land Grants in NSW; Lists of Appointments in NSW; and Applications for Convicts. Jenny accessed 20 different topics, which was only a fraction of the invaluable information available. As Jo said, "We will all have to live on frozen meals this week as all our time will be spent searching this amazing site."

Jenny also demonstrated how to use Phillimore's Parish Atlas, a recent addition to our library.

### 2.00 pm Session

Jo Harris opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, especially our speaker, Mr Bruce McRae, his son Peter and granddaughter Jessica.

'Family Tree Connections', available in the rooms, has many family history stories and new websites. New books available are many and varied, including some that Gordon Library has donated to KHS.

### Book Reports

Atlas of the Great Irish Famine; Scots Corner; Convicts of Port Phillip District; *Descent* magazine article entitled "New Perspectives on Arthur Phillip, first Governor of NSW."

Gore Hill Cemetery online database of burials is now available through the Willoughby Council site.

Exhibitions – Canberra: 'Turner from the Tate' at NGA; 'Glorious Days – 1913' at National Museum of Australia. Further afield: 'Tokyo – change of capital from Kyoto'; and 18th century scrolls at Ido Art Gallery.

### Speaker

Jo introduced and interviewed Mr Bruce McRae, who spoke on 'Highways and Byways of an interesting life.'

Bruce Lewin McRae was born in Epping (a family tradition), but lived in Walcha, where his father owned the local store and his mother was active in CWA, Red Cross, the Presbyterian Church, etc. His middle name was his grandmother's surname. He was an only child, and started school in Walcha, but at the age of 10 he went as a boarder to Armidale, and then to The Scots College so that he could learn to play the bagpipes. Pipe music remained a passion for all his adult years, both playing and adjudicating.

At 15 he started work in his father's store. Its busiest day was Saturday, when the country people came into town, dropped their shopping lists into the store, and spent the rest of the day socialising and playing tennis and golf. Everything on the lists was ready, wrapped up and in their cars at the end of the day, even the goods they wanted from other stores.

That's old-fashioned service!

The Depression years were not as great a hardship in New England as in the city. The store had 40 employees but he does remember there were swaggies coming through Walcha looking for work. His father sold the store in 1943 and moved to 1 St John's Avenue, Gordon.

In the war he went down to Martin Place with his mates to enlist in the Army. When he put his age up he was found out; he was sent to the RAAF marquee, where he enlisted. He did his training in Ballarat. After the war he worked in a store in Lithgow and later came to Sydney, where he worked for a hardware store in Gordon that later became BBC Hardware, now Bunnings. He travelled for the store on the South Coast and the Monaro until he retired. He lived at Wahroonga (his son now lives in the old home), and now lives at the Grange, where he has a birds eye view of the Mazda dealership across the Pacific Highway.

During Questions, Lesley Cheadle, one of our members in the audience, said she had lived next door to the Walcha store as her father was the Bank of NSW manager, and her parents and Bruce's parents had been great friends. Bruce was bowled over to meet her again.

A vote of thanks was moved by Bruce Robinson, whose father had been postmaster at Lithgow at the time Bruce McRae was living there – more connections.

Afternoon tea followed and the Lucky Door prizes were won by Jenny Joyce (*The Opposite Shore – North Sydney and its People*), Elaine Turnidge (*Yesterday's Daughters – Stories of our past by women over 70*), and Jan Cook (*From Strength to Strength, an autobiography by Sara Henderson*).

*Based on notes by Jean Smith*

## Roll up to Ku-ring-gai Historical Society's 50th Anniversary Dinner

Why not get together with friends and meet like-minded people over dinner at the picturesque Roseville Golf Club to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society?

Formed on 7 November fifty years ago, the Society has flourished and promises to continue to flourish in the years to come.

The dinner is on the exact date fifty years after the formation – Thursday 7 November 2013 – and promises to be both informative and enjoyable.

A two course meal, with a pre-dinner drink and canapés, will be served from 6.30 p.m.

Enquiries can be made by emailing [dinner@khs.org.au](mailto:dinner@khs.org.au) or phoning Don on 9144 6948 with your name and contact details.

## *Ku-ring-gai Heroes of World War I*

Members of the Society have by now heard about our project to publish a book or books on the Ku-ring-gai veterans of World War I.

The research has led to some extraordinary discoveries, not the least being the number of highly decorated soldiers whose courage never ceases to amaze.



This article on Major Blair Anderson Wark VC, DSO is the first about some of those heroes. Not only was Major Wark the only Victoria Cross recipient with a Ku-ring-gai connection, but he also was the highest ranked Australian to be awarded the VC in The Great War. The Victoria Cross is the highest decoration for gallantry and heroism “in the face of the enemy” and just 64 Australians were awarded this between 1914 and 1918. Blair Wark’s connection with Ku-ring-gai was post-war, when from the late 1920s to the 1940s he and his family lived at 61-63 Pentecost Avenue, Pymble.

Captain Wark was *Mentioned in Despatches* for his bravery, including during the tragic battle at Fromelles in July 1916, where he was severely wounded. He recovered and was promoted to Major. In 1917 Major Wark’s company repelled enemy counter attacks and disrupted others due very much to his tactics and vigorous patrolling with his personal reconnaissance. His actions of skill and great personal courage saw him decorated with the *Distinguished Service Order*.

From June 1918 through to the final offensive against the Hindenburg Line, “this brilliant young major” at times commanded the 32nd Battalion. Over the course of three days he led from the front in a series of advances, moving fearlessly at the head, and at times far in advance of, his troops, and swept through the village of Nauroy taking forty prisoners. He and a few men then rushed and captured four guns of a battery of 77 mm field artillery, and ten of their crew. Pushing rapidly forward with two others, he surprised and captured fifty Germans. The next day he dashed forward and silenced machine guns that were causing heavy casualties. For these actions Major Wark was awarded the *Victoria Cross*. The Brigade commander stated “I have no hesitation in saying that the success of the operation was largely due to Major Wark’s remarkable courage and leadership”. The final words of his citation stated with the brief and eloquent sentence, “His work was invaluable.”

*David Wilkins*

## **BUILT HERITAGE**

### *Lindfield Soldiers’ Memorial Park and Gates*

Many times over the years, I’ve been to the playing fields in Tryon Road Lindfield, delivering and



collecting boys (mine and others’) for rugby practice and games – cricket too – and always admired the gates that stand at the entrance. I thought they were very elegant and rather grand, but knew nothing of their history.

Part of our research on Ku-ring-gai veterans of WWI is gathering information on the memorials erected in their honour so I was particularly keen to find what I could on this very familiar one.

Shortly after the war a committee was formed to erect a memorial in Lindfield to those who took part, and to create ‘out of virgin bush ... a sports ground, where ... a pair of handsome memorial gates give entrance’.

In August 1921 TJ Andrews of *Palmwoods*, Tryon Road (on its corner with Nelson Road), announced that a prize of £10 would be awarded for the best design for a gate entrance to Lindfield Memorial Park. Notes in files at KHS reveal that the design of architect Henry Lockley, of Highlands Avenue, Pymble won the cash prize, which he then donated to the RSL. Lockley was a brother of John Gilmour Lockley, Shire President in 1924, and was employed in the Ways and Works branch of the Railway Department.

Tenders were called in May and June of 1922 by Andrews, with the plans available for inspection at his house in Tryon Road or his office at 191 Clarence Street Sydney. I’ve not yet been able to find who built the gates, but suspect it was Andrews himself, this being Thomas James Edwin Andrews, monumental mason, son of Thomas James Andrews, undertaker.

The SMH of Monday 6 November 1922 reported: ‘Memorial gates of freestone and wrought iron, to which are to be added tablets bearing the names of 200 men from the Lindfield district who served in the war, were opened by Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal on Saturday [4th]. The gates form the entrance to Lindfield Recreation Ground, a fine reserve of 58 acres, and, together with improvements to the oval, have cost £1300 ... Mr HE Pratten, MP and Mr EJ Loxton, MLA also spoke. When General Rosenthal opened the gates silence was observed for three minutes. The Rev LJ McDonald offered up a prayer, and then Kipling’s ‘Recessional’ was sung. A children’s choir and the local scouts, led by Lieutenant Westbrook, provided a programme of patriotic songs.’

The Lindfield Parks Advisory Committee did not rest with the completion of the park gates, but continued their work clearing areas and installing picnic tables, fireplaces and play equipment, and caring for the many different species of native fauna in the 300 acre reserve. The result we enjoy to this day.

*Kathie Rieth*

## Copy for Newsletter

General copy for publication should be lodged with the Editor, Bob Barry ([bob\\_barry@optusnet.com.au](mailto: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 the members who have recently joined the Society.

Leena Bamann	Wahroonga
Ronald & Noeline Cable	St Ives
Lowana Chapman	Roseville
John Creenaune	Waitara
Margaret Richardson	West Pymble
Daryl Rickards	Warrawee
Guy Smith	Nth Turrumurra
Rhonda Trollope	Nth Turrumurra

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

## September Ku-ring-gai QUIZ

(answers p. 2)

- Primus St, Roseville was later re-named?  
a) Bulgaria Ave    b) Batavia Ave    c) Belgium Ave  
d) Brazil Ave
- Irish Town Rd Pymble and Turrumurra was later re-named?  
a) Bobbin Head Rd    b) Brentwood Ave    c) Billabong Ave  
d) Bannockburn Rd
- Gertrude St Gordon was later re-named?  
a) Bushlands Ave    b) Bromley Ave    c) Bridge Rd  
d) Bungalow Ave
- Albert St Roseville was later re-named?  
a) Bromborough Rd    b) Braemar Place    c) Boundary St  
d) Babbage Rd
- Hilda St Wahroonga was later re-named?  
a) Burns Rd    b) Bareena Ave    c) Borambil St  
d) Billyard Ave

*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 7 Sep** **Family History**  
**11.00 am** *FamilySearch Workshop; Q&A*  
**2.00 pm** **General Meeting followed by**  
Three speakers from *The Arthur Phillip Chapter of The Fellowship of First Fleeters.*
- Sat 21 Sep** **2.00 pm Society General Meeting**  
*Storms across the North Shore*  
A meteorologist's insights into extreme weather conditions that have periodically devastated parts of the North Shore.  
Speaker: **Richard Whitaker**
- Sat 5 Oct** **Family History**  
**11.00 am** *More intranet and internet resources.*  
**2.00 pm** **General Meeting followed by**  
Story-telling-disinterring Early Convict Settlers of the Hawkesbury. Speaker **Louise Wilson**
- Sat 19 Oct** **2.00 pm Society General Meeting**  
*Shakin' the World Over: the Greek-Australian Milk Bar.*  
In 1932 the world's first "American-style" milk bar opened in Martin Place! Hear much more from the foremost "milk bar" historian, **Leonard Janiszewski.**

## Administration

President	Jennifer Harvey	9489 6390
Vice Presidents	Jo Harris	9489 4393
	Lorna Watt	9440 8010
Treasurer	Peter Stehn	9489 9488
Secretary	Trish Thomson	9499 8659
Immed. Past President	Jackie van Bergen	9403 3044
Committee Members	Jill Ball	9653 1888
	Ann Barry	9144 6480
	Helen Davies	9416 5825
	Annet Latham	9440 3998
	Graham Lewis	9416 5818

### Appointees

Accessions	Jennifer Wallin	9983 1871
Catering Supplies	Jill Nicholson	9144 6948
Computer Systems Manager	Peter Stehn	9489 9488
Curators	Jennifer Harvey, Ann Barry	
Family History Leader	Jo Harris	9489 4393
Family History Committee	Margaret Holland	9488 5452
	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
	Yvette Reeve	9987 0904
	Beverly Robinson	9988 3775
	Jean Smith	9498 4468
	Elaine Turnidge	9899 2635

### The Historian

Editors: Jennifer Harvey, Kathie Rieth  
Indexing: Beth Facer

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Research Team	Max Farley, Jo Harris, Jennifer Harvey, Beverly and Bruce Robinson, Trish Thomson	
Speakers Programme	Beverly Dunstan	9419 8526
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