



# KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Incorporating the Ku-ring-gai Family History Centre • Patron: The Mayor of Ku-ring-gai

Affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society, the National Trust of Australia (NSW),  
The Society of Australian Genealogists, and the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc.

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Monthly Newsletter

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## Our Historian of the Year

The selection of Jennifer Harvey as the Society's *Historian of the Year* for 2006 was announced at the Annual Meeting on 20 September.

Jennifer is well known to those who work with her on a number of projects in our Rooms but not, perhaps, to many of our membership at large. Something of her, her background, experience and community activities is contained in our *Member Profile* Page 3 this issue.

Members would well know of the substantial amount of research she does for the HISTORIAN and of the major role she plays in its production. Very few, though, would be conscious of another of her activities of particular relevance to her selection - the impressive work she has done in the very large and specialised field of land ownership and usage within Ku-ring-gai. In this undertaking she often begins from the days of the initial grants and "first owners" then proceeds through many of the subsequent owners to today. This is a monumental task which will never reach completion but the results of much of her labours are now available in our Rooms for use by researchers. As time passes and people become more familiar with it, we feel that her work in this field will become even more widely recognised, valued and accessed.

Jennifer joins the honoured group of earlier *Historians of the Year* - Ian Ramage (2003), John R E Brown (2004), and Jo Harris (2005).

Congratulations Jennifer!

## New Committee Elected

The 20 September Annual Meeting saw few changes to our Committee for 2006/2007. It is:

President: Kevin Callinan  
Vice Presidents: Ann Barry; Jo Harris  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Doug Milne  
Immed Past Pres. Max Farley  
Committee: Kerrin Cook; Helen Davies;  
Sue Dunston; Jennifer Harvey;  
David Wilkins

Ann Barry becomes a Vice President in place of Helen Davies, who chose not to stand. Helen remains on the Committee however. The Society owes our Committee gratitude for the large amount of work it does on behalf of members and the community.

## Coming Meetings

### NEXT SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING

**Wednesday 18 October**

**7.45 pm – GENERAL MEETING**

Guest Speaker:

Kevin Shaw (Ryde Historical Society)

Topic:

**The History and Heritage of the Parramatta River**  
(from its early exploration, its 19th and 20th century use for transportation and industrial uses, and more recently for sport, recreation and residential development).



*A mill on the Parramatta River*

Supper will be available

Visitors welcome

### NEXT FAMILY HISTORY MEETING

**Saturday 7 October**

**11am - Members' Research Session**

*Bring along your questions*

**2 pm - Family History Meeting**

General Reports on activities and events followed by

Speaker: Julie Werner (member)

Topic : **"My German research"**

Jo Harris will then talk on Digital Cameras and laptop computers for the modern genealogist

Afternoon Tea will be available.

Visitors welcome.

We were all sorry to see Alison Trotter not renominate as Secretary. Alison has done a fine job but, having a full time and very responsible position in the medical field, she found it difficult to give the commitment as Secretary she felt she would like to have done. Fortunately one of our members has offered to act as a Minute Secretary for the time being.

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## From the Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting on 20 September received the Committee Report for the year to 30 June 2006, the Treasurer's Report for the same period, selected the Committee for 2006/2007, and carried out the other necessary formalities.

In speaking to the Committee Report, President Kevin Callinan highlighted a number of features including:

- \* the healthy increase in Membership
- \* the increase in space allocated for the Society's Research Centre
- \* the increased usage of our Rooms
- \* the increase in our research resources
- \* the growth in our Collection, its reorganisation and Catalogue updating..
- \* the large amount of scanning of our photographs – an ongoing task
- \* the continuation of the successful SNAP project to collect "as is" photos of Ku-ring-gai
- \* the expanding Family History activities with monthly meetings and Training Sessions
- \* the opening of the Headmasters Office Museum in the Old Gordon School
- \* the restoration of the grave of John Fitz-Maurice, Principal of Abbotsholme College, in St John's Cemetery
- \* the issue of the respected HISTORIAN and ten Newsletters in revised format
- \* the ongoing revision of our Website
- \* the strength of the Society's financial position and receipt of special purpose grants
- \* various activities connected with the celebration of the centenary of local government
- \* participation in the St Ives Festival on the Green and the operation of a Social History Tent
- \* the active participation of our nominee on Council's Built Heritage Advisory Committee
- \* interesting and enjoyable monthly meetings of the Society with Guest Speakers
- \* the input and enthusiasm of the Society's large band of Volunteers
- \* the conduct of two historical tours to nearby and country areas.

A copy of the Report is mailed with this Newsletter.

The Annual Meeting was preceded by the normal General Meeting and followed by a talk by Anne Higham on Post War Architecture in Ku-ring-gai.

## Walking History

Our August Speaker was Graham Spindler. A former English and History teacher, he is now Education and Community Relations Manager at NSW Parliament House and, amongst other posts, is the Chairman of the Historic Houses Trust Members Executive.

Graham says that people "walk" for all kinds of reasons – to exercise, to get somewhere, and to survive.

Walking, he believes, is the most engaging form of tourism, whose origins probably lie in the pilgrimages of former times. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, for example, were to entertain walkers on the journey.

Walks can be organised around all kinds of subjects – literature is a good start but possible topics are limitless. He instanced in particular a "literary" walk he did in the Yorkshire Dales in pursuit of James Herriott. Another was walking the site of the Battle of the Somme.

He began writing walking tour books himself after consulting some and feeling he could do better. He is now writing his fifth, his previous ones (including "Walking the Lower North Shore" and "Uncovering Sydney") being virtually sold out. When he began leading local walks, he developed some personal guidelines:

- \* choose locations close to people's everyday lives (we drive too much)
- \* be well organised (e.g. note daylight saving; note local physical conditions)
- \* take along poetry, or recordings to enrich the experience
- \* the walk should have a point – noting perhaps changes in a place over time and differing social circumstance
- \* find unexpected places on the way.

There are various good walks around the lower North Shore Harbour shoreline sponsored by local Councils and the Harbour Trust, with printed maps available.

Graham helped develop the biggest of these projects: The Harbour Circle Walk, which opened in September 2005, between the Harbour and Gladesville bridges. At a total distance of 28 km, this walk takes 4 days, but can be done in short legs e.g. 2 hours. There are another 50 km of connecting side loops available for those interested. He is firmly of the view that such visionary projects should be instigated by volunteers, not left to bureaucrats.

Maps and Graham's extensive historical notes re the Harbour Circle walk (including public transport, connections etc.), can be obtained from NSW Department of Planning; Sydney Visitor Centre at The Rocks and Darling Harbour, and participating councils (North Sydney, City of Sydney, etc), or download from [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/harbour](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/harbour).

Noel Blake moved the vote of thanks to our very informative, enthusiastic and entertaining speaker.

*- based on notes prepared by Helen Davies*

## A Red Sticker?

If this Newsletter came to you with a red sticker it means you are on our unfinancial list. Immediate payment will enable us to restore your name – something we would like to be able to do.

## Cossington listed

Famed post-impressionist painter Grace Cossington Smith (1892-1984) spent almost all her life at her family home, *Cossington*, 43 Ku-ring-gai Avenue, Turramurra. Born Grace Smith, she adopted the name *Cossington* which her parents had given the home. It is pleasing to see that Planning Minister the Hon Frank Sartor has accepted a Heritage Council recommendation to list the home on the State Heritage Register.

## Quiz

- Q1. When was the railway opened between Wahroonga and Milsons Point?  
(a) 1855 (b) 1890 (c) 1893 (d) 1901
- Q2. When did the Presbyterian Ladies College become the Pymble Ladies College?  
(a) 1945 (b) 1967 (c) 1977 (d) 1982
- Q3. When did the Australasian Scout Jamboree open in the Bradfield/West Lindfield/Fullers Bridge area?  
(a) 1924 (b) 1935 (c) 1938 (d) 1946
- Q4. When was the building that was to become the Marian St Theatre in Killara built?  
(a) 1906 (b) 1916 (c) 1946 (d) 1965
- Q5. When was the district of St Ives rezoned from rural to domestic?  
(a) 1935 (b) 1946 (c) 1959 (d) 1966
- Q6. When was the first recorded burial at St Johns – Ku-ring-gai's only cemetery?  
(a) 1845 (b) 1867 (c) 1883 (d) 1892

## Recent Acquisitions

Recent additions to our Collection include:

TIME FLIES - the memoirs of Dorothy Knox – 30 years headmistress of Pymble Ladies College. 410 pages.

PIONEER WOMEN OF THE BUSH AND OUTBACK (Jennifer Isaacs). Lansdowne Press (1990). 256 indexed pages.

DUBBO TO THE TURN OF THE CENTURY 1818-1900 (Marion Dormer). Macquarie Publications. 196 indexed pages.

PERMANENT ADDRESSES (1987) and EVEN MORE PERMANENT ADDRESSES (1989). Famed storyteller Rabbi Rudi Brasch finds stories behind gravestones throughout Australia.

SYDNEY TAKES SHAPE – a collection of maps from Foundation to Federation. (Kelly and Cocker). Doak Press in association with the Macleay Museum – the University of Sydney (1978). 50 pages.

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO SYDNEY IN 1882. Originally a Gibbs Shallard publication, A&R produced this facsimile in 1981. 140 pages.

## Member Profile - Jennifer Harvey



Jennifer is a researcher and archivist with a special interest in local history, built heritage, and the railways. She was born and educated in NZ. Her training as a Kindergarten Teacher unexpectedly gave her an entry into built heritage because in 1971 she was employed by the Auckland University to research the design of pre-school buildings.

While living in Taranaki, New Zealand, she became more involved with education. She rewrote the handbook for the Kindergarten Union of Taranaki; was on the selection panel for Kindergarten Teachers College; a member of the Kindergarten Union Board in New Plymouth and President for Kindergarten In-Service Training in Auckland and Taranaki. She started researching her family history which involved her travelling to Great Britain in search of answers.

The family left for overseas and spent six months touring Europe before moving to Sydney in 1976. It was in Singapore during the early 1980s that Jennifer first became aware of the importance of saving heritage buildings for future generations. Raffles Hotel was one building whose fate hung in the balance along with Bugi Street and Chinatown.

Returning to Australia the family moved to a hobby farm in Gippsland for the next two years. She enrolled full time in Fine Arts at TAFE College, Moe and completed the course at Hornsby TAFE when returning to Sydney. She majored in photography which was to become the major component of work that she exhibited.

Jennifer and husband Graeme then headed to Borneo, this time leaving their two children behind. She became a volunteer teacher at the International School in Bintulu and immersed herself in the local history and culture. After 3 years they moved to Kuala Lumpur, where she joined the Heritage Trust of Malaysia and helped research and collate information on the history and built heritage of that country. She also researched and photographed four heritage walking tours of Kuala Lumpur for the Malaysian Government. From these three years research she wrote a book on How to Date Buildings (using resources in National Archives of Malaysia).

In 2000 Jennifer returned to Sydney and joined the KHS Tuesday volunteers and KHS Committee. She is the KHS nominee on Ku-ring-gai Council's Heritage Advisory Committee. She is also a member of Council's Interim Tulkiyan Subcommittee and is currently working on its guidelines and procedures. In 2006 she was one of the recipients of the Mayor's special Awards for community service.

Jennifer was employed by NSW Rail Infrastructure to help research and co-write the statement of heritage impact for Gordon Railway Station. For the last four years she has been Co-Editor of the Historian. She is currently working on two publications.

# History Notes

## The Original Huon Park



*Huon Park* is now generally known as notable apartments in Bobbin Head Road North Turramurra, favoured particularly by the elderly. How many, though, have wondered why it carries the name *Huon* and whether it has any connection with the Huon pines of Tasmania. The answer is that the name *Huon Park* certainly does have a connection with Tasmania though the Apartments simply “borrowed” the name from the magnificent home built by George Bertrand Edwards in North Turramurra in 1896/1897.

The original *Huon Park* still exists. It is at 402 Bobbin Head Road on the opposite side of the road from the Apartments, several hundred metres towards the Highway. It was to become *Nazareth House* used as a convent by The Poor Sisters of Nazareth, and now operates as *Southern Cross Care*, which had its origins in the Knights of the Southern Cross. Though more modern buildings between it and Bobbin Head Road now hide much of its beauty, parts of it can still be seen.

Its first owner, George Edwards (not to be confused with J G “George” Edwards of Killara) bought an initial 50 acres in North Turramurra in 1895 in the belief it would prove a good area to grow fruit. He built his *Huon Park* within the next year or two and came to live in it with his wife Mary Ann and children. Though his expectations regarding its fruit potential were not realised, this would have been of little concern to him because he was a man of substance in both the business and political worlds.

George Edwards was born in Hobart in 1855 and became a journalist. He was an Australian Rules footballing friend of Henry (later Sir Henry) Jones, who had taken control of a Hobart jam factory owned by George Peacock after Peacock retired. In the course of time the new company became H Jones and Company and later known throughout Australia as IXL. It happened that George Edwards had married Mary Ann Peacock, a daughter of the original George Peacock and had come to Sydney as a part owner of the new company with the responsibility of managing its Sydney operation.

In the political sphere he was elected in 1901 to represent South Sydney in the very first Federal Parliament. He was re-elected and held the South Sydney seat until health and business pressures caused him to resign in 1907. In 1910 the political world drew him again and he won the North Sydney seat. He was highly regarded universally both for his ability, skills and gentlemanly bearing. One of his parliamentary achievements was to have Commonwealth Parliament agree that decimal coinage should be adopted for Australia. That it did not happen for another 60 years in no way diminishes the vision he showed on this and other topics.

The unfair fickleness of fate, however, has meant that it is not for his political nor business activities, nor even as the owner of *Huon Park*, that he is best remembered within Ku-ring-gai, but rather for the tragic manner of his death.

Ever keen to provide amenities in his home, he had a windmill to pump water from a well filled by water coming from the roof. The water went into a tank on the roof and was fed down by gravity for household use running water. This posed no problems but it was another initiative, of which he was exceptionally proud, that was to bring disaster. This was his acetylene gas generator to provide gas for lighting purposes and which operated very well for 14 years.

At breakfast on the fateful Saturday, 14 February of 1911, he remarked to his family that the valve on the gasometer, located in a nearby shed, had broken and that he would have to repair it. To do so he called for assistance from a Scottish tiler from Newtown, Mr John Graham, who had been working on *Huon Park*’s roof. John Graham had said he had some knowledge of acetylene gas installations. Exactly what happened will never be known because at about noon his daughter, who was sewing on an overlooking balcony, heard a loud report (said to have been heard as far away as Chatswood), saw the tank fly in the air and the iron roof on the shed scatter in all directions. Both George Edwards and John Graham were frightfully injured and pronounced dead by a Dr Blackwood who came quickly. The Sydney Morning Herald of the following day had a graphic description of the tragedy, together with statements from the NSW Premier (Mr McGowan) and Prime Minister Deakin.

His widow, Mrs Mary Ann Edwards, had planned to leave Sydney on the 23 March for London via Japan and America to attend the Coronation in London. A daughter, Marjorie, was to accompany them as far as Japan on her honeymoon. As it happened, George Edwards’s widow chose never to live at *Huon Park* again.

- Max Farley

(with additional information from Evelyn Wyatt)

## Tree in Hiding?

Ian Ramage, our Wahroonga historian, is interested to know more about a tree planted in Wahroonga Park by Sir Thomas Bavin on 7 October 1933. Sir Thomas represented Gordon in the NSW Legislative Assembly in 1917-1920 and again in 1927-35. He was Nationalist Premier from 1927 until 1930 when his Party lost to Jack Lang. Lang was controversially dismissed by the Governor in 1932 and the new United Australia Party won under Sir Bertram Stevens. Bavin and Stevens had been in serious conflict over the formation of the UAP. They were tumultuous times and Bavin, the member for Gordon, had been in the thick of it. In 1933, when the tree was planted, he was undoubtedly off-side with his Premier. All of which is interesting background and would render "his" tree of particular local significance.

Ian's problem is that no one seems to know what particular tree of the many in the Park is the one planted by Sir Thomas. Nor does it seem known whether it still exists. All enquiries have so far proved fruitless.

Does *anyone* have any answers? If so, we, and Ian, would appreciate a call.

## Familiar Names

Most members are familiar with local names such as Pymble, Babbage and McIntosh, and know they commemorate early residents. But how many know much of the people themselves?

**Pymble** would perhaps be the best known of them all. **Robert Pymble**, a silk weaver born in 1783, came to Australia from Herefordshire as a free settler in 1821 with his wife, Mary, and young children Ann, Jane, William, James and Eliza. A son, Robert Junior, was born here soon after arrival. He had been promised he could select land even before he came to Australia and almost immediately chose what was to become Pymble. Tragically, his wife Mary died at the age of 33 before they could develop the new area, and he remained unmarried for the remainder of his life. He nevertheless set about clearing the land and building a home in which to raise his family. The home was where Pymble Station now is. As was frequently the case in those times he became a timbergetter and orchardist. Several generations of Pymbles were to remain prominent in Pymble and there are many descendants spread around Ku-ring-gai. (*In passing, one wonders whether Pymble's home "Merry" Vale, which gave rise to Merrivale Avenue, was a tribute to Robert Pymble's deceased wife Mary.*)

The name **Babbage** is well known to those who travel along **Babbage Road** towards Roseville Bridge. **Eden Herschell Babbage** was the son of a London-born engineer and scientist who migrated to Adelaide in 1852. Eden's grandfather, Charles Babbage, was Cambridge Professor of Mathematics and a mechanical "genius" who invented the calculating machine. Eden himself was born in 1844 in Genoa where his father was working as an engineer. He

worked with the Bank of Australasia in Australia and New Zealand. He spent the most memorable part of his life in Roseville where he lived in his home *Rawhiti* at the top of Clanville Road and one of Roseville's first houses. His commitment to local affairs earned him the title "The Father of Roseville".

The **McIntosh** family is recalled by **McIntosh Street** in Gordon. Many families contain a "mixed bag" of virtue and eccentricity. The McIntosh family were both those things and more. The first **Robert McIntosh** (1781-1829) was born in Perthshire, Scotland, came to Australia in 1814 as Bandmaster of the 46<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot. He was accompanied by his wife Ellen and children - six year-old Elizabeth, Robert (age 5) and John (age about 2). They later had five more children. He was mainly associated with Pittwater and held land there, as did his son Robert (c1809-1889). It was this son who was the centre of later Court actions when the Crown claimed that he had posed as his father to receive a Pittwater grant intended for the father. Robert II's brother James also claimed that this Robert II, who married Jane Pymble, was not the rightful heir to their father's property. A descendant, Clifford S McIntosh (1909-1994), included the details in his book titled *Bandmaster to Farmer/Settler*. Amongst the many of the McIntosh family who were to distinguish themselves on the positive side were three of Robert II's children - Reverend George McIntosh (1833-1917) who served the Anglican Church in many parts of Sydney; William H McIntosh (1835-1919) who was a founding Trustee of St John's, Gordon (his home was where the Gordon Arcade is now) and Robert III (1831-1902), who married Elizabeth Archbold and who lived on "Church Hill" opposite St John's. Robert died unexpectedly in bed in the morning of 9 June. Elizabeth went to call him for breakfast and found him dead. She herself died within hours.

*Archbold Road* is a well used thoroughfare named after **Richard Archbold**, born c1793 in County Kildare and who came in 1813 as a convict. An educated man, it seems likely he was from a family which had known wealth and may have fallen to theft to fund a gambling habit. He married locally-born Mary Pawley in 1817 and was at times both a hotelier and the proprietor of a school. In 1824 he was granted 600 acres on the southern side of Boundary Street, Roseville, encompassing much of the eastern side of Chatswood. He did not work it however and instead acquired the 400 acres of Daniel Mathew's Clanville Estate north of Boundary Street in Roseville to Tryon Road in Lindfield. He and Mary were the first permanent farmers in the area and set out to raise their nine children born from 1818 until 1836. Tragedy struck when Richard died in 1836 leaving a 36-year-old widow and nine children between 18 years and 8 months. They lived in isolation in what was very much the "bush". Mary, with the support of the older children and the assistance of her "assigned servants" (convicts), successfully assumed the responsibility of operating the farm until her own death in 1850. By this time the children were old enough to carry on, and Archbold descendants remained prominent for several generations.

# Family Matters

2 September

## Family History Meetings

The **11 am Discussion Session** was attended by 28 people and took the form of *QUESTIONS & ANSWERS* covering a wide range of topics both on Family History research and accessing general information on the Society's computers. A valuable exercise indeed.

At the 2 pm General meeting there were some 35 present and the following topics were referred to:

- \* The **Introduction to Family History Course** was proceeding very well with participants improving their skills and enjoying themselves into the bargain.
- \* Our **Computers** are still in the process of being networked – a big job but nearing completion.
- \* Judith Fuller (9489 4243) is looking for someone (no computer skills needed) to help her put **Gordon Public School records** on to a database. Stella Green and Alison Lever are doing the same for **Shipping Lists**.
- \* At our **7 October meeting** Julie Werner will tell of her successes in investigating her **German ancestry** and Jo Harris will talk on **laptops and digital photography** for modern genealogists. Noel Schofield, who was to talk on his own family research, will not be able to do so.
- \* The **Royal Australian Historical Society** is to hold its annual conference in Hornsby RSL on 14 and 15 October. Registration is \$100 for KHS members for the two days.
- \* The trip to **Tocal, Paterson and Singleton** on 11 and 12 November is proving popular. Ring Jo (9489 4393).
- \* Requests for **BDM Transcripts** from Joy Murrin should be put in **Jo's** pigeonhole in the Rooms. Some have mistakenly been placed elsewhere recently. The returned transcripts are put in the "to be collected" cupboard and with recipients' names on the whiteboard.
- \* A **Volunteers' Book of Instructions** is now being assembled by committee member David Wilkins.
- \* **Joan Antarakis** visited the **Clarence River Society**. She bought some publications of the Grafton area and lists of cemeteries in the region.
- \* **Lyn Lawrie** visited the Mitchell Library to look at **Hill End** photographs, which had indexes where she found family names.

## WW2 Child Evacuees

Ku-ring-gai resident Eric Ward spoke to the Family History meeting on 2 September. He had been an 11 year old evacuee from England to Australia in WW2 and told of the experiences he shared with many others.

In 1940 the British Government invited working class families to nominate children aged between 5 and 15 for possible evacuation to Canada, Australia and New Zealand. 7000 spaces had been allocated but 211,800 applications were received! Eric and his 13 year-old sister Phyllis, both from Liverpool, were accepted. At the time it was thought the war would last only six months and the parting short. It did not turn out that way.

The children were given very short notice of their departure date and could only take a small suitcase 26" x 18" (66 cm x 46 cm). There were other passengers on Eric's ship in addition to the children, and these included British troops destined for Singapore. Eric does not know the fate of those troops, with whom the children became very friendly, but fears it would have been tragic. The ship was a Polish vessel and was to travel as part of a convoy of 28 made up of 17 passenger ships with 11 warship escorts. The convoy had to follow a zigzag course to help avoid enemy submarines. Eric said that at the outbreak of war, Germany already had over 2000 U-Boats deployed around the world's oceans and shipping losses were extensive.

Eric's ship had been built to travel in the North Atlantic, not the tropics, and was stifling hot. It was also before the days of stabilisers and the heavy Atlantic swells made sickness inevitable. The convoy left from Scotland in early August 1940 and his section of the convoy travelled via Sierra Leone, Capetown, Bombay, Colombo and Singapore. On arrival in Sydney, Phyllis was allocated to a couple in Yass who had sought a girl as company for their own daughter. The children did not want to be parted and the kindly couple agreed to take them both. Eric's detailed account of adjustment from life in Liverpool (cold, wet, a disciplined religious existence – three times to Church each Sunday), to what they encountered in Australia (freedom, sun, a relaxed lifestyle), was fascinating.

The years passed, the war ended, Eric did his Leaving Certificate at Yass, and Phyllis acquired a serious boyfriend named Trevor. However at war's end they had to return to Liverpool but they, and many like them, did not take kindly to the notion. On their return they found the weather atrocious, a lack of suitable career opportunities, and a rigid English hierarchical social system. Also, their parents were appalled at the deterioration of the children's religious commitment. After much soul-searching and anguish he and his sister decided to return to Australia, leaving their parents in Liverpool. It was obviously a difficult decision.

The parents felt they had lost their children forever and for them it had been a disaster.

Eric and Phyllis arrived back in Australia in July 1947 – Eric became a jackeroo and prospered. Phyllis married Trevor and began a long and happy marriage.

The scheme was abandoned after only 2300 children were evacuated. This happened after two later ships were sunk – one with the loss of 71 children. The Royal Navy said it did not have the resources to protect the ships when it was already fully stretched accompanying convoys essential to the war effort.

A most interesting talk.

- based on notes of the 2nd September Meeting by Evelyn Wyatt

## State Library Databases

A limited number of State Library databases are now available online on a trial basis. Those most likely to interest members are the London Times (1785-1985) and a number of American newspapers dating back to the mid 1800s. To access them it is necessary to register or use your existing Readers Card. This presents no problem. The site is [www.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au) then, under the squares *Find*, *Service*, *About* and *What's On*, there is mention of a "Notices: Access to selected text etc". Just follow that path. To each his own of course, but the Times database would probably have most appeal.

## So Shy!

Looking over past issues, it is somewhat surprising how shy our family researchers are about letting other members know of their triumphs, frustrations and results. Among those who have done so in the last several Newsletters include Elaine Turnidge, Joy Walker, Michael MacCabe, Judith Fuller and Diana Rose. And interesting it has been, too, to read of their exploits and those of their forebears. One would not have thought so many others who are so chatty at meetings would become shrinking violets when it comes to putting words on paper!

## Some Truths of a sort..

- \* 42.7 % of statistics are made up on the spot.
- \* I just got lost in thought. It wasn't familiar territory.
- \* Light travels faster than sound – which is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
- \* He who laughs last, thinks slowest.
- \* Depression is anger without enthusiasm.
- \* On the other hand, you have different fingers.
- \* A clear conscience is often the sign of a bad memory.
- \* If you think nobody cares, try missing a few payments.
- \* How do you tell when you are out of invisible ink?
- \* If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

## bitsnpieces@khs

\* **"Dead 'orse 'ill"**. Be warned – those who are not life-hardened should read no more. Dr Peter Degotadi grew up in the Eucalyptus Street area of St Ives in the 1930s and 40s and in his limited edition *Deg's Stories* tells of his childhood in the area. "Dead 'orse 'ill" was named because of the many skeletons of horses at the foot of the high cliff which surrounded the top of the hill. The story was that, in the olden days of St Ives, when the farm horses became too old to work they were led out onto the top of the cliff, blindfolded and walked over the edge. The story was probably true there were at least 40 skeletons, most just at the foot of the highest drop. We did warn you!

\* **Degotardi tells** too of "Fred", whose father had a small quarry at St Ives. It seems Fred always dressed the same way, irrespective of weather or season. He wore a gray woollen singlet with two buttons up to the neck, over this a woollen jumper with the arms cut off, and below, the trousers of a blue serge suit with the legs cut off above the knees. The final touch was a pair of long woollen socks with the feet cut off, and he always wore a dingy old pair of sandshoes. Deg's eldest brother, John, on one occasion asked Fred why he wore the outfit. Fred's reason was quite sensible: "So I can wash my hands and feet without getting undressed".

\* **The 2006 Census** is now behind us and it is of interest to note that thirty thousand people were employed to work on the Census. Most of these were collectors who were paid an average of between \$800 and \$1500 and had to call on about 500 homes at least twice.

\* **Back to the future.** Once upon a time the only toll Sydney-siders were asked to pay was when crossing the Harbour Bridge and there were continuing cries from the Press and public to remove it because the bridge was "paid for". In an earlier "once upon a time" tolls were a common way to raise funds for road maintenance. Back in the 1870s Willoughby Council placed a Toll Gate on the Highway at the foot of Roseville Hill to raise money from northern residents using the Highway through Chatswood. On 10 April 1873 James Archbold refused to pay and travellers used to fasten their horses to the gate and pull it down. "People power" had the toll abandoned.

\* **Water restrictions** – The following is an extract from a daily paper: "hoses, fixed or held by hand cannot be used for watering gardens. Ordinary users cannot use hoses for washing motor and other vehicles, ramps, paths or pavements, walls or floors of buildings, yachts or similar craft". The result of climate change? The quotation is from the Sydney Morning Herald of 8 August 1940. The more things change, the more ....

## Copy for Newsletter

General copy for publication should be lodged with the Acting Editor, Max Farley at (mmff@ozemail.com.au) **as early as possible** but no later than 10th of the month (except 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 readers can reproduce it in whole or part with acknowledgement. Material should preferably be in electronic form.

## Contributors

We thank the otherwise unrecognised people who have submitted additional information for the Newsletter over and above the call of duty. We also apologise to any we may have overlooked:

*Evelyn Wyatt, Ian Ramage and Helen Davies*

Not all the information we have received could be included nor necessarily in the form or words received. It is all nevertheless appreciated.

## Welcome to New Members

We are pleased indeed to welcome the following recent new members:

Ms Helen Cassidy (Thornleigh); Alison Dougherty (Normanhurst); Mr John and Mrs Pat Harper (St Ives); Ms Jenny Rothwell (St Ives) and Mr David and Mrs Helen Zamon (St Ives)

We know they will enjoy their time in the Society and that we in turn will enjoy their company.

## Quiz Answers

1. The railway was opened to Milsons Point in 1893. The section from Wahroonga to St Leonards opened in 1890.
2. It was changed in August 1977 as a result of the formation of the Uniting Church
3. 1938
4. 1906. It was initially a Community Hall and in 1916 renamed the Soldiers Memorial Hall.
5. The St Ives District was rezoned from rural to residential in 1959.
6. The first recorded burials at St Johns were in 1867

## 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 from 10am to 2pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (except the first Saturday of each month when members have a meeting). It is closed over the Christmas period and on public holidays.

## Diary Dates

- Sat 7 Oct **FAMILY HISTORY MEETING**  
11 am - Members' Research - Computers Q&A  
2 pm - FH General Meeting  
Julie Werner (member) on her *German ancestry research*  
Jo Harris - on *Laptops and digital photography*
- Wed 18 Oct **7.45 pm - KHS GENERAL MEETING**  
Guest Speaker: Kevin Shaw  
Topic: *The History and Heritage of Parramatta River*
- Sat 4 Nov **FAMILY HISTORY MEETING**  
11 am - Members' Research  
2 pm - FH General Meeting  
Speaker: Beth Williams - Topic: *Homan family - lace makers who settled at Paterson*
- Sat 18 Nov **2 pm - KHS GENERAL MEETING**  
Guest Speaker: Tom Ware  
Topic: *The Sealers of Macquarie Island*  
**(followed by our Christmas Party)**
- 14/15 Oct **RAHS Conference – Hornsby RSL**
- 11/12 Nov **2 day Tour to Tocal/Paterson**
- Sat 2 Dec **11 am : Family History Research**  
**2 pm : FH General Meeting**
- Wed 17 Jan 2007 **7.45 pm - KHS General Meeting**

## Administration

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