

# **KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

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

**December 2022 Newsletter Vol. 40 No. 11**

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## **General Meeting**

2pm Saturday 21st January 2023

— *Enjoying the Past through Postcards* —

Jeff FitzGerald



## **POSTCARDS FROM THE PAST**

Jeff FitzGerald was encouraged by his father, who worked in the post office, to collect stamps from the age of 16. Later Jeff became interested in postcards and searched world-wide for pre-1960s cards. He has been collecting old postcards since 1982 when he stumbled across a bundle in an antique shop in Tokyo. His focus is now upon the depiction of Aboriginal people on postcards and what it tells us about how mainstream Australians saw them, and what are called 'postcard moments in time in Australian Social History'.



*A typical old postcard illustrating past history*

This includes a very wide range of areas encompassing socialising, working, recreating, rural life, parades and public occasions, entertainments, seaside and winter fun, and some industries, as well as certain artists who illustrated postcards in the early 1900s such as May Gibbs, Norman Lindsay and Ida Rentoul Outhwaite.



The President and Committee wish all our members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy New Year in 2023.

*the  
President's  
message*

My goodness, it is hard to believe we are nearing the end of another busy year, especially having to organise and hold two AGMs!

Hopefully, 2023 will be a trouble-free year, as it is a special birthday for KHS; 60 years since the Society was formed.

The members of the Committee have already begun planning ways to celebrate this very important occasion and look forward to everyone being involved during our Diamond Jubilee Year.

Have a very Merry Christmas everyone, and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Take care,

**Lorna Watt**



## Snow or Not to Snow?

Just after 3.30pm on 27 July 2008, the area around Lindfield, Roseville and Killara unexpectedly turned into a winter wonderland! *"I think the snow here is better than Perisher"* a Roseville man told a radio station. *"It's given a very European feel to Roseville"* a woman said on TV. And it wasn't just the North Shore that experienced the wintry delights of snow on that day – many parts of Wollongong were similarly affected.

But was it really snow? Well, according to the Bureau of Meteorology's senior forecaster, Peter Zmijewski, it was more of a 'snow job' than real snow: *"It was soft hail"* said Mr Zmijewski. *"Snow has a different appearance - snow falls in flakes"*.

Mr Zmijewski explained that while it was cold enough to stop the hail from melting as it fell and cold enough to preserve it when it hit the ground, it still couldn't be classified as real snow because the mercury only fell to around ten degrees. *"Temperatures need to plummet to around two degrees to produce snow"* he said. *"Today's hail is because it is cold enough that it just didn't melt on the way down, so it fell as a soft, melting ice"*.

Had such a thing ever happened in Sydney before? Yes it had, on the morning of 28th June 1836 – and on that occasion, it probably was real snow!



*Kids frolicking in the snow*

The meteorological table in The Sydney Herald recorded that at six o'clock that morning, the thermometer had plunged to 38 degrees Fahrenheit, which is about 3 degrees Celsius. According to the newspapers of the day, the snow fell for an hour or so. Roofs were covered and about an inch of snow dusted the metropolis, reaching right down to harbourside beaches.

In the area of Parramatta, several inches were experienced, Bathurst had a foot, and snowballs were the order of the morning in Sydney streets. Author T.A. Browne (aka Rolf Boldrewood) who would have been ten years old at the time, later

wrote of his recollection of children throwing snowballs in Enmore. It must have been a very cold week indeed, because snow was again reported five days later, though less abundant.

Various theories were advanced, without any universally accepted explanation. Explorer Sir Douglas Mawson postulated at the time that cyclonic disturbances in the Antarctic were not fully understood, and that such an event travelling uncharacteristically so far north could have provided the reason for this extraordinary event.



*Snowballing at Mt Lofty - Aug 29th 1905*

*Image: State Library South Australia*

Another recording of 'snow' on the North Shore was on 21st June 1951. The Sydney Morning Herald reported a fall in several suburbs – but while *something* was precipitated (confirmed by Pymble's Stationmaster as occurring at 11am) no actual snow formed on the ground.

**Ralph Davis**

This article first appeared in the *Sydney Observer*, March 2022

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## **Roseville's Roses**

Reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* ~ 19 October 1929

There is a suburb of Sydney where there are more roses than the owners know what to do with. The air is sweet with perfume. The streets and roads are gay with colour. Flowers are tumbling over the fence tops, climbing up walls, decorating pergolas, and filling corners and beds with loveliness. Thousands of motorists travel many miles at the week-end in search of something to help keep them happy, but no matter how far they travel up or down the coastline they will see nothing to compare in floral beauty with what this quiet suburb shows today. The name of the place is **Roseville**.



Yet **Roseville** is not the only suburb where gardens are a-bloom. It is just one of the beauty places. Having seen **Roseville** you may travel further on, and as you go the roses go with you, reds, whites, yellows and pinks—and all will hold your eyes. Don't miss these roses.



## 'Introduction to Family History' Course

This very successful course concluded on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November following six interesting and practical sessions outlining very useful steps for those interested in researching their family history and connections. To help our course presenters Allan and Joy Murrin, who are very well known in the family history research community prepare for this focused course, our participants provided individual information about their family history questions and what they were seeking.



Each session was assisted by our Course Facilitator Lorraine Henshaw with Jenny Joyce. It was interesting to see how the interactions and interests developed over the series as our participants gathered their understanding and knowledge.

Lorraine and Jenny will be opening the Research Centre on occasional Saturdays for course participants to continue their learning.

Don't forget that Ancestry's Library Edition and Family Search are available for use by members in the research rooms and that the research centre is now open Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 2pm.

If you haven't visited our website [www.khs.org.au](http://www.khs.org.au) recently, then it's well worth taking a look.

We can now confirm the dates for the second Family History Course beginning in February 2023, again, six sessions on a Thursday at the KHS research rooms beginning on Thursday 16 February, missing 23 February, then continuing from 2 March through to 30 March. Lorraine Henshaw will be in contact with people on the waiting list in due course.

*Neil Falconer*

## KHS Speakers' Program for 2023

**21 January**

**Jeff FitzGerald - Enjoying the Past through Postcards**

Hear how a collection began by chance in a Tokyo antiques shop revealing our social history through depictions of Aboriginal people; rural life; moments capturing events and entertainments and the work of early postcard illustrators.

Jeff FitzGerald is the Vice-President of the NSW Postcard Collectors Society.

**18 February**

**Em. Prof. John Ramsland - Peter Finch: Australia's Player King**

John's latest research examines the actor's troubled formative years at Mosman and Greenwich Point, followed by his rapid rise to fame in radio drama, on stage and in feature films, and his later career as an international star.

**18 March**

**Members' Forum**

**15 April**

**Denis Smith - The Mighty Sunderland**

Former President of Lane Cove Historical Society, Denis Smith, tells the story of these impressive planes in war and peace. Destined for Australia, but loaned at the outbreak of war, they would seek and destroy U-boats in the Atlantic before a lengthy peacetime career based at Rose Bay.

**20 May**

**Prof. Paul Ashton - Sydney's Planning History**

Distinguished academic and public historian, Prof. Paul Ashton, author of *The Accidental City: Planning Sydney since 1788*, will take us from 'go to woe' through more than two centuries characterized by opportunistic development and largely failed attempts at holistic planning.

**17 June**

**Dick Whitaker - The Story of Surry Hills**

Dick Whitaker returns with a tale of the changing fortunes of this early inner suburb: from colonial farms and country estates to rapid overdevelopment followed by a lengthy slump to slum status, then a return to desirability over the past 50 years.

# Meat for the Northern Suburbs — BIG SITE AT ST. IVES

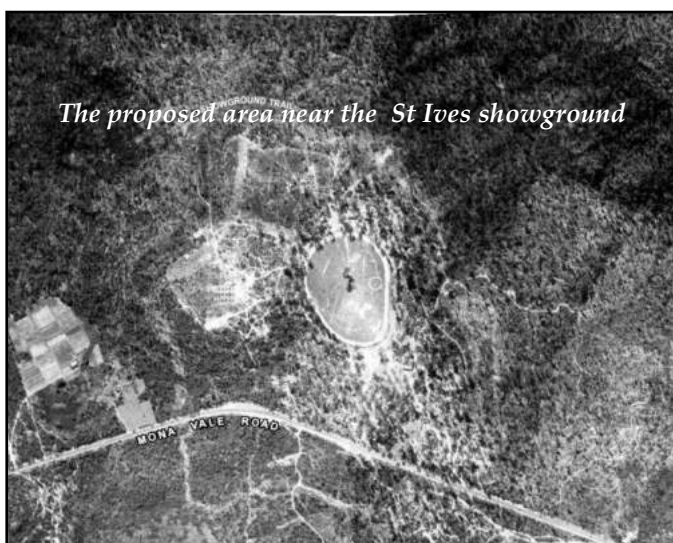
*This banner heading greeted readers of the Daily Telegraph on 16 June 1927.*

## ABATTOIRS FOR ST IVES

The need for an abattoir in the northern districts was announced on 15 June 1927, when Mr JB Cramate, the chairman of the Meat Board, stated that though a big parcel of land was being sought in St Ives, the proposed abattoirs would be a very small affair at first. What the St Ives works would develop into was a matter for the future. In asking the Government to set aside 250 acres of crown land, about a mile from the recently established St Ives Show Ground, there was no fear that in a few years expensive resumptions would be necessary.

The chairman said that the growth of the city in 20 years might mean that the Homebush site would be capable of handling only the meat for the southern side of the city. He said that if this was so, St Ives would serve all districts on the northern side. Four slaughter houses existed in the area, but the board intended to confine killing to the abattoirs.<sup>1 2</sup>

The Meat Board's idea was to make provision for the rapidly growing northern districts.



It was noted that opposition to the proposal had started by residents of the northern suburbs who considered that the establishment of abattoirs at St Ives would be detrimental to the district.

Leading the opposition to the proposal, Mr Thistlethwayte, president of the Ku-ring-gai Shire, pointed out that the whole district from Lane Cove

River to the coast, embracing suburbs from Roseville to Wahroonga, included some of the finest metropolitan areas in the world. He said, "I cannot conceive the Government lending itself to the distroyal (sic) of such an area for residential purposes". He added that the proposal was the more unacceptable in that local government bodies had sought to enhance the area by acquisition and beautification of large areas of parkland.<sup>3</sup>

The nearest station to the proposed site at which any provision at all could be made for stock was Pymble. The stock would have to be driven four miles over the single highway of Pittwater Road. A railway was thought not to be worth building for such a purpose. A railway would only be useful for opening up the country for residential purposes.

The Ku-ring-gai Shire considered the St Ives proposal would pollute the waters of Ku-ring-gai Chase and Davidson Park, and that the value of adjacent land would be diminished. It was also noted that Gordon Station could be an alternative holding site.

Ku-ring-gai was also seeking co-operation from Warringah Shire Council in opposition to the abattoirs proposal.<sup>4</sup>

Claims were made that the Milsons Point to Hornsby railway was not suitable for the transport of stock.<sup>5</sup>

In 1928 the Meat Board secured an option over several extensive slices of virgin country from the Railway Commissioners and asked the Health Department to report on what it deemed to be the best site for slaughter yards. The Board was waiting for the report before making arrangements for the commencement of the work. Tentative plans had been prepared and would be of the most modern type. Associated with them would be up-to-date boiling down works and other works associated with the butchering trade.



Some of the population had come to favour the scheme, as it would bring business and added population, and a general rise in employment. By that time, it was thought that the stock would be taken by road from Hornsby to the abattoir site.

In January 1928, The Sunday Times was optimistic



about the abattoirs with the line "The North Shore Bridge will not be the only incidental of our national progress that will make the northern side of the harbour a wonderful place, and a still more wonderful place for posterity.

New abattoirs to be erected by the Metropolitan Meat Board at an estimated cost of about £20,000 will open up the Hornsby, Pymble, Gordon and St Ives districts, probably supply them with tram services and generally give a fillip to commerce and population of the vast area they are intended to serve".

It was also proposed that the abattoirs be moved closer to French's Forest a few miles to the east of the new Northern Suburbs Show Ground.<sup>6</sup>

In 1932 the Abattoir Acts ordered the closure of all private abattoirs. In 1970 the last Hammond butcher shop, which was on the Pacific Highway between St John's Avenue and Moree Street, Gordon, closed, along with the last private abattoir in Ku-ring-gai.<sup>7</sup>

We know that the project never happened.

<sup>1</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 16 June 1927 p.2  
<sup>2</sup> *The Farmer and Settler*, 8 July 1927 p.18  
<sup>3</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 June 1927 p.2  
<sup>4</sup> *Evening News*, 21 September 1927 p.6  
<sup>5</sup> *SMH*, 17 June 1927  
<sup>6</sup> *Sunday Times*, 1 January 1928  
<sup>7</sup> *KHS Newsletter*, Vol 30 No 9

**Morrison Hammond**

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**Bradfield**

**1 Hill Street, Roseville**

As most members will know, the focus for the next edition of our journal, *The Historian* is Roseville. Part and parcel of investigating the progress of the suburb is looking at people and buildings of note. One building that particularly interests me is 1 Hill Street, a two storey Arts & Crafts style house on the northern corner of Victoria Street. Heritage listed, it was bought some years ago and beautifully restored, and is now occupied by the Wong Tai Sing Cultural Centre.

I know it was built by September 1907 because that month Alfred Livingstone Parker's wife Annie gave birth there to their son Richard. Parker, a prominent solicitor, served later with Hornsby Shire Council and Sydney City Council, and was elected Lord Mayor of Sydney in 1933, an office he held until his death in October 1935, the year he was knighted.

The Parkers named the house *Omaha* and lived there until 1911, but it was owned by Annie's widowed mother, Mrs Mary Louise Spark who had bought the one and a half acre site on 29 May 1894. She didn't sell until 1917. Mrs Spark also owned the

corner lot opposite, where, by March 1901, her own home, *Irembah*, stood. Now long gone.



*No. 1 Hill Street, Roseville*

Mary and Robert Henderson moved into *Omaha* in 1911, renaming it *Loch Lomond*. They vacated the house when Mrs Spark sold to Mary Hunter, wife of James Hunter who named it *Blair Logie*. James Gray Pritchard owned the house from 1923 to 1939 when he sold to Gwendoline Utber, wife of Dr Frank L Utber who added a number of rooms to the ground floor and ran his medical practice there.

From November 1954 to June 1987 the house was owned by Dr Edward Ventris Bradfield (1893-1992), eldest son of JJC Bradfield, civil engineer and designer of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Dr Bradfield's service in the Great War is recorded in *Rallying the Troops*, Volume IV, p.208. After the war he worked in general practice in Wollongong and later Belmont near Newcastle and it was there, in June 1941 that, with the help of the local midwife - my great grandmother - Dr Bradfield delivered my sister.

**Kathie Rieth**

**New Members**

We extend a warm welcome to the following member who has recently joined the Society.

Helen **Scarpinato** from Winston Hills  
Daniel **Johnson** from Pymble

We hope you will find your membership rewarding and look forward to your participation in the many activities we have to offer each year.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT ~ 2021-2022**

During this last financial year, the Society once again was impacted by the effects of the Pandemic; presenting a restrictive and challenging time for all of us. We have, however, managed to keep the Society operational.

### **Finances and Membership**

The Treasurer's Report sets out the detailed accounts of the Society showing our strong financial position.

Membership numbers this financial year increased on the previous year, due mostly to people being attracted to our engaging website which is kept up to date by our talented web master Ralph Davis. Membership secretary, Annet Latham, works tirelessly keeping in touch with members, and making sure all records are up to date.

### **Meetings**

The Pandemic affected the operation and attendance at our monthly General Meetings. During last year's lockdown, we managed to present our guest speakers in October and November and also in January this year, using the ZOOM platform. These proved to be a great success.

Beverley Dunstan has very efficiently continued to organise our speakers' program and is very deserving of the Life Membership presented to her this year in recognition of her long and outstanding service.

The afternoon tea, very ably provided by Vicki Williams, is enjoyed at the conclusion of all meetings.

### **Family History Group**

For more than twenty years, there has been a Family History meeting held on the first Saturday of each month, organised by the Family History Group. This sub-committee of the Society has been an integral and important part of the society, managed by a leader and committee elected in March each year.

Unfortunately for the Society, there were no nominations received this year, resulting in the April meeting being the last, and the group now being inactive. I am quite confident that, in the future, this group can be a part of KHS again and its activities resumed.

### **Tours**

The Pandemic and its restrictions unfortunately affected the planning of, and the attendance at, our tours thus presenting a challenging time for our tour organisers. The highlight of the tour program

this year was the very successful harbour cruise commemorating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japanese Midget Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour conducted by the Naval Historical Society of Australia.

The tour team, Yvette Reeve, Neil Falconer and Geoff Little, after having organised more than 70 tours over many years, have decided to retire. Their willingness and hard work during that time is very much appreciated. A great effort.

### **Research Rooms**

In February we were able to re-open our research rooms on Tuesdays and Fridays only, with the restricted opening time of 10am to 12noon; thanks to willing volunteers.

Recently, we have been able to revert to the usual time of 10am to 2pm and it is hoped that the number of days can be increased in the future. This, of course, will depend on the availability of room volunteers.

### **Volunteers**

My thanks and appreciation to all those who have generously given of their time in the past, and to those who continue to work tirelessly carrying out the many tasks required for the efficient running of the Society.

Wednesday's Preservation Group, dedicated volunteers guided by Ann Barry, continues each week taking care of our collections, cataloguing donated material, and updating our vast photographic collection.

Our computer system's administrator, Peter Stehn, a very dedicated volunteer with the necessary expertise, continues to keep all our computers working and up to date, including our intranet resources.

Geoff Little, editor of our monthly Newsletter, continues to spend many hours producing this popular and interesting publication. I am sure you all enjoy receiving your copy by email or post.

The Society's journal, *The Historian*, is on track for publication in the not-too-distant future thanks to the assistance of Kathie Rieth, and the receipt of a number of articles.

The Built Heritage and Family History research teams continue to provide assistance to members, the general public and Council.

I remain the Society's representative on the Heritage Reference Committee assisting Council with information relating to property and land history.

The Society would not function without volunteers

providing these services we all enjoy. Membership is increasing, but unfortunately, volunteer numbers are decreasing.

**Committee**

The Committee, elected in 2019, is most appreciative of the support it has received from members and volunteers, enabling the Society to fulfil its objectives.

During the last year the Committee has remained the same except for the position of treasurer when, in March, Marilyn van Eerde needed to resign for personal reasons. We were very fortunate and thankful that Ken Bromley offered to take on the role. Marilyn is continuing as our Public Officer and the Committee thanks her for her ongoing commitment to this position.

This year, Yvette Reeve and Neil Falconer will be retiring from the Committee. Also, this is Jenny Joyce's last term as Immediate Past President. I thank each of them for their contributions and

support. It has been a pleasure to have them on the team.

My thanks and appreciation to all members of the Committee for their support, willingness and assistance in managing the affairs of the Society and I look forward to working with the next Committee.

As we continue to emerge from the last of the Pandemic, it is hoped that members' involvement with the Society will increase.

Next year will mark 60 years since the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society began, and, all going well, we hope to be able to organise various activities to celebrate this very important Diamond Jubilee Year.

I look forward to you joining with the committee and myself in those forthcoming activities of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society.

***Lorna Watt,***

***President, on behalf of the Committee.***

October 2022

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**Ku-ring-gai...      Then... and Now**

by *Dick Whitaker*



*Image: RMS Archives*



*Image: Google Streetview*

**Then:**

Looking south across the Pymble Bridge in 1959, with Grandview Parade off to the left. The bridge was being widened at this time and the associated formwork is visible to the left. This was a noted traffic blackspot, with numerous accidents occurring as cars came down Pymble Hill too quickly and failed to make the rather abrupt right and left deviations across the bridge. The widening was an attempt to fix this problem.

We can see two FC Holdens - one on the bridge and another approaching. A Morris Minor is between. Coming out of Grandview Parade is an Austin Cambridge A50. The bus approaching the bridge on the left could be one of the Gillott fleet.

**Now:**

A recent view showing the wider bridge and the easier road deviation. A large concrete barrier in the middle of the road increases safety.



## DIARY DATES

### JANUARY 2023

Saturday 21 : **2pm - General Meeting**  
*Enjoying the past through Postcards*  
**Presenter : Jeff FitzGerald**

### FEBRUARY 2023

Thursday 16 : **2nd Family History Course begins**  
 Saturday 18 : **2pm - General Meeting**  
*Peter Finch : Australia's Player King*  
**Presenter: Em. Prof. John Ramsland**

### MARCH 2023

Saturday 18 : **2pm - General Meeting**  
*Members' forum*

### APRIL 2023

Saturday 15 : **2pm - General Meeting**  
*The Mighty Sunderland*  
**Presenter : Denis Smith**

## **Christmas Closure**

Kindly note that our Research  
 Room will be closed from 2 pm  
 on Friday 9 December 2022;  
 re-opening at 10 am on Tuesday  
 10 January 2023. We wish all our  
 members a peaceful, healthy and  
 relaxing holiday season!

**KHS bank details are as follows:-**

**BSB ... 032-083**  
**A/c No. ... 248971**



## ADMINISTRATION

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| Vice President | Annet Latham  | 0431 479 987 |
| Treasurer      | Ken Bromley   | 0414 419 456 |
| Secretary      | Judith Godden | 0408 967 937 |

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| Committee | Ralph Davis       |              |
|           | Marilyn van Eerde | 0418 269 126 |
|           | Morrison Hammond  | 0425 303 525 |
|           | Geoff Little      | 0411 885 870 |

### Appointees

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| Accessions           | Jennifer Wallin  | 9983 1871    |
| Book Sales           | Margaret Holland | 9488 5452    |
| Catering             | Vicki Williams   | 0401 914 524 |
| Computer Systems     | Peter Stehn      | 9489 9488    |
| Curator              | Ann Barry        | 9144 6480    |
| Built Heritage Group | Lorna Watt       | 0402 028 034 |

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| Research (Fam Hist.) | Leone Stumbaum    |                   |

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## Newsletter Details

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