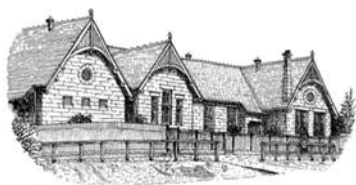


KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



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

March 2022 Newsletter Vol. 40 No. 2

Research Centre : 799 Pacific Highway Gordon • web: www.khs.org.au

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

the **President's message**

I was elected President of the Society at the Annual General Meeting held on 19 October, 2019 and then not long after, along came the pandemic!

Needless to say, it has been quite a challenging time for all of us.

Due to various restrictions and lockdowns during the last two years, it has been difficult to hold many of our meetings, including our AGMs for 2020 and 2021. This means we have a bit of a 'catch-up' to take care of.

The Department of Fair Trading has been understanding but has given us an extension of time, only until the end of March, to furnish the required details.

Therefore, we will be holding an 'in person' deferred AGM at 2pm on Saturday 19 March, 2022, just prior to our General Meeting.

This meeting is to:

- Pass the Minutes of the 2019 AGM
- Review and endorse the financial statements for the KHS for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- Appoint the auditor
- Receive the President's Report

As the meeting is to attend to matters pertaining to the end of the 2021 financial year, the Committee has decided that the election of Committee members will take place at our usual AGM in the second half of this year. I am most thankful that the present members of the Committee have agreed to continue in their present positions until that time.

I look forward to seeing everyone on 19 March.

Please come along to support your Society.



Lorna Watt

General Meeting

2pm Saturday 19th March 2022

Three Vietnam Wars from 1946 to 1975

David Wilkins graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1963, an infantryman who served with 2nd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, the Pacific Islands Regiment and 5th Battalion RAR, the last in Vietnam in 1969-70 as the Adjutant and then as a rifle company commander.



David Wilkins OAM

He later graduated from the ANU with BA, LLB (Hons) and transferred to the Army Legal Corps to be a Defence Force Magistrate and Judge Advocate for courts martial. He retired from the ARA in 1986 and practised as a barrister in Sydney for 20 years and then as a tribunal member of the Veterans' Review Board.

Now retired, he was awarded the OAM for services to community history in the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

David will detail the histories of three connected Vietnam Wars, and discuss the main controversies surrounding the 2nd (the American War), whether the US strategy was appropriate or misguided, the fall of Saigon, whether it was an American defeat and the impact of public relations as a principle of war. Discussion will include the causes (such as the domino theory).



Choppers with infantry in the Vietnam war

PRISONERS OF WAR IN AUSTRALIA

Part Two

The Effect of the Armistice with Italy

After Italy signed an armistice with the Allies in September 1943, the Australian authorities took between 13,000 and 15,000 Italian prisoners out of the POW camps and put them to work. At the time of the armistice, there were 2,000 Australian prisoners of war in Italy, who would benefit from the armistice with Italy. 1,900 were from the AIF and 100 from the RAAF. In that year, the Secretary of War (UK) said that the Empire held 274,000 Italian prisoners of war.

In October 1942, when the government had called for 500 men to work on the east-west railway line from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, a response came from only 27 men, so 400 prisoners of war were put to the job. They would receive a small payment.



Italian prisoners working on the transcontinental railway

In November 1942 an inspection of POW camps in southern NSW, by the Minister for the Army and The Postmaster General, found 50 miles of irrigation canals, at an old brickworks 1,000 bricks a day were produced at no cost, 1,000 acres of virgin soil produced 193,000 pounds of vegetables and 30 tons of fodder. Their report was favourable.

In June 1944, the Tasmanian RSL was concerned about the safety of their daughters in Launceston.

In March 1945, 18,000 Italian prisoners were not under direct supervision, with 13,000 who were seen as suitable for the work, working in rural areas. From 1944 up to three could work on the same farm. Most lived with the farmer or in hostels. That solved rural manpower problems as the return of Australian soldiers had not begun. In September 1945, many farmers asked the government if the workers could remain in Australia. In 1945 Italian prisoners of war worked under direct supervision; Germans did not work outside their camps with supervision; Japanese prisoners were not permitted to work outside their camps.

In September 1944, payment to prisoners of war was one pound per week, while the ruling wage for Australians was four pounds or more. In April 1945

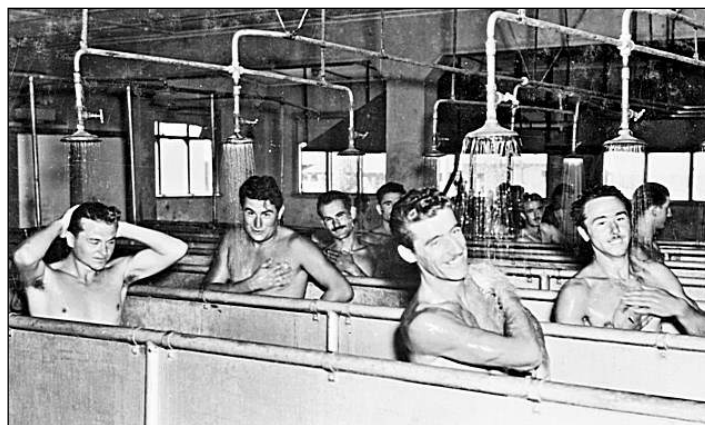
the payment to prisoners rose to two pounds. One pound per week was the nominal amount provided for under the Geneva Convention.



Prisoners at work in the Liverpool internment camp

Photo: Australian War Memorial

Research undertaken of POWs in northern New South Wales indicated newspapers carried much anti-Italian sentiment: Unionists held concerns unpaid Italian POW labour would displace existing Australian labour; Inequality of Italian POWs had greater freedoms and better food than Australian POWs in overseas camps; and POWs should not be allowed to return to Australia post-war. On an individual level, rapport occurred between landowners and their POW labourers.



The ablution block for Italian prisoners Photo: AWM

At war's end, the British government had the responsibility to repatriate the Italians, but shortage of suitable shipping made this a protractive programme. During this time Italian prisoners cost 6,000 pounds a day by 1946 to cover their pay and keep alone, then there were administrative costs, pay for the guards and accommodation upkeep. In November 1945, the government began withdrawing 14,000 prisoners from the country so returning Australian soldiers could find employment.

Morrison Hammond

Part three in the April Newsletter
' looks at the repatriation of prisoners '

It was so good to be able to hold a workshop and meeting on February 5 and reacquaint with old friends and meet new faces. Lorna's workshop entitled 'Six Maps' was very worthwhile for the members who had booked a place. At the afternoon meeting Jo Harris reported that a new group had been formed called *The Woodlanders* and that 'Woodlands', where Ethel Turner had written 'Seven Little Australians', will be opened to visitors interested in Ethel Turner when such visits are possible post COVID. At present the group is trying to collect at least one early edition of each of Ethel's books to have in the library of the home.

(See Susannah Fullerton's article on page 4)



RootsTech

Jenny Joyce reported that 'RootsTech' conference will be held in March. It will be online for free for everyone. There will be many interesting sessions and excellent keynote speakers. The annual conference of NSW & ACT Family History Societies will

be in September in Maitland and will again be available online.

Unfortunately, Clare Brown is now unavailable for our next workshop so her talk has been postponed to a future date. The topic for the March 5 workshop will now be 'Useful Tips for Family Research' to be presented by members of the FHG committee. The workshop starts at 11.00am. As numbers who can attend may still be limited, please book by emailing Sue at susankholmes2@gmail.com. If numbers have to be reduced you will be notified.

At the afternoon meeting of the FHG on March 5 at 2.00pm, Judith Dunn OAM will talk on the subject 'Parramatta Cemeteries'. Judith is a highly regarded and sought-after speaker and tour guide. She holds a Parramatta and District Historical Society Fellowship for researching and recording Parramatta history.

The 'new' Trove continues to confuse some of its users and yet it is a very useful tool in Family History Research. Lorna Watt is going to lead a workshop on this subject on April 2 at 11.00am. Come along and learn how to get the most out of this online portal.

At 2.00pm member Patrick Dodd will be telling us about the 'Dreadnought Scheme' which brought young British teenagers to Australia to become farm workers.

Sue Holmes

Election of FHG Committee

The election of the Family History Group Committee will take place at 2.00pm on April 2 and a nomination form is attached.

Under the guidelines for the Management of the FHG 'nominations for the positions of Convenor and ordinary sub-committee member :-

1. Shall be made in writing on the form authorised by the KHS Committee, signed by two financial members of the Society and signed by the candidate as an indication of their acceptance of the nomination and
2. Shall be lodged with the Secretary of the Society by close of business at least 15 days before the date fixed for holding of that election.
3. There will be no nominations from the floor on the day of the election'.

80th ANNIVERSARY

OF

SUBMARINE ATTACK ON SYDNEY HARBOUR

31ST MAY/1ST JUNE 1942

We received a remarkable response to our request for expressions of interest for the Naval Historical Society of Australia's commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Japanese Submarine Attack on Sydney Harbour, to take place on Wednesday 1st June, 2022.

The morning tour will depart from King Street Wharf, providing a detailed description of events leading up to and during the attack. The cruise will take us to sites on the harbour where key events occurred and a comprehensive description will be given of how those events, during the fateful night of 31st May and early morning of 1st June 1942, unfolded.

The story will be told by expert narrators from the Naval Historical Society of Australia. The commentary on this cruise will be supported by a complimentary booklet of photos to bring the story to life. Morning tea will be included. The tour will return to King Street Wharf at 1.00p.m.

The cost for this tour is \$75 for members, \$85 non-members.

We have made a booking for 70 members and their visitors with only a few vacancies remaining.

If you would like to join this tour please contact Yvette at yreeve@optusnet.com.au as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Yvette Reeve

SOCIETY AWARD

At the February General Meeting, **Beverley Dunstan** was awarded **Life Membership** of the Society in recognition of her long and outstanding service.

Beverley has been a member of KHS since 1996, has served on the Committee, is a former Vice-President and was President in 2000-1. The following year she was co-editor of our Newsletter.

She has held the position of Speakers' Program Co-ordinator for twenty three years, a task she took on 'temporarily' as a Committee member in 1997/8!

During that time Beverley has expertly undertaken the considerable work of organising in advance our entertaining and informative monthly speakers who are always introduced by Beverley with much grace and eloquence.

Congratulations, Beverley.



Beverley Dunstan receiving her Life Membership award from President Lorna Watt

Ethel Turner

In 2020 a new literary group was formed - the Friends of Ethel Turner Group. Patrons of the group are Albert Lim and Eva Yao, owners of the historic home 'Woodlands' which was where Ethel Turner wrote 'Seven Little Australians'. Albert and Eva are generously opening up their beautifully restored home to community, garden and literary groups. In 2022 the house will be getting one of the very first Blue Plaques given out in NSW.



Ethel Turner

The Friends group publishes a free newsletter twice a year. If you would like to become a member, and keep in touch with what is happening at Woodlands and learn more about Ethel and her writings, you can join the group on

<https://susannahfullerton.com.au/ethel-turner-woodlands/>

In the room where young Ethel Turner penned her novel, there is a beautiful mahogany bookcase and the Friends group is aiming to have a copy of each one of Ethel's books (and she was prolific!) on those shelves. We'd also love to have novels written by her sister Lilian Turner. These are some of the books we are seeking:

Tiny House, Happy Hearts, Funny, Sunshine Family, King Anne, Apple of Happiness, Ungardeners, St Tom and the Dragon, The Raft in the Bush, The White Roofed Tree, Walking to School.

If you have copies of any of these and would like them to find a home at Woodlands, please contact :

Susannah Fullerton on susannah@susannahfullerton.com.au

Susannah Fullerton OAM FRSN

See September 2021 newsletter for article on
'Friends of Ethel Turner'

TOUR REPORT

We are pleased to report that following all the difficulties over recent times, we are fairly confident that our early 2022 tour schedule, outlined below, is now under way.

We were very disappointed not to be able to schedule our planned trip to the UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE listed site - Cockatoo Island. This tour will be listed for the Spring.

We are also disappointed to report some changes to the costings of tours using Community Transport buses. For many years now, the regulation supporting community transport has always included that users would need to be registered with - My Aged Care - (+ 65y.o. and no financial reference). The purpose is to obtain a referral for Community Transport. Once IN, other benefits can be assessed, if required, after a possible Aged Care visit. Whilst this has been generally understood the participation of our members has not been mandatory. This is now not the case, thus the Community Transport pricing system will increase 'going forward'.

All is certainly not lost!! We have made excellent arrangements for our upcoming tours to Penrith and Thirlmere with *On Course Tours*, having used them occasionally over the past.

All tours will be run according to the latest State Health Department rules in place at the time of the tour.

Current tours scheduled;

March 24, Thursday - Arms of Australia Inn and the Museum of Fire both at Penrith.

We will leave Bannockburn Oval (free parking) at 8.45 a.m. Our first stop will be the *Arms of Australia Inn* where we will have morning tea followed by a guided tour where we can discover local history, photos and much more. The Inn was once a staging post for travellers making the trip from Sydney to the goldfields.

We will then travel to nearby *Emu Hall* for lunch (**lunch will be at own cost**), which is adjacent to the Yandhai Nepean Crossing, an interesting pedestrian crossing of the Nepean River. Emu Hall is a historic house situated on the riverbank of the Nepean River. The Estate was originally established in 1854 and built by James Tobias (Tony) Ryan who was born in Penrith and ultimately involved in politics.

After lunch we will travel to the famous *Museum of Fire* where we will have a guided tour of this outstanding museum which stands in honour to the dedication and courage of those who answer the call to protect our lives and the community daily. We expect to return to Bannockburn Oval around 4.30 p.m.

This tour will cost \$70 for members \$80 nonmembers. **Note:** We only have space for 22 participants.



The Museum of Fire

Tour bookings and payment will open on Friday 4th March and will close on Friday 11th March. Payment should be made by EFT to KHS (BSB 032 083 Account 248 971) stating your name and

'Penrith Tour'. When payment has been made please advise Yvette at yreeve@optusnet.com.au.

As numbers are restricted, the EFT bookings will be accepted in order of deposits received at the KHS Account. Deposits made after the maximum number is reached will be placed on a waiting list in case of cancellation or, if enough interest, we may be able to fill a second bus.

Please note that with all our tours we have a strict non-refundable policy. If you are unable to attend it will be up to you to find a substitute and advise Yvette ASAP on 0414 249 737.

Our upcoming Schedule; 'Save the date' !!

April 21, Thursday: NSW Railway Museum - Thirlmere.

June 1, Wednesday: Navy Harbour Cruise - 80th Anniversary of Japanese Mini Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour - A few spaces still available.

(See separate note on page 3)

June 23 Thursday: Madam Tussauds - Darling Harbour.

July 21, Thursday: Powerhouse Museum - Ultimo.

KHS Tour Team

— — — — — // — — — — —



"Where in the world is this pub?" (see page 6)

Photo - courtesy of KHS member

February Family History Meeting

The speaker at the February Meeting was Dr Tanya Bretherton, sociologist and author of four true crime books. Her latest is *'The Husband Poisoner'* and describes a series of crimes from the post WW2 era in which women used Thallium to poison husbands and other family members. Tanya presented details of how she approaches the background research for all her books, particularly highlighting the social history of the times and what happened to the individuals and their family members after the crime was committed.

Prior to writing the book she spent many hours at the NSW State Archives researching the post WW2 period. She studied the crime and gender of each perpetrator, especially the women who had killed and why. Each of the women had used a poison called Thallium which was available on grocery shelves as a rat poison. It comes from a metal which has to be chemically extracted, was discovered in 1890s and was very poisonous. When ingested it causes severe intestinal upset and then pins and needles in the legs and feet. If continuously ingested it causes hair loss, loss of sight and finally sends the victim mad. Thallium was also used for hair removal, in paediatrics and prescribed by doctors for skin disorders such as ringworm (considered a 'safer' alternative to the previous x-ray treatment). She cited a case of a 3 year old boy with ringworm who was given Thallium in a syrup, developed stomach pains which the nurse said "happened all the time with this syrup". The boy died after three days and the subsequent inquest gave the cause of death as an unusual allergy, as Thallium poisoning was not identified.

Tanya gave several examples of Thallium murders all done by working class women, often for quite trivial reasons, in various Sydney suburbs. The poison was added to food such as pikelets and given in low dose over quite a long period of time. One such case was a grandmother who killed several family members who offended her in some way. It was obvious to the courts that the victims had died from poisoning but the only available tests were for arsenic and other well documented substances. It was a long time before Thallium was suspected and a test to identify it was developed.

There were many interesting questions from the audience and comprehensive replies from the speaker. It was noted that all of Dr Bretherton's books are available in Ku-ring-gai libraries.

Jean Smith

Answer to photo question:

Llangollan Road, Trevor, Wrexham, Wales.

KHS German Special Interest Group

- The first item on the agenda was in recognition of the significance of that day's date with a report by **Lowana** on the origins of St Valentine's Day. Lowana distributed a fascinating handout on the results of her research. Who knew that the origin can be traced back to the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius II (AD 268 to 270)?
- **Tony** reported on the activities of the German Australian Genealogy and History Alliance (GAGHA) since our last meeting and asked members to volunteer to share responsibility for monitoring activities of individual members of the alliance and reporting significant developments at each of our meetings.
- **Leone** kindly offered to provide a one-on-one service to members to get them up and running on German Family History research, especially using Ancestry. The service would be by appointment only.
- **Peter** briefed members on a proposal for a way ahead for our Intranet and the need for volunteers to critically examine the current Intranet to inform the planning process. Since the meeting, two SIG members have kindly volunteered to assist and will be contacted to arrange suitable dates and times.
- **Tony** gave a presentation to the meeting entitled, 'Why my family left Germany to come to Australia in the 19th century'. The presentation was well-researched, of great interest to all of the group, an excellent presentation.
- **Deborah** reported that an acquaintance has a captivating "tale to tell" with a Germanic flavour and could possibly be persuaded to share her tale to a future SIG meeting. Deborah volunteered to contact her acquaintance to ascertain willingness and her availability.
- **Frank** reported on a book he found to be absolutely fascinating ("best book I have ever read"). The book is entitled 'The House by the Lake' by Thomas Harding. One of the many comments on the book states, 'a superb portrait of twentieth-century Germany'.
- The meeting concluded with a healthy afternoon tea and considerable interpersonal interacting (chatting). The next meeting is planned for **Monday 11 April 2022 at 1:30 pm**. Agenda item suggestions welcomed.

Peter Stehm

Did You Know?



Our KHS Intranet is a fantastic resource for:

- ⇒ Researching your family history
- ⇒ Exploring the history of Ku-ring-gai
- ⇒ Databases on convicts, pioneers, properties, cemeteries...
- ⇒ And so much more!

All these invaluable resources are available to members for **FREE** in our rooms – so come on in to start your research journey!

We're currently seeking members who'd be interested in providing some feedback on how we could make our Intranet even better!

If you'd like to take part in the discussion, we'd love to hear from you today – please email webmaster@khs.org.au by the end of March.

New Members

In January we had 3 new members join our Society.

Welcome to the Society.

Patricia CATT	from	Kariong
Rosalie GEDDES	from	North Turramurra
Joan ROBERTS	from	St Ives

So far in February we have had 2 new members join our Society.

Welcome to the Society.

Donna BARTHO-JONES	from	Gordon
Hillar & Diane PODER	from	Wahroonga

We hope you will find your membership rewarding and look forward to your participation in the many activities we have to offer once we recover from this current set-back of Omicron.

Annet Latham

DIARY DATES

MARCH 2022

Saturday 5 : **11am - Family History**
Useful Tips for Family Research
2pm - FHG - Judith Dunn OAM
Parramatta Cemeteries

Thursday 24 : **Tour** - Penrith - Museum of Fire & Arms of Australia Inn

Saturday 19 : **2pm - Deferred Annual General Meeting then General Meeting**
Three Vietnam Wars from 1946 to 1975
Presenter : David Wilkins OAM

APRIL 2022

Saturday 2 : **11am - Family History** - Lorna Watt
Using Trove to discover your Family History
2pm - FHG Meeting & Election of FHG Committee
Speaker : Patrick Dodd
The Dreadnaught Scheme

Saturday 9 : **2pm - General Meeting**
(Please note our April General Meeting will be held one week earlier due to Easter)
Rayner Hoff's Memorial Masterpieces as a Sculptor.
Presenter : John Ramsland

Thursday 21 : **Tour** - NSW Railway Museum at Thirlmere

MAY 2022

Saturday 7 : **11am - Family History**

Saturday 21 : **2pm - General Meeting**

JUNE 2022

Wednesday 1 : **Tour** - 80th Anniversary of Sydney Harbour submarine attack cruise.

Treasurer's Report

January 2022 was an extremely quiet month as far as treasury was concerned. Our main Income was from Membership Fees and Book Sales. Our main Expenses this month were for Internet Costs and Leasing of the Photocopier.

Looking forward to having meetings again in 2022.

Ku-ring-gai Historical Society bank account is

Westpac Bank BSB: 032-083 Account No: 248971

Marilyn van Eerde

ADMINISTRATION

President	Lorna Watt	0402 028 034
Vice President	Annet Latham	0431 479 987
Treasurer	Marilyn van Eerde	0418 269 126
Secretary	Judith Godden	0408 967 937
Past President	Jenny Joyce	0404 473 767
Committee	Ralph Davis	
	Neil Falconer	9488 7293
	Morrison Hammond	0425 303 525
	Geoff Little	0411 885 870
	Yvette Reeve	0414 249 737
Family History Group	Sue Holmes, Convenor	0414 255 003
	Susan Alder	0409 981 605
	Jo Harris OAM	9489 4393
	Margaret Holland	9488 5452
	Jean Smith	9498 4468
	Joan Stebbing	9489 6476
	Pam Tout	9488 9807

Appointees

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
	Trish Thomson	9499 8659
Historian Editor	Lorna Watt	0402 028 034
Indexing	Beth Facer	9988 0823
Newsletter Editor	Geoff Little	editor@khs.org.au
Public Officer	Marilyn van Eerde	0418 269 126
Research (Fam Hist.)	Joan Stebbing	9489 6476
Tour Contact	Yvette Reeve	0414 249 737
Speakers' Programme	Beverley Dunstan	9419 8526
Web Masters	Peter Stehn	9489 9488
	Ralph Davis	webmaster@khs.org.au
Welfare Officer	Jill Nicholson	9144 6948

Newsletter Details

© Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Inc. and authors. The content may be reproduced as sourced from this newsletter with acknowledgment to named authors.

Copy for publication should be sent as early as possible to editor@khs.org.au **but no later than 13th of each month.** Copy is accepted on the basis that Ku-ring-gai Historical Society has editing rights and that readers can reproduce it in whole or in part with acknowledgment to the authors. Articles should be **WORD** docs and photos as *jpeg* files.

For correspondence :-

The Secretary	~	secretary@khs.org.au
Membership	~	membership@khs.org.au
KHS website	~	webmaster@khs.org.au
Treasurer	~	treasurer@khs.org.au