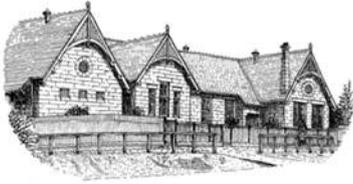


KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



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

May 2022 Newsletter Vol. 40 No. 4

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the President's message

Following Marilyn van Eerde's resignation from the treasurer's role due to ill-health, member Ken Bromley has offered his services and I am pleased to advise that the Committee has welcomed Ken to fill the position of treasurer of KHS.

In the March edition of our Newsletter all members received notification of the upcoming election for the committee of the Family History Group to be held on 2 April. A nomination form was provided as an insert.

How disappointed I was to learn that the election could not take place as **no** nominations were received. Unfortunately, this means that this is the first time since the formation of the Family History Group more than 20 years ago that there is no committee to organise all the activities that you have enjoyed during those years.

As the May meeting has already been organised, it will go ahead but then all Family History activities will, unfortunately, have to be deferred until some members come forward and a new committee formed.

The Family History Group is an integral part of the history and activities of our Society and it is vitally imperative that this situation is resolved as soon as possible. An early return is extremely important.

To borrow, and reword, John F Kennedy's very famous historic quote:

*Ask not what your society can do for you -
ask what you can do for your society!*

I look forward to hearing from you.

Lorna Watt

General Meeting

2pm Saturday 21st May 2022

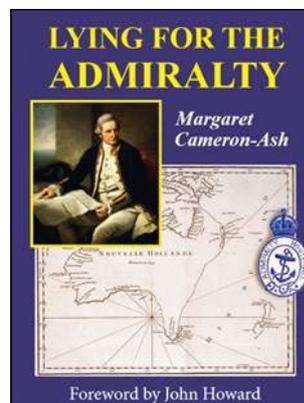
Lying for the Admiralty

Margaret Cameron-Ash is a lawyer and a former visiting fellow of the University of New South Wales. Margaret worked and lectured in law in both Sydney and England after which she embarked on research to include, inter alia, early Australian history, cartography and stories about Captain Cook.



Margaret examined lots of Cook's original journals, charts and other information with forensic detail and has produced the book *Lying for the Admiralty* which is richly illustrated with many landscapes, ships, maps and charts. This highly successful book is now in a second printing.

The author makes the case that Cook didn't miss key coastal features at all, he confused them by obeying secret orders from the Admiralty to hide discoveries of strategic importance from Britain's rivals; in particular the French.



The evidence is found in the author's forensic examination of manuscript maps and journals, revealing Cook's tell-tale changes: the crossings out and corrections, the drafting and redrafting, his first thoughts, second thoughts and self-censorship.

Still more lies ahead when these original and corrected manuscripts are handed to the Admiralty. Comparisons of the documents show that the blue pencil was liberally used prior to publication of the authorized version, while the originals were filed away for 200 years.

The meetings on Saturday 2nd April went well and members seemed to enjoy them. Unfortunately, due to illness, Lorna Watt was unable to present 'The New Trove' to the morning Workshop but Sue Holmes and Susan Alder managed to assemble a handout and, using the computer and projector, were able to teach attendees how to search Trove efficiently. Emphasis was made on the information Trove contains for Family History Research. Lorna assisted Sue's preparation remotely and her help was gratefully received.

Patrick Dodd gave a very interesting talk in the afternoon to a small crowd of KHS members and some of his own family. In the absence of Gerard due to 'isolation requirements', we received assistance in the recording process from Ralph Davis and Jenny Joyce. This ensured the smooth delivery of the presentation.

The Family History Group elections were unable to be finalised. All positions on the Committee were declared vacant but as there were no nominations received by the 18th April and no nominations were allowed from the floor, the matter was referred back to the KHS Committee. Members were reminded that the continuity of the FHG was important to the organisation and that the May meetings will go ahead as planned i.e. a workshop with Clare Brown in the morning and a Forum in the afternoon, and that Family History Fridays would continue.

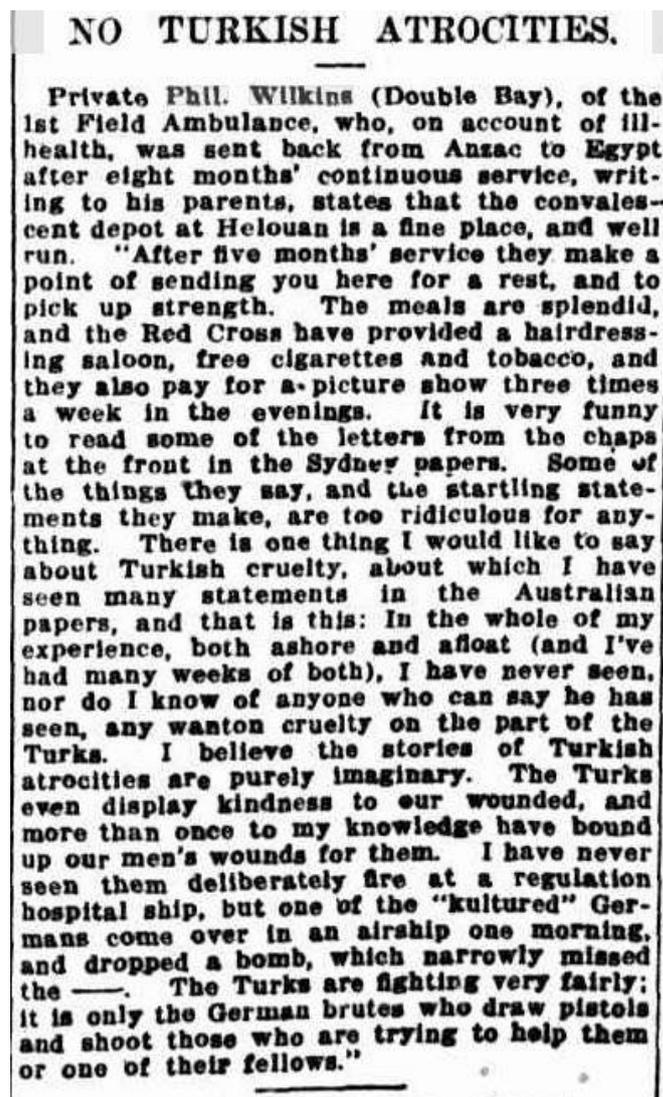
If members would like to bring their published or unpublished family histories (or just their notes) to the morning workshop, Clare Brown will be giving ideas (and show examples) on how to take the next step. For the afternoon forum, it would be great if members could come prepared to talk briefly on their first ancestor to step foot on Australian soil. We would like to hear how and when they arrived, where they settled and their occupations and their achievements.

Sue Holmes

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A revelation from Trove.

A big thank you to Sue Holmes and Susan Alder for their 2 April presentation on searching the revised Trove website. It was most helpful and greatly appreciated by all those attending.

As a direct consequence, I returned home and did some 'Troveing' (a new word perhaps?). One hit I found is the attached extract from *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 16 November 1915.



This extract relates to an interesting letter written from Egypt by Private Phil Wilkins to his parents in Double Bay, Sydney.

An analytical chemist, he was my father's youngest brother, the first of the three to enlist in the AIF.

Following Phil's service as a stretcher bearer with 1st Field Ambulance at Gallipoli, he returned to Australia aboard a hospital ship while performing nursing and mess duties.

Later, in 1916, he sailed for the Western Front, this time to become a rifleman with the 3rd Infantry Battalion.

Phil Wilkins, aged 23, was killed in action on 9 April 1917 as the Australians attacked a German-defended town called Hermies in Northern France.

Rest in peace, Uncle Phil.

Dave Wilkins OAM

Ethel Turner

Two articles about Ethel Turner were in the September 2021 and the March 2022 newsletters. Now you can visit her home in Killara. Details are listed below.



Woodlands, 1 Werona Avenue, Killara

Dates : 14 May 2022 : 10am - 4pm
15 May 2022 : 10am - 4pm

Prebooking is required at
<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Things-to-do/Whats-on/Woodlands-Ethel-Turner-Seven-Little-Australians>

Albert Lim - owner

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Three Vietnam Wars from 1946 to 1975

by David Wilkins OAM

At the March general meeting, KHS member David Wilkins gave us a deft summary of Vietnam's three wars. The first war was with the French (1946-54); the second with America and her allies including Australia (1960-73) and for this war David drew on his personal experience in Vietnam with the Australian army; the final war he discussed was in 1975 which resulted in the unification of North and South Vietnam.

Most of us could remember aspects of the last two wars and knew something of the first, but David provided new and forgotten details. Most importantly, he made sense of the whole. His talk was well illustrated – I especially appreciated the maps which clarified locations and terrain. He also touched on the human drama of war with its usual accompaniments of heartbreak, errors and deceit. In all, another excellent talk arranged by our Speaker Coordinator, Beverley Dunstan.

Judith Godden

The German SIG

Peter thanked Sandra Clark and Sue Moore for their able assistance in defining the relative importance of the many resources on our Intranet.

Tony reported on the low level of activity of the German Australian Genealogy and History Alliance (GAGHA) since our last meeting. Tony then described several interesting articles from the latest edition of the International German Genealogy Partnership (IGGP) newsletter. Members wishing to read the IGGP newsletter, *Partner Zeitun* can go to www.iggp.org and open the link to the latest copy or past issues of the newsletter at the middle of the home page.

As mentioned during the subsequent discussion, a link to old German maps that may interest members can be found at the bottom of the home page for Kartenmeister www.kartenmeister.com and through the website www.davidrumsey.com.

Leone gave a very interesting and informative presentation on how she managed, using Ancestry.com private member trees. The data (events and facts) found during each session of her one-on-one service to members to get them up and running on German Family History research. Leone's presentation generated much lively discussion.

Julia Green reported on a book she found incredibly valuable to her family history research. The name of the book was *Strangers and Pilgrims* by Douglas and Anne Coombs. Julia kindly offered to give a presentation on the book at a future meeting of the SIG.

The next meeting is planned for **Monday 06 June 2022 at 1:30pm**. Peter offered to give a presentation at the June meeting on Legacy Family Tree genealogy software and compare the software with selected online tools. Additional agenda item suggestions, welcomed.

Peter Stehn

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New Members

In March we have had 1 new household join our Society.

Welcome to the Society.

Tony CAMERON from Turramurra
We hope you will find your membership rewarding, and look forward to your participation in the many activities we have to offer going forward this year.

Annet Latham

A Merciful Journey ...

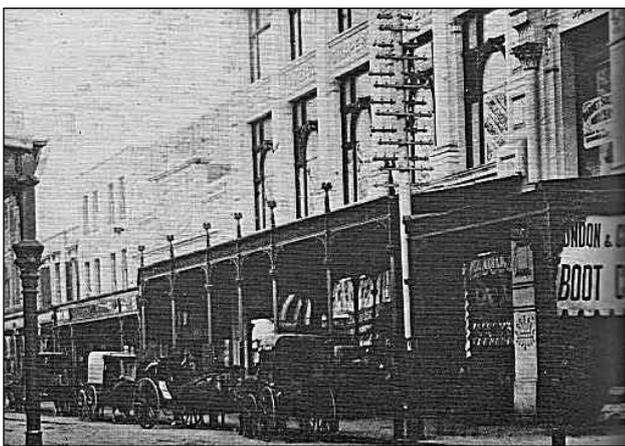
I am pleased to advise that on 26th March, long-serving and highly respected Warrawee Bowling Club member, Marsden Hordern reached the magical age of 100 years. Let me tell you about some of the exploits and achievements of this remarkable man.

Marsden Carr Hordern was born in the Sydney suburb of Rose Bay to father Frederick, an Anglican clergyman, and his wife Iris. As a young boy Marsden moved around a bit as his father was posted from parish to parish, eventually arriving in Wahroonga.

Thereupon, Marsden attended Knox Grammar School leaving school in 1939, about 8 weeks after World War II was declared. After leaving school, Marsden joined the Army Reserve, later moving to the Navy. He became a Sub-Lieutenant and saw action in 1942. He was given command of a patrol boat which operated in the Pacific theatre for the duration of the war.

While serving in the Navy, Marsden studied part time, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts from Sydney University. He retired from the Navy in 1947 with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Marsden is part of the Hordern retailing family. In 1879, his grandfather Edwin Kerr Hordern, together with two of his brothers, set up a department store called Hordern Brothers, spanning from George Street to Pitt Street, Sydney. At one stage, the company employed 750 people.



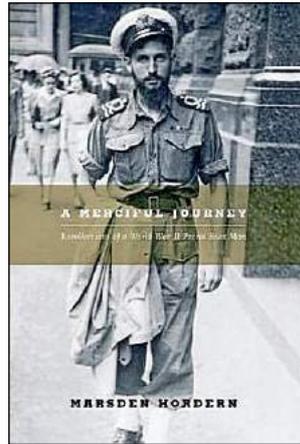
Hordern Brothers Department Store at 211 Pitt Street, c 1880

The family also traces its origins back to the Reverend Samuel Marsden, a Church of England minister from the convict era in Australia.

After leaving the Navy, Marsden never lost his love of the water and competed in several Sydney to Hobart yacht races, as well as other classic, blue water sailing events. Marsden spent some time in the family's retail business but it did not keep his interest.

He had a passion for fine arts and established and operated a fine art print gallery (Hilton Hordern) from 1958 to 1996. At the same time, he was a member of the board of directors of the Hydro Majestic Hotel at Medlow Bath.

He then retired to write books.



His books include *Mariners are Warned...*(1989), *King of the Australian Coast...*(1997), *A Merciful Journey...*(2005). These are still available through Amazon.

In 2004, Marsden received an honorary Doctor of Letters from Sydney University.

In 2009, he received the Order of Australia Medal for "Services to the recording of

Australian maritime history, particularly early exploration and naval history during World War Two".

Marsden had joined Warrawee Bowling Club in the early 2000s, enthusiastically embracing the sports of lawn bowls and croquet. He retired from active play only recently and remains a Social member of the Club.

Hillar Poder

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Anzac Memorial Hyde Park

The Royal United Services Institute of NSW was established in 1888. In 2018 it was moved to the Anzac Memorial Hyde Park where the Ursula Davidson Library, deemed to be a library of national significance, holds approximately 25,000 books, all relating to defence and military history. Our collection includes the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society's excellent set of books *Rallying the Troops* relating to local residents who enlisted in WW1. At the time of their release, the R.U.S.I. published a review of these books.

I wanted to bring our library to your members' attention as it is available to the public and is ideal for historical research. In addition to the library the Institute provides a monthly newsletter and a quarterly journal. Visits to Naval vessels, Army and Airforce bases and other places of interest are also undertaken. Details of the R.U.S.I. and the Ursula Davidson Library can be found on our website:

The library: <https://www.rusinsw.org.au/site/Library.php>

The Institute: www.rusinsw.org.au

Jim Braid - R.U.S.I. Board member.

PRISONERS OF WAR IN AUSTRALIA

Part Four

N34 Prisoner of war camp hostel - North St Ives

The N34 hostel was at the northern end of St Ives backing on Richmond Avenue where Mona Vale Road (then Rocky Creek Road - also known as Pittwater Road) goes down to the wildflower garden. At that time, Richmond Avenue was not a circuit. The St Ives hostel was an adjunct to the major Prisoner of War and Internment Camp at Liverpool. It was not as far as the Military Camp which was constructed by W.G. Hutchinson of Beechworth Road, Pymble, in 1942, costing £8,575.



The Camp site

Taken from Six Maps of Sydney, 1943

The hostel was used for about 160 Italian prisoners of war who had been captured in North Africa. They had quite a trip before they got to St Ives in January, 1946. Captured in Libya in the campaigns of 1940-41 and 1942, sorted out in Egypt, and then taken to India where they were properly housed and kitted out, and finally from India to Australia to camps such as Cowra, Hay, Murchison and others. They wore regulation outfit of maroon trousers and jacket with a grey shirt. The men slept in long, low scrap timber huts, quite unlike conventional military huts that existed in other military camps. Twenty men to a hut.

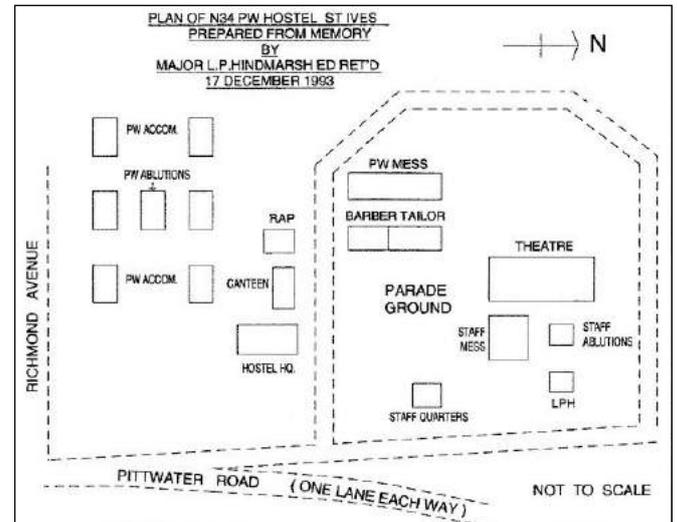
In May 1946, Major Laurie Hindmarch was appointed as Administration Sergeant in Charge. He



Laurie Hindmarch

was from the AIF. He had a staff of eight Australians, reduced to seven when the cook was discharged. The cook's two helpers, Bonfidio and Gelati remained. They had been taught how to make pasta and tomato puree, spaghetti and gnocchi (items not

generally known in Australia at that time) by the prisoners, so all fared well. Meals generally consisted of breakfast: tea and two slices of bread and butter; lunch: meat and vegetables with some pasta or rice; night meal: meat, 2 potatoes, cup of tea, and two slices of bread and butter.



It was a hostel because it was not guarded. Hostilities with Italy had ceased in 1943, and yet in 1946, Australia still had Italian prisoners. In later court proceedings it was described as the "walk out, walk in" camp when it was revealed that the prisoners visited friends in the countryside, and went to the local cinema.

Laurie recalled that "Because the place was not guarded, these blokes could duck over the back fence and down a valley and up the other side which was an area of market gardens. They used to work there and get some pocket money. The St Ives Progress Association hated it. What used to upset the locals was that on Sunday afternoon the prisoners would get out onto the side of Mona Vale Road, to watch the girls in the cars going down to the beach".

"The prisoners had two roles - about 100 were picked up every morning at 6.00am and taken to North Ryde where there was an enormous vehicle park. Many of them were mechanics from the Fiat works in Turin. They were engaged in servicing surplus military vehicles prior to their auction. Another small party was loaded onto a truck about 8.00am and taken down to the northern beaches to clear up the beach defences". They worked from Manly to Brookvale, joining other Italian prisoners from the Signal Hill Drill Hall, Old South Head Road. They returned about 4.30pm.

At Christmas 1946, the prisoners embarked for home. Three double-decker buses turned up. Laurie said that "we'd better look the part" so he got a couple of pistols out of the safe. "We strapped them on, and we were the escort. When the buses got out on Mona Vale Road, you'd have thought it was a Royal procession. You'd have had to wonder who had won the war". The buses took them to Glebe Island to the waiting ship. They went up the gangway without a

Exciting, Adventurous and Heart-Rending sculptor Rayner Hoff's memorial masterpieces

Emeritus Professor John Ramsland, OAM, FACE.

backward glance".

Escape from St Ives Camp

After the war, Australians who harboured escapees were liable for up to six months imprisonment or a fine of 100 pounds under the Aliens Act or 5 years imprisonment under the Commonwealth Crimes Act of November 1947.

Many of the missing men being sought in NSW in November 1947 had escaped from South Head, St Ives and Ryde. Six had escaped from the St Ives camp in September 1946. A further two escaped later in that month.

Andrea Sgro, of Porters Lane St Ives, was fined 25 pounds in November 1946, for assisting Armando Bianco escape on 20 April 1946 from the St Ives camp and for having harboured him. In November 1946, Umberto Caddeo of Hassel Street, Wetherill Park, was also fined for assisting Bianco.

In evidence, Bianco said that while a prisoner at the central control centre at St Ives, he had a talk with Sgro near the camp and asked him to help him escape. On April 20 he packed his gear and by arrangement met Sgro, who was in a car with Caddeo about a mile and a half from the camp. They left the car at Sgro's and then drove to Wetherill Park with Caddeo, to his farm where Bianco stayed for 43 days. Caddeo paid him 2 pounds a week. He went with Caddeo to the markets and bought a civilian suit. While in the camp, he even went to the local movies.

At the end of 1946, police were looking for Carmine Delpito and Giulio Medagli who had escaped from St Ives in May 1946.

Sources: *Trove*, and a talk given by Laurie Hindmarch to the Rotary Club of St Ives, April 2014 and Margaret Wyatt, *Ku-ring-gai During War*, 1997.

The next part of the story looks at two prisoners from the St Ives Hostel who returned to Australia and one established himself in Warrimoo Avenue, St Ives; the other went on to be awarded an OAM.

Note: In addition to this camp, and the army camp at the St Ives Showgrounds, there was a RAAF base at Bradfield, followed by migrant and housing commission settlements. With the arrival of migrants, Ku-ring-gai's population grew from 27,931 in 1933 to 39,874 in 1947.

Morrison Hammond

At the April general meeting, John Ramsland summarised the life and achievements of sculptor Raynor Hoff (1894-1937). This British born sculptor nearly threw it all in to become a farmer in Canada. Luckily, instead he took up a position at the Sydney Technical College, Darlinghurst, starting teaching there in 1924. John outlined Hoff's many achievements while in Sydney. Sadly, Hoff died after just 13 years, partly due, it was argued, to burnout. John's illustrations demonstrated why Hoff is considered such a major sculptor. His war experience contributed to his radical depictions, including the moving sculpture of 'sacrifice' that is the centrepiece of the War Memorial in Hyde Park.

After the talk and numerous questions from his audience, David Wilson launched John's latest book, *Rendezvous with Death – Anzac Stories of the Great War* (Brolga, 2021). Copies of another of John's books, *The Legacy of Douglas Grant; A Notable Aborigine in War and Peace* (Brolga, 2019) were also available for sale.

Judith Godden

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Tour Report

Unfortunately, our 24th March Penrith tour to the Arms of Australia Inn and the Museum of Fire had to be postponed for the **third** time, this time due to widespread flooding in the area. We intend rescheduling these great venues for later this year or early 2023.

We are keenly looking forward to our harbour cruise with the Naval Historical Society of Australia on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of the Japanese Mini Submarine Attack on Sydney Harbour. This cruise will be on Wednesday 1st June.

The tour is fully booked but, if you are interested on placing your name on the waiting list, please contact Yvette at yreeve@optusnet.com.au or phone 0414 249 737.

Upcoming Schedule:

Thursday 23rd June : *Madame Tussauds* - Darling Harbour

Thursday 21st July : *Powerhouse Museum* - Ultimo



Some modes of transport at the museum

In the April newsletter a short article headed 'Tales from the Past' told a story about the Gaukrodger family. The story was a bit misleading as pointed out in the following article by Max Farley in the newsletter January/February 2010. Editor.

Exploding A Myth?

Once an incorrect historical 'fact' is expressed, particularly in print or in family folklore, it gains a life of its own and becomes virtually impossible ever to dispel. On page 465 of her excellent *Story of St Ives*, Gay Halstead tells in good faith the belief, accepted it seems by the family, that Elizabeth Gaukrodger married George Scott, alias Captain Moonlite in New Zealand in 1865.

Most Australians would know of the gallant bushranger, Captain Moonlite. Many Ku-ring-gai people would also remember that the Gaukrodger family had abattoirs and a butchery in the St Ives/Pymble area in the closing days of the 19th century. It was a good story and appeared to be a romantic link between Ku-ring-gai and the gentleman bushranger.

Unfortunately the facts do not seem to support it.

The Society's vice president and leader of our Family History Group, Jo Harris, had her curiosity roused during the Society's Tumut tour last October/November when a visit was made to the Gundagai cemetery. A plaque mentioning Captain Moonlite was noticed. Once stirred, Jo has a 'never-give-up' approach to research. In essence, she discovered:

- an Andrew George Scott was born in Ireland in 1842

- he went to New Zealand in 1861 with his Anglican clergyman father, Thomas, his mother and siblings. He taught school before joining the Waikato Militia and later the Auckland Volunteer Engineers Corps

- there is conjecture that he was in California in 1865 but the Australian Dictionary of Biography makes no mention of this. The ADB gives a birth year of 1842 but sometimes 1845 is written. Neither of these discrepancies affects the outcome

- after being refused a senior post with the armed constabulary in New Zealand in 1867 he came to Australia in 1868

- in July 1868 he became a lay reader of the Church of Holy Trinity at Bacchus Marsh and in March 1869 was transferred to Egerton in Victoria

- on 8 May 1869 his path took a different turn when he held up a Bank at Egerton, near Ballarat

- though acquitted of the Egerton robbery, he pursued lawless ways and, in short, finished at the

end of a rope in Darlinghurst Gaol on 20 January 1880. This date is of course undeniable and well documented.

- *Moonlight* was a widespread family name in New Zealand, and it was during the Egerton affair that he applied the name *Captain Moonlite* to himself. He is thought to have intentionally mis-spelt *Moonlight*. It is speculated that he took a liking to the name when in New Zealand and adopted it. So why his alleged marriage to Elizabeth Gaukrodger in New Zealand?

- a George Moonlight was born in Scotland in 1832 and joined the Californian goldrush in 1848 before coming to Australia and then to the Otago goldrush in 1861. He became known as George Fairweather Moonlight.

- the records show that George Moonlight married Elizabeth Gaukrodger on 28 February 1865 at Wakefield, New Zealand.

- George and Elizabeth had children and George became engaged in prospecting and exploring river systems in New Zealand. Moonlight Creek near Atarau is named after him

- he became a hotelier but bad times came his way after Elizabeth's death in 1882. His business failed and he went prospecting, alone, in the Howard River area

- he died in the bush in July 1884. A monument to George and Elizabeth Moonlight was erected in Nelson, NZ, recognising the role he played in opening up the 'back country'. Captain Moonlite, the bushranger, was hung in 1880.

George Moonlight, who married Elizabeth Gaukrodger, died in 1884. There is no doubt about these dates. So Elizabeth Gaukrodger's husband could not have been Captain Moonlite. Perhaps, just perhaps, this research by Jo Harris will put paid for all time to what appears to be a myth that our Gaukrodger family had a past connection with Captain Moonlite.

There is a piquant touch to the end of the story. While in gaol, Scott had earlier met James Nesbitt and the two had become close friends. Nesbitt was killed in the shootout which resulted in Moonlite's capture and had died in his arms. It is said that Moonlite's final request was to be buried in the same grave as Nesbitt. This was refused and he was buried at Rookwood. One hundred and fifteen years later, in 1995, the authorities relented and re-interred him at Gundagai close to his friend.

Max Farley

DIARY DATES

MAY 2022

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

How to publish our Family Histories

2pm - FHG meeting

Who was your First Ancestor to set foot on Australian soil?

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

Lying for the Admiralty

Presenter : Margaret Cameron-Ash

JUNE 2022

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

Saturday 18 : **2pm - General Meeting**

Grace Cossington Smith - A Ku-ring-gai Local

Presenter : Dr Reinhard Ronnebeck

Thursday 23 : **Tour** - Madame Tussauds - Darling Harbour

JULY 2022

Saturday 16 : **2pm - General Meeting**

More Australian Inventions

Presenter : Ian Thompson

Thursday 21 : **Tour** - Powerhouse Museum - Ultimo

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	Ralph Davis	webmaster@khs.org.au
Welfare Officer	Jill Nicholson	9144 6948

Treasurer's Report

Due to Marilyn's retirement, Annet kindly prepared the March, 2022 accounts.

I have just been appointed your new treasurer and look forward to joining the KHS team.

Our main income for March was from sales of 6 sets RTT books at our special Anzac price + 2 sales of our popular book Almost Like Home. Our big expense this month was the renewal of our Ancestry subscription, the meeting room hiring fee to KMC for our bi-monthly meetings and the renewal of our contents insurance. We are still in surplus to date and this should cover our costs to June.

Our bank account details are:-

Ku-ring-gai Historical Society

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

Until next month.

Ken Bromley

Newsletter Details

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