

# KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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

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## Consider joining one of our Special Interest Groups

### Mac Users SIG: 1st Mondays, 2pm

The next meeting is 2pm Monday 3 November in the Research Centre. Please email suggestions for topics. No need to book, just turn up and bring your laptop, iPad and/or iPhone if you like.

Jackie van Bergen: [jackievb@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jackievb@optusnet.com.au)

### German Research SIG: (most) 2nd Mondays, 1.30pm

The next meeting is 1.30pm Monday 8 December in the Research Centre. All welcome.

Peter Stehn: [pstehn@tpg.com.au](mailto:pstehn@tpg.com.au)

### Technology SIG: 2nd Thursdays, 1.30pm

A small but enthusiastic group at our October meeting learnt about the Flip-Pal Mobile Scanner and online sites for Maltese research, and gathered tips to improve our blogs. The group will be in recess now until 2015. Details of our next meeting will be announced in our newsletter, blog and Facebook page.

Jill Ball: [jillballau@gmail.com](mailto:jillballau@gmail.com)

### Irish Research SIG: 2nd Fridays, 1.30pm

Some of our members visited Ireland over the last few months. One account mentioned a very lucky find. Leaving Australia with very little information on a family branch and returning with details going back many centuries. Genealogy is in the genes as many ancestors and contemporaries have been recording the family history. The first recording started in the 18th century. An Index of Free Irish eBooks and details of Irish Naming Patterns was provided by Alan Jones.

The next meeting will be 1.30pm Friday 14 November.

Ric Hall: [rehall@iprimus.com.au](mailto:rehall@iprimus.com.au)

### WWI Writers & Researchers: 4th Saturdays, 2pm

This month's meeting is 2pm Saturday 22 November in the Research Centre.

Kathie Rieth: [frithie@netdata.com.au](mailto:frithie@netdata.com.au)

### New Zealand SIG: coming soon

Calling for expressions of interest in joining this start-up group. Please write your name in the bookings folder in the Research Centre.

Morrison Hammond: [morrisonhammond@gmail.com](mailto:morrisonhammond@gmail.com)

## General Meeting

Saturday 15 November 2pm

### *Here Come the Cars*

State records Archivist JOHN CANN has some engaging stories of two men - one a Premier, the other a gangster - and their cars.



Please bring a plate of party fare to share at our Christmas table.

Visitors are welcome.

## Family History Meeting

Saturday 6 December 2pm

11am Workshop New websites, general Q & A

2pm General Meeting followed by

*Riches to Rags – Rags to Riches:*

*A Brief History of Surry Hills*

Speaker: Richard Whitaker

Please bring a plate of party fare for our Christmas table.

Visitors are welcome.



# General Meeting Notes

## Darinung Recognition

At our September general meeting one of our longtime members, Dr Geoff Ford, gave us a very interesting talk on the origin of the Aboriginal people of the Ku-ring-gai area. In this presentation Geoff drew heavily on his 2010 doctoral thesis: Darinung Recognition.

Historical records dating from the first settlement, described the Aborigines living on the Cumberland plain as being all of the Dharug tribe and that the natives of the Hawkesbury River spoke a different language. Ford found in his extensive researches that the correct name for the Hawkesbury River tribe is Darkinung (pronounced Darkinyung) and that in the 1820s many moved south to occupy the area formerly occupied by Dharug speakers. These latter people having moved closer to the Sydney settlement where food could be easily obtained.

One of the tribe, the well-known Bungaree was dubbed "Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe" by Governor Macquarie and given an inscribed chest plate to wear. Macquarie settled Bungaree's family on 15 acres of land on Georges Head. Dressed in discarded uniforms, he became a prominent and somewhat comical figure around Sydney. He accompanied Mathew Flinders on his coastal survey and later on his circumnavigation of Australia as guide and interpreter. Geoff noted that we have a statue of Flinder's cat but none of Bungaree. It was probably Bungaree or his son who showed George Peat the overland way to James Webb's Brisbane Waters farm. Geoff also spoke of Bungaree's daughters one of whom was white, most likely fathered by a convict, but accepted by Bungaree as his daughter.

Geoff amassed a huge volume of work in his doctoral research only a small part of which he was able to share with us in the time available. His thesis is available at the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai libraries or on-line at <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/7745>.

Doug Milne

## Vale

It is with much regret the Society has been advised of the death of some of our members.

Hazel Perdriau, one of our life members passed away two days short of her 100th birthday. A member since 1976, she served as both secretary and president. She also photographed every house in Nelson Street, Gordon, for the Society.

Harry Churchland, member since 2000  
June Greenhalgh, member since 1996  
Neroli Lock, member since 1997

Our sincere condolences are extended to their families and friends.

## The Lindfield Tornado, 25th November 1914

This month is the 100th anniversary of a very severe thunderstorm that swept across the North Shore in 1914, spawning what is believed to have been a tornado that produced significant damage across Lindfield.

A contemporary photograph revealed heavy damage to the Lindfield shopping centre, with awnings down and wreckage on both sides of Gordon Rd—now Pacific Hwy. The Sydney Morning Herald reported:

*The roofs of the premises occupied by E. Duval, boot-maker, and H. J. Dale, grocer, which form part of a terrace facing Lindfield Railway Station, were blown completely away and debris was carried across*



*the roadway and onto land adjoining.*

After blasting the North Shore, the thunderstorm moved southeast. In the Watson's Bay area, a military tent encampment suffered heavy damage.

The Herald continued: *At Watson's Bay the storm was accompanied by a particularly strong whirlwind which did much damage, flattening trees and tents on South Head, and striking Middle Head, where similar damage occurred. A big tree at Watson's Bay was struck by lightning, and was torn up by the roots. Two of the military tents were caught by the whirlwind and were carried high into the air and deposited about 200 yards away. A lot of other tents were blown down. Mr. T. Farrell of Watson's Bay was working on his 16ft skiff, which he had dragged up from the beach. The wind struck this and carried it up to a height of about 50 feet, hurling it over a fence and dashing it on to the ground where it was badly smashed.*

This description involving the suggestion of a "whirlwind" suggests that the storm may have produced a tornado, and this is consistent with the extent of the damage observed in the photograph.

Tornados on the North Shore are rare but certainly not unknown. A devastating twister blasted across the Naremburn/North Sydney area on 27 March 1906, resulting in one death, scores of injuries and major property damage.

In more recent times a tornado struck Hornsby on Monday 18th November 2013, ripping down trees and tipping a demountable building over near Hornsby Railway station.

Severe thunderstorms across the North Shore can occur at any time but the peak season is from October to March, so monitor any warnings that have been issued during this time and be ready to take any action recommended by the authorities.

Richard (Dick) Whitaker

# Get to know your Committee

## **President: Graham Lewis** (joined KHS 2004)

Graham was born in Wellington NZ and gained a BSc and BCom there, before going on to qualify as an actuary. He married Isabel in 1965, settling in Sydney, but also living in Melbourne, London and Wellington, and managing businesses there, in Europe and Asia.

Graham was heavily involved in the production of the ABGR volumes of early musters etc by the Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG), arranging the seed finance and computing support necessary. He retired in 1996, did a bit of consulting work and got heavily involved again at SAG, as councillor, secretary/treasurer, webmaster, IT support and production of CDs for SAG and AGCI. He was elected FSAG in 2004.

He has been Treasurer of Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre, FOKE and Friends of Turramurra, Vice President of KHS and KPT and webmaster of them all, winning an international award for the SAG website, and both SAG and KPT websites were chosen for regular archiving by Trove.

He is a keen family historian, with interests in many parts of the world, and also takes a strong interest in the built and natural heritage of Ku-ring-gai. He is a Fellow of the NZ Institute of Management, and of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## **Vice President: Jenny Joyce** (joined KHS 2005)

Jenny first moved into Ku-ring-gai as a baby, moving into the house where her father had lived since he was about 10. She has a background in IT, with a degree in computer science. She has been interested in her family history since she was a teenager, listening to the stories her grandmother told her. Jenny has previously served on the committee for five years, been involved with the preservation group, oral history, and has developed a new catalogue for the Society. She was also involved in Scouts when her son was a member, helping on Scout and family camps, being involved in fundraising, and making scarves for North St Ives Scouts.

## **Immediate Past President: Jennifer Harvey** (joined KHS 2000) Committee 2000-2013, Vice President 2008-2013, President, Feb 2013-2014.

Collection co-Curator; Historian co-Editor, layout, researcher, contributor 2003-present. Ku-ring-gai Council Heritage Reference Committee 2000-2014. Tuesday manager with Built Heritage team. KHS Historian of the Year 2006. First Ku-ring-gai Council Heritage Award, Australia Day 2012.

Born and educated in NZ, Jennifer is a researcher and archivist with a special interest in local history, built heritage, genealogy and the railways. In 1971 she was employed by Auckland University to research the design of pre-school buildings. While living in Taranaki, she became actively involved with education. She was a member of the Kindergarten Union Board and rewrote their handbook. It was during this period that she started researching her family history, travelling many times to Great Britain in search of answers.

Based in Singapore during the early 1980s Jennifer became aware of the importance of saving heritage buildings for future generations when the fate of Raffles Hotel and Chinatown hung in the balance.

Returning to Australia the family moved to Gippsland, Victoria where Jennifer enrolled in Fine Arts at TAFE College, Moe. She completed the course at Hornsby TAFE majoring in photography. The next move was to Borneo after which came Kuala Lumpur where Jennifer joined Badan Warisan (Heritage Trust of

Malaysia). She researched and photographed the four heritage walking tours of Kuala Lumpur for the Malaysian Government and from three years research she wrote a book on *How to Date Buildings*; using resources in the Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia).

## **Treasurer: Neil Falconer** (joined KHS 2012)

Long term resident of Ku-ring-gai (St Ives and South Turramurra) with an intervening tree change to St Albans.

Interested in local history and the evolution of Sydney's North Shore, in family history particularly military history: Gallipoli, The Western Front & WW2 Tobruk and The Western Desert. Member of Friends & Family of First AIF.

He worked in senior management and CEO roles in international companies: Miles Laboratories/Schwarzkopf/Revlon/Seagram both in Australia and Europe. Foundation Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

In semi retirement he has worked as a Bushfire Risk assessor for new dwellings in bushfire prone areas across NSW.

His tree change years were spent as proprietors of St Albans Court House & Police Station & Lodgings (Built 1890) B&B and the Fickle Wombat Restaurant.

He is a Life member of St Albans Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade (member 24 years) including Crew Leader, Deputy Captain, Vice President, Treasurer & Secretary (10 years).

Very interested in the breadth of interests and continued success of KHS in coming years.

## **Committee: Morrison Hammond** (joined KHS 2003)

Morrison is a retired academic who since retirement has been involved in community matters in Ku-ring-gai. He was President for two three-year terms of the Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre (St Ives) for which he wrote a history of its first 30 years. He has received a Mayoral Award for Community Service and a similar award from Lions. Morrison also spent some years on Council's Community Liaison Committee.

Since retirement he has become very interested in family history, and participates in that activity within KHS. Morrison is an active member of the Mac SIG, helping people understand genealogical programs that operate on the Mac. He hopes that a New Zealand Genealogy SIG will start in 2015.

## **Committee: Margaret Holland** (joined KHS Feb 2010)

Having lived in North Turramurra for 52 years, I am amazed at how my suburb and the surrounding suburbs have grown and the many changes I have witnessed. Ray, my husband, and I raised our two sons and one daughter in this delightful semi rural suburb, which it was in the late 1960s. We have moved three times in all, and all our residences have been in North Turramurra. We must love it!

After selling our family printing business, Gordon Businessprint, in St John's Ave, Gordon, and after much travelling overseas, I was keen to pursue my family history and learn more about the wonderful history of Ku-ring-gai. I joined the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society and found their resources very helpful and the members very friendly. I hope my role, as a member of the committee, will be just as friendly and rewarding.

Further bios will follow in future issues of the newsletter:

Vice President: Jo Harris (joined KHS Dec 1999)

Secretary: Yvette Reeve (joined KHS Apr 2008)

Committee: Ann Barry (joined KHS Jul 2000)

Committee: Joan Stebbing (joined KHS Mar 2013)

# Family History - Notes from the meeting on Saturday 4 October

## 11am Session

Jo Harris opened the meeting and welcomed the 20 attendees. Jo showed us a photo of the latest headstone placed in St Johns Cemetery, for Helen Peterina Lawrence, 1881-1918. This was organised by our member, Warren Dent, former pupil and dux of Gordon Public School in 1955, who has lived in the USA for 40 years. This led to many questions and a discussion regarding graves, cemeteries, including St John's, Gordon. With an aging population of the parishioners who do some work each month, this cemetery could do with a good overhaul. <http://www.austcemindex.com> is a site to search cemeteries. If a mistake is found, an email requesting the correction can be sent to Peter Olsen.

[http://www.shortfamilytree.com/nswbdm/nsw\\_bdm\\_search.php](http://www.shortfamilytree.com/nswbdm/nsw_bdm_search.php) can assist you back to the original NSW BDMs rather than the new 'unfriendly' BDM site.

A one page handout of 'free' websites and a double page handout of 'useful' websites were given to attendees.

Jo told us about "The Australian Civil Volunteers – 1916-1920", a government scheme to send 5,060 volunteers to Britain, half of whom were labourers, to assist companies whose employees had joined the war effort. 1,000 skilled Australian metal tradesmen worked with the Vickers company, 230 were soldiers recovering in Britain from combat disabilities. The government paid the two way fares and some of the return fares included English wives.

## 2pm Session

Jo Harris opened the meeting and welcomed members, visitors and especially Peter Bidencope, our guest speaker. Apologies as per the attendance book. There was no entry for 4th October 1788 in John Copley's book, but Jo gave some information compiled from Jonathan King's Book *The First Fleet*. Jo gave mention of the Society's happenings for the coming months and special mention of 'gems' from an October *Family Tree Connections* article – *The 10 Golden Rules of Genealogy – and how to ignore them* – some gems included "I don't have to worry about researching my mother's side as my second cousin did it and they sent me a copy"; "Would you please tell me if people made their wills before or after they died"; "Isn't it wonderful to know that all the Births, Deaths and Marriage indexes are 100% accurate"; "I know he died a porpoise"; "Do you have to have some sort of paper to bury dead people, or can you just take them along to the cemetery" – and many more.

Book reports from members included Carol Field *A Lady in a Thousand, 1838*; Noel Blake *The War that Ended Peace* by Margaret MacMillan. Jo also brought several books including: Michael McKeman's well-indexed book *Padre: Australian Chaplains in Gallipoli and France*; *An Industrial Invasion: Australian Civilian Volunteers in British Factories 1916-1920* by Tony Griffiths; and *Runaways, Robbers and Incurable Rogues: Certificates of Freedom Records for Port Macquarie convicts, 13th December 1823 to 26th April 1827*.

Seminars/Conferences/Exhibitions – Jill Nicholson visited the Arthur Boyd Exhibition in Canberra; Angela Lind

visited a WWI Exhibition in Vienna and saw the car in which the Archduke and Duchess had driven, and several members had visited the WWI Exhibition at the Mitchell Library.

Jo introduced Peter Bidencope, a long term member, to speak about "Joseph Bidencope and his Descendants". Judy, Peter's wife, a son, a grandson and Peter's sister were also in attendance at the meeting. Peter never knew his grandfather, who died 13 years before he was born. Joseph Beidenkopf was born 1837 in Szczakowa, Poland, close to Krakow near Auschwitz. In the 1840s he went to Paris then East London. Life there was very difficult with many thousands of tailors. He lived and slept where he worked. On 6th November 1857 he sailed on the *Trade Wind* as a cabin boy, aged 20, on a horrendous voyage being thrashed by the 1st mate. There was typhus, whooping cough and many deaths on the ship which arrived in Hobart in February 1858 and was quarantined for a month.

After initially working for tailor Henry Cook, in 1860 he opened his own business making military and naval uniforms, a business which eventually grew to have a staff of 103. In 1861 Joseph married Emma Booker in St David's Church, Hobart. He established a hat factory, but prior to Federation there were customs duties between the colonies, but with no duty from the UK it eventually closed.

In 1866 he was naturalised and swore allegiance to Queen Victoria. In 1868 Joseph saw the Duke of Edinburgh (later Edward VII). Later, Bidencope's Store made Police, Railway, Tramway and other uniforms. Emma died in 1892, and in 1894 Joseph married Emily Maggs, a milliner. Their first child was Clarence, Peter's father. Joseph died in 1915.

Clarence joined the AIF Medical Corps on 7th May 1915 and later in Britain transferred to the British Kings Royal Rifle Corps. He saw active service in France and was promoted to Captain. He returned to Australia and after originally training to be an architect in Melbourne, was encouraged to seek a life on the land. So after ventures in Tasmania, Victoria, and Merriwa, he finally settled in Coonamble, NSW where he established a Border Leicester sheep stud. He died in 1941 aged 46, of complications from appendicitis. During WWII, Bidencope's made 500 pairs of khaki drill trousers a day in a special factory, then in the 1950s women's wear was included. The store eventually changed hands to Soundy's then Sportscraft. During his talk, Peter showed us some wonderful photos, especially of the family.

Morrison Hammond gave the vote of thanks to Peter and presented him with the Society's new publication *Rallying the Troops* in a Society bag.

Lucky Door prizes were won by Vicki Williams who chose, Les Thorne's *A History of the North Shore Sydney*; Judy Bidencope chose *A History of Kangaroo Valley* by John Griffith and Joan Stebbing chose *Convicts & The Colonies* by AGL Shaw.

Notes by Elaine Turnidge.

# Ku-ring-gai Heroes of World War I

## Captain Brian Colden Antill Pockley (MID)

Captain Brian Pockley of *Graystones*, Wahroonga, was the first officer in an Australian army unit to die in combat action in World War I. He was the first member of the Australian Army Medical Corps and the first person from Ku-ring-gai to lose his life in the War. Captain Pockley was also the first Australian army officer of that War to be decorated for bravery.

Born on 4 June 1890, he was the third of five children. He attended Shore School where he made a major impact, so much so that on 14 September 1914, following his death, a Sydney Morning Herald article described him as having had a brilliant career, both as a student and athlete, at the Sydney Church of England Grammar School. He was champion athlete of the school, and won the championship shield two years running, with a record number of points on each occasion. He also captained the college football team for two years. Brian Pockley graduated with a medical degree from Sydney University in 1914 and began a practice at Sydney Hospital. Then war erupted. He applied for a commission on 14 August although he had made some earlier arrangements by volunteering for the Australian Navy and Army Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) soon after recruiting for it began. On 12 August he was offered a position as a medical officer with the AN&MEF that embarked on the *Berrima* a week later on 19 August for Rabaul, the capital of German New Guinea. One of their objectives was to destroy German wireless stations including one operating inland from Herbertshohe (Kokopo).

At dawn on 11 September 1914, he was the medical officer attached to a naval landing party at Kabakaul Bay near Rabaul. As the small force moved inland astride Bitapaka Road, a rough dirt road through the thick jungle, German troops with native police opposed the advance and soon the first Australian casualties of the war occurred.

Captain Pockley attended Able Seaman William Williams who was badly wounded but realised the severity necessitated that he be evacuated. Pockley instructed William's companion, Stoker Kember and another, to take him back to the shore and in doing so Pockley removed his Red Cross arm band and placed it around Kember's hat as protection. Kember protested to which Pockley replied, 'You take it, you can't do anything while you are carrying him back. I can look after myself.' This selfless act to protect the evacuation party left Pockley devoid of his non-combatant insignia. It would prove fatal. As Pockley continued the advance a short while later at about 10.30am, he was also shot and badly wounded. He was carried on an ambulance cart to the shore where he was seen by Captain John Donaldson, another medical officer from Ku-ring-gai.

Williams and Pockley were taken aboard the *Berrima* for

treatment, but both died that afternoon.

Captain Pockley was posthumously mentioned in despatches for his courageous, caring and selfless act, referred to officially as 'conspicuous gallantry' in action. The author of the official history's volume of the Rabaul campaign, SS Mackenzie, recorded this act as follows:

Pockley's action in giving up his red cross badge, and thus protecting another man's life at the price of his own, was consonant with the best traditions of the Australian Army, and afforded a noble foundation for those of the Australian Army Medical Corps in the war.

With reinforcements, the attacking force finally reached its objective and captured the wireless station at about 7pm for a loss of six killed and four wounded. Thirty-one enemy died. On 13 September Rabaul was captured and on 17 September the German commander signed Terms of Capitulation.

Captain Pockley's body, dressed in full uniform, was wrapped in a Union Jack and, as 'The Last Post' was sounded, he was buried at sundown near Herbertshohe with his head towards Sydney. In 1919 his and the other bodies were exhumed and re-buried with full naval and military honours at Rabaul cemetery. In 1950 the remains were again relocated to the beautiful War Cemetery at Bitapaka.

Brian Colden Antill Pockley was described by one of his comrades as a charming gentleman, a gallant soldier and a manly man.

*David Wilkins*



*Captain Brian Pockley, MID, the first Ku-ring-gai soldier to be killed in the Great War. He was also the first decorated soldier in an Australian unit.*

## 100 Years On- Rabaul Commemorations in 2014

It was a first-time experience for many of the party to travel in an RAAF C130 Hercules aircraft and it was over 30 years since my last jaunt during my Army days. The side-saddle cargo netting type seating was the same, the noise and earplug requirements were the same, the chilly temperature was familiar and the minimalist facilities were unchanged, but what does one expect for a gratis 7-hour ride to Rabaul on the island of New Britain in Papua New Guinea? We are fairly sure however that Air Hercules is unlikely to challenge Jetstar or RyanAir in the commercial world for some time yet.



On 9 September this year I was fortunate to be part of a Navy-organized group of about 30 civilians invited to attend five days of commemorative services in Rabaul. The majority were descendants of the servicemen who lost their lives 100 years ago in Australia's first battleground of World War I, some were press and some were historical writers. There were also four from Shore School- the Headmaster, the history master and two Year 10 students.

One hundred years ago, on 11 September 1914, Australian troops went into battle against the Germans for the first time in World War I. They were from the Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force and it was 7½ months before the AIF's Anzac landing at Gallipoli Peninsula. That day to the south of Rabaul in German New Guinea, Australia also lost its first men in battle- six were killed and four wounded. The combined German and native force suffered 31 killed. Significantly this was Australia's first victory over the Germans and two days later Colonel Holmes, the military commander, raised the Australian flag at Rabaul. But the German administration had moved inland, and so, with the support of naval gunfire from the HMAS Encounter, an infantry force set out to capture them. On 17 September the German commander surrendered and signed Terms of Capitulation. Ten German ships throughout the islands were captured by late October and outstations occupied by December. Tragically on 14 September however, during a naval patrol to the east of Cape Gazelle in St George's Channel, the AE1, one of Australia's two submarines with the force, mysteriously disappeared. The submarine and its complete crew of 35 have never been found, despite many searches including recently with the use of modern technology.

Rabaul was nearly destroyed by volcanic action in 1937 but was rebuilt. Once the provincial capital of East New Britain and the most important settlement in the province, it was again almost demolished in 1994 by falling ash from the volcanic eruptions of Mt Tavurvur and Vulcan. During those eruptions ash was sent thousands of metres into the air and the subsequent downpour caused 80% of the buildings in Rabaul to collapse. Consequently the provincial capital was moved to Kokopo, a 40-minute drive around the huge bay along today's pot-holed road. Recent minor eruptions from Tavurvur in 2014 have the now half-mountain billowing smoke and sulphur fumes. In the colourful words of a local expat, "It gave a big fart the other day, but is quiet now."

The once tropical paradise of Rabaul beside its beautiful harbour is now a sad sight with volcanic ash smothering many parts of the town although the tropical vegetation is valiantly making a comeback.

The Rabaul Hotel, owned and operated by Susie McGrade, appears to be doing well commercially however. Susie, who is the Secretary of the Rabaul Historical Society, organized many of the town's activities for the commemorative week including a welcome cocktail party at the Rabaul Club, a dusk service on the harbour foreshore, a dawn service at the RSL Cenotaph, a Kinavai or traditional Rabaul welcome (where Commodore Richard Stokes from HMAS Yarra was initiated into the local Tolai tribe) and a parade through the town to the beat of the visiting Naval band.

The Australian Navy itself organized the two main services to commemorate the casualties from the battle of Bitapaka (held at the beautifully groomed Bitapaka War Cemetery near Kokopo) and the loss of the AE1 and its crew (again on the Rabaul harbour foreshore). Members of Ku-ring-gai Historical Society will recall from its recent publication *Rallying the Troops* that the first Army officer to die with an Australian unit in World War I was Captain Brian Pockley from Wahroonga, one of the medical officers with the force. (See the separate article in this newsletter.) A great nephew of his, Dr Simon Pockley, spoke at the Bitapaka service, as did author, Greg Raffin, who recently published *Australia's Real Baptism of Fire: Heroes known only to a few*, a history of that campaign. Another pleasing aspect of this service was the playing of the national anthems of all the three nations involved in that battle: Papua New Guinea, Australia and Germany.



Dr Simon Pockley addressing the service at Bitapaka War Cemetery, near Kokopo, on 11 Sep 2014.

Amongst the guests at the ceremony were two people wearing the Victoria Cross on their right chest (meaning it was the medal of a relative). Rob Rawlinson, a New Zealander, was wearing a VC and Bar, the World War II medals of his uncle, Captain Charles Upham- the only New Zealander to ever be awarded TWO VCs! The other guest was John Hook, the grand nephew of Pte Alfred Hook of the 2nd Battalion, 24th Foot (later the South Wales Borderers) from the Battle of Rorke's Drift in the Anglo-Zulu War. John defended Alfred and said he wasn't really like the malingerer reprobate 'Hooky' depicted in the movie Zulu starring Michael Caine and Stanley Baker. John was himself a most interesting man, having been an interpreter at the Japanese War Crimes trials in Rabaul after World War II.

Finally, I visited the Japanese hillside tunnels constructed in World War II, Admiral Yamamoto's command bunker and the museums of Kokopo and Rabaul. Coincidentally, a member of Pymble Golf Club, Raphael (Ray) Chue, was a 9 or 10 year old boy living in Rabaul at the time and worked as Yamamoto's houseboy doing cleaning. He says that he was required to bow three times to Yamamoto in the mornings but that he was a gentleman and treated him well. Rabaul Museum revealed many interesting pieces of local history from early German colonial days to modern times including a report by ABC radio journalist, Keith Jackson, on "The most hated man in Rabaul". It read:

When I arrived in Rabaul in early 1970, the most hated man was not one of the leaders of the feared Mataungan Association. It wasn't John Kaputin, who had shocked the colony by marrying a white woman. Not Oscar Tammur whose inflammatory speeches ignited the anti-colonial passions of the Tolais. Nor Damien Kereku who had threatened that the gutters of Rabaul would run red with the blood of Europeans. No, the man most hated by the white residents of Rabaul was Australia's most mercurial politician, Gough Whitlam.

Whitlam had visited the town some months before I arrived but people would still become abusive at the mere mention of his name. "I don't know exactly what kind of Australian it is that settles in New Guinea", he had said at a cocktail party, "but it's a very inferior breed".

And so ended a fascinating trip to Rabaul, with just the return journey in the belly of a C130 Hercules to complete it.

*David Wilkins*



*Mt Tavurvur, smoking today after recent rumblings.*

## Volunteers

### *Can you help us please?*

We have a few areas where we need volunteers, so take a look. Please talk to us if you think you can help.

#### **Auditor**

After many years service, our Auditor is no longer able to help us with our accounts. This is a once a year job, auditing our accounts for our AGM.

If you have skills in this area, please talk to Jenny Joyce or Neil Falconer.

#### **Newsletter co-editor**

The Newsletter is in need of a co-editor, and some new content helpers. We have someone who will co-edit and would like someone to share this job with them. Past experience in desktop publishing particularly welcome. If you can help, please talk to Jenny Joyce.

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### **Room Volunteers**

We have a new volunteer doing the rosters.

**Geoff Little** who some of you may know through the family history group has kindly offered to take this over. Please be patient while he gets used to his new role.

He can be contacted on 9449 3131.

If you can't do your rostered day, please phone Heather Davidson on 9144 1844.

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## **Rallying the Troops, A World War I Commemoration**

This is no ordinary WWI reference book, nor is it just about Ku-ring-gai.

The introductory chapters cover such topics as Recruitment, Rifle Clubs, Overseas War Memorials, Charles Bean, The New Guinea Campaign, & Gallipoli. The biographies cover men and women from all parts of Australia, and some parts overseas - their connection with Ku-ring-gai sometimes as tenuous as a next-of kin address.

Their experiences echo many of those who served.

**A great  
Christmas gift  
at \$40**

Copies available in the  
Research Rooms or  
via our website.



**RALLYING THE TROOPS**  
A WORLD WAR I COMMEMORATION  
BY KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY, VOLUME 1

## Administration

President	Graham Lewis	9416 5818
Vice Presidents	Jo Harris	9489 4393
	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
Treasurer	Neil Falconer	9488 7293
Secretary	Yvette Reeve	9987 0904
Immed. Past President	Jennifer Harvey	9489 6390

Committee	Ann Barry	9144 6480
	Morrison Hammond	9449 7447
	Margaret Holland	9488 5452
	Joan Stebbing	9489 6476

### Family History Group:

Leader	Jo Harris	9489 4393
Committee	Margaret Holland	9488 5452
	Jenny Joyce	9440 2131
	Yvette Reeve	9987 0904
	Beverly Robinson	9988 3775
	Jean Smith	9498 4468
	Elaine Turnidge	9899 2635

### Appointees:

Accessions	Jennifer Wallin
Book sales	Kathie Rieth, Margaret Holland
Catering	Vicki Williams, Margaret Holland
Computer System	Peter Stehn
Curators	Jennifer Harvey, Ann Barry
<i>The Historian</i> Editors	Jennifer Harvey, Kathie Rieth
<i>The Historian</i> Indexing	Beth Facer
Newsletter Editor	Vacant
Publicity	Sue Dunston
Public Officer	Helen Davies
Research Team Leader	Bruce Robinson
Social Media	Jill Ball
Speakers Program	Beverley Dunstan
Volunteers Roster	Heather Davidson
Volunteer Roster Preparation	Geoff Little
Webmaster	Andy Joyce
Welfare Officer	Elaine Turnidge
WWI Team coordinators	Kathie Rieth, David Wilkins

## Copy for Newsletter

Please email copy for publication to [khs@khs.org.au](mailto:khs@khs.org.au), as early as possible.

Please note: we do not have a newsletter editor at this time so please submit all entries in as print-ready form as possible.

The deadline for the December newsletter is 15 November.

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## Diary Dates

Sat 1 Nov	Family History Meeting 11am: Getting the best from Google, and Q&A. 2pm: General Meeting followed by <i>Riches to Rags – Rags to Riches: A Brief History of Surry Hills</i> . Speaker: Richard Whitaker
Sat 15 Nov	2pm: Society General Meeting followed by <i>Here Come the Cars</i> . State Records archivist John Cann with engaging stories of two men and their cars. Please bring a plate of party fare to share at our Christmas table.
Sat 6 Dec	Family History Meeting 11am: No workshop. 2pm: General Meeting: <i>Show and Tell</i> Please bring an item from your family to share with other members, an early photo of yourself, and a plate of party fare for our Christmas table.
Sat 17 Jan	2pm: Society General Meeting followed by <i>Ellen Thomson: Beyond a Reasonable Doubt?</i> Author Vashti Farrer's latest book examines a controversial 1887 murder case in northern Queensland which still raises doubts as to whether the accused woman was given a fair trial.  Visitors are welcome.

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to members who have recently joined the Society.

Ian Neilson	Killara
Natalie Boyd	Gordon

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

## Research Centre Hours

The Society's Research Centre is at 799 Pacific Highway, Gordon, adjacent to the Ku-ring-gai Library.

The Centre is open to the public from 10am to 2pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (except the 1st Saturday of each month when members have a meeting).

It is closed over the Christmas period and on public holidays.

## Christmas / New Year Closure

Please note, the Research Rooms will be closing at 2pm on Friday 20 December 2014, and reopening at 10am on Monday 12 January 2015.