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SOME OF THE MASONS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF KU-RING-GAI

Over the years many Freemasons have been involved in the development of Ku-ring-gai.

A number have served as Shire Presidents and Mayors; Councillors and Aldermen. Others have contributed to the growth of the district as farmers, shopkeepers and businessmen. Some have represented the electorate in State and Federal Parliaments and many have been employed over the years as Council Officers. A number of clergymen have been members of the local lodges as have those of other professions practicing in the district.

Let us first take the Shire Presidents and Mayors:

William Cowan, was the first Shire President in 1907. He was a member of Lodge Kuring-gai.

His successors, Dr Paul Clipsam, (Lodge Turramurra) W.R. Fitzimmons (Kuring-gai) and C.B. Thistlethwaite (Turramurra) were also Freemasons.

George Christie, the last Shire President in 1928 and the first Mayor in 1929, was a member of Lodge Roseville. He was a very enthusiastic Freemason particularly in the field of charity and the welfare of aged persons. He worked tirelessly for the Frank Whiddon Masonic Homes at Glenfield where one of the complexes, 'Christie House,' was named in his honour.

Other Mayors include George Travis, (Lodge Killara) H.G. Carter, Noel D. McIntosh and Geoffrey H. Robin, (Kuring-gai) Herbert T. Cornish, (Roseville) Andrew N. Campbell M.B.E., A.H. Jago and George R. Nicolls, (Killara) and Michael Kartzoff O.A.M., and others.

Several of these need special mention:

Noel Desmond McIntosh joined Lodge Kuring-gai on 19 November 1925. He also became a member of Lodge The King's School where he became the Worshipful Master in 1950. He had been a pupil at the school. This Lodge met for a time at Turramurra. He was also a member of Lodges Torchbearer and Samaritan.

He was a direct descendent of the pioneer Robert McIntosh, the Bandmaster of the 46th Regiment who arrived in the Colony in 1814. He owned a large orchard opposite St. John's Church, Gordon. He called this property 'Gordondale' in honour of his friend, James Gordon, of Pittwater. It is believed the suburb takes its name from McIntosh's property, although some claim that it is named after James Willoughby Gordon of the Peninsular wars. He was a friend of Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor General at the time.

In his youth, Noel McIntosh was an accomplished tennis player winning the Australian Junior Doubles Championship with his friend, Harry Hopman. In 1939, he was Captain of the Australian Universities Debating Team and led it to many countries.

In 1925 Noel McIntosh was called to the Bar.

In 1940 he became Mayor of Kuring-gai after serving many years as an alderman.

Noel joined the RAAF in 1942 rising to the rank of Squadron Leader.

He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1952 and subsequently elevated to Judge of the District Court.

From 1955 to 1976 he served the United Grand Lodge of N.S.W. as Grand Registrar, advising the Grand Lodge on legal matters, and had the rank of Past Assistant Grand Master conferred on him for his services.

He was also served on the Grand Lodge Investment Committee and on the Board of the Masonic Temples Fund.

Noel McIntosh died on 2 August 1986.

Andrew N. Campbell, Mayor from 1957 to 1960, was a member of Lodge Lindfield where he served as Wor. Master in 1959. He was the Secretary of the Water Board for a number of years during the 1950's.

Harry Jago, MLA, was a member of Lodge Killara. He was Mayor in 1960-62 and was Minister for Health in the State Government. He received a Masonic 50 year membership certificate in 1997.

We shall not mention that he forgot to nominate for State Parliament in 1974.

Michael Kartzoff, OAM, was Mayor in 1973 and was a 'colourful figure' indeed especially when dressed in his kilt and full highland dress. He was a member of Lodge Claymore, a lodge formed by members of the Black Watch Regiment. He really got into the spirit of things when he gave the 'Address to the Haggis' on Burn's Nights in Lodges.

Prominent among the many ministers of religion who were members of the district lodges were:

Rev. Arnold Conolly of St John's, Gordon. He was a member of the Millions Lodge in the City and a foundation member of Lodge Gordon. He arranged for all the meetings leading to the formation of the Lodge to be held in St John's, Parish Hall, the foundation stone of which was laid by the Wor. Master, John Liggins, and the Brethren of Lodge Samaritan which then met at North Sydney but now holds its meetings at St Ives.

Another prominent minister was the Rev. Norman Fox of St Martin's, Killara. He was a member and the Chaplain of Lodge Killara. He also was the President of the N.S.W. Masonic Club in the City and a Grand Chaplain of the United Grand Lodge of N.S.W.

His successor, Rev. Wallace Long was also a Grand Chaplain and organised many Masonic Church Services at St. Martin's.

Some of the other ministers included Reverends Clifton-Brown, Charles James, Charles Judd (He organised the formation meetings of Lodge Turramurra to be held

in the Methodist Church Hall at Turramurra), Rev. W.R. Wrightson of the Uniting Church, Roseville, who was also a Grand Chaplain, and Rev. Canon F.W. Tugwell of St. Alban's, Lindfield.

Many prominent sportsmen were in the district lodges including test cricketers W.A. (Bert) Oldfield. Charles G. McCartney, Brian Taber and others.

Bert Oldfield MBE, was argueably the best wicket keeper of all time. He was a member of Lodge Killara where he served as Wor. Master in 1955 and he was the foundation Wor. Master of Lodge Cricket which met at St Ives. He had the rank of Past Junior Grand Warden conferred on him in 1968. He died in August 1976.

The W.A. Oldfield Oval at Killara is named in his honour.

Brian Taber was also a notable wicket keeper and also a member of Lodge Cricket. He toured with the Australian Team to England in 1968 and was one of only a handful of wicketkeepers to score a century - he did so in 1968.

The Test Batsman, Charles McCartney was a member of Lodge Roseville. He scored a record 345 runs against Nottingham in 1921 and in the 1926 Tour of England he scored a century before lunch at the Leeds Test Match.

John Treloar, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games Representative was a member of Lodges Killara, Olympus and Falconian, the North Sydney Boys' High School Lodge. He won the Commonwealth Games 100 yards title in the record time of 9.7 seconds in Auckland in 1950 and was placed third in the event at the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952.

Trevor Allen was a member of Lodge Kuring-gai Lewis. He captained Gordon Rugby Union Club to its premiership win in 1949 and and scored a record 101 points for the season. He was Australia's youngest Test Captain, leading the 1947-48 Wallaby Tour to England at the age of 18 years. This team played 34 games, winning 29 of them scoring 429 points to 197 against. He switched to Rugby League later and played for North Sydney.

Many of Kuring-gai's pioneers were Freemasons, possibly one of the earliest was James Oatley. He joined the Lodge of Australia in the City in 1849. He married the Licencee of the Greengate Hotel, Eleanor Johnson and lived there for some time. He became the Lord Mayor of Sydney in 1862 and the suburb of Oatley was named after him.

Radio pioneer, Sir Ernest Fisk, who lived at Roseville was a member of Lodge Victoria in Sydney. He was an enthusiastic Freemason and belonged to other lodges and masonic orders.

Australia's contact with the rest of the world depended on underwater cables in 1918 but in September that year at Fisk's home at Wahroonga, he made history when he picked up the first morse code wireless transmission from the United Kingdom to Australia.

Fisk married Florence Chudleigh, a music teacher, in December 1916 at St John's Anglican Church, Gordon. He died at his Roseville home in 1965.

John Job Crew Bradfield, the designer of Sydney Harbour Bridge, joined Lodge Ipswich in Queensland in 1889. On moving to Sydney, he took up residence at his

home on the corner of Park Street and Rosedale Road at Gordon. Together with Rev. Arnold Conolly, formerly an architect himself, he designed the additions to St. John's Church in 1924.

He died in 1943, aged 76 and is buried in the family grave at St. John's Churchyard.

His son, Anthony, was a member of Lodge Gordon and served as Wor. Master in 1934.

Lodge Gordon contained several well-known identities, Arthur Hirst, the Deputy Shire Clerk, George Lancaster a Gordon Pharmacist, Percy Tooth, Gordon Stationmaster, Sid Luckett the Shire Health Inspector and Havelock 'Frank' Ashton the Editor of *The Sun* newspaper.

John Fitzmaurice was a member of Lodge Unity of Sydney and the Foundation Master of the Millions Lodge.

He was the founder of Abbotsholme College in Greengate Road, Killara, a property which covered several hectares with buildings and sportsfields. It was founded in 1909 and closed in 1925 following his death.

He certainly knew the meaning of Masonic Charity. In 1923 he offered to take 50 orphaned children free of charge, under his care.

One outstanding pupil of the school was William McMahon, Prime Minister of Australia. He joined Lodge University of Sydney in 1974.

Sir Edward Hallstrom was a member of Lodge Roseville. He was a philanthropist and gave thousands of pounds to charities. He was a part-time inventor and President of Taronga Park Zoo Trust.

His Company manufactured the famous Silent Knight Refrigerators at his factory at Willoughby. Many will remember the radio advertisement - "Silent Knight Refrigerators, £55 respectively, gas, electric or kerosene."

Herbert Henry 'Smoky' Dawson, one of our greatest country and western entertainers, was a member of Lodge St Ives and Lodge Brotherhood at Willoughby. He served as Wor. Master of Lodge St Ives in 1969. He is a very enthusiastic mason and belongs to many of the other Orders of Freemasonry.

Not being blessed with children themselves, he and his wife Dot have devoted much of their lives to the caring and welfare of children. Their 'Ranch' at Ingleside, destroyed by a bushfire in 1980, became a haven for children from the Far West Childrens' Scheme who spent holidays there, free of charge, over many years.

The Dawsons have donated thousands of dollars to childrens' charities including nearly two million to the Westmead Childrens' Hospital since the hospital was founded.

Many will remember Smoky's radio show, "The Smoky Dawson Show" centred around the mythical property 'Jindawarrabel' in the outback. The show, sponsored by Kelloggs, attracted a huge audience and he formed the 'Wild West Club' for his fans who were mostly children. It developed into Australia's largest fan club with more than a million members before it was phased out.

Smoky, now over 90 years of age, is still working with radio and helping children and never misses taking part in the Anzac March each year.

On the subject of music, several Ku-ring-gai musicians are, or have been, Freemasons.

Peter Kneeshaw is one of the country's leading organists. He is a member of Lodge Killara and served as Wor. Master in 1988.

Peter studied the organ with the late Frank Johnstone, Norman Johnston and Christa Rumsey. He won the organ section of the City of Sydney Eisteddfod in 1970. He has since given recitals at Sydney Town Hall, The Opera House, Sydney University and many cathedrals and he completed his Licentiate of Music at Trinity College, London.

He became President of the Organ Society of Sydney and Assistant Director of Music at Christ Church, St Laurence.

In 1982, he became the Grand Organist for the United Grand Lodge of N.S.W. and is the principal organist at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.

Roy Freeman was organist for many Lodges including Lodge Renown and Lodge Duke of York at Turramurra of which he was a member. He worked for the Organ Builder, C.W. Leggo and was deputy Organist at St. Andrew's Cathedral. He was the organist for Manly Methodist Church and also the Grand Lodge Organist for 33 years. He died in June 1992, aged 94 years.

Doug Merrick is well-known in musical circles in the district and has featured as a tenor in many musical society productions, as has John Linquist, the latter carrying out a ladies' hairdressing business at Lindfield. Both are members of Lodge St Ives.

Many local Kuring-gai businessmen were members of the district lodges including:

Arthur H. Gillott who was a member of Lodge St. Ives where he occupied the office of Treasurer for many years. He literally 'put St Ives on the map' in the 1950's with his bus service, garage and trucking business. He assisted in many ways in the building of the St Ives Masonic Hall in Stanley Street and with the voluntary help of several local builders, the building was opened in 1955.

His sons were also members of the Lodge.

Royce Gregory, founder of the Gordon Funeral Directors, Gregory and Carr, was a member of Lodge Killara and served as Wor. Master in 1960. His sons are also Freemasons.

Sir Frank McDowell lived at Roseville and was a member of Lodge Lindfield and Lodge Frank McDowell which was named after him. His store, McDowells in George Street, Sydney, was a well-known landmark. He served as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of N.S.W. from 1948 to 1951.

Garage proprietors, A.J. Wagg of Lindfield and Cecil R. Pierce were both members of Kuring-gai District lodges and James William Davies of Lodge Killara was the owner of the Lindfield Newsagency opposite Lindfield Station. He served as D.G.I.W. in 1940-42.

Noel Newport owned the newsagency at Turramurra.

B.C. and J.W. Taylor were members of Lodge Pymble and ran a successful Estate Agency and W.P. Clifford, a local dentist was also a member of Lodge Pymble. The second Wor. Master of Lodge Pymble was the Pymble Stationmaster, J.W. Clissold.

Ossie McLardy of Lodge Pymble was a dairyman and would have been pleased to know that the world's first milk bar was opened in Sydney in the same year that his Lodge was consecrated.

St Ives shopkeepers, Frank Ekas, (Chemist) Eric Steward and Alwyn Bedwin, (Butchers) were members of Lodge St Ives as was Dan Thatcher, partner in the firm, Thatcher and Oberg, Timber Merchants.

No doubt Bro. Neville Newling, a St Ives builder, obtained his supplies from this source.

Allan Pryor of Lodge Turramurra was headmaster of St. Ives High School and before him, Hilton Bell Squire of Gordon was headmaster of Chatswood Public School. Roy Horrocks, headmaster of Kings School, (Prep) for many years joined Lodge Brotherhood in 1954 but is now a member of Lodge The Kings School where he served as Wor. Master on two occasions. This Lodge met for a time at Turramurra. Bro. Merv Riddle of Lodge Roseville was the headmaster of East Gordon Primary School for a number of years.

Albert E. Thomas was one of four local postmasters who were Freemasons.

Harry Churchland, who is an authority on the horticulture and growing of camelias, has been for some years, the advisor at 'Eryldene' at Gordon in this field. He is a Past Master of Lodge Hornsby now meeting at the Turramurra Masonic Hall.

Wartime pilot, Very Wor. Bro. Air Commodore Bill Garing CBE, DFC, DSC (U.S.A.) and Right Wor. Bro. Doug Wade-Ferrell distinguished soldier and Company Director were members of district lodges.

Most Wor. Bro. Hon. Francis S. Boyce, KC, was called to the Bar in 1897. He was appointed acting District Court Judge in 1916. In 1923 he was nominated to the Legislative Council and held the office of Attorney General from 1927 to 1930. He was appointed a Supreme Court Judge in 1932 and died in 1940. Francis Boyce became a member of Lodge Pymble.

Arthur F. Webb, a builder, was the foundation master of Lodge St Ives in 1953. He organised the masons of the district lodges to help with the construction of units at the Frank Whiddon Masonic Homes at Glenfield for which he donated all the joinery for the building. The Arthur F. Webb Court Hostel was named in his honour. He served as President of the Homes from 1955 to 1963.

William Flick, a member of Lodge Hornsby meeting at Turramurra, commenced the Pest Extermination Firm of W.A. Flick and Son. Their motto, "One Flick and they're gone," is well-known.

These then are some of the Freemasons who have contributed in no small way to the growth and prosperity of Ku-ring-gai.

The contribution to Ku-ring-gai by members of the Masonic fraternity has been of great benefit over a long period and will, no doubt, continue into the future to ensure that the municipality of Ku-ring-gai will always remain a pleasant place in which to live and work.
