

KURRAJONG - COMLERoy HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

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The Millstone

Volume One, Issue Three, MAY-JUNE, 2002

"THE MILLSTONE" REFERS TO THE LITTLE WHEENEY CREEK MILLSTONES ON DISPLAY AT KURRAJONG MEMORIAL PARK, BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST ITEMS OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT IN "THE KURRAJONG".

THIS EXTRACT FROM THE FIRST EDITION OF "THE MILLSTONE", JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 2002.



SATURDAY, MAY 11 WAS THE DATE FOR THE SOCIETY'S EXCURSION TO THE LITTLE WHEENEY CREEK MILL SITE.

PICTURED ARE: (L-R) ROGER HOLLIDAY, STEVE RAWLING, CAROL CARRUTHERS, MARGUERITE WYBORN, BRENDA SMITH, BRYAN WYBORN, MARGARET ROZZOLI, ROBERT BRITTEN, RON ROZZOLI, BARBARA BRITTEN, JAN LIVINGSTONE, LOUISE McMAHON AND LES DOLLIN.

LES DOLLIN AND LOUISE McMAHON ARE COLLABORATING ON RESEARCH INTO THE MILL, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED BY BEN SINGLETON AND OPERATING PRIOR TO MARCH 1816.

LES DOLLIN AND BARBARA BRITTEN ARE DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM SINGLETON, BEN'S FATHER.

OVERSHOT OR UNDERSHOT? - KNOW YOUR MILLS!

WE KNOW FROM A "MEMORIAL" THAT BEN SINGLETON AND HIS BROTHER JAMES WROTE TO GOVERNOR LACHLAN MACQUARIE IN 1820 THAT BEN HAD ESTABLISHED A MILL AT WHEENEY CREEK AND JAMES AT WILBERFORCE (WE GET THE WORD "MEMO" FROM "MEMORIAL")

BEN'S FIRST MILL WAS AN OVERSHOT. ACCORDING TO LES'S DESCRIPTION, AN OVERSHOT OPERATES BY HAVING THE WEIGHT OF THE WATER "SHOOT" OR FLOW OVER THE TOP OF THE WHEEL CAUSING IT TO ROTATE AND THUS DRIVE THE MILL.

THE OVERSHOT MILL WAS LOCATED CLOSEST TO THE LITTLE WHEENEY CREEK BRIDGE AND WAS CALLED THE "SPEEDWELL".

LES SAYS AN OVERSHOT WAS AN INCREDIBLY EFFICIENT MILL, REQUIRING A HIGH LEVEL OF ENGINEERING. THE FRENCH BURRSTONES WERE LOCATED AT THIS MILL. FINE FLOUR WAS MILLED AT THE "SPEEDWELL".

AN UNDERSHOT MILLS WORKS WITH THE WEIGHT OF THE WATER RUNNING UNDER ONE THIRD OF THE WHEEL TO DRIVE THE MILL. THE UNDERSHOT MILL WAS CALLED THE "WELLINGTON" AND MILLED "GRIST" OR MEAL FOR HORSES.

THE 1920 NEWSPAPER ARTICLE PRINTED IN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE "THE MILLSTONE" STATES THAT THE MILLSTONES (NOW IN MEMORIAL PARK) HAD ONE STONE FROM THE TOP MILL AND A SECOND STONE FROM THE BOTTOM. SO, WHILE THEY ARE A TOP AND A BEDSTONE, THEY ARE NOT A PAIR.

LES SAYS UNDERSHOT MILLS RAN "BACKWARDS" AND THE TOP STONE AT KURRAJONG IS FROM AN OVERSHOT MILL, CONFIRMING THE REPORTS WE HAVE.

BELOW: LES EXPLAINS THE LOCATION OF THE TWO MILLS AND CAROL FINDS A MUCH-ANTICIPATED LEECH!



LOGO LOWDOWN

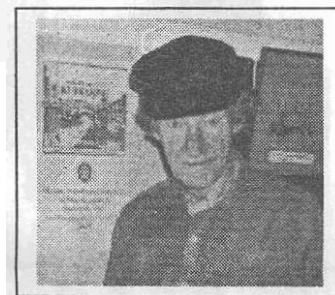
BY LOUISE MCMAHON

ONE OF THE SATURDAY MILL SITE EXPEDITIONERS MADE THE COMMENT THAT IT WAS "LUCKY" THAT THE SOCIETY HAD CHOSEN THE MILLSTONES AS ITS LOGO.

WHILE IT IS APPROPRIATE, IT WAS NO ACCIDENT!

IN HAVING THE IDEA TO START A HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR KURRAJONG, I SPENT SOME TIME THINKING ABOUT WHAT COULD BE A GOOD ICON TO SYMBOLISE KURRAJONG AND ITS HISTORY. I ALREADY KNEW THE MILLSTONES DATED FROM BETWEEN 1815 AND 1820, AND THOUGHT IT A GOOD CHANCE THEY WERE THE OLDEST ITEMS OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT THIS IN "THE KURRAJONG"

I CONTACTED KURRAJONG WEEKEND VISITOR, ARTIST TONY DIXON, AND ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD DO US A SKETCH THE MILLSTONES TO USE AS A LOGO IN OUR LETTERHEAD. TONY GRACIOUSLY AGREED.



TO THANK HIM, I INVITED HIM ALONG TO OUR "BACK TO THE KURRAJONG DAY" TO LAUNCH HIS BOOK, "THE BLACK AND WHITE OF KURRAJONG". TONY SAID HE HAD SUCH A SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH, TO THANK US, HE HAS DONATED ANOTHER SKETCH TO THE SOCIETY, THIS TIME A FRAMED PICTURE OF ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, KURRAJONG THANKS TONY!

SENSATIONAL "SUNNYSIDE"

SERENDIPITY HAS SEEN TO IT THAT OUR TWO MAY EXCURSIONS HAD A STRONG HISTORICAL LINK

JOHN TOWN, WHO IN 1820 BOUGHT THE PROPERTY THAT WAS TO BECOME KNOWN ACROSS NSW AS "SUNNYSIDE" WAS ALSO AN OWNER OF THE LITTLE WHEENEY CREEK MILLS FROM 1824.

SOCIETY MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO VISIT "SUNNYSIDE" AHEAD OF ITS MAY 11 AUCTION THANKS TO KURMOND THOMPSON'S REAL ESTATE AGENT, JOHN KILLEN

WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET LES AND JENNY CHALMERS (AND RENE CHALMERS) AND HEAR ABOUT THE 20-ODD YEARS THEY SPENT RESTORING "SUNNYSIDE"

JOHN TOWN CAME TO AUSTRALIA AS A CONVICT IN 1800, BUT QUICKLY PUT HIS MISADVENTURE BEHIND HIM TO BECOME A VERY SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR IN THE INFANT COLONY.

HIS NORTH RICHMOND HOME WAS, FOR DECADES, A SUPREMELY STRATEGICALLY LOCATED. WITH THE PUNT CROSSING THE HAWKESBURY LOCATED DIRECTLY BELOW THE HOME, EVERYONE WHO TRAVELLED FROM RICHMOND TO THE WEST PASSED CLOSE BY THE PROPERTY.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO WATCH AND TALK WITH EVERYONE AS THEY CROSSED THE RIVER MEANT "SUNNYSIDERS" WERE VERY WELL INFORMED ABOUT EVERYONE'S ACTIVITIES, AND OTHERS SIMILARLY TOOK A GOOD DEAL OF INTEREST IN THE ACTIVITIES AT "SUNNYSIDE"

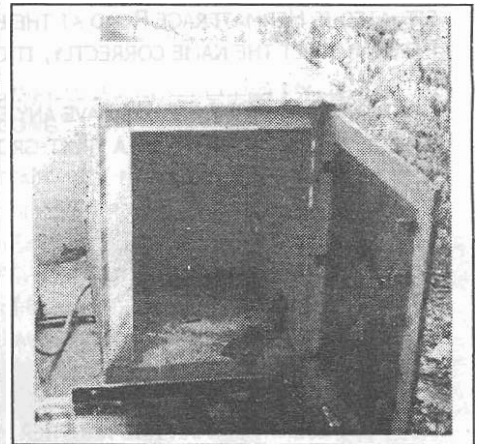
"SUNNYSIDE" WAS ALSO HOME TO JOHN GORDON TOWN, HIS SON-IN-LAW, GEORGE MATCHAM PITT AND HIS SON, JOHN THOMAS MATCHAM PITT, MEANING THAT THE HOME WAS THE CORNERSTONE OF SOCIETY FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS.



MARGARET ROZZOLI, CAROL CARRUTHERS, RON ROZZOLI, JEAN McMAHON, JOY SHEPHERD, JOHN KILLEN, PHIL SHEPHERD.



ABOVE: LES AND JENNY CHALMERS WHO HAVE WORKED HARD TO RESTORE SUNNYSIDE, WITH LES'S MUM, RENE CHALMERS, A NEAR NEIGHBOUR.



THE SAFE (DATING FROM 1850) IN WHICH LES AND JENNY DISCOVERED THE DIARIES OF "SUNNYSIDE" OWNER, JOHN THOMAS MATCHAM PITT.

THE DIARIES MAKE FASCINATING READING AND ARE AVAILABLE ON MICROFICHE AT WINDSOR LIBRARY. A JOHN TOWN DESCENDANT, JEANETTE DIXON, IS TRANSCRIBING THE DIARIES.

IN AN ENTRY OF INTEREST TO OUR SOCIETY, JTMP DESCRIBES ATTENDING THE KURRAJONG RACES ("IN THE PADDOCK" {McMAHON PARK} ON EASTER MONDAY, 1897: "ABOUT 800 PRESENT. A LONG LINE OF VEHICLES. EVERYTHING PASSED OFF WELL. SOME OF THE {BOYS?} WON A BIT. MY LUCK WAS DECIDELY OVER ON THIS OCCASION, BEING TWO POUNDS SHORT AT THE FINISH".

PITTMAN RESEARCH

MY NAME IS THELMA EVANS; I AM A DESCENDANT OF JOHN MATTHEW PITMAN AND AM RESEARCHING THE PITMAN/PITTMAN FAMILY HISTORY.

JOHN MATTHEW PITMAN AND HIS WIFE, MARY SUNDERLAND, SETTLED IN THE KURRAJONG AREA ABOUT 1827.

JOHN PURCHASED TWO FARMS. A BLOCK OF 30 ACRES, KNOWN AS "ROSE FARM" FROM THOMAS SMITH WHO HAD RECEIVED THE LAND AS A GRANT FROM GOVERNOR MACQUARIE ON MARCH 31, 1821.

THE OTHER LAND WAS 60 ACRES, KNOWN AS "LINLEY FARM", FROM JOHN FRANCIS, WHO HAD HIS LAND GRANT AUTHORISED BY GOVERNOR DARLING ON DECEMBER 11, 1830. THESE FARMS WERE AT THE WESTERN SIDE OF "LINLEY FARM". BLUE GUM CREEK PASSED THROUGH "LINLEY FARM" AND WENT ON TO JOIN WHEENY CREEK. THE NAME OF THE ROAD IN WHICH THE PROPERTY IS SITUATED IS HERMATERAGE ROAD AT THE BOTTOM END (NOT SURE IF MR PITTMAN SPELT THE NAME CORRECTLY, IT COULD HAVE BEEN HERMITAGE).

I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY EARLY HISTORY OF THE AREA, AS I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT IT WAS A FRUIT-GROWING DISTRICT. MR BASIL PITTMAN, WHO IS ALSO DESCENDED FROM JOHN MATTHEW PITMAN, THROUGH HIS YOUNGEST SON, CHARLES ALBERT PITTMAN, OWNS AN ORCHARD IN PITTMAN'S ROAD, BILPIN.

BASIL TOLD ME HIS FATHER AND GRANDFATHER GREW FRUIT ON THE ORIGINAL FARM, HOWEVER AFTER THE FIRES OF 1945 (**ACTUALLY 1944**) WHEN HIS AUNT WAS BURNT TO DEATH, THE PROPERTY WAS SOLD TO "RAINERS" OF THE ISLANDS.

CHARLES ALBERT PITTMAN AND ANOTHER MAN (WHOSE NAME WAS NOT GIVEN TO ME) BUILT THE UNITING CHURCH AT KURRAJONG HEIGHTS.

I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY HELP YOU COULD GIVE ME. IT IS VERY HARD TO OBTAIN ANY INFORMATION ON WHAT THEIR LIFE COULD HAVE BEEN LIKE IN 1827 AND LATER.

JOHN MATTHEW PITMAN COULD NOT READ OR WRITE. HE DIED IN 1863 AND IS BURIED IN THE ST PETERS CHURCH OF ENGLAND CEMETERY. HE AND HIS WIFE PARTED SOMETIME IN THE MID-1840S AND SHE LIVED FOR MANY YEARS IN THE HUNTER VALLEY AT WARKWORTH.

AFTER JOHN DIED SHE MARRIED RICHARD GIBBS AT SINGLETON IN 1864. WHEN RICHARD DIED SHE MOVED TO MANILLA NEAR TAMWORTH TO LIVE WITH HER DAUGHTER, FRANCIS.

BECAUSE OF EARLY SPELLING ERRORS THE NAME "PITMAN" (THE ORIGINAL SPELLING IN ENGLAND) WAS SPELT PITTMAN, SOME OF THE CHILDREN WERE REGISTERED WITH ONE "T" AND SOME WITH TWO. I AM DESCENDED FROM JOHN AND MARY'S SON THOMAS PITMAN, WHO SETTLED ON THE NORTH-WEST PLAINS IN THE MOREE DISTRICT.

JOHN'S WIFE, MARY, WAS THE DAUGHTER OF JOHN AND MARY SUNDERLAND; I THINK THERE ARE STILL SUNDERLANDS IN THE KURRAJONG AREA.

THELMA EVANS
6/19 RIVERVIEW STREET,
MURWILLUMBAH, NSW, 2484

• THE NEXT ISSUE OF "THE MILLSTONE" WILL INCLUDE SEVERAL SNIPPETS FROM JOHN THOMAS MATCHAM PITT'S DIARY (SEE SUNNYSIDE STORY) WHERE HE RECORDS IN A COUPLE OF ENTRIES THAT "FATHER" (GEORGE MATCHAM PITT) HAS BEEN AWAY AT KURRAJONG SURVEYING THE PITTMAN PROPERTY

• ALSO, UPDATES ON TWO PREVIOUS LETTERS, THE FIRST FROM LYNNE ANDERSON OF MOSMAN REGARDING HIS RESEARCH INTO THE DANIEL MAHONEY FAMILY AND JUDY FITZPATRICK OF VICTORIA AND HER SEARCH FOR HER GREENTREE ANCESTORS.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 20.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE FROM JULY 1 AND MEMBERS MUST BE FINANCIAL TO VOTE IN AUGUST.

**FEES FOR 2002-2003 ARE:
HOUSEHOLD COUPLE, \$25;
SINGLE, \$20; OVER 75, \$10.**

MILLSTONES ON DISPLAY:

THE KURRAJONG SCARECROW FESTIVAL IS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20 TO EDUCATE LOCALS AND VISITORS ALIKE TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEMORIAL PARK MILLSTONES, THE SOCIETY WILL RUN A DISPLAY STALL NEXT TO THE MILLSTONES DURING THE FESTIVAL. THOSE INTERESTED IN MANNING THE STALL FOR PART OR MORE OF THE DAY, CONTACT LES (4576 1495) OR LOUISE (4573 1823).

"The Millstone" appears every two months. If you have a contribution, contact the editor and society secretary, Louise McMahon on 4573 1823.

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 18

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON TUESDAY, JUNE 18 AT THE COMLERoy ROAD SCHOOL OF ARTS AT 7.45PM SHARP.

IT IS LIKELY OUR PRESIDENT, KATHIE, WILL BE IN CANADA: IF SO, SHE EXTENDS HER APOLOGIES.