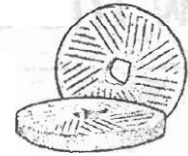


KURRAJONG - COMLERROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 174 KURMOND, 2757



The Millstone

Volume One, Issue Five, September-October, 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

MINUTE MILLSTONE

Bumper Crop of Historic Agricultural Photos

• NEXT MEETING

IS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15 AT THE COMLERROY ROAD SCHOOL OF ARTS HALL AT 7.30PM. **MEMBERSHIPS:** WE NOW HAVE **73** FINANCIAL MEMBERS. NEW OR REJOINING MEMBERS WELCOME. HOUSEHOLD COUPLE \$25, SINGLE \$20 AND OVER 75, \$5.

• "BACK TO THE KURRAJONG"

AN EVENING OF YARNS, SINGING, SUPPER AND HISTORIC PHOTOS RECALLING THE EARLY DAYS OF KURRAJONG WILL BE HELD AT THE KURRAJONG CWA HALL ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18. MORE DETAILS INSIDE.

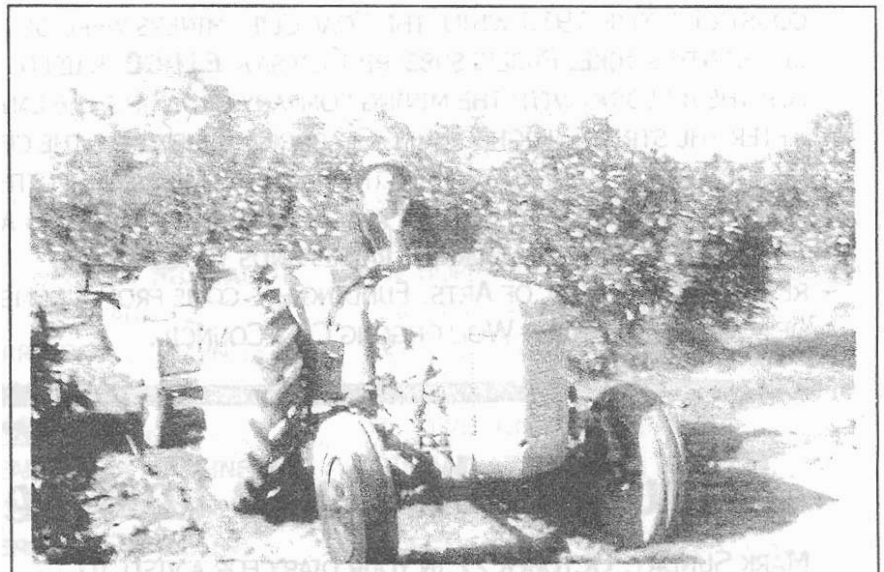
• KURRAJONG SCARECROW FESTIVAL

IS OCTOBER 20. MORE ABOUT OUR MILLSTONE EXHIBITION INSIDE.

• OUR MUSEUM/GALLERY:- PLANS FOR OUR OWN EXHIBITION PREMISES ARE NOW ON HOLD.

MORE DETAILS INSIDE

RESULTS OF OUR "NAMING" POLL:
13 VOTES FOR "GALLERY"
9 VOTES FOR "TIME CAPSULE"

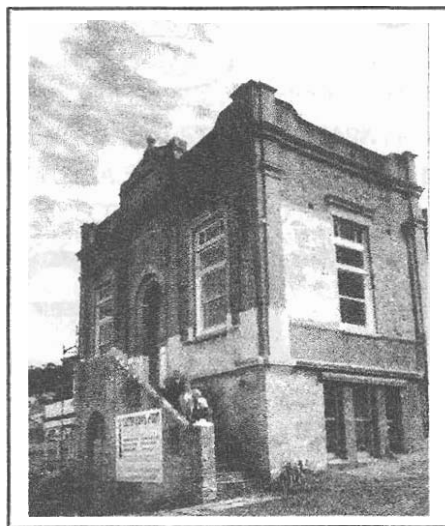


KURRAJONG NORTH: LATE 1950s, LES TAYLOR ON HIS FERGUSON TRACTOR WITH TRAILER TO PICK UP ORANGES GROWING ON THE FAMILY FARM, "BURNSIDE"

WITH THE THEME OF "SPRING INTO ACTION" CHOSEN FOR OUR EXHIBITION AS PART OF THE KURRAJONG SCARECROW FESTIVAL, MEMBERS HAVE BEEN BUSY LOCATING INTERESTING PHOTOS AND HAVING THESE REPRODUCED FOR EXHIBITION.

THE DISPLAY WILL BE AT THE KURRAJONG CWA HALL ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19 AND 20 FROM 10AM TO 4PM. MEMBERS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND REGULAR MEETINGS, BUT WHO WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN A SOCIETY EVENT, ARE **ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENCOURAGED** TO PARTICIPATE.

How the other half live....!



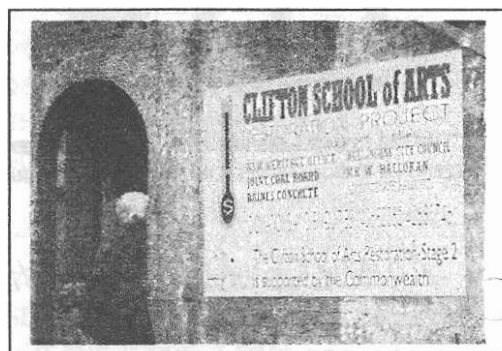
CLIFTON SCHOOL OF ARTS

CLIFTON WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1879, BUT THIS BRICK BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1910 WHILE THE COAL CLIFF MINERS WERE ON A SIX-MONTH STRIKE. PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION SAW **£1000** RAISED FOR THE BUILDING WITH THE MINING COMPANY DONATING THE LAND. AFTER THE STRIKE, NEIGHBOURING SCARBOROUGH BECAME THE CENTRE OF POPULATION SO STAGE TWO OF THE HALL WAS NEVER COMPLETED. THE BUILDING FELL INTO NEGLECT AND DETERIORATED. IN 1996 A NEW COMMITTEE BEGAN WORK TO RAISE FUNDS TO REPAIR AND RESTORE THE SCHOOL OF ARTS. FUNDING HAS COME FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES INCLUDING WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL.

A THREE-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE "SCHOOLS OF ARTS AND MECHANICS INSTITUTES: FROM AND FOR THE COMMUNITY" WAS HELD IN SYDNEY ON SEPTEMBER 6-8. KCHS MEMBERS, RON AND MARGARET ROZZOLI, JEAN AND LOUISE MCMAHON ATTENDED. A HIGHLIGHT WAS A DAY-LONG BUS TOUR OF SCHOOL OF ARTS BUILDINGS IN THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS OF SYDNEY. EXCITING RESTORATION WORK IS UNDERWAY AT THE CLIFTON SCHOOL OF ARTS, NORTH OF WOLLONGONG.



JEAN MCMAHON, RON AND MARGARET ROZZOLI AND MARGARET THORNE VISIT CLIFTON SCHOOL OF ARTS ON SEPT 6.



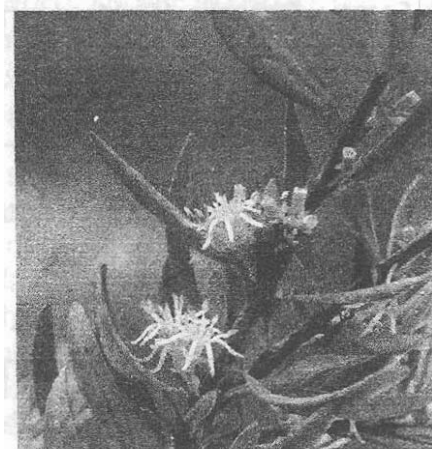
JEAN MCMAHON THINKS IF CLIFTON CAN BE REVIVED WITH COUNCIL AND FEDERAL FUNDS - WHY NOT COMLEROY?

Master organist, Stuart Gale, will hold a fundraising concert for Comleroy on Saturday, March 29, 2003 at the Richmond School of Arts at 2pm

Tribute to Louisa's Lost Legacy Looms Closer

MARK SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 IN YOUR DIARY FOR A VISIT TO THE MOUNT TOMAH BOTANIC GARDEN FOR A DAY-LONG DIP INTO THE WORLD OF LOUISA ATKINSON, THE KURRAJONG HEIGHTS RESIDENT WHO WAS AUSTRALIA'S FIRST WOMAN NOVELIST, A WORLD-CLASS BOTANIST AND A CORRESPONDENT FOR THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, (WRITING PIECES ABOUT HER BELOVED KURRAJONG).

• THE DAY BEGINS AT 8.30AM (*SHARP*) WITH A WALK TO TOMAH SPUR IN HOPE OF SEEING LOUISA'S *ATKINSONIA LIGUSTRINA* IN FLOWER. YOUR GUIDE FOR THIS WALK WILL BE GARDEN INFORMATION OFFICER, JAN ALLEN. BRING A PICNIC, OR BE SURE TO BOOK EARLY FOR LUNCH AT THE RESTAURANT (4567-2060) AT 2PM JENNIFER STACKHOUSE WILL HOST TALKS BY THREE GUEST SPEAKERS WHO WILL HELP YOU DISCOVER "LOUISA'S LOST LEGACY" **COST \$30 WALK & TALKS, OR \$15 FOR TALKS ONLY. LIMIT 20 FOR WALK, 60 FOR TALKS BOOKINGS: JAN ALLEN ON 4567 3017.**



Atkinsonia ligustrina
Photo by Jaime Plaza,
Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney

Gallery hiccup no handicap

LIFE, AS WE ALL KNOW, CAN DEAL UP SOME UNEXPECTED AND SUDDEN CHANGES IN FORTUNE. AND SO IT IS WITH OUR INTENDED PREMISES AT THE BELL BIRD ECHO CENTRE AT KURRAJONG HILLS.

OUR PRESIDENT, KATHIE McMAHON, HAD GRACIOUSLY OFFERED TO DONATE TO THE SOCIETY THE USE OF TWO ROOMS AT THE CENTRE WHERE THE SOCIETY COULD ESTABLISH A PHOTO GALLERY AND REPOSITORY FOR COLLECTED MATERIAL.

DUE TO FAMILY AND OTHER ISSUES, KATHIE'S CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED SO, UNFORTUNATELY, THE PREMISES ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

FROM THE MOMENT KATHIE HAD TO BREAK THE SAD NEWS TO US OUR RESPONSE HAS BEEN TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES AND NOT LET THIS SET-BACK INTERFERE WITH OUR LONG-TERM GOAL OF CHAMPIONING THE HISTORY OF "THE KURRAJONG"

THE EXHIBITION PLANNED FOR THE OPENING OF OUR GALLERY HAS BEEN RELOCATED TO THE KURRAJONG CWA HALL FOR THE SAME EVENING OF FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18 AT 7.30PM

THE AGRICULTURAL THEME HAS BEEN RETAINED AND UP TO **120** PHOTOS HAVE BEEN SELECTED AND PREPARED FOR DISPLAY.

THE EVENING IS NOW BEING PROMOTED AS "BACK TO THE KURRAJONG" AND FITS COMFORTABLY WITHIN THE KURRAJONG SCARECROW FESTIVAL WEEKEND OF EVENTS.

NORTH RICHMOND-BASED REAL ESTATE AGENT, **KATHY McMANUS** HAS GENEROUSLY DONATED \$500 TO THE FESTIVAL, AND \$250 HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE SOCIETY BY THE KURRAJONG COMMUNITY FORUM TO HOST THE "BACK TO THE KURRAJONG".

THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO KATHY McMANUS

THE EVENING WILL ALSO INCLUDE GUEST SPEAKERS, ENTERTAINERS AND SUPPER, ALL FOR JUST \$20. AS CWA HALL SEATING IS LIMITED, **BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL WITH JOY SHEPHERD: 4571 1524.**

THE DISPLAY OF HISTORICAL AGRICULTURAL PHOTOS WILL REMAIN ON EXHIBITION AT THE CWA FROM 10AM TO 4PM ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY OCTOBER 19 AND 20.

ALL MEMBERS, AND PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND EVENING MIDWEEK MEETINGS ARE ENCOURAGED (*WITH A CAPITAL "E"*) TO COME ALONG AND HELP MAN THE DISPLAY FOR A FEW HOURS EITHER ON SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, (OR BOTH). CONTACT JOY SHEPHERD

OUR EXHIBITION AT THE MILL STONES RUNS FROM 9AM TO 4PM ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20. THIS WILL INCLUDE POSTERS AND DISPLAYS OF MILLS STILL OPERATING IN BRITAIN, WITH SOCIETY MEMBER, LES DOLLIN GIVING 10-MINUTE TALKS EACH HOUR.

SCHEDULE FOR OCT 18-20

FRIDAY: MIDDAY. CWA HALL OPENS. MEMBERS BEGIN ASSEMBLY OF PHOTOS ONTO DISPLAY PANELS.

HALL SEATING IS CONFIGURED FOR THE "BACK TO THE KURRAJONG" EVENING

6.30PM: EVENING SQUAD OF MEMBERS TO HELP WITH ENTERTAINERS, GUEST SPEAKERS AND SUPPER.

*****SUPPER*****

WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE KURRAJONG CWA OUR THANKS AND APPRECIATION.

11PM: ARRANGE HALL FOR WEEKEND PHOTO DISPLAY.

SATURDAY: 9AM TO 4PM

PHOTO DISPLAY AT HALL. REGISTER FOR A "SHIFT" WITH JOY SHEPHERD ON 4571 1524.

SUNDAY: 10AM- 4PM

PHOTO DISPLAY: WORKERS NEEDED!

MILLSTONE EXHIBITION: THIS STALL WILL BE IN A PRIME POSITION, LOCATED ALONGSIDE THE MILLSTONES. AT THE STALL WE HOPE TO HAVE KURRAJONG TREES FOR SALE ALONG WITH LOUISA ATKINSON BOOKLETS AND OTHER MERCHANDISE. HELP IS NEEDED AT THIS STALL AS WE WILL BE DIRECTING PEOPLE TO OUR PHOTO DISPLAY AT THE CWA HALL.

RAFFLE: WE WILL RAFFLE A PRODUCE HAMPER ON FRIDAY AND SUNDAY DONATIONS OF ITEMS FOR THE HAMPERS ARE NEEDED. **ANYTHING HOMEGROWN!** CONTACT JENNIFER STACKHOUSE: 4576 1221.

- Contributions for "The Millstone" should be sent to the editor, Louise McMahon at PO Box 174 Kurmond, NSW 2757.
- Next issue will include the latest on our Camp MacKay research and special news from the RAHS.

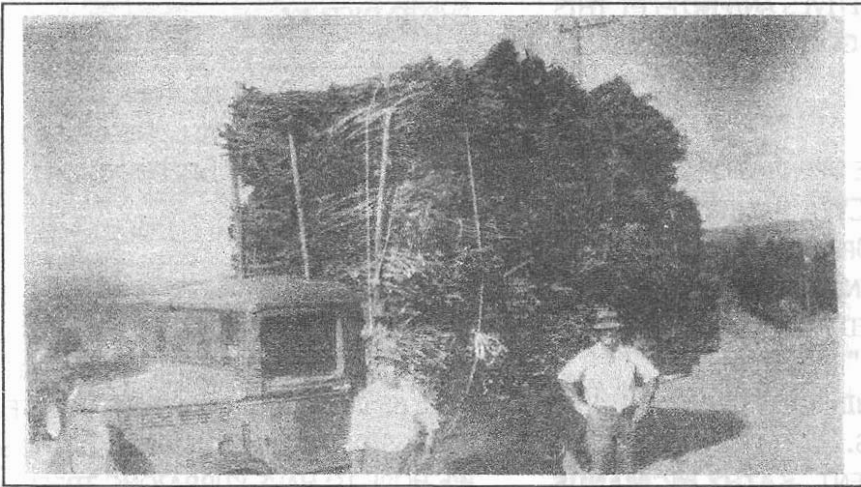
"Kurrajong Wool" unravelled

CONTRIBUTED BY JEAN McMAHON

"KURRAJONG WOOL" OR "KURRAJONG GOLD" REFERS TO WATTLE BARK WHICH WAS STRIPPED FROM TREES AND USED TO TAN LEATHER. ONE OF THE EARLY AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS OF THE KURRAJONG DISTRICT WAS STRIPPING BARK FROM WATTLE TREES WHICH PROVIDED AN EXTRA SOURCE OF INCOME FOR MANY LANDHOLDERS.

ANECDOTES ABOUND OF REASONS FOR DOING THIS, EG, "PAY THE RATES" "FIX THE TRUCK"; ETC. SOCIETY MEMBER, JOY SHEPHERD RECALLS A FAMILY STORY ABOUT HER FATHER, LES TAYLOR, WHO STRIPPED WATTLE BARK FOR TWO DAYS TO EARN THE MONEY TO BUY HIS FIANCÉE, GLADYS DAVIS AN ENGAGEMENT RING.

LOCALLY THE BARK WAS TAKEN TO THE TANNERY IN WINDSOR AND LATER ALSO TO SYDNEY TANNERIES SUCH AS FARLEIGH NETTHEIM.



GROSE VALE: LATE 1930s. A LOAD OF WATTLE BARK LEAVES KURRAJONG FOR ANSCHAU'S TANNERY, WINDSOR

THE FOLLOWING EXTRACTS FROM THE BOOKLET, "HOME TANNING WITH BARK", BY MICHAEL R GORDON OF CRANBROOK, TASMANIA © 2001, GIVE AN EXCELLENT DESCRIPTION OF WHAT IS ENTAILED.

"TANNIC ACID, OR TANNIN, IS A MIXTURE OF CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS FOUND IN THE BARK AND WOOD OF MANY TREES. AUSTRALIA HAS MANY TREES WITH TANNIN IN THE BARK. ACACIAS OR WATTLES YIELD THE STRONGEST TANNINS.

THERE ARE ALMOST 300 SPECIES OF ACACIAS IN AUSTRALIA, THE MOST SUITABLE FOR TANNING ARE THE SILVER WATTLE AND THE BLACK WATTLE.

"BLACK WATTLE, WITH 45 PER CENT TANNIN, IS PROBABLY THE BEST TREE IN THE WORLD FOR MAKING LEATHER. IT WAS HARVESTED COMMERCIALY FROM ABOUT 1850 TO 1960 IN NSW, VICTORIA AND TASMANIA. BARK GATHERERS TOILED, HAND-STRIPPING BARK. THEY TIED IT IN BUNDLES AND LEFT IT IN THE BUSH TO DRY. IT WAS THEN TAKEN TO BARK MILLS WHERE IT WAS GROUND UP AND BAGGED. ONE OF THE REASONS BARK MILLS CLOSED DOWN WAS THE INTRODUCTION OF CHEMICAL TANNING.

NOW THAT BARK TANNING HAS BEEN SCALED RIGHT BACK TO JUST ONE OR TWO SPECIALTY LEATHERS, AND WITH NO BARK MILLS, THERE IS NOW AN ABUNDANCE OF BLACK WATTLE TREES.

WHILE STRIPPING WATTLE BARK IS A LOST ART, BY ALL ACCOUNTS IT IS A HARD, UNPLEASANT JOB, WHICH IS WHY IT WAS UNDERTAKEN ONLY WHEN TIMES WERE TOUGH AND DOLLARS WERE SHORT.

ACCORDING TO MICHAEL GORDON, THE BEST TIME TO GATHER BARK IS WHEN THE SAP IS RISING TO THE LEAVES, IN SPRING AND SUMMER.

"THE TOOL FOR STRIPPING WATTLE IS A BAR ABOUT A METRE LONG WITH A TURNED SPLAYED END, SIMILAR TO A PINCH BAR. ALTHOUGH NOT THE CORRECT TOOL, AN AXE WILL ALSO DO THE JOB OK.

"GATHERED BARK CAN BE USED GREEN OR DRY AND IT WILL LAST FOR YEARS. STORE IN A DRY PLACE AWAY FROM DIRECT SUNLIGHT.

"ONCE YOU HAVE BARKED A BLACK WATTLE TREE IT WILL, OF COURSE, DIE. THE DRY WOOD FROM THESE TREES MAKES EXCELLENT FIREWOOD. IT IS A VERY DENSE WOOD, AND WILL LAST WELL WHEN BURNT.

BLACK WATTLE TREES GROW QUITE LARGE ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE NOT CROWDED, AND ARE IN FERTILE SOIL. THEY GROW IN MANY TYPES OF SOILS, FROM CLAY TO STONY SOIL AND EVEN IN ALMOST PURE SAND."

The story of "Kurrajong Wool" is just one of many to be told in pictures and captions as part of the photo display at the Kurrajong CWA hall on the weekend of October 18-20. Members who have not been able to participate in other Society events are encouraged to come along and share a shift with their fellow members at our millstone or photos exhibitions.