



The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society is dedicated to researching, recording, preserving and championing the history of "the Kurrajong", the district bounded by the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond, the Grose River, "Cut Rock" at Kurrajong Heights, along Comleroy and Blaxlands Ridge Roads to East Kurrajong, and to the Colo River. "The Millstone" refers to the Little Wheeney Creek millstones on display at Kurrajong Memorial Park. Logo designed for the Society by artist Tony Dixon.

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[Top] Valerie Holland talking to Member for Hawkesbury Steven Pringle at the opening night of the Kids of the Kurrajong exhibition. [Above] The opening night was booked out. [Photos by Ian O'Toole] See story on page 7.

News

By Jennifer Stackhouse

Changes to our constitution

As a young and developing society we operate under a constitution adopted when we became incorporated. This constitution is known as the 'Model Rules' and was formulated for incorporated bodies by the Department of Fair Trading. It is broad in its focus and designed to enable groups such as ours to operate within the law in an organised and systematic manner.

The committee members and others in the society saw the need to develop a constitution that would better reflect the specific nature of our group and our developing aims and objectives. As a result, a subcommittee was formed with the brief to review the Model Rules and assess how relevant this document was as our constitution. The subcommittee was also asked to develop amendments to make the Model Rules more relevant.

The subcommittee came up with several recommended amendments to the Model Rules, which were accepted and endorsed by the committee. The resulting draft new constitution was circulated to all members. As is required under the Model Rules amendments to the constitution can only be accepted if they are put to a Special General meeting. Any changes to the constitution must be passed by 75 per cent of financial members.

The Special General Meeting was held immediately after the Annual General Meeting on 26 September. At this meeting all changes were discussed and suggestions from members were also recorded and taken on board. The amended constitution was not voted on at the Special General Meeting as, although well attended, the required percentage of membership was not present. At the first committee meeting after the Special General Meeting it was resolved to circulate the desired changes with this copy of The Millstone (see insert). To overcome the difficulties of gathering together at a meeting such a large number of members, the Committee decided to hold a postal vote. If you do not agree with the proposed constitutional changes you must return the enclosed voting slip by 21 November. If you do agree you can also register your vote on the enclosed voting slip, but by not returning the voting slip we will count you as voting for the amended constitution.

The committee is happy with the amendments

to the constitution and urge their acceptance by all members. If you have any specific questions please do not hesitate to contact Frank Holland on (02) 4573 2226, who chaired the constitution subcommittee.

Committee for 2005-2006

At the Society's Annual General Meeting held on 26 September at Comleroy Road Public School the following members were elected to the committee.

Executive

President: Jennifer Stackhouse
Vice-President: Kathie McMahon
Treasurer: Joy Shepherd
Secretary: Valerie Holland

Committee members

Les Dollin (research and activities), Robyn Fuller (publicity officer), Airdrie Martin (fund raising and activities), Pat O'Toole (minutes secretary), Marguerite Wyborn (catering)

Retiring members

2004-2005 committee members Val Birch and Frank Holland stood down this year. Despite leaving the committee, Val Birch has agreed to continue her valuable work as the Society's Acquisitions Officer, while Frank Holland will continue to act as Public Officer and Project Leader. Both have been invited to attend committee meetings as observers and we thank them for their on going commitment to the Society and its future.

Greg Upton has also agreed to continue as our very able editor.

Local history honoured at new library

Several meeting and study rooms at the new Hawkesbury Central Library at 300 George Street, Windsor have been named to commemorate local figures past and present.

Journalist, writer, botanist and botanical artist Louisa Atkinson (1834-1872) is remembered in the Louisa Atkinson Room. Louisa lived at Fernhurst at Kurrajong Heights. Ron and Kevin Rozzoli are honoured by the naming of the Rozzoli Room. Ron is a member of this society and a regular contributor to this newsletter and our meetings. Ron has been instrumental in preserving the Richmond School of Arts. His brother, the Hon. Kevin Rozzoli, was Member for Hawkesbury from 1973-2003 serving as Speaker from 1988-1995.

Other figures whose names are commemorated include business woman and social reformer Mary Reiby (1777-1855),

poet and patriot Charles Harpur (1813-1868), astronomy pioneer John Tebbutt (1834-1916) and journalist and photographer Stan Stevens (1924-2002).

Postman afloat

Do you remember the river postman? If you do, or if the thought of such as postal service sounds enticing, head down to the new photographic exhibition at the Hawkesbury Regional Gallery.

The 'Hawkesbury River Postman' is a unique collection of photographs by Axel Poignant (1906 - 1986), who travelled with the river postman in 1951 and produced a set of sharply-observed images recording life on the Hawkesbury half a century ago. At the same time, a survey exhibition, 'Reference and Notation' by Ambrose Reisch, includes paintings and drawings of the Lower Hawkesbury. The two exhibitions run until 11 December.

Talks program

In conjunction with the exhibition are several talks, which are open to the public:

* Ruark Lewis, on Axel Poignant and the River Postman series, 4pm on 16 November.

* 'The Oyster Farmer' (film) 7pm on 24 November (screening in the Tebbutt Room). For more information on any of these events, contact the Hawkesbury Regional Gallery on 4560 4434 or visit the website on www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



An early delivery on the Hawkesbury River [Photo courtesy Hawkesbury Regional Gallery]

KURRAJONG'S FIRST CHURCH AND SCHOOL?

An old photograph which is currently on display in St Stephen's church at Kurrajong might show what the district's first church and school looked like, as KCHS member Betty Upton explains.

In the July/August 2005 issue of *The Millstone* there was an article on the schools of the Kurrajong district and in this article mention is made of the old Anglican Denominational school on the corner of Hermitage and Bells Line of Roads. Erected about 1836/37 in the simple style of the times with sturdy slab walls and bark roof this building served as both church and school for many years.

Recently my cousin, Mrs Thelma Groch, gave me a photocopy of an early photo of this building which is currently on view in St Stephen's Church of England at Kurrajong. The caption shows it to be 'First Church at Kurrajong' and on the back there is an indication that one of the gentlemen in the photo is the first rector of Kurrajong, Rev George Middleton, and the other is Rev Joseph Dark.

Back in 1996 while researching my father's Robinson family line I came across the original photo on microfilm at the State Library in Macquarie Street, Sydney. I copied the photo without realising what it actually was. The only information given was 'Early church. Rev Plume 188-. In a series from the home of the late Mr Comrie, Kurrajong. 8/1918'. Mr James Comrie died at his home, 'Northfield', Kurrajong heights on 21 November 1902 and this photo must have been among the papers belonging to his considerable estate. This and other photos from Mr Comrie's collection can be found now on the internet and there is a reproduction of it in Vivienne Webb's book 'Kurrajong, An Early History.'

While very little is known about this old Anglican school many KCHS members will probably be interested to see the old photo and perhaps will have related anecdotes to share with others. Thelma tells me our grandmother, Emily Jane Lord nee Peck, went to school there and no doubt her older siblings did also.

There is no record of the school hours for this early school or of the teachers there



apart from Alexander Anderson, thought to be the last, and Rev Joseph Dark who was catechist there for some years. Rev Dark is later mentioned as rector of St Luke's, Sydney.

The Rev Dark, the man standing in the photo, was one of the group who lobbied and worked hard for a new Anglican church for Kurrajong. Subsequently the foundation stone for St Stephen's was laid on 26th August 1868 and the church was opened for regular services on 15 April 1869.

St Stephen's was separated from Richmond parish in 1873 and the Rev George Middleton was the first rector. The Rev Henry Plume, mentioned on the back of the original photo, was rector at St Stephen's from 1888 to 1891. To supplement the very meagre stipend at St Stephen's he took in a limited number of pupils and this small school he conducted at the rectory. In 1891 he moved his school to 'Stokesleigh' on Kurrajong Heights and named it 'Barker College', a third non-government school for the district.

On 8 October 1878 Mr Alexander Anderson was appointed first headmaster of the new (current) government school built at Kurrajong North but he remained at the old church school until 1882 when the new school was ready for occupation. By 1878 the old school was said to be in a dangerous state with '...ominous cracks in the walls

probably due to the new galvanised iron roof which was too heavy for the structure...'.

The Hon James Comrie for whom we must thank the original photo of the old Anglican school was a local dignitary of stature. He bought 'Northfield' on Kurrajong Heights after the death of Samuel North who had built it. He was elected to the NSW Legislative Council in 1858, appointed to the Windsor Bench of Magistrates between 1860 and 1870 and for many years was involved in the work of the Bible Society. Of immediate interest to the KCHS was his vigorous involvement in the establishment of Kurrajong North and Comleroy Road public schools and of St Stephen's church at Kurrajong. He died at 'Northfield' in 1902 and there is a memorial tablet to him and his wife Sophia in St David's Presbyterian (now Uniting) church on Kurrajong Heights.

Sources of information:

Kurrajong, An Early History. Vivienne Webb.

Early Days of Windsor. James Steele.

Kurrajong North Public School 1878-1978 Centenary Booklet.

Comleroy Road Public School 1880-1980 Centenary Booklet.

Church of England Historical Society Journals 1960 and 1969.

Australian Dictionary of Biography.

EAST KURRAJONG - DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS

This article covers one aspect of a talk given by Cathy McHardy for The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society held at Kurmond Wine Bar and Grill, Bells Line of Road, Kurmond, 7 pm, Monday 25 July 2005.

For as long as I can remember I have been fascinated by history. Not so called 'text book history', but the very 'stuff' of people's lives. The social history, the local history, the oral history... facets of history which have, in recent years, become a credible and recognised part of the study of a place, locality or region. Professional historians and academics are no longer dismissive of such research.

People have often commented to me that East Kurrajong is a 'blink and you'll miss it place' that is if they have even heard of the place! I find the history of small places far more intriguing than larger settlements. It may also be said that the history of small places is far more easily lost than larger places.

East Kurrajong today is a scattered settlement stretching along the road, which runs the length of the landform known as The Bull Ridge, from the Comleroy Road and East Kurrajong Road intersection, thence in an easterly direction to the vicinity of Sackville. On the southern side is Howe's Creek and in the valley to the north flows (sometimes) Roberts Creek. The name Bull Ridge seems to be most often spelt as two words when talking about the landform and as one word when referring to the locality. The Bull Ridge transverses two parishes in the County of Cook, namely the Parish of Currency and the Parish of Meehan.

To understand the pattern of settlement around the East Kurrajong area it is necessary to imagine the landscape north of the Hawkesbury River between Kurrajong on the western side, and Sackville on the Hawkesbury River, as it was in the early 1800s. That is, with few roads and tracks and small numbers of people. We need to divest our thoughts of how the landscape appears today. Especially erase from your thoughts the present route of the Singleton Road from Wilberforce to the Colo River. An important part of understanding the history of East Kurrajong involves researching the portions of land along The Bull Ridge and around the

two creeks. This sheds light not only on the date the land was alienated from the Crown but also the methods by which land was obtained and by whom. For example, was the land obtained by grant, conditional purchase or auction sale?

The earliest portions to be settled in the area were along the creeks, due to the obvious necessity for a reliable water supply. Land was also taken up along the roads and tracks, which did exist at the time. For example, the grants near the Comleroy Road end of the ridge date from an earlier time period than those further to the east. William John was granted Portion 19, Parish of Currency, of 100 acres in 1840 and Portion 9, a further 30 acres in 1852. Peter Hornery was granted Portion 10, Parish of Currency, of 60 acres in 1831.

Settlement was also spreading northwards from Wilberforce through present day Glossodia and along Buttsworth and Howe's Creeks on the south side of the ridge. For example Henry Buttsworth received two large grants: Portion 3 of some 1,000 acres and Portion 7 of 500 acres in 1837. William Nowland was granted Portion 141 of 50 acres in 1840.

Further along the ridge Portion 61 of 30 acres in the Parish of Meehan had been granted to Daniel Rawson in 1823. It was not until the latter part of the 19th century that the greater proportion of allotments were taken up along the ridge. A study of the electoral roll for 1878 indicates that at that time most of those eligible to vote gave their place of residence as Howe's Creek, Buttsworth Swamp or Ryan's Swamp. In comparison the 1901 Electoral Roll shows, apart from a large increase in the numbers of eligible voters, that 50% gave their address as Bullridge.

Aside from these earlier grants much of the land settled along the Bull Ridge was made possible by the Crowns Lands Alienation Act of 1861, also known as the Robertson Land Act. This act permitted free selection by Conditional Purchase (CP) of Crown Land *before* survey. Crown land selected could be between 40 and 320 acres at a fixed price of £1 per acre. There were several conditions to be met by selectors: one quarter of the purchase price was required as deposit with the balance due within three years. Later this condition was changed so that only the interest was required to be paid. Many years often elapsed between the date of CP and the date of the first Certificate of Title under the Torrens system.

The land was to be continuously occupied by the selector and improvements to the value of £1 per acre were to be made. CPs were registered at the Land Office in Windsor. Many selectors were not able to satisfy the conditions and the land was forfeited by the selector. The portion was then often sold by public auction. Additional selections could be made providing they adjoined the original CP. A study of the relevant Parish Map will show many of the blocks which were obtained by CP. Some blocks along Bull Ridge were CPs dating from the 1870s but many date from the 1890s and later.

Another method of gaining land was purchasing of Crown Land blocks at a public auction. Public auctions were often advertised in the local newspaper, *The Windsor & Richmond Gazette*. Land which was to be auctioned was usually surveyed *prior* to the auction taking place.

So it may be seen that East Kurrajong was slowly and gradually settled over the course of the 19th century. By the early 1900s almost all of the blocks between Roberts Creek and Howe's Creek had been selected. This may be contrasted with some of the portions along Blaxland's Ridge which remained unselected until more recent times due to the largely unproductive nature of soils in that area.

As the population of the Bull Ridge grew, the settlers marked out roads and tracks to serve their needs. Tracks were cut to give each portion access to the nearest source of water. Some of the public roads today are constructed along early tracks leading from the ridge down to Howe's, Buttsworth's or Robert's Creek. On our own block at East Kurrajong, can be seen traces of old tracks which once lead down to Howe's Creek. Today this would involve crossing several other blocks in the process.

From the 1850s onwards, the track along The Bull Ridge became the main thoroughfare for the droving of stock from Sackville to Richmond and beyond. In those days the main tracks tended to follow the ridges cutting through private land holdings with side tracks leading down to reliable sources of water. It is said that The Bull Ridge therefore earned its name and reputation as a stock route. The portion of land now occupied by Stanley Park was part of a Camping and Watering Reserve notified for the use of travelling stock in 1889. As late as the 1930s, older residents of the area remember that there were still slip rails along the Bull Ridge and it was necessary to

stop and open the sliprails in order to pass through, whether you were travelling by car or horse.

The settlers who took up land either by auction sale or conditional purchase during the 1890s had mixed success. They were at the mercy of the vagaries of unreliable rainfall and extremes of weather. In the 1930s there was a severe drought. Families were short of water so they would take the washing down to the swamp, put it out to dry and go back later and get it.

Settlers sometimes needed to supplement their incomes from the orchards by stripping wattle bark to send to the tanneries in Windsor. Another source of income was trapping animals such as possums and selling the hides. When rabbits were in plague proportions a steady income during the winter months could be derived from this activity. Men were also employed on local road works and in timber getting. When the Singleton Road was constructed during World War II, many local men were employed as labourers on this project.

Life at the Bull Ridge was, in common with other communities, centred on farm work, home and family and community life. Before the building of the School of Arts, dances and entertainments were held in family homes. Many had a central partition which could be removed to form a larger space for dancing. Sports such as cricket and tennis were popular pastimes and local teams participated in district tournaments. The annual sports day on Anniversary Day was well attended by locals and visitors from all over the Hawkesbury District. Funds were raised for local as well as regional projects such as the hospital in Windsor. The local community successfully agitated for the provision of services such as the post office, telephone, electricity and the tar sealing of the road.

During the first quarter of the 20th century, land was still being purchased, subdivided and planted out as orchard blocks. There was an influx of settlers from other areas. These settlers also bought established farms and orchards from the first wave of settlers. The Whalan family came to the Bull Ridge from the Oberon district in 1914. Henry Whalan purchased Portion 153, Parish of Currency, County of Cook of 70 acres from Thomas Case in 1920. Henry's brother Arthur, purchased Portion 117, Parish of Meehan, County of Cook of 59 acres from Alfred Bailey in October 1918. The Carmichael's came from Tasmania and Harry Carmichael purchased the block on which we live from Arthur Case in 1927. The main land use type was still orchards and mixed farming.

Successful crops grown at East Kurrajong over the years include apricots and other stone fruit, passion fruit, peas and beans, mandarins and other citrus. The *Gazette* of 1900 reported extensive increases in the area of land devoted to orchards in the area. Some fruit varieties were developed at East Kurrajong. There were 3 varieties of apricot grown and developed at East Kurrajong. George Case grew 'Glengarry', Harold Case grew 'Caselin' and Bert Case grew 'Case's Early'. George Packer developed the 'Emperor Mandarin'.

The women of the families were also employed picking crops as they matured. For example, Nellie Packer had the reputation for being a champion pea-picker. Everyone participated in farm work, men, women and children. Children often stayed home from school to work on the farm when picking season arrived.

Most families on the ridge earned their living by farming until the late 1970s when land began to be subdivided for acreage residential and 'hobby' type occupancy. A new wave of settlers have now taken up land in the district. Apart from newcomers from the Sydney area, residents still include descendants of the first families of the area. Other residents like ourselves have moved up from other more densely settled Hawkesbury locations such as Wilberforce and Richmond seeking quiet and space.

East Kurrajong today is still a family and community orientated place to live. The school is very much the centre of family life for many families. In researching the history of East Kurrajong I hope to foster and generate interest in East Kurrajong for the present generation of residents as well as documenting the history of the area for the benefit and knowledge of the generations to come.

I propose to be ready to publish my research in about two years time. If you would like to contribute information, reminiscences or photographs for the project I would love to hear from you. All photographs will be copied and returned to their owners. Sources of information will be acknowledged in the publication.

Please contact me by telephone: 4576 3506 (home), email: cathy@nisch.org or by mail: Cathy McHardy PO Box 258 Kurrajong NSW 2758.

Cathy McHardy 14 August 2005

Trafalgar at Kurrajong



The house named 'Trafalgar' on Comleroy Road at Kurrajong marks a fascinating link between the early families of district and the British naval hero, Lord Nelson. Trafalgar was one of the land grants of the Pitt family. Other grants were named 'Nelson Farm' and 'Bronte'.

Nelson died at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805 and the bicentenary of his death was celebrated last month.

The link between Kurrajong, the Hawkesbury and Lord Nelson was summarised by Elaine Anderson writing in the 'Hawkesbury Historical Society Newsletter' (October 2005). Elaine traces the Nelson link back to her ancestors, the Pitt family. She also describes and traces the history of the Bowman flag.

Although not a family relation to Nelson, Mary Bowman, who lived in Richmond, made the flag to celebrate Nelson's victory at the Battle of Trafalgar. Mary began work on the flag a year after Nelson's death in the Battle of Trafalgar. She was 10 years old. She used fabric from her mother's wedding dress to make the flag. The Bowman flag is now in the Mitchell Library.

Family legend has it that Mary Pitt (nee Matcham) was linked by marriage to Nelson. She arrived in the Colony in 1801 carrying letters of introduction from the great Nelson himself. The Pitt family enjoyed their family connection receiving land grants and other privileges.

For more information on the Nelson connection and the Bowman flag, see Elaine's full story in the 'Hawkesbury Historical Society Newsletter'. Copies of this and other newsletters are kept in our library. The library is available at meetings or by contacting Val Birch on 4573 2346.

Jennifer Stackhouse

SOCIETY TOUR 2006: UP THE BELLS LINE

This advanced notice for the society's overnight exploration of the Bells Line of Road is given so that necessary arrangements and bookings can be made. The tour will leave Kurrajong Village on Monday 9 May 2006 at 9am and return after lunch on 10 May.

Highlights

We will travel by private car along the Bells Line with a major stop at Mt Tomah Botanic Garden for morning tea and lunch. Here we will have a guest speaker and time to tour the garden. Afternoon tea is planned at Clarence after further exploration. We will overnight at Mt Victoria where we will enjoy dinner and hear guest speaker Patricia Downes. After a delicious breakfast we will hit the road again, traveling to Little Hartley and Collits Inn for lunch. After exploring Harley Vale we will return home to Kurrajong.

Les Dollin will again lead the trip. Trish Downes will share more of her research into the area, particularly around Collits Inn. We also hope historian Andy Macqueen may also be able to join us (depending on commitments) to share some of the history of the Grose Valley. We are also hopeful of examining some of the original road as well as hear of the early history of the road from descendants of the original settlers.

Travel, accommodation and costs

The trip will be made in private vehicles, which will cater for those who do not wish to stay overnight. We hope to arrange car pooling for those who are happy to join other travellers. We have located guesthouse accommodation at the Manor House, Mt Victoria at a cost of \$99 per head for Dinner, Bed and Breakfast. Other expenses such as morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea on day 1 and lunch on day 2 will be at own cost. Details and expected venues are still to be finalised at this stage.

The Manor House at Mount Victoria was built in 1876 by John Fairfax, who was founder of 'The Sydney Morning Herald' as a mountain retreat. Designed by architect and builder, Alexander Dean of Manly in Sydney it was originally situated on 13 acres, which was about half of the village of Mount Victoria. John Fairfax died in 1877 and his sons leased out the property until 1887. The property has had a number of owners and uses until it was purchased by the present owners Colin and

Annette Lenton in July 1991. There is a more detailed history on the Manor House History link which can be accessed on www.themanorhouse.com.au/history.htm.

Our first trip (to Comleroi in 2005), attracted 33 members. It was great fun and highly informative. This trip will be limited to a maximum of 40 (for overnight accommodation). Places will be reserved on a first come basis. A booking fee of \$5 plus a \$25 deposit per head needs to be paid to Joy Shepherd to secure your place. Deposits for accommodation need to be paid by 15 December 2005.

This will be a fun and informative two days, just ask anyone who participated in the first trip. For enquiries contact Frank Holland on 4573 2226.

Frank Holland
Projects Officer

If you would like to place a small classified advertisement in 'The Millstone' contact Jennifer Stackhouse on 4573 0836.

KURMOND SCHOOL 85TH ANNIVERSARY AND BOOK LAUNCH

On Saturday 5 November, Kurmond Public School held its 85th Anniversary Celebrations and Fete. Jill Renaud of the Kurmond School History Committee worked hard all year, seeking out ex-students and teachers, many of whom travelled long distances to attend.

The History Committee, consisting of Jill, her Mum, our Society Treasurer Joy Shepherd, and Bronwyn Ford have had a hard-working, but very rewarding seven months, talking to ex-students and teachers from all decades, getting their stories and photographs. They produced and launched a 200 page book – 'Longleat to Kurmond: The Journey of a Soldier Settlement School', profiling some of these stories, and attempting to give an insight into the growth of the school since 19 July 1920. There is also a small section on the history of the town. Jenni Ropa, in charge of administration at the school has worked

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MEMBERSHIP

We thank all of our members who have renewed their financial year membership. Without your support, we would not be able to continue with our important work. We still have a few stragglers, so if you have forgotten, this is just a gentle reminder.

We would also like to welcome some new members to our Society:

Polly Wheen and her cousin, Frank Wheen. Polly is well-known in the Hawkesbury, as she was the Main-Street Co-ordinator for the Hawkesbury City Chamber of Commerce for some time, and has worked in many other areas for the benefit of the district. She and Frank will be a great asset to our group, I am sure.

Michelle Nichols and Jonathon Auld are also warmly welcomed. Michelle needs no introduction to any of us, her historical knowledge of the Hawkesbury is legendary. Michelle's husband Jonathon Auld is of Tizzana Winery fame. Jonathon also has the 'Hawkesbury on the Net' website – www.hawkesbury.net.au, and his major work at the moment is assisting in the transcribing of the local cemeteries. They have recently completed the photography and transcription of the Comleroy Road cemetery, and the results can be found on www.hawkesbury.net.au/cemetery/comleroy_road/.

We also welcome Margaret Andrews. Oldies of the Kurrajong area will remember her as Margaret Robinson, elder daughter of Ben and Lorna Robinson. Margaret attended Kurrajong Primary School and later Richmond Rural School, and she and her family were stalwarts of the Kurrajong community, especially St Stephens church. Margaret has lived for many years with her family at Wodonga. Cousin Betty Upton has been kind enough to pass on a copy of our Millstone to her, and Margaret has decided to get involved as well. We are glad to have her on board, to help us with the researching and recording of the history of our area.

Joy Shepherd, Treasurer

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hard to compile a list of every enrolment since 1920, to include in the book. The book is available for purchase from the school for \$29.95.

The 85th Anniversary Fete included a large display of photographs and memorabilia. The official ceremony and cutting of the cake by the oldest ex-pupil and two youngest current pupils was an exciting feature of the day.



Above: Oldest ex-student and the two youngest students of Kurmond Public School: Gladys Vincent (the oldest member of our Society) cutting the 85th anniversary cake with Lochie Shepherd and Taylor Robinson.

Left: Toby Allen, of 'Human Nature', Australia's premier male vocal group, with his sister Lauren, who both came and spoke, and donated lots of autographed cds, including the group's latest album released officially on Sunday Nov 6th [Photos courtesy Joy Shepherd]

Correction

On page 5 of the previous issue of the Millstone in the article 'Little Boy Lost' mention is made of 'Toby Robertson the butcher' (of Kurrajong). This should read 'Tobyy Roberts'. Tobyy was the nickname given to Harold Roberts. Also the article refers to Reg Hurst as having the general store at Kurrajong, however at that time the general store in Kurrajong was operated by Woodhill & Co Pty Ltd.

Kids of the Kurrajong Success

The annual Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival was held on the weekend of 22-23 October. Activities focused on Memorial Park with stalls, scarecrows and entertainment. The atmosphere, particularly on Sunday was delightful, bathing Kurrajong Village in a rosy glow of community spirit.

The society's exhibition to coincide with the festival, 'Kids of the Kurrajong', opened on Friday 21 October with a special members preview of the photographic exhibition at the CWA Hall and supper afterwards at Valley View Cafe.

A highlight of celebrations of 'Kids of the Kurrajong' was a panel of those 'kids' who grew up in Kurrajong Village in the 1930s, '40s and '50s. Their anecdotes together with some marvellous images of Kurrajong kids of yesteryear unleashed great childhood memories.



Their memories ranged from playing cricket in the street, to hunting as well as early cars in the village and days spent down at Wheeney Creek. The Pansy also loomed large. Pansy, the steam train from Richmond to Kurrajong, was a large part of the kid's lives, especially when they got to travel to Richmond Rural School, boys in one carriage and girls in the other. It was a great time for mucking up and showing off, with boys being dangled out of the train by the feet as they crossed the North Richmond bridge, or being dared to walk right around the outside of the carriage by clutching the window sills.

A big thanks

Many thanks are due to Joy Shepherd, who curated the exhibition, organised the panel forum and prompted so many great questions. Joy not only worked hard preparing for our annual exhibit, she was also on hand throughout the



weekend answering questions, recording memories of early Kurrajong and displaying the Society's new computer system and fascinating digital archives.

The exhibition, 'Kids of the Kurrajong', together with the ongoing digital archiving is achieved with the continuing support of Hawkesbury Skills and the 'Work for the Dole' Program.

Thanks too to all the other volunteers who made the exhibition and the weekend display such as success.



Far left: Thelma Groch and Pat O'Toole enjoyed the opening night [Photo by Ian O'Toole] Left: Valerie Holland and Robyn Fuller attend to the many requests for photo reprints [Photo by Greg Upton] Above: A view of part of the exhibition [Photo by Greg Upton]



Dates for your diary

* Tuesday 14 November – A program of music and song

Kathie McMahon has arranged a concert featuring old style music, song and verse at her home. There is an afternoon session and an evening session. Come along and join the fun.

Where: 954 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Hills
Time: 2pm or 7pm

Cost: \$5 (afternoon tea or supper will be served – if you can help Kathie call her to offer your services)

More information: Katie McMahon (02) 4567 7105 (after 9 November)

* Monday 28 November 2005 – Meeting and guest speaker Max Doyle

Reminisce about Kurrajong of old when we hear from Max Doyle, 'the meter man'.

Where: Grose Vale Community Centre, Grose Vale (Grose Vale Community Centre Road, off Grose Vale Road)

Time: 7.30pm

Cost: Gold coin donation (supper will be served; bring your own mug)

More information: Joy Shepherd (02) 4571 1524

* Sunday 11 December 2005 – Christmas party and 'Pig Out' barbecue

This year's Christmas party for all members is being held at the home of Bryan and Marguerite Wyborn. We will be enjoying a barbecue with a spit roast, salads and dessert.

Where: 16 Jacaranda Road, Kurrajong (off Blaxlands Ridge Road)

Time: from 5pm

Cost: \$20 (bring your own drinks; coffee will be served)

More information: Marguerite Wyborn (02) 4576 1371

* Thursday 26 January 2006 – Australia Day breakfast

Celebrate the 5th birthday of the Kurrajong Comleroy Historical Society with breakfast, music and poetry in the delightful environment of Wynella Gardens. We will also present the Society's Annual Award of Merit to acknowledge an individual's outstanding contribution to local history research in The Kurrajong.

Where: Wyanella Gardens, Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Heights

Time: 9am-12noon

Cost: \$30 (numbers limited so book early!)

More information: Kathie McMahon (02) 4567 7105

Coming events for 2006

Along the Grain Road: A day trip along the old Grain Road (now better known as Kurmond

Road), 21 February, 2006. This road was used to carry wheat from the Singleton Mills on Wheeny Creek to the Government Stores.

On the Bell's Line of Road: An overnight exploration of the Bells Line of Road from Kurrajong to Hartley, 9-10 May, 2006. Travel by individual car (car pooling available). More information: Frank and Valerie Holland (02) 4573 2226.

Bookings

To book for any of these events, call Joy Shepherd on (02) 4571 1524. All cheques should be made out to the Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society and posted to KCHS, PO Box 174, Kurmond, 2757. Include your name, address and phone number along with the event you are booking for and the names of those attending.

Venues

Activities will be scheduled at different venues to make use of halls, meeting rooms and restaurants throughout the district. Check venues carefully before setting off. Any problems en route contact Jennifer on 0417 692 133.

Next newsletter

The next issue of 'The Millstone' will be published in early January 2006. If you have an item to include in the newsletter please contact Jennifer Stackhouse on 4573 0836. Copy deadline 14th December.

COMMITTEE

President: Jennifer Stackhouse

Vice President: Kathie McMahon

Secretary: Valerie Holland

Treasurer: Joy Shepherd

Minute Secretary: Pat O'Toole

Committee Members: Airdrie

Martin, Marguerite Wyborn, Robyn

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