Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Newsletter

The Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society is dedicated to researching, recording, preserving and promoting the growth of interest in the history of the Kurrajong district, the area west of the Hawkesbury River bounded by Bilpin and the Grose and Colo rivers

THIS ISSUE

2 Scarecrow Festival display

'Uncovering your property's heritage' was the theme of this year's display. Visitors learnt much and the Society added to its collections.

3 Christmas picnic party

A general meeting was held in conjunction with our Christmas party at Jenny & David Griffiths' property. Four merit awards were also announced.

4 Kurrajong Nursing Home

Part one of Valerie Holland's article covering the history & development of Kurrajong & District Community Nursing Home.

5 Samuel Hurst

Samuel Hurst was one of the district's pioneers. A brief article on his and some of his offspring's lives.

6 From the Archives

Two classic photos from the Society's archives of Panorama Point and Ethel & Lucy Maxwell, relatives of Dell Nutman.

8 Dates for your diary

Final reminders for the Australia Day breakfast on Monday, 26 January and the tour of Belmont on Sunday, 15 February.

New Members

The Society would like to welcome the following new members

CHARLES (BILL) McLEAN
LYNETTE MCLEAN
MARGARET O'BRIEN
PHILLIP PATTERSON

Rouse Hill House & Durham Bowes

CAROLYNNE COOPER

Thirty—one members of KCHS and their friends visited Rouse Hill House and farm as well as Dight's farm Durham Bowes on Friday, 7 November.

This most rewarding day began when we gathered at Rouse farm. Three guides ushered us to our seats and we were given talks on Margaret Catchpole, the Rouse and Dight families.

Rouse Hill House was built by Richard Rouse and is a Colonial Georgian design. After the property was passed on to Edwin and his wife Hannah, extensions were added to the rear. This housed the servants' quarters, new kitchen and service wing. Edwin and Hannah also altered the appearance of the house by adding a verandah.

After Edwin died in 1862, his son Edwin Stephen inherited the property, but as he was only twelve years old at the time his mother Hannah looked after all his matters until he came of age.

In 1874 Edwin married Bessie Buchanan. They improved the whole estate and it is Bessie's decorating which mainly remains today. Windows were made into cupboards, the bathroom was added and the studio was added underneath the bathroom.

We were shown the scullery, a wonderful room which had a sandstone sink and above it a rack in which the plates were put. The sink was worn at the front where it was used to sharpen knives.

The second part of our field trip began after lunch when we headed toward Richmond and Dight's farm Durham Bowes. We were met there by Robyn Sharpe and her daughter Penelope.

Durham Bowes is a rare example of our earliest colonial history. There have been few alterations to the building since the 1870s. The building is an early Georgian homestead, with the original two–roomed sandstock brick cottage dating from around 1804. It has a corrugated iron roof, central chimney and brick floors with a cement covering which has worn thin in places.

The two storey Georgian home was joined to the original cottage in the 1870s with a link section. The most unusual part of the house is the mock chimney which was added to give the house symmetry.

Everyone agreed it was a most enjoyable and informative field trip. There was much discussion as to which property held the highest merit, but all agreed that the choice of properties made for a memorable day. 💥



Durham Bowes

President's Corner

The sub committees for the Macquarie 2010 celebrations continue to make progress. Following the uncovering of much information it has been decided that we will split the proposed tour into two separate ones. The first will focus on Old Government House and Experiment Farm at Parramatta. Both of these locations were a focal point for Governor Macquarie. The second will pick up the Macquarie party's route starting from Penrith near the site of Jamieson's farm grant and then trace the many stops he made at various early farms and significant locations on his way to Kurrajong Heights. It is proposed to conduct these tours some time apart during late 2010 so that as many people as possible can attend. It is not too early to let the Secretary know if you are interested in joining either or both of these tours. There will be limited space on the coach tours.

Planning for the gala dinner at Loxley on Bellbird Hill, first of December 2010 is well in hand and will include an historic re-enactment. The booking list is open for members and others to register their interest. Planning is underway on the street parade which will be held on 3 December 2010. This event will be primarily for school children of the district. This will include a re-enactment group of Governor Macquarie, Mrs Macquarie, soldiers and other gentlemen that made up the Governor's party. Prizes will be awarded for related project work. Please let me know if you would like to help with the planning and/or conduct of any of the above events.

An enthusiastic group of members and friends visited Rouse Hill Farm and Dight's farm (Richmond). It was fascinating to inspect these old buildings and learn of their associated history. More field trips are in the pipeline so keep a check on the 'Dates for your Diary' column in *The Millstone* for details.

The November general meeting, incorporating our Christmas gathering, was held at the home of Jenny and David Griffiths on 30 November with twenty-eight members and visitors

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Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society Incorporated

PO Box 174 Kurmond NSW 2757

www.kurrajonghistory.org.au

AND COL

COMMITTEE

President Frank Holland

Vice President Airdrie Martin Secretary Valerie Holland

Treasurer Greg Upton

Minutes Secretary Patricia O'Toole

Committee Members Carolynne Cooper, Paul Hulbert, Kathie McMahon,

Steve Rawling AM

Accessions/Librarian Valerie Birch
Millstone Editor Chris Upton
Webmaster Greg Upton

The Clampett family visit Kurrajong

VALERIE HOLLAND

The hillbilly Clampett family of scarecrows assembled in style in the back of Bryan Wyborn's A Model Ford utility outside the CWA Hall in Kurrajong and greeted and amused visitors to the Society's annual display as part of the Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival held over the weekend of Saturday, 25 October and Sunday, 26 October.

Anne and Les Dollin created these excellent likenesses of the former television and film family and the car was kindly loaned by Bryan Wyborn.



Photo: Frank Holland

Bryan Wyborn, his Model A Ford ute and the Clampett family drew much interest at the Society's annual display

This year our exhibition was entitled 'Uncovering your property's heritage' and was a two day event. Frank Holland had suggested that we involve members and visitors in the process of collecting and sharing historic land grants and property information.

Visitors thoroughly enjoyed poring over early parish maps of the district and documentary evidence of early landholdings which members had donated. Arthur Cooper displayed two large folders of fascinating images of Glossodia, formally known as Currency Creek, and shared stories of their history, while Garth Smith projected mapping images. Another highlight was our photographic display. Joy Shepherd delighted visitors by providing the opportunity for them to view and purchase copies of images from the Society's archives.

The exhibition has provided us with positive outcomes. We were given historical information from members of the community to include in our collection and have received invitations to visit historic properties to record related information.

We extend our sincere thanks to North Richmond Community Bank® branch Bendigo Bank for providing a community grant which enabled us to purchase the parish maps. Thanks also to the many willing members of the Society and wider community who provided their assistance and forwarded their knowledge during the course of the exhibition.

Photos & videos of the Kurrajong Strawbillies www.scarecrows-in-motion.com.au

KCHS Christmas party

VALERIE HOLLAND

Jenny and David Griffiths provided their delightful property as the venue for our Christmas Party. Twenty eight members and friends arrived with their picnic baskets in perfect weather conditions. Everyone enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere assisted by the accompanying Christmas music.

During a brief General Meeting for KCHS, Frank Holland told of some of the planned field trips for 2009/10 and asked for any other business. Frank had pleasure in announcing four KCHS Merit Awards that had been decided upon by the Awards Sub-Committee. These awards for preserving the history of the Kurrajong district were: Greg Upton as

former editor of The Millstone and for establishing and operating the KCHS website, Chris Upton as our current editor of *The Millstone*, Bryan Wyborn for his models of the Singleton brothers' grain mills circa 1810 and Rita Crane for her book 'Saint Gregory's Catholic Church Bells Line of Road Kurrajong'. Bryan Wyborn was presented his Merit Award after the announcement. All guests present showed their appreciation by acclamation. The remaining Merit Awards will be presented when the recipients are able to be present at a General Meeting.

We sincerely thank David and Jenny Griffiths for their warm hospitality and use of their grounds.



Jenny & David Griffiths' property Merrajong was an ideal venue for the Society's 2008 Christmas gathering



From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue for 2009. It has arrived early in your letter boxes as our printer, Lynette Parry, will be taking annual leave from mid—December and not returning until mid—January. The decision was made that members would prefer to receive the newsletter early rather than late.

I cannot thank Lyn enough for finding the time to print this issue. Her workload is massive at this time of year and to still be able to fit our newsletter into her schedule is a credit to her. The quality of her printing has also been brought to my attention by editors of other newsletters who are envious of the clarity of the photographs and graphics which accompany the articles.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers the best for the Christmas and New Year period. I have met very few of you but you can be assured that I am thinking of each and every one of you when assembling each issue.

A lot of our readers are old yet some are young, but one thing which is common among them all is their interest in the history of the district and the many and varied people associated with it. I hope the articles which have been included in the newsletter this year have been informative, enjoyable to read and spurred some on to further research on the subjects close to their heart.

Cheers 'til next year.

notpuc@bigpond.com

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83 Old Bells Line of Road KURRAJONG VILLAGE

Kurrajong Memorial Hospital - Kurrajong & District Community Nursing Home

VALERIE HOLLAND

From Kurrajong & District Hospital Society Inc. by permission from Anne Birdsey

The Hawkesbury River has been an almost impassable barrier to the residents of North Richmond travelling to Richmond during times of flood. Expectant mothers west of the river were often reliant on the hospital at Lithgow, the closest by road but involving a considerable and arduous journey.

The floods of 1955–56 highlighted the community's lack of a local hospital and a public meeting was called to address the situation. Dr John Bain ('Doc') told those assembled, "We are prepared to help ourselves if the government won't help us." He also stated, "I feel very strongly if no maternity hospital is provided I will not be able to stay here." The chairman of the meeting, George Davidson, said later: "The community which helped itself in such matters was more likely to receive government help than one which just sat back and called on the government for help." "If a committee was elected and could not raise £5,000 within three months, this is not the district I think it is."

The meeting unanimously decided to appoint a committee and the 'Kurrajong and District Maternity Hospital Appeal was launched'. An 'offer of land was made by Mr Mark Duffy and Mr and Mrs Sansom'.

'The hospital was built on land donated by Mr and Mrs Sansom and a second block was later purchased and partly donated by Anna Elizabeth Maud Samson, (Daisy), on 17 February 1960'.

The initial building was known as 'The Kurrajong Memorial Hospital or The Kurrajong War Memorial Maternity Hospital'. It contained 'a labour ward, five—bed obstetric ward, a nursery and a small kitchen. Water was pumped from Little Wheeny Creek and gravity fed to the hospital'.

The hospital was never officially opened as Graeme Gardiner 'beat the gun' when he was born there on 16 June 1958, prior to the proposed opening date.

Mr M. Duffy was approved as the licensee in July 1958 and on 28 August the first matron, Sister Joan Brace, commenced her duties. Sister Brace at first 'leased the hospital' from the Kurrajong and District Hospital Society, 'paid rent for her accommodation and collected all the fees. In June 1961 the Society took over the collection of fees'.

The hospital was supported by the 'Kurrajong War Memorial Hospital Ladies Auxiliary and the Pink Ladies gave their services from 1974 to the early 1980s'. Donations were also provided by the community. One memorable instance was recorded on 11 March 1959 when the Windsor and Richmond Gazette reported, "A humidicrib donated by Grose Vale Road community, has been generously made available to all hospitals in the district." It has been told that 'Helen Winston had obtained a receipt book from Doc Bain on a Sunday night and walked the length of Grose Vale road to collect donations for a humidicrib'. The response was so generous that within two

days sufficient money was collected and a week later the hospital was the proud owner of a humidicrib.

'No government funding was received' for this hospital. It was built on fundraising, donations and patient fees. This made the hospital's policy of waiving fees for those experiencing financial difficulties all the more commendable.

Extensions were added as community needs for surgical and medical accommodation became evident and changes in government regulations required upgrading of the facilities.

The hospital became known as the 'Kurrajong and District Community Hospital' and incorporated the 'War

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Kurrajong Hospital 1958



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*Samuel Hurst*1794 – 1886

Samuel Hurst was baptised at Whittlebury, Northamtonshire, on 23 February 1794. He was the son of Samuel Hurst and Ann née Stones. In 1817 he was charged with highway robbery and sentenced to a be hanged. This was commuted to transportation for life. After spending nine months in prison he was shipped aboard the convict transport *Ocean II* and arrived in the colony in January 1818. After assessment he was assigned to emancipist Robert Hill of North Richmond.

He disembarked from *Ocean 11* on 16 January 1818 and was listed as not married. He was sent to Parramatta for assessment and to be assigned to a free settler or emancipated convict.

Around 1823 he was filling the position of constable at Windsor and on 5 July 1825 he was appointed District Constable at Lower Pitt Town. He was granted his ticket of leave on 13 April 1826. A report in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, dated Monday, 16 April 1827 states that due to improper conduct as a constable in Pitt Town he was replaced by Edward Cross.

Samuel married Elizabeth Barwick at St Peters Church of England Richmond, on 1 May 1837. He was forty-one years of age and she sixteen. Between them they produced twelve children, the first when Elizabeth was sixteen and the last when Samuel was sixty-seven.

The 1828 census for New South Wales has him listed as thirty-one years of age, Protestant and employed as a labourer by Robert Hill on his farm at North Richmond. Later records have him listed as a timber and shingle cutter.

Samuel was ninety-one when he died on 24 September 1886. His will states that he owned twenty-two acres, was a grower of fine fruit and owned a well-known dwelling named *Fernhurst* in Donkins Road, part of Mill Road between it and Hermitage Road, Kurrajong. It is not known if Samuel obtained his land by grant or purchase. He was buried alongside his wife Elizabeth in St Stephens Cemetery, Kurrajong.

One of his daughters, Mary, married Henry Peck and they conducted a guesthouse named *Mountain View* at Kurrajong Heights. There are some photos and a short article on this property in the previous issue of *The Millstone*. Also in that issue is an advertisement for Reg Hurst Motors at Kurmond, owned and operated by one of Samuel's great–grandsons.



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The five Hurst boys, grandchildren of Samuel with their mother Diana *circa* 1920 Back L-R William Kenneth, Arthur Leslie & Horace Gordon (Jack) Front L-R Samuel Edward & James

Samuel's third child, born on 20 October 1841 was a son named Samuel in honour of his father. He was born in Kurrajong and died there on 10 October 1896. Samuel jnr married Diana Wilson at North Richmond on 31 July 1872 and they had ten children.

The sons from this marriage are pictured above. The daughters were: Ester born 1873, Ellen born 1875, Edith born 1877, Priscilla Jane born 1886 and Ruby Alice born 1888.

Government Notice.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 14th April, 1827.

Is Excellency the Governor has been pleased to approve of the following Appointments in the Police of the Colony:—

Windsor.—Samuel Taylor, per Mangles, to be Constable in the Room of Thomas Roper, per Ship Agamemnon, resigned, to bear Date the 1st Instant.

Pitt Town.—Edward Cross, a Native of the Colony, to be Constable in the Room of Samuel Hurst, dismissed for improper Conduct, from the 1st Instant.

At Port Stephen.—To be Honorary Constables:—Richard Barnes, came free to the colony; Michael Kierman, per Ship Tyne, free; John Massay, per Ship Providence, free; William Weston, per Ship Indefatigable; John Newton, per Ship Cawdry; Alexander Green, per Ship Countess of Harcourt; John Maher, per Ship Lord Eldon.

By His Excellency's Command,

ALEXANDER MCLEAY.

The Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser Monday, 16 April 1827

Panorama Point

BEVERLEY WOODMAN

My grandmother, Linda May Walker, one of Thomas Walker's daughters, inherited forty acres of his property at Burralow Road on his death in 1922. She, her husband Charlie Hobbs and their four children moved there in about 1924.

The property has been known by various names during its life: Mount Knight, Panorama Point, NRMA picnic grounds and Cherry Park.

Thomas was born in Cornwall and first appeared in the Richmond area in 1876 working for a coach builder, William Mitchell. In 1877 he married Mary Anne Mahoney and they moved to Kurrajong Heights where he was appointed the local postmaster in 1884. Their home was Lochiel House and they ran the Post Office from there. In 1905 they bought the house and the forty acre property stretching to the top of the mountain from the estate of Dr James Cameron.

The property was fairly barren in those days. The family lived in some workmans cottages that had been built when Canon William Scott surveyed the land and established a trig station on the site in 1860.

Charlie built picnic tables, benches, sheds and toilets. He also planted rows of pine trees across the top of the ridge which still survive today. In the 1940s Charlie's sons Edward (Ted) and Ian (Jack) and his son—in—law Harry Clewett built a more modern house which was very basic for the time. There was no internal plumbing; there was a well at the side of the house and water was pumped into a can and carried inside. Laundry was done in the open at the side of the house.





Mary Faulkner née Hobbs sitting on the fence at Panorama Point circa 1938

The front gate had a fire burning to provide hot water for picnickers and tourists stoked by Charlie as he collected the admission fee – sixpence a car and a penny for a walker.

During the 1950s Charlie and Linda realised their old age was making the upkeep of Panorama Point difficult and they decided to sell the property for £8,000. Today it would be worth millions of dollars.

The property was renamed Cherry Park after they sold and is now derelict and overgrown. The house on the property was vandalised many years ago and later bulldozed to the ground. The only remaining things at Panorama Point familiar to me when I have revisited the property are the huge pine trees which my father planted and the wonderful view.

Ethel & Lucy Maxwell and one very bogged horse



Dell Nutman's mother-in-law, Ethel Nutman née Maxwell, was an identical twin, her sister was Lucy and they were born in 1898. Their parents were David James and Isobel Emily Maxwell. The girls were reared on a property at Somerton, near Tamworth, called *Clymont Park* where this photo was taken.

David owned a flour mill which later merged with Fielders. The company is now known as Goodman Fielders.

The children were virtually born on a horse, and this has gone down through the generations. The Nutman family established and still own the *Fairview Park* horse stud at Grose Wold. Other members of the family have satisfied their love of horses by becoming trainers, jockeys and veterinarians, while some just like to ride for relaxation.



On Saturday a match was played at the Comleroy cricket-ground between a team organised by Messrs Pope and Griffiths, and the Fruitgrowers of the district. The visitors, who went to the wickets first, soon knocked together a good number of runs, which they continued to do until luncheon hour, when a beautiful spread was laid out by Mr J T Town of the "Travellers Rest" Hotel. The players and friends did full justice to the luncheon, and afterwards the game was proceeded with. The whole of the visiting team were disposed of for 138 runs. The Fruitgrowers then went to the wickets, and put together a total of 96 runs, thus leaving the visiting team an easy win. The Sydney players stayed at Mr J Town's Hotel on Friday night, and had an enjoyable time, being driven to Comleroy at early morning by Mr S Dunstan. The GAZETTE was to have had the scores in this match sent along, but so far they have not come to hand.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 26 March 1898

A meeting was held on Saturday night last for the purpose of re-forming the old Comleroy Cricket Club, which has been defunct for some years. Although the night was dark and stormy, a good crowd gathered at Mr T. McMahon's residence, where the meeting was held. It was unanimously decided to reorganise the club, and Mr T. W. McMahon was elected secretary pro tem. A great number of good men have promised to throw in their lot with Comleroy Club, and it is expected that, with a little practice, the team will be as strong as in the days when they defeated Park Villa and some of the strongest district teams. Another meeting will be held this Saturday afternoon on the cricket ground, at 4.30, to make final arrangements. A big crowd is expected.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 3 September 1904

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BULLRIDGE

What happened to a letter addressed to Morgan Hills. The Education Department sent a letter to our public school teacher proclaiming Wednesday week a holiday. The letter arrived on the Bullridge on the Saturday evening following, so our juveniles lost the holiday. Note how this blunder happened. The Education Department addressed it, "Teacher, Public School, Morgan, Windsor." It was returned to the GPO Sydney marked "Not known in Windsor district." GPO stamped it "Not known in NSW." The dead letter office put their stamp on it, and evidently referred it back to the Education Department, which then added the decorations "Bullridge." Then it arrived 4 days late. This is not the first letter that has been miscarried. Our worthy teacher's salary cruised round on the "not known" ticket a little time back. What are the residents of the Bullridge to do. The Education Department call the place Morgan, the Postal Department don't know such a place. The Lands Department address "Bullridge" as also the Treasury. It is a well known fact that the name was altered from Bullridge to "Fern Heights" at a large and influential public meeting, the vote being unanimous, and why the Government don't gazette the name "Fern Heights" and let it be publicly known, is a mystery. There is a petition going around on this subject, and it is to be hoped the trouble will be settled for all time.

> Windsor & Richmond Gazette 9 June 1900

NOTICE

PEARCE & CO. wish to inform the public of Kurrajong and Surrounding Districts that they intend opening a COACHBUILDING & GENERAL BLACKSMITHING ESTABLISHMENT at Wheeney Creek, Kurrajong, on MONDAY NEXT, 22nd FEBRUARY. All orders promptly attented to. (Signed) W. PEARCE & CO., Wheeney Creek, Kurrajong.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 20 February 1897



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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday, 26 January

Australia Day breakfast. Join with friends at *Loxley* on Bellbird Hill for this special occasion and hear recollections of the property's history from some of our senior members.

The day will get under way at 9.00 am. Cost per person is \$25 and bookings are essential. Bookings can be made with Valerie Holland on 4573 2226 and payment to KCHS, PO Box 174, Kurmond 2757. Please advise your attendance by 12 January as places are strictly limited.

Continued from page 2

in attendance. The meeting was brief with a report from the President outlining the information provided above before moving on to an evening of fellowship. Our thanks go to Jenny and David for making their home available.

When I look back on 2008 I do so with pride on the achievements of the Society which have been made possible by the dedication of a willing band of members. We could always do with more helpers and in particular some people willing to undertake the research of various topics important to the district. If you would like to help in any way feel free to contact either the Secretary or myself.

Finally, Valerie and I extend our best wishes to all members, friends and their families for the festive season and trust that 2009 will bring both joy and peace.

Sunday, 15 February

Tour of Belmont. The Brothers of St John of God Hospital, formerly Philip Charley's renowned residence *Belmont Park*, have kindly agreed to give our members a tour of this magnificent and very historic building.

The tour will commence at 10.00 am and is expected to take approximately one and a half hours. This will be a rare opportunity to gain access to this property and numbers are strictly limited. Morning tea will be served in the new cafe 'Gilbert's on Belmont' and if required lunch will also be available there. For those wishing to bring their own picnic lunch there are plenty of delightful spots one can relax in the grounds.

Further details including the cost per member are still to be finalised but please make your booking early. Please note this is strictly a 'Members only' event, yet it is bound to fill very quickly.

Further information and bookings can be made by phoning Joy Shepherd on either (02)4571 1524 or (0417)029 685.

Saturday, 4 April

Lithgow field trip. A visit to the Small Arms factory and museum at Lithgow as well as a tour of Eskbank House. This historic house was built in 1842 and was home to the first industrialist in the valley, Thomas Brown and his wife Mary Maxwell. More details will be advised in the next issue of *The Millstone*.

Continued from page 4

Memorial Maternity wing' and provided general, children's and maternity wards. It grew to include four general wards, a children's ward, an operating theatre, one private room and a large front room for adults. It attracted the services of visiting specialists from Sydney.

In 1962 a laundry block was added to the matron's flat. During flood periods the flat was sometimes used as temporary accommodation for doctors and hospital staff who were unable to return home across the Hawkesbury River.

Brick veneer extensions were completed in 1965 and by this time the hospital had a twenty-bed capacity. On the lower level was a large kitchen, staff dining room and quarters, and a storeroom later used as a mortuary and pathology lab. The upper level of the extension included wards, casualty, X-ray and a number of offices.

Continued next issue

LOST

N Sunday, in George street, Windsor, GOLD WATCH CHAIN, Nugget and Pen-knife attached. Will finder please return to MISS REIN, Public School, Windsor.

Reward.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 20 February 1897



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- Winner of the HMAA Best Short Break Accommodation in NSW for 2003
- Winner of Western Sydney Industry Awards for Excellence in Tourism, Hosted Accommodation 2002