

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

3 What heritage protection

Steve Rawling explains the various levels of 'heritage listing' and the lack of protection and limitations of each of them

4 Project Officer's update

Paul Hulbert's detailed report on the projects and activities undertaken over the past year and his invitation to all members to become involved

AGM report

The AGM was held on 28 September and this report gives an account of proceedings and the results of the election of office bearers

5 Woodhill store burglary

On Monday, 3 February 1930 Woodhill's Kurrajong store was broken into and four fugitives fled followed by police from Richmond, North Richmond, Windsor and two aeroplanes.

7 Horses for courses

Three photos from the Society's archives showing the importance and respect offered to horses by our pioneers

8 Dates for your diary

Final reminder for the annual Christmas party at Carolynne and John Cooper's property in Kurrajong. Saturday, 28 November 5 p.m.

New Members

The Society would like to welcome the following new members

BRUCE FRANKLIN
LOIS THORNBOROUGH

Back to the Kurrajong

AIRDRIE MARTIN & FRANK HOLLAND



Two scarecrows representing surveying at Kurrajong in 1809 made by Les and Anne Dollin. One has a circumferator and the other a measuring chain

Photo: Chris Upton

There was a constant flow of interested people through the CWA hall to view and talk about the first land grants and the beginning of settlement in the Kurrajong district over the weekend of the Scarecrow Festival.

During the Friday night forty-three members, guests and visitors attended the preview and were treated to an enlightening and entertaining presentation by Les Dollin, supported by Anne Dollin, about the early days of the colony with a particular emphasis on the 1808 – 1810 land grants in and around Kurrajong. A 200th anniversary cake was cut by Les and Carolynne Cooper who have family links back to some of the early grantees. The night was finished with a rendition of 'Happy Birthday' in recognition of 200 years of European settlement in the Kurrajong district.

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Just a few of the many informative displays being appreciated on the Friday night

Photo: Anne Dollin

President's Corner

I would like to acknowledge the work of Greg Upton, our past Treasurer, and Kathie McMahon both of whom did not stand for re-election at the recent AGM. Many thanks to Greg who stood in last year to help us out of a very difficult spot and to Kathie who has recently undergone major surgery and we wish her a speedy recovery to full health.

The issue of finding a bookkeeper has been resolved with Joy Shepherd's offer to fill this role. We are indeed very lucky to have Joy's services as it was under her stewardship as Treasurer that the MYOB system we use was established. Many thanks Joy, your gesture will save the Society the cost of outsourcing the activity at commercial rates.

I warmly welcome the new committee elected at the recent AGM. In particular to Peggy Israel and Carol Roberts who are joining the committee for the first time. I think we are somewhat lucky that we have managed to retain the services of most members of the 2008/09 committee as it will provide continuity as we start the major celebrations of 200 years of European land grants in the district and of course the 200 year anniversary of Governor Macquarie's journey to the 'Curry Jung'. I won't go into detail here as a separate section details the calendar of events for 2010 except to re-state the need for members to let the secretary know if you wish to have your name added to the booking list for the various events - expression of interest only at this time. Each event is open to the general public and seats will be allocated on a first come basis.

Since my last report the sub-committees preparing for the 2010 events have continued to meet to develop plans and make necessary arrangements. All sub committees report satisfactory progress and we can expect that each event will be of a high standard, informative and entertaining.

On the weekend of 10 October a number of interested members joined a group from the Archaeology Department of Sydney University who under the direction of Dr Martin Gibbs carried out an initial survey of the Singleton Mills site on Little Wheeny Creek. As the site is on Crown Land administered by Hawkesbury City Council, council approval was sought and given for this study to be undertaken. We hope that the initial survey will be followed up with further work in this area. In due course we will receive documentation on the output of this work which we will share with members and Hawkesbury City Council.

Valerie and I attended a workshop sponsored by the North Richmond Community Bank (Bendigo Bank). This workshop was attended by approx. fifty people from various community organisations. The aim was to provide the directors of the Bank with ideas of how the Bank could best target the funds it gives back to the community.

The family history group continues to expand and by the time you read this they will have conducted 'The Back to the Kurrajong' display at the CWA Hall in Kurrajong. This annual event coincides with the Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival over the weekend of 24-25 October. The guest speaker on Friday 23 was Les Dollin speaking about the early Land Grants.

I hope to meet as many members as possible at our next two events which are the annual Christmas party at the Coopers property and the Australia Day brunch on 26 January at Bowen Mountain Park.

Best wishes to all for a safe and happy Christmas.

Continued from front page

The original settlement of Kurrajong spanned a three year period:

1808 – First land grant at Kurrajong issued to William Lawson by Acting Lieutenant Governor Johnston.

1809 – Over twenty more land grants issued to settlers in the Kurrajong district by Lieutenant Governor Paterson.

1810 – Kurrajong land grants were reissued by Governor Macquarie.

Officially there was no town as such, the grants were used for cattle runs and crops.

We thank Les and Anne Dollin, Carolynne Cooper and the family history group very much for the quality of their displays and in particular Les for his very informative talk.

KCHS is very interested in hearing from anyone who might have more information about the early land grants in the Kurrajong district, especially anything related to Governor Lachlan Macquarie and the year 1810.



Photo: Chris Upton

A representation of a soldier reading a proclamation of land grants

Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society Incorporated

PO Box 174 Kurmond NSW 2757

www.kurrajonghistory.org.au

COMMITTEE

- President** Frank Holland
- Vice President** Airdrie Martin
- Secretary** Valerie Holland
- Treasurer** Loma (Peggy) Israel
- Committee Members** Carolynne Cooper, Paul Hulbert, Patricia O'Toole, Steve Rawling AM, Carol Roberts

- Accessions/Librarian** Valerie Birch
- Millstone Editor** Chris Upton
- Webmaster** Greg Upton
- Bookkeeper** Joy Shepherd
- Grants** Garth Smith
- Projects** Paul Hulbert
- Awards** Airdrie Martin
- Publicity** Robyn Fuller

Protection for Heritage – What Protection?

STEVE RAWLING AM

In the May-June issue Chris Upton, in his Editor's column, gave his views on the impact of the NSW Government's decision to absorb the Heritage Office into the Department of Planning, as well as giving the Planning Minister power over both development and heritage protection. These issues have been much discussed in the media in recent months with several high profile cases. There is no doubt that most groups concerned with heritage and history, including the Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS), regard the present situation as unsatisfactory.

However, people often do not realise that even before this particular change many buildings and other items of real heritage value had virtually no protection, and this goes for our area as well as the rest of the State. It is useful to look at the various levels of 'heritage listing' and what effect they have.

Listing by the National Trust of Australia

The Trust has done a wonderful job for five decades in identifying items of heritage value, and 'listed by the National Trust' is taken by many people to indicate some level of protection. There are over fifty properties and sites in the Hawkesbury listed with fewer than twenty in our area. There are, however, some notable omissions. The key fact about National Trust listing is that it affords no legal or statutory protection at all. It simply means that an important group has researched an item and established its heritage value and it is always hoped that this will influence state and local government decisions about possible developments affecting the item. Over the period of its existence the Trust has won some and lost some.

Council Local Environmental Plans

Local Government authorities are required to list in their Local Environment Plans (LEPs), those items of heritage value which they have been able to identify. The Hawkesbury LEP dates from 1989 with some amendments since. The current Council Community Strategic Plan undertakes to update the LEP which apparently means simply that – to correct any errors, update addresses etc. There is no evident commitment to add any items missed the first time around. There are over fifty items in our area but significant omissions, such as the remains of the convict-built roads at Kurrajong Heights and Comleroy, Lochiel dating from the 1820s, and the Singleton's Mill site.

Council has a responsibility to take heritage values into account when assessing development applications and to take steps to ensure that items are maintained in a secure way. The case of the 'Old Post Office and Store' in Kurrajong Heights, about which Council has been lobbied for at least seven years, and which is in an advanced state of demolition by neglect shows the limitations of this requirement.

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From the Editor

My apologies for this issue arriving in your letter boxes a bit later than usual. I made the decision to include the article on the Back to the Kurrajong activities and due to it being held toward the end of October the issue had to be held back for an extra week.

This particular article is a good example of how the members contribute towards the content of much of the newsletter. In response to a cry for help via email to Frank and Valerie Holland, Airdrie Martin supplied the foundation of the article, further detail concerning the Friday night came from Frank, and Les and Anne Dollin sent a number of photos, brief notes concerning Les's talk and details concerning the two photos which appear with the article.

Collaboration plays a major role in the formation of every issue and it is during this process that interest is created in subjects which may have become dormant. For example the photo of George Wilson and B Robinson on page seven has created much research and constructive debate between my mother and I.

As this is the final issue of volume seven I would like to wish all our readers the best for the festive season.

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Project Officer's update

PAUL HULBERT

Projects and activities continue to be vital aspects of the life of our society, providing opportunities for all members to be involved and enriching our historical knowledge of the Kurrajong district.

During the past twelve months:

- 'Local History for Primary Schools Using Music' has been implemented with other areas using this as a model for their schools.
- 'History of the North Richmond Community Bank branch of the Bendigo Bank' research has been completed.
- The earlier project of 'Register of family histories relating to the Kurrajong district' has evolved into the 'Family History' group with seven members.
- A display of historical interest that promoted the work of the society was manned at Clarendon during the Hawkesbury Hobby and Model Show.
- A display with associated material to uncover documents relating to early land grants was manned at the CWA hall in the village.

There were six excursions during the year: Powerhouse Discovery Centre at Castle Hill, Singleton's mill sites in Kurrajong and Wisemans Ferry, NSW Rail Museum at Thirlmere, Rouse Hill House and Dight's Farm at Rouse Hill, Belmont Park at Richmond, and two days spent in Lithgow visiting the State Mine Heritage Park, Small Arms Factory Museum and Eskbank House.

Copies of the book 'Glimpses of the Kurrajong' have sold very well enabling the society to be in a very healthy financial position. The book committee has embarked on another book production of 'Buildings of the Kurrajong'.

A short statistical summary since the inauguration of the society in 2001:

- Research projects - eight completed, five ongoing, thirteen in progress, one yet to commence.
- Development projects - three completed, five ongoing, one in progress, one suspended.
- Excursions - thirty-six completed.
- Publications - three published, one in progress.
- Presentations - forty-three held.
- Birthday breakfasts - eight held.

An invitation has been made to all members in an earlier issue of *The Millstone* to become involved in a project or activity at whatever level best suited them.

AGM report

FRANK HOLLAND

On 28 September 2009, thirty-one members attended the Society's Annual General Meeting held at Comleroy Road Public School. The purpose of the meeting was to receive the 2009 annual reports, elect office bearers and approve the annual statement to be forwarded to the Department of Fair Trading.

Annual Reports of the President, Secretary and Treasurer were printed in *The Millstone* and the Projects Report was submitted at the AGM. This report is printed to the left of this article. All reports were received as tabled.

After thanking the outgoing office bearers and committee for their work during 2008/09 the President passed control of the meeting to Ron Rozzoli to conduct the elections. The following were elected to office for the 2009/10 year: President - Frank Holland, Vice President - Airdrie Martin, Secretary - Valerie Holland, Treasurer - Peggy Israel. Committee - Steve Rawling, Paul Hulbert, Patricia O'Toole, Carolynne Cooper and Carol Roberts. A major issue was that of how to have the society bookkeeping completed as no one had the necessary MYOB skills. The matter was left for the new committee to resolve.

On resuming the chair Frank Holland thanked Ron Rozzoli for the professional conduct of the elections and then presented the Annual Statement which was subsequently approved for despatch to the Department of Fair Trading.

There being no further business the AGM was closed and the September General Meeting held. This was followed by a presentation by Cathy McHardy and Arthur Cooper on the production of their book 'Glossodia'. This book traces the history of the district and some of the early settler families. This is another fine book capturing some more of the past of our district.

BULLRIDGE.

There is another petition on the move, re a road from Blaxland's Ridge to Bull Ridge, alias Morgan Hills, via Ryan's Swamp. This looks like the same that occupied the Land Board for four days some time ago, when the petitioners came off second best.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette
9 June 1900

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EXCITING CHASE

FOUR THIEVES IN STOLEN CAR

LUCKY ACCIDENT PAVES WAY TO ESCAPE

KURRAJONG STORE ROBBED – GOODS RECOVERED

PERHAPS the most unique and exciting chase after thieves in criminal history in New South Wales was carried out on Monday when North Richmond, Richmond and Windsor police, in co-operation with two aeroplanes from the Richmond aerodrome, scoured the district for four escaping fugitives.

EARLIER in the morning the thieves had broken the external lock and forced the front door of Woodhill's store at Kurrajong and decamped with £80 worth of tobacco and silks. Despite the intensive search they escaped, but the booty was recovered.

THE chase is full of the thrills that go to make up a first-class movie film.

Shortly after 3 o'clock on Monday morning Constable Allen, of North Richmond, received word that a strange car was standing outside Woodhill's store at Kurrajong.

Awakened from bed at the time, Constable Allen was soon in his uniform, and, racing across to Mr. A. L. Shepherd's garage, requisitioned a car and a driver. Within ten minutes from the time he received the message the police officer was approaching the turn-off to Comleroy Road, about a mile from the store, when he noticed the lights of the suspect car coming towards him.

Two residents of Kurrajong fired revolver shots at the car soon after it had left the store in an unsuccessful attempt to puncture the tyres, and, spurred on by this, the thieves came down the hill past the Roman Catholic Church at breakneck speed.

Constable Allen was now in the roadway, a conspicuous figure in the glare of his own car's headlights. He signalled and called on the driver of the oncoming car to stop; but it bore down on him at terrific speed. He had no alternative but to jump clear' the car missing him by inches only.

The car sped on to North Richmond where it skidded for 20 yards before pulling up in front of Shepherd's garage. Here the occupants quickly scanned the direction boards at the cross-roads and made off again.

Meanwhile Constable Allen attempted to follow the fugitives, but the car in which he travelled was not fast enough. He communicated with the North Richmond police station, and after ascertaining that the thieves had passed through the township, sent word to the police at Richmond, Windsor and Parramatta. He then followed in another car.

Through North Richmond the wanted car sped at such a pace that it almost crashed into an embankment after crossing the river bridge. But, after traversing another mile, the party, endeavoring to turn the sharp bend at Nowland's Corner, crashed through the fence of Baker's farm, tearing several panels of fencing away.

In an attempt to hide their tracks the thieves ran the disabled car down Waters' Lane, for a distance of about a mile, where they abandoned it.

Shortly after the smash Constable Allen arrived at Nowland's Corner and, seeing the damaged fence, but no sign of the car, concluded that the thieves had continued their journey, and would be intercepted either at Richmond or Windsor. Arriving at Windsor, however, he was informed by Sergeant Morgan, who had a guard watching South Creek bridge, that the fugitives had not come through.

Sergeant Morgan and Constable Hansford, of Windsor; Sergeant Cafe and Constable McNamara, of Richmond; and Constable Allen then raced to the scene of the smash. In the abandoned car – a Chev. Six – they found £75 worth of tobacco and about £5 worth of silks, evidently discarded by the thieves in their hurry to escape.

The car, except for a damaged radiator and a punctured tyre, was found by the police little the worse for the mishap. Not a piece of glass was broken.

Sergeant Cafe then communicated with the Richmond Aerodrome and asked for a search by air for the gang.

While the police combed the district in cars – they actually followed four suspects as far as Wiseman's Ferry where those interrogated gave satisfactory

Continued page 6



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Continued from page 5

explanations of their movements – for two hours the planes flew low over the area and scoured the countryside for about 20 miles.

They passed over North Richmond, Richmond, Windsor, Riverstone, Castlereagh, Penrith, and many other small farming centres in the vicinity, but their efforts were fruitless.

Had Constable Allen known that the thieves did not proceed beyond Nowland's Corner by car after it crashed, the accident, instead of providing a lucky escape, would probably have proved their undoing. Furthermore, had the North Richmond police officer been provided with a fast and reliable car the culprits would undoubtedly been "in the bag" ere this.

Police have since ascertained that after abandoning the car in Waters' Lane, the thieves, said to be all young men, travelled by foot across the farms along the Richmond Lowlands to Cornwallis, where, about a mile from Windsor, they waded across a shallow part of the river attired only in their shirts. Proceeding along the river bank towards Wilberforce, they obtained a boat and crossed to Pitt Town Bottoms. To further cover their tracks, they swamped the boat before leaving it.

They were next seen making towards the bush between Pitt Town and Parramatta. Between 10 and 11 a.m. they reached the Windsor-road and obtained drinks at a road-side stall. Shortly afterwards they hailed a red-colored lorry making towards Sydney, and obtained a lift in that direction, thus eluding the police.

The police are anxious to interview the driver of the red-colored lorry who picked up the thieves between 10.30 and 11 a.m., near the Whiteheart Picnic Grounds.

This is the fifth time that Woodhill's store at Kurrajong has been broken into and robbed during the past two years.

The stolen car is the property of Mr. Sidney Willis England, of Mosman. It had been missing since Sunday afternoon.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette
7 February 1930

MYSTERY PHOTO



THE KNIFE SHARPENER
E JENKINSON PRACTICAL CUTLER

This photo was kindly passed on to the Society by Mary Avern. She recalls being told stories about the man and he was generally described as being a 'tinker who travelled from town to town'. Joy Shepherd and Valerie Birch have been doing some research on it and believe that the photo was taken on one of his visits to Richmond. As nothing is recorded on the photo the date it was taken is unknown. His first name could have been either Edwin, who died in Sydney in 1896, or Edward, who died in Newcastle in 1935.

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 From THE ARCHIVES

Troopers George Wilson & B Robinson

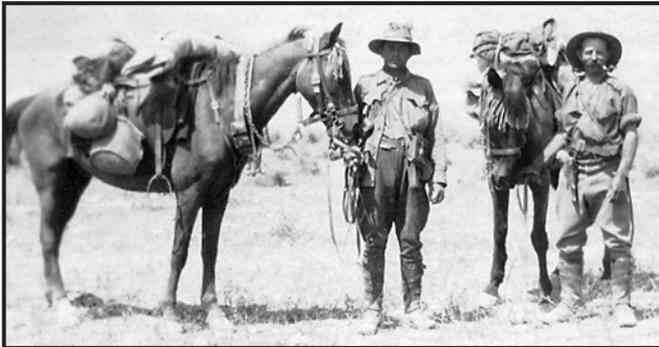


Photo courtesy: Kathie McMahon

These two soldiers are believed to be troopers George Wilson and B Robinson, both from Kurrajong.

George was the son of Rol and Ellen Wilson. He joined the Australian Light Horse 18th Reinforcement 7th Regiment on 18 January 1916, aged 25 years 4 months. He returned to Australia on 3 August 1919.

The location where the photo was taken is unknown and the date is believed to be *circa* 1914-1918.

Any feedback that readers might be able to pass on regarding the subjects, location or period would be greatly appreciated.

DEATH BY BURNING.— Some time last week, an aged woman named Jane Hawkins, met with her death by falling in the fire, in the hut which she inhabited at Kurrigong. Evidence adduced at the inquest, held on her remains, went to show that she had for a long time labored under paralysis of one side, and, being left alone in the hut, had accidentally fallen into the fire, and was unable to extricate herself from it. Verdict of accidental death by burning was returned.—

Herald's Windsor Correspondent.

Maitland Mercury
23 June 1852

Dave, Bill & Tiger

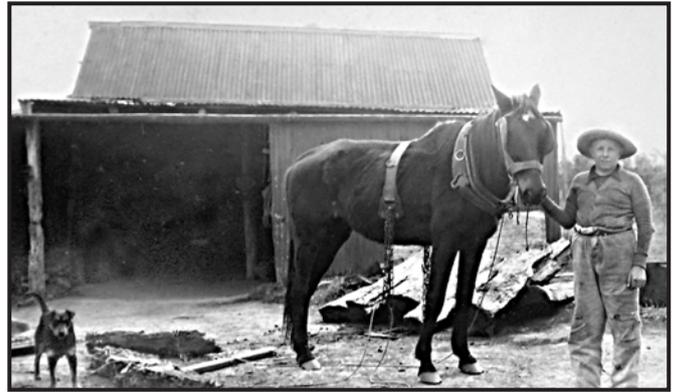


Photo courtesy: Philip Chapman

David Chapman with 'Bill' the horse and 'Tiger' the dog, a wired-haired terrier. The trio have hauled some slabs of wood from the bush to be cut as firewood for the stove and are pictured next to the tractor shed at *Longleat Farm*, Longleat Lane, Kurmond. The photo is believed to have been taken *circa* 1940.

Percy, David, Philip & Baldy



Photo courtesy: Philip Chapman

This image shows Percy Chapman with his sons, David on the left and Philip on the right. Their draught horse was named 'Baldy'. The shed in the background was located on Longleat Lane, Kurmond and was constructed of large sheets of stringy bark. It served its purpose until the family left the property in 1946. The photo is believed to have been taken *circa* 1932.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 28 November

Our Christmas party will be held at the property of Carolynne and John Cooper, 13 Turpentine Grove, Kurrajong. It will commence at 5 p.m. Please bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups and cutlery. Tea and coffee will be provided.

There will be no cost involved but please advise your attendance to Valerie Holland on 4573 2226 so that Carolynne and John will have an idea of numbers so that they can ensure everyone will be comfortable.

Tuesday, 26 January

Our Australia Day function will be a BYO breakfast at the Bowen Mountain Park, Lieutenant Bowen Road, Bowen Mountain commencing at 9 a.m. BBQ facilities are available for those members who might wish to cook a hot breakfast. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please bring your own cups, plates and cutlery.

Cost is \$2 per person to assist with the park hire fees.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Gough leave Windsor this week for Richmond, where they will open Dr. Cameron's premises opposite the Royal Hotel, as a sanatorium. This building, which was once the residence of the Bowman family, has an interesting history. Their friends wish Mr. and Mrs. Gough success.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette
18 July 1896

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State Heritage Inventory

In the past this simply recorded what was on the Council LEP, without adding any level of protection. However, a current check shows that there are only 115 Hawkesbury items compared to the 518 that there used to be, *and none of them are in our area.*

State Heritage Register

This is where the real protection begins. Inclusion on the register of items of 'State significance' means that items are protected under the NSW Heritage Act and cannot be demolished or damaged without making an application to the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning (before the changes Chris referred to, the Heritage Office was a separate body).

The Hawkesbury Branch of the National Trust took advantage of the State Icons Project a few years ago to nominate a dozen or so items from our area and others in the Hawkesbury for inclusion. The project offered the chance to cut short the very lengthy process of nomination and accept suggestions from the community. Unfortunately, the project fell into a hole somewhere and the nominations were never acted on.

The sad truth is that there is not a single item in our area on the State Heritage Register. That is, no items have actual legal protection and protection of them in the face of development proposals or of neglect depends on the vigilance

of the community, people like us, and the willingness of Council to put a high priority on heritage values.

National Heritage Register and World Heritage Listing

Given the preceding it is not surprising that neither of these contains any items in our area unless we claim that part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage qualifies!

Steve Rawling is on the committee of KCHS and is Chair of the Hawkesbury Branch of the National Trust



BOOK SALE

To clear the Society's stock these two books have been discounted considerably just in time for Christmas and would make ideal gifts for anyone with an interest in our district's heritage

Future History by Paul Hulbert
Profiles of over 100 individuals and families of the Kurrajong district
\$49.95 (was \$80)

Diggers Hill by Vera Bentvelzen
The story of surviving on a soldier settlement farm
\$29.95 (was \$40)

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