

## KURRAJONG ~ COMLEROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*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 2011 RAHS conference

Frank & Valerie Holland attended the annual RAHS conference and this report gives a brief outline of the event as well as the acceptance of a \$1,000 grant to KCHS and a Certificate of Achievement for Ron and Margaret Rozzoli.

#### 4 Opening of Nth Richmond bridge

A reprint of a 1905 article from the Sydney Morning Herald announcing the opening of the new bridge over the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond. The occasion was deemed important enough to the district that a public holiday was declared.

#### 7 From the archives

Three photos from the Society's archives showing a mix of men, machines and transport. They were taken at Kurrajong and Bilpin and are dated from the early 1900s.

#### 8 Dates for Your Diary

Final reminder for the Australia Day function on Thursday, 26 January. It is the Hawkesbury Bell Line Lions Club function which will be held at McMahon Park. Proceedings get under way at 8:30 AM.

#### *Windsor Rifle Club*

The editor is researching the history of this club as some photos were passed on to him of some members. Despite many hours searching online sparse detail has been found.

If you are able to forward information regarding this or other rifle clubs in the district your help would be appreciated.

Chris Upton  
 2 The Circle  
 Lithgow 2790  
 notpuc@bigpond.com

## KCHS Christmas Party

JOHN COOPER



The morning of the KCHS Christmas party could not have looked less encouraging. The week leading up to Saturday, 26 November was nothing but rain. Towards the end of the week I spoke to Paul Hulbert with the view of cancelling or transferring to a hall or somewhere else I could find as a large number of people trudging through a person's home on a wet and muddy evening would have been disastrous. Paul elected to take the chance as the weather prediction was a better outlook for the afternoon.

As I was sitting having morning tea, looking out to the west from my window my thoughts were do I really want to go this afternoon. As the cuppa progressed Alan said there is a small break of blue appearing on the western horizon. As we sat and watched the rain stopped and the rain clouds moved across the sky like a lifting of a veil. Within an hour the sun was out and within two hours the sky was almost perfectly clear, it was completely amazing.

Around the due time to leave Carolynne, Alan and I departed for the Heights and being the second ones to arrive, we selected a prime place to park and ventured around to the rear to be greeted by Paul and Lesly and the sight of a most wonderful backyard setting with plenty of hard surface. You couldn't have wanted a better location and the weather couldn't have been better.

Other members started to arrive and by six thirty around forty had made the journey to the Heights. A short meeting took place with our thanks to Paul and Leslie for having us. The main topic of the night was TALK and most of us did well with that topic.

It was sad to learn that one of our most senior members and a great friend to almost everyone is starting chemotherapy. With that we all expressed our thoughts and best wishes for Ron Rozzoli and lo and behold he walked in with his wife Margaret. Ron has a positive attitude and I think that is important, we can only hope for the best.

*Continued page 6*



Some of the members who enjoyed the break in the weather and the hospitality of Paul & Leslie Hulbert

Photo: Carolynne Cooper

## President's Corner

Somehow I missed having my inaugural report in the previous issue of *The Millstone*. I did write one but alas it never made it to the computer; Carolynne types it up for me after I write it. I guess in many ways I could say it was expected as my last employer, the NSW Government Railways had me seen by three psychologists and after many tests I was diagnosed with having a severe case of computer phobia.

We held our second committee meeting on the fourteenth of November and got down to business planning next year's programme. Because Christmas might affect the publication of the next issue of *The Millstone* I am unable to confirm any specific outings in this report. However, I will outline this year's programme.

2012 will commence with our traditional Australia Day breakfast. We are joining with the Lions Club function at McMahons Park. The Dates for your Diary column will have updates of details as the date nears.

We have some interesting guest speakers lined up and our tours for the year will include Colo and Glossodia plus a presentation by Les Dollin. A spring visit to the Harbour City is also planned but the date is yet to be settled.

When one is thrown into a role with a new outlook it takes a little time to come up to speed. The omission of my report in the previous issue meant that the Society failed to express its thanks to Frank and Valerie Holland for their work above and beyond anyone's expectations. They worked as a team and what a great one it was. The Society wishes them the best for the future and we certainly look forward to seeing them at our meetings and outings.



I thought I would finish off with a little of my own history for the benefit of those who have not yet met me. I originated from the North Coast of NSW, born in 1938 at Coraki situated on the Richmond River. I spent my childhood on a dairy farm and came to Sydney in 1955 to apply for a job on the railways. I worked for them until my retirement in 1999.

Socially I became interested in railway history and was elected foundation chairman of the Zig Zag Railway, a position I held for ten years. I was also the last chairman of Tourist Railway Association Kurrajong and given the ominous job of winding up that society.

I met my second wife Carolynne during my tenure of president of the Association of Preservation Groups of NSW. She was then secretary of Macquarie Railway Society located in Richmond railway yard and also ran the rail motors that once ran on the Richmond line. In 1999 we moved to Kurrajong with all of our railway memorabilia and carriages.

With the festive season now underway I hope all members have had a pleasant and enjoyable Christmas and that the New Year brings prosperity, peace and happiness to all. I look forward to supporting the Society the best way I can and getting to know more members as time goes by.

### Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society Incorporated

PO Box 174 Kurmond NSW 2757  
www.kurrajonghistory.org.au

#### COMMITTEE

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## 2011 RAHS annual conference

VALERIE HOLLAND

Frank and I, together with 150 delegates, enjoyed the 2011 annual two-day conference at Maitland in October to hear a variety of interesting presentations and to meet and share information.

Maitland District Historical Society hosted a preconference tour of historic Newcastle and in the evening gave a warm welcome to delegates at their newly leased centre in Cathedral Street, Maitland. The main proceedings were held in the conference room of East Maitland Bowling Club. Space was provided outside for the various societies to display and sell publications.

The opening address was given by the president of the Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS), Emeritus Professor David Carment. Presentations at the conference included a variety of major Australian disasters and their impact on communities and associated procedures for document recovery, the importance of updating councils' LEP lists, the 'Significance Assessment' of collections, Maitland: landscape and heritage, Records of Fire Inquests held at the State Archives, systematic cemetery research, the Maitland Jewish Cemetery and the importance of 'Stopping the Rot' in collections.

Tim Whitford, a former combat soldier, gave a very moving presentation titled 'The Pheasant Wood Project and Beyond'.

Continued page 4



Photo: Frank Holland

Ron & Margaret Rozzoli, who were unable to attend the conference, being presented with the RAHS Certificate of Achievement by Valerie Holland



## From the Editor

I recently received some photos in the mail from my second cousin, Margaret Andrews, showing some members of the Windsor Rifle Club.

Margaret was of the opinion that one of the men in the photos was her father Benson, as the photos were kept in his wallet. I mailed them to my brother and his detective work identified the man as Benson's brother Ernest, my grandfather. This piqued my interest in finding further information not just on those in the photos but the rifle club in general.

Once again this subject, the Windsor Rifle Club, shows that even though there is a massive amount of information available on the Internet on many subjects, on some there is little. I was able to find an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* detailing the day's activity and location of where the photos were taken. When searching for detail on the club's history what was found had general commentary but little content or substance. Thus my front page request for information. I feel this is a subject which would be of interest to many so I'd like to put some words and pictures together for an article in a future issue.

Noreen Montgomery and Peter O'Donnell's request for details regarding 'Tennyson' on page eight is another subject which is worth recording for future generations. After I received their draft copy of the notice they wished to display I searched online for further information.

I didn't find much. Hopefully you can help.

notpuc@bigpond.com



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## FLOOD HAVOC.

### HAWKESBURY VALLEY SUFFERS.

SYDNEY, October 17.

Flood damages in the Hawkesbury Valley are estimated at £50,000. Heavy losses have been suffered also in the Maitland district, and at places along the coast. In the Windsor district alone the damage to the potato crops is estimated at £25,000.

The Brisbane Courier Friday, 18 October 1929

Continued from page 3

He highlighted the many frustrations, difficulties, sadness and sense of achievement the team, of which he was part, faced in the years of research and recovery of the missing Australian soldiers interred in a mass grave at Fromelles, Northern France. This was a very moving presentation that had an emotional impact on all present.

Darren Mitchell, Director of the NSW Government's Office for Veteran's Affairs spoke of the importance of preparing for the Commemoration of the Centenary of the First World War 2014-2018 and preservation of documentary evidence. This may present an opportunity for the Society to obtain funding for the publication of Valerie Birch's work on the Diggers from 'The Kurrajong'.

As part of the conference a guided tour of the Hunter River was conducted to give a historical context to the way the many floods had altered its course and the resulting impact for the communities.

On behalf of KCHS I accepted a \$1,000 grant from the RAHS to assist our KCHS Family History Group to print the results of their research into the birth, death and marriage records of St Stephens Anglican Church Kurrajong. This cheque has been passed on to the treasurer. I also accepted a RAHS Certificate of Achievement, relating to Macquarie 2010 preparations and celebrations. The citation read:

*Awarded to Ronald and Margaret Rozzoli of Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc. by the Royal Australian Historical Society for their joint efforts in publishing, researching, preservation of and performing aspects of history in the Richmond-Kurrajong areas.*

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# THE HAWKESBURY.

## A FLOOD-PROOF BRIDGE.

### OPENED AT RICHMOND.

The Richmond district made general holiday yesterday to mark the opening of a substantial new bridge across the Hawkesbury. The days are long gone when Richmond was one of the chief settlements of New South Wales. Nevertheless, the place still carries a large population, and yesterday the residents mustered in strong force. The day was fine, too fine from a farmer's point of view, and the continued absence of rain was responsible for excessive dust. But it apparently takes more than drought and dust to mar a gala day at Richmond, for immediately the enthusiastic crowd had witnessed the Premier cut the ribbon and declare the bridge open they proceeded to spend the rest of the day at picnic sports in an adjoining paddock. Windsor and neighbouring centres contributed generously to the attendance, and a public holiday having been proclaimed there was a big representation of children.

The face of the country from Parramatta to Richmond, and out beyond, is far from satisfactory. Instead of abundant promise of green spring feed, the paddocks are bleached white, as though the season were late summer. Grass is exceedingly scarce and parched, and the crops are very backward. Clouds of dust followed the hundreds of vehicles which carried the residents to yesterday's function, and the rattle of tires sounded ominous in early September. The coast drought has hit the old locality badly. Even about the river the scenery, which has tempted so many of our artists, is parched and dispiriting, and the stream itself meanders very shallowly through the sand beds. Stock is poor and hand-feeding very necessary. Lucerne patches occasionally relieve the poverty, and although not luxuriant, demonstrate the wisdom of their cultivation. Across the bridge, up on the Kurrajong Heights, where orchards are the chief asset, the dry spell is also felt severely. The trees are suffering considerably, and are late. Should rain not fall speedily, yields will probably be light.

The old and new bridges standing side by side furnish a striking contrast. The old one, soon to be demolished, is of timber, and to-day has few pretensions. But in its day it doubtless marked a stride in the progress



Taken in 1904 this shows the construction well underway. The gentleman in the foreground is thought to be Mr Skuthorpe.

Photo courtesy: Mary Avern

of the district, and was regarded as something of an engineering feat. It was built by a private company, and those who passed over paid toll—two conditions almost of the past. Its level was very low, and countless great floods have passed over it. At one time, in 1867, the water went on rising and spreading until the structure was 52ft submerged. As the flood fell, speculation was strong as to the fate of the structure. But it stood by its builders.

The bridge which began its official life yesterday is one of the country's many monuments to Mr. O'Sullivan's rule. It has, however some bright features. It was built by tender, and its cost of £19,245 has fallen a little below the original departmental estimates. Standing 12ft above the old one, it consists of 13 reinforced concrete arch spans, each 50ft in the clear, with an overall length of 722ft, and a roadway width of 21½ft.

The arches have been constructed on the Monier principle, with round steel bars forming a square grill or mesh embedded in the concrete to strengthen it. All the round bars were rolled at Messrs. Sandford and Co's works, Lithgow, where the handrails were also manufactured.

The handrails are collapsable, and when the bridge is threatened by flood will be folded down into recesses in the concrete, and so protected from damage. The piers consist each of two concrete caissons, resting on a steel shoe. The caissons have been sunk under air pressure to bedrock, into which they have been carried about 2ft, and further secured in the upstream caissons by iron rods let into the rock. This is the first application of this class of foundation in the State. It has been necessary to tie all parts of the structure securely together, as this is said to be, so far as there is any record, only the second bridge to be constructed of this character—a low level structure of reinforced concrete in a river subject to high floods. The other example, constructed upon a somewhat different principle, is the Maryborough Bridge, Queensland, which has successfully withstood several high floods.

The Ministerial Party, comprising Mr. Carruthers, Mr. Lee, the Minister for Works, several members of Parliament, and a number of ladies, was welcomed at the Richmond railway station by the Mayor, Alderman T. Griffiths, and the leading residents of the district. A procession, headed by De Groen's Vice-regal Band, and comprising about 60 vehicles, then journeyed to the bridge. The speeches were brief. The Premier, in declaring the bridge open, referred happily to the historical interest of the district, and to the important part it had played in the development of New South Wales. He hoped that the farmers would be early delivered from their spell of dry weather, and that they would

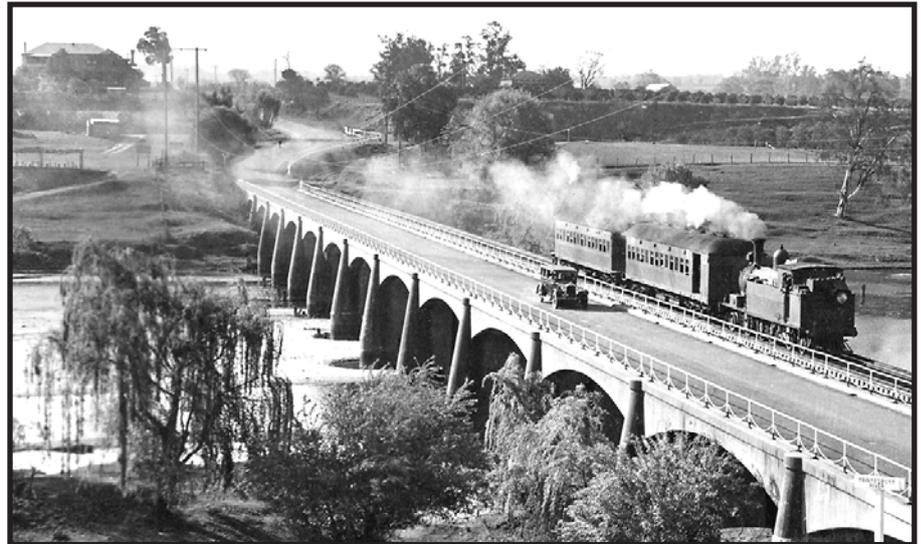


Photo courtesy: Mary Avern

'Pansy' the Richmond to Kurrajong train crossing the bridge heading for Richmond. Date of photo unknown.

share in the wave of prosperity just now passing over the greater part of the State. His remarks on Hawkesbury College were warmly cheered. He rejoiced in the fine work the institution was doing, and said the Government had decided to spend an additional £10,000 in its development. Its accommodation would be practically doubled. The Premier also paid a graceful compliment to the school children, who, daintily dressed and garlanded, stood across the bridge, representing "Welcome." Mr. Lee reviewed the public works policy of the Government, and defended the Shires Bill. He was sure the people of the country desired more control of their local affairs. Mr. M'Farlane, M.L.A., and Mr. Brinsley Hall, M.L.A. for the district, also spoke.

The bridge was designed by the officers of the roads and bridges branch of the Public Works Department, under Mr. W. J. Manns, the Commissioner and Principal Engineer for Roads and Bridges, under whom the erection has been superintended by Mr. W. F. Burrows, resident engineer. Mr. F. J. Carson has been the contractor for the whole of the work.

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD  
 Tuesday, 5 September 1905  
 Contributed by *Joy Shepherd*



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Continued from front page



Photo: Carolynne Cooper

Croquet was the ideal sport for the day's relaxed atmosphere

Meanwhile the ladies took to the croquet course which Paul had set up in his back yard. I don't think the standards were those of the Royal Croquette Society but those who played had a really great time.

As darkness fell Paul lit the BBQ and demonstrated his qualifications of a chef. The only downside of the evening was it was unseasonably chilly, particularly for those of us who failed to take a jumper.

All in all it was a great evening and a good opportunity to have a social yarn and wish all a safe and festive season. By ten o'clock there were a few remaining, we departed by thanking our hosts Paul and Lesly for a wonderful evening.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe, carefree, prosperous and wonderful New Year.

## At Currency Creek.

Monday week was quite a gala day at Currency Creek. For some time the people of the village had been looking forward to the days outing to celebrate Empire Day. Early on Monday morning children could be seen wending their way (pot or cup in hand) to the Public School grounds, the place appointed for the festivities. There were visitors from far and near. The proceedings were opened by hoisting and saluting the Union Jack, then the programme for the day was continued in the school. The children were addressed by Mr White, Mr Lines, and their teacher (Mr Ross). The Rev. J. D. Brown (who takes a keen interest in the children of this school, attending every week to give them religious instructions) was to have addressed the gathering, but owing to indisposition was unable to attend early, but arrived later in the day. Mr White spoke chiefly upon the recent Boer war, and the British subjects and possessions in South Africa. As Mr White was on active service at South Africa, his address proved interesting to children and adults alike. Mr Lines dealt with some of the interesting features in England's history, and concluded his remarks by strongly advising the children to read and study for themselves, after leaving school, so as to become conversant with the leading topics of the day, and thus pave the way to making useful citizens. The teacher's address was upon "The British Navy." Mr Ross traced it from its inception to the present day, also pointing out its advantages to the Empire. The addresses were interspersed by songs and recitations. The school children rendered the songs "Advance, Australia Fair," "Home, Sweet Home," "Red, White, and Blue," and "God Save the King." Recitations were given by Eileen Treble, Grace Smith, Stanley Kingham, and Hubert Greentree, four pupils of the school. The first part of the programme now over, the children and their friends entered into games until a halt was called for lunch, when all showed their appreciation of the good things provided by Mr Beveridge, of Windsor. After lunch came the races (for to the child's mind a picnic is incomplete without races) and the children could be seen running preliminaries before the final events. When the races were over every child seemed pleased to find that he or she had won a prize. More games were played until the call for tea, after which a move was made homewards, everyone agreeing (both young and old) that Empire Day at Currency Creek had proved a very enjoyable one.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette  
6 June 1908



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**THE ARCHIVES**

**The water cart**



Photo courtesy: Thelma Groch

This photo, taken in the early 1920s, shows the water cart which was used at Kurrajong to carry water from the creek to the young citrus orchards planted on the Soldiers' settlement allotments. The workmen and horse are taking a break.

**Camp Mackay workers**



Photo courtesy: The family of Percy Stevens

A truckload of happy workers at Camp Mackay, Kurrajong. The nine men are atop and beside a truck laden with timber. Superintendent Percival Stevens is standing on the ground and the eight youths are sitting on top of a Clyde Sawmilling truck, a Chevrolet 'Maple Leaf' part of the sawmill's fleet.

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**The old sawmill**



Photo courtesy: Mary Avern

Taken in the early 1900s this photo is believed to show the remains of Powell's Mill at Bilpin. The encroaching vegetation indicates some years of little if any activity.

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- A History of the Postal and Telephone Services of Mount Wilson* by Mary Reynolds
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For further information and expressions of interest in submitting manuscripts for publication in future editions you are welcome to contact the editor of the journal, Dr Peter Rickwood, via the Association's website.

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# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## Thursday, 26 January

FOR THE 2012 AUSTRALIA DAY FUNCTION KCHS members will be participating in the Hawkesbury Bells Line Lions Club function which will be held at McMahon Park in Kurrajong. Activities begin 8:30AM and should conclude 11:30AM. The event will be a community day to raise funds for Kurrajong Nursing Home, Kurrajong Rural Fire Service and 180TC Yarramundi, an organisation that assists young males. There will be games and face painting for the children, a raffle and static displays by the RFS, the police and several community organisations. Breakfast of sausage sandwiches, bacon and egg sandwiches, and steak and egg sandwiches will be available for a small cost.

## KCHS joins HEN

PATRICIA O'TOOLE

Hawkesbury Environmental Network (HEN), is an organisation aimed at bringing together Hawkesbury organisations with an interest in caring for the environment. It is modelled on a very successful group operating on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Groups and issues find support within HEN and have a greater chance of being heard.

The history of Kurrajong is tied in closely with the environment and for this reason it was decided to support HEN. Little Wheeny Creek brought Kurrajong's first settlers, the climate and soil bought farmers and orchardists, and timber getters harvested its forests. These are just a few of the factors which emphasise the importance of the environment to Kurrajong, not just in the past but in the present.

HEN has established itself by gaining support from the University of Western Sydney and the Western Sydney Institute of TAFE. Through their support of HEN they have become partners in a worldwide organisation, 'Water Keepers Alliance'. Independent monitoring of the health of the Hawkesbury River becomes possible through this association.

You may like to find out more about HEN by visiting their website [www.hen.org.au](http://www.hen.org.au)

### Request for information Tennyson

NOREEN MONTGOMERY & PETER O'DONNELL intend to write a book detailing the history of Tennyson. They are hoping people might come forward with stories, anecdotes and photographs to record before they are lost and forgotten.

The original name was 'Sally's Bottoms' and the school was the main place where people met for many occasions. There was also a butcher's shop, post office, fire brigade and cricket team.

Any items would be much appreciated and contact details are:

**Noreen Montgomery**  
96 Hilltop Road  
Tennyson 2754  
4571 2095  
greg\_nor@yahoo.com

**Peter O'Donnell**  
245 Tennyson Road  
Tennyson 2754  
4576 5623

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Australian Womens Weekly. Wednesday, 24 June 1981



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- Australian Bridal Industry Academy National Award Best Resort / Motel Reception 2008
- Hills Excellence in Business Awards for Excellence in Customer Service Environmental Management & Sustainability 2008
- Parramatta Regional Awards for Business Excellence in Sales & Marketing Customer Service, Chairman's Choice Contributing to the Environment 2005 '06 '07 & '08
- Western Sydney Industry Awards Excellence 2002 '03 '04 '05 '06 '07 & 08
- Hotel Motel & Accommodation Association Best Short Break Accommodation in NSW 2003