

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

6 Committee nominations

Nominations for office bearers and committee members as of closing date 22 August. Further nominations will be accepted during the AGM on 23 September. Be there.

8 Mid-year dinner

Dr Ian Jack was special guest and the subject of his talk was George William Evans, the forgotten man of the development of the western districts of NSW. Steve Rawling's article summarises Ian's talk in detail and makes one wonder why Evans' name is not as well-known as 'Blaxland, Lawson & Wentworth'.

10 Drilling for oil at Kurrajong

In January 1955 the Australian Oil & Gas Company began drilling for oil at Kurrajong Heights. Construction of the site began in 1954 and the operation ceased in August 1955 after drilling to a depth of 4,766 feet. No oil reserves were found. Airdrie Martin's article and associated photos fill in a part of the district's history of which many would not be aware.

12 Dates for your diary

Final reminders for: **The Glenbrook Circuit Walk**, Sat 21 Sep; **National Trust Tour of the Hawkesbury**, Sun 22 Sep; **KCHS AGM** Mon 23 Sep; **Kurrajong Open Garden Weekend**, Sun 20 Oct.

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KCHS Mill Walk with Les Dollin and Frank Holland

GREG UPTON

On the morning of 15 June a very enjoyable and informative tour of one of Benjamin and James Singleton's mill sites on Little Wheehey Creek at Kurrajong was hosted by Les Dollin and Frank Holland.

The event commenced at Kurrajong's Memorial Park with an interesting talk by Frank who described the significance of the mills in the context of early exploration and settlement in the Kurrajong district. Frank explained that from the evidence available it is highly likely that the mills and the nearby dwellings which housed the mill workers may well have represented Kurrajong's first European settlement.



Photo: Greg Upton

Les Dollin (centre) and Frank Holland (left) addressing the group at the beginning of the day's excursion at Memorial Park, Kurrajong.

The mill site which was visited later in the morning was established in about 1810 and was of the undershot type. It was known locally as the 'lower' or 'bottom' mill. The other mill, located a little less than a kilometre upstream, was of the overshot type and was known as the 'upper' or 'top' mill. The upper mill was capable of grinding forty bushels, or just over one tonne of wheat daily. Singleton operated the mill until 1816 when probably due to financial hardship he advertised it for sale. The sale did not proceed and John Town rented the mill for £250 per annum. Samuel Leverton Jnr was reported as renting one of the mills in 1820.¹ A mill was sold to William Leverton in 1824 before he died later that year. John Town rented both mills and eventually became their owner erecting a substantial six-roomed house near the bottom mill.⁴ Various millers operated the mills through to about 1858 when they ceased operation. John Town's house and the mill buildings continued to be used as dwellings and for storage for some time. The stone mill house of one of the mills was severely damaged by fire in 1902.² The remnants of both mill's buildings were most likely recycled by local residents and/or the soldier settlers in the 1920s.

Frank explained that in about 1844 the presence of the mills and their regular supply of grain encouraged the establishment nearby of a still for brewing spirits. At least two inns are known to have been established in the area. *The Donny Brook Fare* was

Continued from front page

located near the upper mill site and the *Currency Lass* nearby, opposite Bells Line of Road near to where today's Kaleidoscope Lodge motel is situated.

Following Frank's talk Les took over and explained to the group how the mills were operated and maintained.³ With actual surviving millstones from the Little Wheeney Creek mills on display in the monument before the group Les explained how the millstones worked, the purpose and impact of their grooving pattern, known as 'furrows', and how the millstones were maintained. Les also had on display an actual mill counterweight and had a cardboard and tracing paper cutout model to pass around to demonstrate how the millstones' furrows interacted in a scissoring motion to draw the ground flour outwards when the runner (upper) stone rotated over the bedstone or 'nether stone' at about 120 rpm. Les described the importance of ensuring when the millstones were in service how essential it was to monitor that they did not overheat in which case they could crack. It was also important to ensure that a sufficient supply of grain was continuously fed to the mill and that the gap between the millstones was closely monitored and adjusted with the counterweights as required, otherwise the runner stone could strike the bed stone, spark and cause a dangerous explosion. For this reason a boy was often employed in a mill to 'keep his nose to the grindstone', paying careful attention for the characteristic smell known as 'brimstone' which arose when a potential explosion was imminent.



Photo: Greg Upton

Les identifies the mill pond site upstream from the lower mill. Most of the group are standing on the mill race with some up on the bank of the mill pond.

Les demonstrated from four inconspicuous pock marks towards the outer edge of the flat millstone in the monument how it once supported the legs of a German WWI machine gun. Both these millstones had been used in an early Soldier Settlement war trophy located at the intersection of Bells Line of Road and Comleroy Road which was unveiled in a large ceremony in October 1922. An account of this occasion published in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*⁴ describes how the pock-marked millstone was dug from the bed of the creek when digging piers for a bridge, probably in 1890.⁵ It was believed this millstone derived from the upper mill. The other stone, ie: that which stands vertically in today's monument, was found buried below the dam site of the lower mill and was believed to be that mill's nether stone (bed stone).⁴ It is unclear how long the war trophy remained on display, however the Department of Main Roads removed the millstones from this site in 1946 when it realigned Bells Line of Road north from Mill Road to bypass Kurrajong village.⁶ It seems this operation was carried out with haste and disregard for their heritage value as it was later reported they lay "... spread in a number of shattered fragments, apparently ownerless, next to the Kurrajong Park."⁷ until repaired and re-erected by the DMR back at the intersection of Bells Line of Road and Comleroy Road in 1958.⁸ The millstone monument was relocated yet again in 1988 this time to its present location as a Bicentennial project in conjunction with Hawkesbury Council and Kurrajong Public School.⁹

Following the talks by Frank and Les the group made its way to an area off Mill Road where Les then led the way down a short remnant of the original Grain Road¹⁰ to the old sandstone quarry where stone was sourced to build the lower mill and surrounding buildings. Nearby Les pointed out a site adjacent to the old road where several convict mill workers' huts would have been located. A short distance further along the old road led to the creek where Les identified the lower mill site. While standing on the actual site of the lower mill Les had several copies of Esther Gray's c. 1892 sketch of the lower mill to pass around amongst the group to show how the structure was located on the site. Les explained that the site was chosen as Wheeney Creek always flows, being constantly fed by springs upstream toward its source near Kurrajong Heights thus providing a reliable supply of water to drive the water wheels. The ruins of the mill buildings have long since gone, however the structure of the mill race still remains and Les guided the group along this to the location 250 metres upstream where

Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society Incorporated

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COMMITTEE

President John Cooper

Vice President Kathie McMahon

Secretary Suzanne Smith

Treasurer Marguerite Wyborn

Committee members Carolynne Cooper, Lorna (Peggy) McCarr, Patricia O'Toole, Steve Rawling AM, Joy Shepherd

Accessions/Librarian Valerie Birch

Millstone Editor Chris Upton

Webmaster Greg Upton

Public Officer David Griffiths

Grants Carol Roberts

Hon Auditor Bruce Obermann

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the mill pond and its dam were located. Sufficient detail still remains in the convict-built mill race to illustrate the effort and attention to detail that was taken in order to ensure that the race was effective, getting an adequate water feed to the mill's wheel to power the rotation of the runner stone. Sadly today much of the race is in poor condition, having endured damage from over two centuries of tree and root growth as well as the occasional flood flow along the creek. Efforts are continuing to have this important site heritage listed for conservation and possible restoration support.

Following the mill walk a small group of participants gathered at Kurrajong's Sas-safras Café for a refreshing coffee.

This was a very enjoyable and informative event and was the sixth KCHS Little Wheehey Creek mill site excursion that Les Dollin has led. The Singleton mills were very influential in the establishment and early development of the Kurrajong district and their surviving millstones on display today in Kurrajong's Memorial Park have been adopted as the icon for our Society.

This assistance of Les Dollin and Frank Holland in providing editorial input to confirm the accuracy of information presented in this article is appreciated.



Detail and condition of a section of the lower mill's race structure today

Photo: Greg Upton

¹ Kurrajong-Curry[G]ong Mill [Kurry Jung Mill] - Singleton, Benjamin. In *Water-Powered Flourmills in Australia*. Morawa District Historical Society, <http://members.westnet.com.au/caladenia/waterflourmill/aust.html> accessed 30 Jun 2013.

² *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 17 May 1902 p10; 24 May 1902 p14.

³ For a detailed account of how the mills worked refer to Les Dollin's article on an earlier mill walk in the March-April 2003 issue of *The Millstone*.

⁴ Kurrajong Soldier Settlement. Unveiling the War Trophy. Historic Mill Stones. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 3 Nov 1922 p14.

⁵ This was most likely associated with the construction of a culvert on Mill Road over Wheehey Creek in 1890, per the advertised tender - *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 22 Feb 1890 p5.

⁶ The Bell's Line Road (Main Road No. 184). History and a recent improvement. *Journal of the Department of Main Roads New South Wales* Vol XVI No. 1 Sept 1950 p25.

⁷ Historic Millstones, letter by MacLeod Morgan published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 13 March 1954 p2.

⁸ Old Mill Stones Re-established on Bell's Line of Road at Kurrajong. *Journal of the Department of Main Roads New South Wales* Vol XXIV No. 1 Sept 1958 p29.

⁹ Plaque attached to the millstone monument, Memorial Park, Kurrajong.

¹⁰ See Les and Ann Dollin's article on the Old Grain Road in the May-June 2006 issue of *The Millstone* for further details on grain and wheat trade in the early colony in the context of Singleton's Wheehey Creek and other mills.



From the Editor

I have come to regard issue five as the 'annual' issue as it contains the Society's financial statements for the past year and the annual reports from the office bearers. This is a time I look back over the issues published this last year to see if there are any changes needed and to note those I need to thank for their contributions in the publication and distribution of the newsletter.

The articles published covered a varied range of subjects. I would like to thank the following contributors: Valerie Birch, Carolynne Cooper, Les Dollin, Geoff Ford, Frank Holland, Airdrie Martin, Kathie McMahon, Pat O'Toole, Phil Peck, Steve Rawling, Joy Shepherd, Suzanne Smith, Eddie Sorby, Jennifer Stackhouse, Betty Upton, Greg Upton and Marguerite Wyborn. I am sure readers would have found their articles both interesting and informative.

Keeping all the above on their toes, and my fingers on the right keys on my keyboard, I have my merry band of proofreaders to thank: Carolynne Cooper, Kathie McMahon, Pat O'Toole, Steve Rawling, Joy Shepherd and Suzanne Smith. We have had a number of discussions this last year regarding punctuation as most people are set in the ways that they were taught at school. It is an evolving subject, always has been, but one on which I enjoy reading the finer points, but even reference books differ on what should be.

The majority of members receive the printed copy of the newsletter. I would like to thank Words and Pixels at North Richmond for the quality of their printing and the short time that is needed for them to have it ready for posting. For the folding, placing into envelopes, addressing and posting I thank Pat O'Toole and those who help her.

Over a twelve month period there are many people involved in the publication and distribution of a newsletter. I apologise if there are any who warranted recognition but were not mentioned.

You all have my thanks.

notpuc@bigpond.com

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Windsor & Richmond Gazette
1 November 1935

President's Report

JOHN COOPER

As I look back on the past year there has been some significant highlights for KCHS and its members. The first such event was the awarding of the Family History Group with their Heritage Heroes Award by the State Government with a presentation by the Hon. Robyn Parker, Minister for Heritage and a luncheon at the Heritage branch office at Parramatta.

The KCHS Christmas event was spent at the home of Bryan and Marguerite Wyborn which was well supported by our members. We held the event under the large trees that surround the old house on their property which was originally a McMahon property called *St Elmo*.

We have had two tours to Sydney, one being the tour of Australia's first hospital. We had a guided tour of the hospital and the Nightingale Wing which is now the hospital museum. This hospital is the oldest hospital in Australia still being used for its original purpose. After our tour of the hospital we had our lunch in the ground and then toured the hospital's museum. A great day was had by all.

Another tour to Sydney was Parliament House which was hosted by our local members Bart Bassett and Ray Williams. After a tour of the building by our guide organised by Bart Bassett and conducted by Justin Taunton we were invited to luncheon in the Palm Court garden with both Ray and Bart joining in for lunch and a talk. After lunch we sat in the gallery of the Legislative Assembly for question time, another interesting tour and great day.

At this point I'd like to thank our secretary, Suzanne Smith for organising the Parliament House tour and Marguerite Wyborn for the Sydney Hospital tour.

In April we had a full fact finding tour of Colo by our very own member Wanda Deacon. This tour started at the historic Colo church with a tour of the early settlers' graves, followed by a morning tea provided by the Family History Group and then a Powerpoint presentation. After touring around the district we arrived at the Somerset Learning Centre where we were met by Arthur Crichton the proprietor. Arthur first gave us a fabulous lunch followed by a very informative tour of his pride and joy, the property. We had such a good time at Somerset that we ran out of time to finish the tour.

Next was our mid-year dinner which this year was held at Loxley on Bellbird Hill. There is no doubt that Loxley is one of the treasures of the Hawkesbury district. The evening was

graced by the presence of our federal member Louise Marcus MP who once again gave up her night to attend a KCHS function.

The topic of the year of course has been the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth and all who followed them. It then stood to reason that our guest speaker should follow this theme and talk about the crossing, but more significantly the surveyor Evans and who better than Professor Ian Jack to tell us the story.

This coming year it is the committee's intention to delve more deeply into the events and excursions in the mountains in warmer weather.

Traditionally our Australia Day breakfast is one of the year's premier events and departing from some of our previous venues we ventured to Remos Winery at Blaxlands Ridge. We were not disappointed. The spread had an enormous selection and sixty plus members and friends attended and all were satisfied. It's not every day we celebrate breakfast with wine, but it was locally grown wine, processed and bottled by our host Remo himself.

The society had great pleasure in making the Australia Day award to Frank and Valerie Holland for their outstanding service to KCHS over a period of almost a decade. This is not the end for Frank as he is still researching the Singleton mills and other projects. Well done Frank and Valerie.

Looking to the future I look forward to seeing KCHS continue its success. It is the committee and workers that we have that make it such a success and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your great effort over the past year.

Kurrajong – Comleroy Historical Society Incorporated ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Monday, 23 September

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Monday, 23 September at the Kurrajong Community Centre, 30 McMahons Park Road, Kurrajong. All members are welcome to attend. Proceedings will get underway at 7:30 p.m.

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Secretary's Report

SUZANNE SMITH

On behalf of the members of the Society I would like to thank everyone who has contributed both financially and in kind, time, knowledge, research, support and skills to the continuing operation of the Society throughout 2012/13. Our current membership stands at 170 members.

Thank you to John Cooper who has ably facilitated us throughout his second year as president. Kathie McMahon our vice president. Marguerite Wyborn the keeper of finances. Pat O'Toole our minutes secretary and postmistress for newsletter distribution. Steve Rawling for know-how when it comes to the use of words and punctuation. Carolynne Cooper for technical support with laptop and data projector at our general meeting presentations, filing and archiving for the Society. Joy Shepherd, image archive project and Les Dollin for their prompt attention to requests for local history information through website enquiries.

Acknowledgement to Greg Upton our webmaster, Chris Upton editor of *The Millstone* and David Griffith for accepting the position of public officer and returning officer for 2012/13.

Members library

Valerie Birch diligently maintains the members' library, accessions and records. The full list of publications available for loan to members is on the KCHS website.

Millstone advertisers

Peggy McCarr has continued to maintain the relationship between the local business community and the Society. This helps with publication costs of the newsletter. We trust our readers support them through patronage of their respective businesses.

Paul Maher, proprietor of Loxley on Bellbird Hill, Natalie Smith of Carey & Co and Sassafras Creek, Christine Mead of Kurrajong Cellars, Kieran Warner practitioner Tai Chi in the Wollemi, Ruth Barber of Harmony Boutique, Brian Briggs Kurrajong Antiques and Collectables. Welcome to Sam Dirani of Kurrajong Friendly Grocer, Andrew Sinclair and staff Kurrajong Butchery, Megan Storie, The Bank Bazaar Richmond, along with Isabella Stevenson the new proprietor of Sassafras Creek in Kurrajong Village.

Printer

A sincere thank you to Darren and Hazen, a father and daughter team at Words & Pixels North Richmond for the consistent, professional and timely print of *The Millstone*.

Awards

In December 2012 the Family History Group were honoured with an award received from the Minister for Heritage, the Hon. Robyn Parker MP. This award is granted by the NSW government to community volunteers, who have made a considerable contribution to researching and conserving their local history. Members also wish to acknowledge the work of this group: Carolynne Cooper, Valerie Birch, Wanda Deacon, Kath McMahon, Carol Roberts and Joy Shepherd.

KCHS Australia Day awards were granted to Frank and Valerie Holland and Margaret and Ron Rozzoli in consideration of their combined organisation of the 2010 bicentennial celebrations of Governor Macquarie culminating with the vice-regal dinner held in November 2010 at Loxley on Bellbird Hill. Frank and Valerie Holland were further recognised for their leadership as president and secretary, with the first award to be

offered by the Society of honorary life membership. A framed reproduction of Esther Gray's c1890 sketch of the Kurrajong mill was presented to the Hollands. An acknowledgement is offered to Carolynne Cooper for professional reproduction and framing along with the design of the award certificates.

Grants

We trust the nomination of Carol Roberts to the position of grants officer will be accepted by members at our September AGM. This position has been vacant for some time now.

Book Sales

There has been a consistent flow of requests for the mailing of Society books through our website listing. Also regular bimonthly orders for restocking of books are received from the ARHS and Hawkesbury Museum. Total sales for the year to June 2013 are \$3,463.17. Thank you to Natalie Smith and Airdrie Martin for retail sales through Sassafras and Carey & Co., Kurrajong Village.

General Meetings and AGM

24 September; AGM and GM was held at McMahon Park Community Centre with Les Dollin presenting the latest research on the millstones. 24 November; Christmas gathering and GM at the home of Marguerite and Bryan Wyborn. 26 January; Australia Day breakfast at Remo's & Sons Vineyard Kurrajong. 25 March; Kurrajong Radio Museum, Ian O'Toole gave a history presentation on AWA followed by Leyland Brothers Colo River Expedition film. 27 May; St Davids Kurrajong Heights. Talk and presentation by John Low OAM on the 1813 Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson expedition. 26 July; mid-year dinner held at Loxley on Bellbird Hill, presentation by Professor Ian Jack RAHS on surveyor George Evans.

Events and Field Trips

26, 27 and 28 October; Back to the Kurrajong exhibition, 'Transport into the Past'. 20 October; BMACHO conference Carrington Hotel Katoomba. 13 November; Sydney Hospital tour. 19 February; Riverboat Postman excursion to Brooklyn. 20 March; NSW State Parliament visit and tour. 9 April; Family history Upper Colo and Somerset Outdoor Learning Centre excursion. 17 April; Kurrajong CWA eighty-fifth anniversary luncheon. 26 May; 200 years of William Cox HHS tour. 15 June; Romancing the Stones and More, Kurrajong Mill Road excursion with Les Dollin and Frank Holland. 14 July; National Trust Georgian homes tour.

Thank you to members and friends of KCHS for the support offered to the Society in numerous ways, including local history knowledge contributions, photos, letters, articles and attendance at our general meetings and field events.



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Profit & Loss Statement

July 2012 – June 2013

Income

Membership 2012-2013	262.50
Membership 2013-2014	2,655.00
Advertising	540.00
Donations received	224.70
Field trips	1,364.00
Door takings	
General Meetings	99.00
Special functions	1,060.00
Exhibitions	417.35
Day excursions	110.00
Total door takings	1,686.35
Other functions	
Annual dinner	660.00
Total other functions	660.00
Raffle proceeds	178.00
Retail sales	
Teaspoons	20.00
Photographs	151.00
'Kurrajong Walks' books	190.00
'Diggers Hill' books	34.95
'Future History' books	85.10
Research family history	10.00
Postcards	154.80
Family History Group	167.00
'Kurrajong Collections' books	1,713.20
'Pansy' books	2,529.00
Books unspecified	40.00
FHG sales	12.00
Total retail sales	5,107.05
Bank interest	1,429.69
Postage reimbursed	12.00

Total Income **\$14,119.29**

Cost of Sales

Purchases for resale	
'Light Railways No 89'	3.90
'Diggers Hill' books	252.00
'Glimpses Kurrajong' book	6.58
'Future History' books	1,623.28
Postcards	73.15
'Kurrajong Collections' books	440.83
'Pansy' books	1,063.43
Total purchases for resale	3,463.17

Total Cost of Sales **\$3,463.17**

Gross Profit **\$10,656.12**

Expenses

Archiving materials	55.00
Bank charges	4.30
Coach hire	140.12
Computer & printer	279.62
Depreciation	1,268.38
Digital archiving	219.95
Dues & subscriptions	326.00
Gifts/flowers etc.	187.50
Field trips	1,148.00
Filing fee	51.00
Functions	
Catering	1,714.00
Hall hire	300.00
Total function expenses	2,014.00
Insurance	535.70
Library & literature	272.95
Membership ceased	535.00
Office supplies & stationery	483.91
Photocopying & laminating	442.45
Photography & archiving	116.00
Postage & printing	435.55
Publishing costs	829.61
Post Office box rental	99.00
Research expenses	195.67
Research FHG	288.00
Rent	600.00
Website operation	588.50

Total Expenses **\$11,116.21**

Operating profit **-\$460.09**

Other income 0.00

Other expenses 0.00

Nett Profit / Loss **-\$460.09**

Committee Nominations

The following nominations have been received for positions on the committee

President	John Cooper
	Steve Rawling AM
Vice President	Kath McMahon
Secretary	Suzanne Smith
Treasurer	Marguerite Wyborn
Committee	Carolynne Cooper
	Jennifer Stevens
	Pat O'Toole

There are two further vacant committee positions

Further nominations will be accepted during the annual general meeting on 23 September

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Balance Sheet

As of June 2013

Assets

Current assets			
Cash on hand			
Cheque account - Bendigo Bank	2,816.41		
ING Direct	6,300.16		
Petty cash	100.00		
Total cash on hand		9,216.57	
Savings funds			
Bendigo Bank Term Deposit 1	10,513.10		
Bendigo Bank Term Deposit 2	14,718.34		
Total savings funds		25,231.44	
Trade debtors		2,585.00	
Total current assets			37,033.01
Property & equipment			
Stock on hand			
On the Kurrajong books	39.60		
Diggers Hill books	19.05		
Postcards	109.55		
Pansy book	1,192.91		
Kurrajong Collections	5,413.13		
Total stock on hand		6,774.24	
Equipment			
Audio visual	3,698.10		
Camera equipment	410.00		
Computer equipment	8,880.50		
Equipment accum depreciation	-11,793.41		
Total equipment		1,195.19	
Total property & equipment			7,969.43
Total Assets			\$45,002.44
Liabilities			\$0.00
Nett Assets			\$45,002.44
Equity			
Retained earnings	45,462.53		
Current year earnings	-460.09		
Total Equity			\$45,002.44

Treasurer's Report

MARGUERITE WYBORN

This year has presented us with many challenges, mainly the fact that we now have to pay for the printing of *The Millstone*, previously printed for us by Hawkesbury Council free of charge. However, the number of members receiving it online has increased which cuts down on postage. We have not increased our membership fees.

During this financial year we will be publishing a book listing the births, deaths and marriages at St Stephens Church, Kurrajong, which will mean outlaying considerable expense. Details of the financial outlay are not available yet. We have also committed \$2,000 to help with the cost of a shelter for the millstones in Kurrajong Park.

Unfortunately Paul Nelson, who has been auditing the books for the Society for some years has declined to continue. We have been fortunate to secure the services of Bruce Obermann, a retired accountant from Bowen Mountain to do this year's audit.

The Society's capital remains steady despite an overall loss of \$460, with funds being raised from the sale of books, modest profits from functions and members' subscriptions. I would like to put on record our thanks to Airdrie Martin for her efforts to sell books for us.

POWELL.—The interment of the late ARTHUR BARCLAY (A. B.) Powell, of Bilpin, is appointed to take place in the family vault in St. Peter's Church of England Cemetery, Richmond. This (Monday) Afternoon, after service in the Church, commencing at 3 o'clock.

K. E. PRICE, Funeral Director.
Phone 77 Richmond.

Sydney Morning Herald
22 February 1954



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The Mid Year Dinner

STEVE RAWLING AM

The mid year dinner was held this year at Loxley on Bellbird Hill. The Society's President, John Cooper, welcomed thirty-eight members and visitors. Amongst the latter were Ruth Coutts and Jan Lawless, two descendants of George William Evans, the subject of the talk given by Dr Ian Jack, and the Member for Macquarie, Louise Markus. This was not the first time that Ian has addressed a meeting of the Society on a subject which he has researched in his typically thorough and professional way. He did not disappoint.

He chose to speak about Evans in the two-hundredth anniversary of the first crossing of the Blue Mountains as he regards Evans as the 'forgotten man' amongst the six who contributed most to that achievement and what followed. They were Governor Macquarie, Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth of course, William Cox the road builder and Evans.

Ian confessed to having shared the general ignorance of Evans' contribution both to the events of 1813 and to the Hawkesbury and the colony of NSW generally. His authoritative guidebook, 'Exploring the Hawkesbury', published in two editions in 1986 and 1990, contained no reference to Evans. But when asked by heritage consultants Graham and Carol Edds early this century to investigate the history of the property at Clarendon now known as *Clarendon Park*, he uncovered the story of a man who, "... was a fascinating, cultured and gifted figure virtually forgotten in the Hawkesbury as a farmer there and consistently undervalued as an explorer, surveyor and topographical artist in the broader arena of early colonial New South Wales and Tasmania."

Clarendon Park had always been thought to be William Cox's house but Ian clearly established in his research that it was built by Evans and occupied by himself and his family.

George William Evans was born in England where his father was secretary to the Earl of Warwick. The Earl was George's godfather. He showed early promise as an artist, was articled to an engineer and architect, but took up land surveying instead. At age eighteen he travelled to the Cape Colony and got a job in the Naval Storekeeper's department. He married there and he and his wife Jennett travelled to Sydney where Jennett had family connections with Governor King. He was appointed Acting Deputy Commissary and bought land fronting the Parramatta River near the present James Ruse Drive.

Later, Evans was appointed as Acting Surveyor of Lands, did considerable surveying work in the Hawkesbury and in 1804 obtained a grant of 519 acres at what is now Clarendon, extending to the Richmond lowlands next to William Cox's grant. He began farming and when discharged from his government job for unspecified 'fraud', he became a full-time Hawkesbury farmer.

The first house Evans constructed was on the lowlands but severe floods washed it away and a house was then built on higher ground, in three stages, which are clearly visible in the house today. The small central part was built first and Ian Jack believes it is the oldest two storey house in Australia.

Evans was 'restored to grace' in 1809 when he was appointed Assistant Surveyor at Port Dalrymple in Tasmania. Though he spent some time there he also continued to carry out major survey work in New South Wales, especially in the Hawkesbury. He, with James Meehan, laid out the five 'Macquarie towns' and Macquarie charged him with surveying the route taken by



Clarendon Park

Photo: Suzanne Smith

Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth. He did that monumental job but went further and was the first European to travel as far as the site of Bathurst where he is commemorated by a statue, the only known one. He came back to the Hawkesbury at Macquarie's request to guide the Governor on his famous trip across the mountains and to Bathurst in 1815. He was in Tasmania between assignments in New South Wales until 1825.

While in the Hawkesbury Evans employed another of his talents, landscape painting, including the well known view of Green Hills (Windsor) from the north bank of the river. His first wife died in Tasmania in 1825 and after a trip to England he returned with his second wife to live in Sydney. He started a new career as a bookseller, publisher, stationer and drawing master. He never returned to work as a farmer and lived the later years of his life in Tasmania where he died in 1844.

Ian Jack summarised his picture of Evans as follows:

Evans had a chequered career but is a highly significant figure in New South Wales history. He was an excellent surveyor, much admired by Governor Macquarie, entrusted with one of the greatest works of the 1810s, the opening up of the Bathurst plains. He was a distinguished explorer in the central west. His importance in laying out the five Macquarie Towns on the Hawkesbury, and, later, Hobart in Tasmania, has been insufficiently recognised.

His abilities as a topographical artist were outstanding, and he is particularly important for his detailed vistas of the future Windsor and of the first model farm in the colony, at Pitt Town.

And his house is still there for us to see.

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Family History Group

CAROLYNNE COOPER

The past year for our group has been a very busy one as usual. Val Birch, Wanda Deacon and I have been working just about every week on trying to get the first book on the St Stephens registers published while Joy Shepherd has been helping us from home. Joy hasn't had much luck with her health this past year but still plugs away with the digital archiving and doing research for the book from home. Chris Upton has also been hard at work putting the information into book form and doing a really good job of it. We are hoping to get it published this year but finalising the content, indexing and deciding on the printer and format might not see it published until the new year.

November saw the FHG accepting a Heritage Heroes Award for their work that they have done thus far. Joy, Val, Wanda and I travelled to Parramatta to be presented with the award for Outstanding Contribution to Heritage Conservation in NSW by the Minister for Heritage the Hon. Robyn Parker MP.

We had a very successful 'Back to the Kurrajong' night in October titled, 'Transport into the Past'. It was the first time that our photos represented areas other than our district and the people we had coming through on the weekend were very excited to show their children or reminisce with friends of days gone by.

Pansy was our main focus in our area and on the Friday night we had Paul McDonald and Mick Reberger talking about this. Wanda Deacon, having grown up in Colo, gave a wonderful talk about the riverboat trade. Everyone got in on the action and memories were flying back and forth. It certainly was a great night. The CWA ladies outdid themselves again with our supper and we're very grateful to them for doing this as it takes pressure off the members enabling them to enjoy the night.

Wanda and I put together a tour of Colo which twenty-two people attended. We had such a great time that we didn't finish the tour. The reason for this was that Arthur Crichton was such a wonderful host when lunching at *Somerset* that we ran out of time. We will be holding the second half of the tour of Colo next year.

Wanda, Val, Kathie and I were booked to go to Norfolk Island on 3 May this year but before we took off Val, Joy and I went to Lithgow to give Chris Upton more info for the book. On the way home I decided to stop at what was St James Church, Kurrajong Heights to get better photos of the graves and the building. I clambered up an embankment by holding onto a tree branch and got what I thought were some good shots. Only trouble was when I used the branch to get back down it broke and I went tumbling backwards onto the road.

Val and Joy couldn't stop laughing as they thought it looked like something out of a movie. However, when I got up my wrist was hanging at right angles. Panic then took over as I was the driver. I had to give Val driving lessons on the way to the hospital because she had never driven a Toyota Tarago before. I had broken my wrist and spent two months in a cast and no holiday. Val, Wanda and Kathie had to go without me.

We are still getting enquiries coming in about family history and we have also been working on quite a few family trees. Thank goodness for Family Tree Maker, Ancestry.com and the internet because it makes it so easy to build the tree and gather information at the same time.

NEW POST OFFICE REFUSED

Mr. A. G. Manning, M.P., has received the following from the Deputy Postmaster General:—

Sir,—With reference to your communication of the 18th May, 1925, covering a letter addressed to Mr. R. B. Walker, M.L.A., by Mr. J. E. McMahon of "Luckenough," Kurrajong, and a petition from residents for the establishment of a receiving office in the vicinity of Hermitage-road, I have to inform you that a later petition, signed by practically the same residents, was received favoring the location of such an office at the premises of Mrs. S. A. Hearne. As there is a shop at the latter place with free public access it was decided that it would be more suitable in the event of facilities being granted. Owing, however, to the proximity of Kurrajong and Sterculia offices, the establishment of a post or receiving office in the position mentioned is not considered justified at present. It has been decided, however, to establish a free-bag to be taken charge of by Mrs. Louisa Hearne, as from 15/6/'25. The question of providing telephone facilities is being considered, and a further communication in this matter will be forwarded to you in due course.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette
Friday, 19 June 1925

THIS IS A
WON'T-EAT



It's playing hard-to-feed, poor silly thing. Secretly, of course, it enjoys good food as much as anybody, and if someone put a bowl of Kellogg's Corn Flakes in front of it this minute there'd be practically no holding it! One mouth-watering whiff of those flavour-loaded, energy-loaded flakes and it would be spooning away like everybody else.

**ANY WON'T-EATS
IN YOUR FAMILY?** Better get some Kellogg's Corn Flakes—quick! Fuss-pots and fancy-eaters can't resist them.

Australian Women's Weekly
22 August 1956

Drilling for Oil at Kurrajong Heights

AIRDRIE MARTIN

In the latter half of 1954 the Australian Oil and Gas Company commenced developing a site at Kurrajong Heights with the intention of drilling for oil.

The drilling company, Oil Drilling Exploration Limited, cleared an area of approximately two acres on the western fall of the ridge between Warks Hill Road and Cherry Park. It was the first of six test sites planned.

The chairman of directors said evidence of gas had been found in many places near the site, which was a 'monocline' - a dome formation necessary for the discovery of oil.

A huge concrete platform was laid to erect a drilling tower for an array of machinery and for the rotating head which gave the power to the drilling bit. At one end of the platform three Caterpillar V8 diesel engines powered the unit while a large instrument console and work shelter stood nearby. An area the size of a tennis court at the other end of the platform stored the drill pipes.

Water for the machinery and drilling was obtained from Buralow Creek being continually returned from the drill bit, filtered and reused.

January 1955 saw the construction completed and drilling commenced. The official opening was held on February 5 1955. The machinery operated twenty-four hours a day and the roar of the engines could be heard all over the Heights.

The unit worked continuously for approximately six months with some notable incidents occurring. At one period the sandstone structure of the drill hole was so loose it constantly fell in jamming the drill bit. It became necessary to concrete the hole for some depth, allow it to set and then drill through the concrete to continue on. Several hundred feet of steel casing were also put in place to stop the drill hole from collapsing.

The work site attracted a continual stream of people and the Kurrajong Heights Hotel benefited from the need to accommodate senior operators.

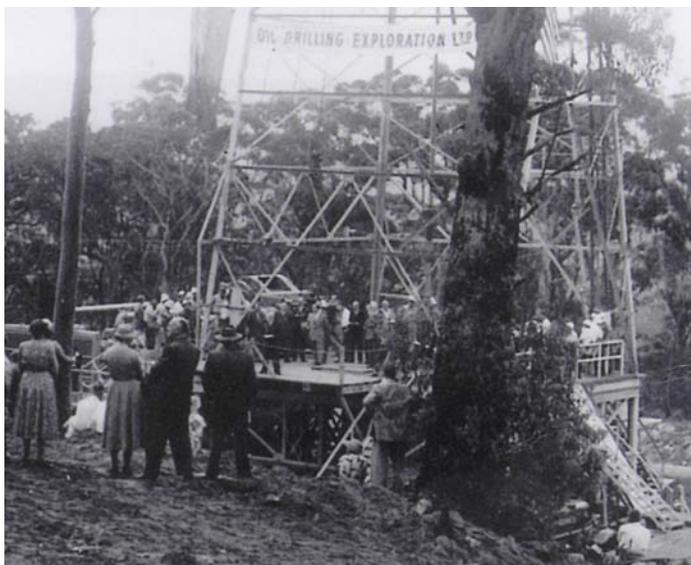
In charge of the drilling was a tall thick-set American, John Cooper. Mr H H Watson, an earth moving contractor said, "People at the pub were asking Johnny when he was going to strike oil." John told them, "It's bubbling up there now, oozing out of the ground in the middle of the clearing." That afternoon fourteen cars of people drove there to have a look.

District properties previously up for sale were withdrawn in expectation of a steep rise in land values.

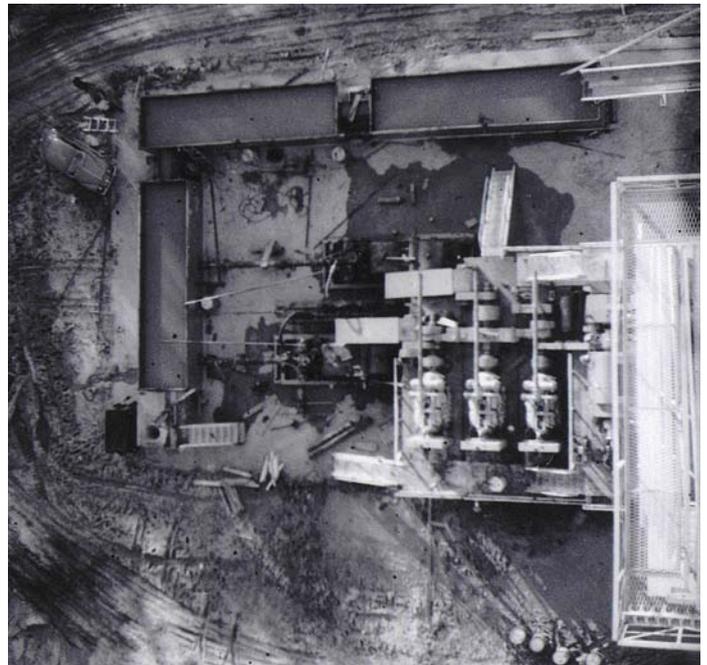
Cuttings and cores were taken between the depths of 30 and 4,755 feet for micropalaeontological examination. Foraminifera of Permian age were found at a depth between 4,656 and 4,755 feet. It is said that only lava was struck and drilling ceased on August 2 1955 at a depth of 4,766 feet.

The ground level of the rig was 1,785 feet above sea level so when drilling halted the drilling had reached 2,981 feet below sea level.

The hole was capped, the rig dismantled and everything was removed. The bush has reclaimed the site and only the concrete pad can be found.



The official opening of the drilling rig on February 5 1955



View from the top of the rig looking down showing the three Caterpillar V8 diesel engines which drove the drilling bit

Photos courtesy of Phil Peck

If you can add further material to this subject or feel corrections need to be made please contact Airdrie Martin

airdrie1@bigpond.com Phone 4567 7921



Hobby Brothers sawmill



A pole-lifting truck in operation at Hobby Brothers sawmill. This mill was built on Portion 6, Parish of Merroo, County of Cook after the land was acquired in 1918 by Daniel Hobby. It was located just past Cut Rock, on the Bells Line of Road at Kurrajong Heights, in the vicinity of the present Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club. It is thought that this photo was taken circa 1920.

MR. DANIEL HOBBY

ONE of Kurrajong's best known and most respected residents, Mr. Daniel Hobby, passed away in "Moorong" Hospital, Ryde, on Monday last, at the age of 49 years. Deceased, who had not been enjoying the best of health for some time, entered hospital about a month ago for treatment for an internal trouble, which was the ultimate cause of death. Born at Oberon, he was a son of the late Robert Hobby, and was a single man. Migrating to this district some years ago, he conducted a sawmill at Kurrajong Heights, and later entered into business as a motor garage proprietor near the Kurrajong railway station. He is survived by three brothers and two sisters, viz., Archibald (Kurrajong), Robert (Rylstone), Elias, Tilly (Mrs. Keen) and Massy (Mrs. Morgan), of Sydney. The funeral on Wednesday was largely attended, the remains being laid to rest in the Catholic cemetery, Richmond. Rev. Father Hollands, assisted by Rev. Father John Hall, C.M., who is conducting a mission in the district, officiated at the graveside.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette
15 November 1935

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Digital Archive Report

JOY SHEPHERD

We continue to receive some wonderful images for our collection. The girls of the Family History Group spent some time with Don and Mavis Cobcroft of Wilberforce and this resulted in the addition of many early images of that area. Helen Webster managed to get some photos from her mother, Charlotte Innes' collection. These were of 'Pud' and Florrie Hough from Bowen Mountain in their younger days.

Ron Madden, who has helped us with so much information and many images over the years arrived at our display at the Scarecrow Festival in October. He had some images of a visit by the Air Force of the United States of America to Richmond RAAF base.

We needed a display for the Australia Day breakfast regarding the history of our venue, Remo's Winery. Jesse and Gladys Shepherd's grand-daughter Lesley Loveday came up with a collection for us. This was part of their family property from the early 1950s.

An old school friend, Joy Pearce (née Tierney) sent me an image from South Australia of the staff of Hawkesbury Tailoring in Richmond in the 1950s. There are some old memories there.

With work on our first volume of the St Stephens records nearing completion I put an appeal in the local paper for old images of the churches involved. I was contacted by Noelene Reynolds who could not help with those particular churches, but offered some images of early Windsor from her grandmother's collection, including many flood photos.

Ever helpful member Philip Chapman sent me some photos of some plant and equipment at Kurrajong Heights. He came across this in early 1955 on a trip to the mountains with his fiancée and family. It was obviously the gear to build the oil rig at Kurrajong Heights that year. Coincidentally around the same time Airdrie Martin got some photos from Phil Peck of the building and opening of the oil rig that same year.

By far the biggest project this year has been the late Jack Thomson collection. Jack came to Kurrajong in 1934 with his young wife to work as an electrician at the Hawkesbury Development Company, the new electricity undertaking. He went on to the RAAF at Richmond and then served in New Guinea in the Second World War. After the war he came back to Richmond, serving many years at Richmond Council and later Prospect County Council. Jack was a keen photographer and his daughter Jan Nash has kindly loaned me his albums to scan along with his diaries whilst in New Guinea. It is going well but is still a work in progress.

I would like to thank all who have supported and assisted in this project, particularly Carolynne Cooper for her continuing work in repairing and enhancing badly damaged images.

Visitor numbers to the Digital Archive link on the Society's website continue to grow each year. Over the last twelve months 3,828 people visited the page and 2,097 searched the archive. Some have made contact requesting further information on the subjects they were researching and others have given details which have added to that which we have.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 21 September GLENBROOK CIRCUIT WALK

The Glenbrook circuit walk, to Dunn's Sawmill, Brookside Creek, Lennox Bridge (1814) and the old stone quarry is an easy walk along a well-defined bush track.

Meet at Kurrajong Village 8:30 a.m. with the start of the walk 9:30 a.m. at Glenbrook. It is suggested we car pool. If interested in this excursion please contact the secretary, Suzanne on 4567 7410. Cost will be \$5.

Sunday, 22 September NATIONAL TRUST TOUR

A tour of the flour windmills of the Hawkesbury.

Meet at the corner of Wiseman's Ferry Road and the intersection to Cattai Homestead, Cattai National Park 10 a.m. Wear sensible shoes and a hat. Lunch will be in the grounds of Caddie Farm; bring your own lunch and refreshments. We will also be driving to Wisemans Ferry to inspect two tide-driven water mills.

Bookings are essential and need to be made by Monday, 9 September. Booking forms are available by emailing nt.hawkesbury@gmail.com or post a cheque with name and contact details to Booking Officer, National Trust

Hawkesbury Branch, PO Box 737, Richmond NSW 2753. KCHS members on the email database will receive a booking form automatically.

Cost per person is \$30.

Monday, 23 September KCHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us at Kurrajong Community Centre in McMahon Park to receive the annual reports, elect office bearers and committee members, and confirm appointments for 2013/14.

The AGM will be followed by supper and the September general meeting. Guest speaker will be Lesley Jane Abrahams who will share local history from the 'Longtime Series' by Hesba Hungerford Brinsmead, along with other local research findings. There will also be a special presentation to the Society.

Further enquiries contact the secretary, Suzanne on 4567 7410.

Sunday, 20 October KURRAJONG OPEN GARDEN WEEKEND & SYDNEY WELSH CHOIR PERFORMANCE

Beginning 12:30 p.m. The hosts will be Fay and John Edwards, 49 Comleroy Road, Kurrajong. Off-road parking will be available. Cost is \$15 per person, concession \$10.

If raining the event will be re-scheduled to Sunday, 27 October. For further details phone 4573 1965.



Secretary's Snippets

INTERNATIONAL FLEET REVIEW SYDNEY HARBOUR OCTOBER 3-11

This event commemorates the centenary of the first entry of the Royal Australian Navy's fleet into Sydney, on 4 October 1913. The flagship, HMAS Australia led the new fleet unit comprising HMAS's Melbourne, Sydney, Encounter, Warrego, Parramatta and Yarra into Sydney Harbour to be greeted by thousands of cheering citizens lining the foreshore. This was a moment of great national pride and importance, one recognised as a key indicator of Australia's progress towards national maturity.

In celebration the formal aspects of the IFR will commence with tall ships entering the harbour on Thursday, 3 October and all warships entering on Friday, 4 October, 100 years after the first RAN fleet entry. For full details and schedule of events visit the RAN website, www.navy.gov.au or www.rahs.org.au.

RAHS HISTORY CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2-3

The Royal Australian Historical Society will be holding its Annual State History Conference at the Katoomba RSL, 86 Lurline Street, Katoomba.

Proceedings get underway on Nov 2 at 9 a.m. and Nov 3 at 2 p.m. Cost is yet to be confirmed. For further details visit www.rahs.org.au



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- Winner Western Sydney (WSABE) Award for Male Entrepreneur of the Year, Paul Maher, 2012
- Winner Western Sydney (WSABE) Award for Excellence in Sustainability in a Business Exclusive of the Environmental Industry, 2012
- Highly Commended Western Sydney (WSABE) Award for Excellence in Hospitality, 2012
- NSW Business Chamber Awards finalist in Excellence in Sustainability, 2012
- NSW Business Chamber Awards finalist for Business Leader, Paul Maher, 2012
- Winner Excellence in Tourism, Western Sydney Excellence in Business Awards, 2011