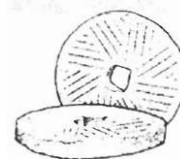


# KURRAJONG - COMLERROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 174 KURMOND, 2757



# The Millstone

2003 - Volume Two, Issue Four, JULY-AUGUST

"THE MILLSTONE" REFERS TO THE LITTLE WHEENEY CREEK MILLSTONES ON DISPLAY AT KURRAJONG MEMORIAL PARK, BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST ITEMS OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT IN "THE KURRAJONG". THIS EXTRACT FROM THE FIRST EDITION OF "THE MILLSTONE", JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 2002

## MINUTE MILLSTONE

- **Annual General Meeting**
- **Tuesday, Aug 19, 7.30pm**
- **Comleroy Community School of Arts hall**  
**362 Comleroy Road,**  
**Kurrajong.**
- **Members must be financial before the start of the meeting.**
- **Subscriptions: \$20 single, \$25 family.**
- **Please send cheque to**  
**PO BOX 174,**  
**Kurmond, NSW, 2757**
- **Contact: Treasurer,**  
**Joy Shepherd, 4571 1524.**
  
- **Back to Kurrajong evening,**  
**Friday, October 17, at Valley View café,**  
**Kurrajong Village, starting 7.30pm. Cost,**  
**\$15 Bookings essential with Joy**  
**Shepherd, 4571 1524.**
- **"Hidden Treasures of Kurrajong"**  
**Historic photo exhibition, Kurrajong**  
**CWA hall, Oct 18-19, 9am-4pm.**

## ANNUAL REPORT 2002 -2003

Looking back on the past 12 months, and even beyond, to our first anniversary in January 2002, serves to highlight just how much our fledgling, but energetic Society has achieved in such a short time.

Most groups and organisations would be proud to have one event or achievement to highlight as their "No 1" success for a year, but our Society has achieved so much it is impossible to nominate just one.

It will be up to each member to choose for themselves which was the "most important" milestone for 2002-2003. Was it saving "La Tosca"? Or being awarded a Royal Australian Historical Society research grant regarding the origin of the millstones? Or the partnership grant with Hawkesbury Skills "Work for the Dole" digitalising our extensive photo exhibition? What about our mill-site expedition, or the visit to Camp MacKay (Life Adventure site), Or our fundraiser dinner with Rotary, Or our 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday celebrations on Australia Day? The society-nominated Johnston family healthy city award? Or our historic photos at the Scarecrow Festival?

This report is compiled and written by Society foundation secretary, and "Millstone" editor, Louise McMahon. President Kathie McMahon has been overseas spending time with her family prior to the preparation of this report, and therefore no President's Report could be included.

## **The story so far January - Aug, 2002**

The first edition of the Society's newsletter, "The Millstone" on January-February 2002 carried a progress report of the Society's first year, from the foundation meeting of Sunday, January 28, 2001 through to the November 20, 2001 bus trip for members.



Frank Holland, Steve Rawling, Kathie McMahon, Bryan Wyborn, Jean Pollard, Bill Livingstone, Garth Smith, Keith Pollard, Jean McMahon, Val Birch, Valerie Holland, Marguerite Wyborn, Louise McMahon, Cathy McHardy, Anne Dollin, Les Dollin, Eleanor Taylor, Jennifer Stackhouse, Geraldine Tilden, Brenda Smith, Jan Livingstone and Peter Martin.

For the bus trip, I spent more than one month preparing the commentary, which ran to 30,000 words - 10,000 larger than my master's thesis! The trip went from 9am to after 5pm and visited, among many points of interest, the home of Steve and Judie Rawling for morning tea and Bryan and Marguerite Wyborn for lunch.

The Society's next event was our first anniversary on **January 27, 2002**, where more than a dozen members sweltered through two hot working bees to establish a museum/photo gallery/ time capsule at the Bellbird Echo Centre at Kurrajong Hills.



Kathryn Terrace, Kathie McMahon, Marguerite Wyborn, Alex Nolf, Kay Vella and "heads" Steve Rawling and Bryan Wyborn, cool down after the second working bee on Feb 10.

While ultimately the Society's plans for a museum at Bellbird Echo were not to proceed, the Society still has mounted a permanent a historic photo exhibition on boards constructed by member Bryan Wyborn. Bryan generously donated his time, and the Society spent \$500 on materials erecting this interesting display of Kurrajong scenes.

In **January 2002** we had a glass display AMP 2001 Centenary treasure chest donated by members Chris and Robyn Parsons of AMP Richmond. This was to prove most useful for our subsequent displays. Later another glass display cabinet was also donated by Karen Gray of the Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens.

At the Society's February 19, 2002 meeting, I first flagged that I had concerns regarding the seemingly rapid deterioration of "La Tosca", and that others in the community had also made comments to me of their anxiety regarding the preservation of this historically significant Dunstan home. In "The Millstone" of Jan-Feb, 2002 I included an item: "Watch dog role", saying "with the development pressure increasing in the Kurrajong', we may find our Society needs to take an active role in lobbying to protect and preserve our heritage". How prescient my words proved to be, with me as Society secretary ultimately giving evidence at the Land and Environment Court to support Hawkesbury Council in its decision to reject the application to demolish "La Tosca".



**March 2002:** The introduction of the Society's newsletter, *The Millstone*, is well received, with strong, positive feedback. I choose the name as it provides an obvious link with the items that are the earliest evidence of European settlement and build on the "corporate image" begun when in March 2001, when I commissioned artist Tony Dixon to sketch us the millstones for use as our logo. The name is readily accepted by members, and letters and other items are submitted for inclusion.

On February 9, with Les Dollin, and Richmondites Vern Avern and Arthur Cooper, I carry out a reconnaissance of the Wheeney Creek mill site. It is decided we should hold members-only visit to the site.

Our **April 16 2002** meeting had to be held at our then under-construction "museum" premises at Bellbird Echo because our usual meeting venue, the Comleroy School of Arts hall was closed temporarily due to public liability issues. Guest speaker was John Irving of Grose Vale, who has also carried out extensive research into the Wheeney Creek millstones.

**On April 20, 2002** the Society runs a "folk music fundraiser" at the CWA hall. This is a success, with \$506 added to the coffers. Thanks to Sue and Gary Ragen and Arch Bishop for their assistance in donating their entertaining skills. I had originally organised this as a fundraiser for the Comleroy hall, but when public liability issues shut the hall the show went on, but with a new beneficiary.

**The mill walk excursion is held on May 11, 2002**, with Les Dollin taking the lead. As an engineer, Les becomes very excited about how the water-driven flour mills on Wheeney Creek worked and begins to develop a fascinating presentation. The mill walk quickly establishes itself on the Society's events calendar as an annual event.

**The first member's only mill site walk, May 11, 2002**



Roger Holliday, Steve Rawling, Carol Carruthers, Marguerite Wyborn, Brenda Smith, Bryan Wyborn, Margaret Rozzoli, Robert Britton, Ron Rozzoli, Barbara Britton, Jan Livingstone, Louise McMahon and Les Dollin.

**May:** The plight of the monument erected to internationally-acclaimed naturalist, **Louisa Atkinson** at Kurrajong Heights has been drawn to the Society's attention. Louisa is also honoured during the 2002 International Woman's Day for her courage and contribution to botany in the 1870s. At this time I suggest a mission statement: ***"The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society is dedicated to researching, recording, preserving and championing the history of the Kurrajong'."*** The Society adopts research into Louisa as one of its on-going projects as it fits well within this charter.

**May 5:** The scheduled May 11 auction of historic North Richmond home, "Sunnyside" gives the Society the opportunity for an inspection, lead by member John Killen of Thompsons Real Estate. The home reaches \$1 million at auction, setting a record for a North Richmond residential home. Member Mildred Reynolds writes a "Millstone" article on "Sunnyside's" history.



"Sunnyside": Carol Carruthers, Ron Rozzoli, Jean McMahon, John Killen, Margaret Rozzoli, Joy and Phil Shepherd.

During our visit to "Sunnyside", vendors Les and Jenny Chalmers make two special donations to the Society. The first is artifacts collected on the grounds of "Sunnyside" for exhibition in our museum.

The other is a set of farrier's bellows, which they loan to the Society for display.



Les and Jenny Chalmers and Les's mum, Rene Chalmers say sayanara to Sunnyside



Christmas Day, 2001  
Bushfire at Les  
Dollin's property.

**July 20:** The research possibilities of the Christmas 2001 bushfires inspires Les Dollin who thinks the Society should record some of the stories as these will quickly become part of Kurrajong's history. Les schedules a workshop to begin research on the project, and this is held at the "museum".

Les submits an article to the Millstone explaining his project, and designs an interview kit to help members carry out the interviews needed to capture our oral history.

**July 2002:** Valerie Holland begins work on researching Camp Mackay, the former police boys club property on Mill Road. Given this site neighbours the mill site and includes several former soldier settlement properties, Valerie's work will contribute a very important piece to our Kurrajong history jigsaw. Lots of people know a little about Camp Mackay, but until Valerie began her work no one person knew the whole story. Husband Frank and Val Birch assist.



Bev Woodman

Newcastle-based member, Bev Woodman submits a fascinating article on her childhood recollections of her grandfather's property, Cherry Tree Park, at Kurrajong Heights. Bev agrees to be a guest speaker at our October "Back to the Kurrajong" evening.

### July 16: special Time Capsule establishment meeting

A special mail-out invites members to both the bushfire workshop and the meeting to progress the museum, now known as the "Time Capsule". Joy Shepherd takes the lead as convenor for on this meeting, with Bev and Phil Woodman travelling down from Newcastle specially to attend. A theme of "Spring into Action" is chosen for our October Back to the Kurrajong historic photo exhibition, with photos showing the agricultural diversity of the area in the past 120 years. This theme captures the spirit of starting our new venture, along with the idea of an exhibition in spring featuring agriculture.

**Other Events:** Along with the **Time Capsule**, the Society continued to progress its other research projects, including Valerie Holland's work on **Camp Mackay**, my work with Jennifer Stackhouse and the secretary of the Mt Wilson and Mr Irvine Historical Society, in planning for the **Louisa Atkinson** day at the Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens; my research into the importance of "**La Tosca**"; and my photo essay with two members of the Hawkesbury Camera Club, Alan Aldrich and Bronwyn McGlinchie, and further research into the **Soldier Settlement** at Kurmond and Kurrajong.

Along with Roger Holliday and Bea Horacek, I man a Society promotions stall at **Carnivale** in Richmond Park on Sept 15.

## Annual General Meeting, August 20

The Society's first AGM revealed some of the challenges behind setting up a new organisation. It was voted to adjourn the meeting to allow extra time to finalise the financial statements. The Society's first election of office-bearers went ahead:

President, Kathie McMahon; vice-president, Jennifer Stackhouse; secretary, Louise McMahon; treasurer, Marguerite Wyborn. Committee: special projects, Les Dollin; time capsule convenor, Joy Shepherd; acquisitions officer, Val Birch.

Office bearers had been appointed at the foundation meeting of January 28, 2001, and under the terms of incorporation, it was not necessary to hold an election until 2003, but it was decided in 2001/2002 to hold an election at the meeting immediately following the end of the financial year.

A special meeting was called for September 17 to be held at the Society's Time Capsule at Bellbird Echo Centre. The purpose of this meeting was to adopt the financial statements and settle on the final name for the Time Capsule, as other names had also been voted on and adopted at different meetings (June 18 and July 16).

## September 17 Special Meeting

At this meeting the business of the adjourned AGM was completed.

Unfortunately president Kathie McMahon has some bad news for the Society, explaining that she was no longer able to make available space at the Bellbird Echo Centre for the Society to use as premises rent free. Kathie explained she was leasing the entire building to be used as a restaurant and gift shop and the new tenant wanted to use the rooms offered to the Society as an office. Kathie said she had negotiated with the tenant to allow the Society to exhibit a display of historic photos on the walls of the retail part of the new business.

Bryan Wyborn had donated his time and already made a set of attractive display boards for use in the Time Capsule, and photos could be displayed on these

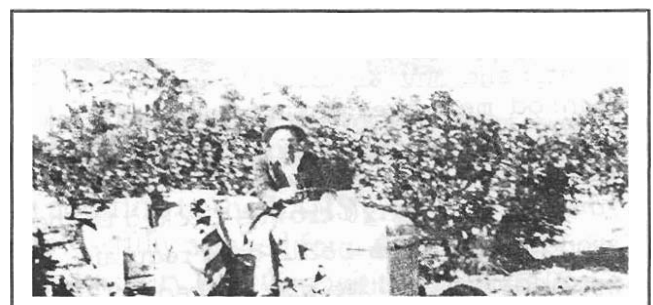


Members Bea Horacek, Louise McMahon and Roger Holliday man a stall at the Richmond Carnivale, in Sept to further raise awareness of the Society and fundraise!

## September to October, 2002

Work begins in earnest towards mounting our historic photo display as part of the Oct Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival. Joy Shepherd, and Jean McMahon use their extensive contacts and local knowledge to source an extensive and diverse array of photos for display. Val Birch is kept busy acquisitioning all the new photos. In the week prior to the exhibition, Marguerite Wyborn, Brenda Smith, Valerie Holland and Jan Livingstone make a much valued contribution to preparing the display.

With the Time Capsule plan abandoned, it is decided to keep the agricultural theme, but change the name to "**Fertile Ground**". Meanwhile I am busy working with Les Dollin and Steve Rawling preparing a display at the millstones to raise awareness of the importance of these historic items. Steve has a fascinating videotape of his visit to mills in England that are of a similar style to the Wheeny Creek mill, and I supply equipment to allow this to be shown.



Les Taylor on the farm, "Fertile Ground" photo exhibition

The photo display receives strong support and praise from those that visit over Scarecrow Festival the weekend. I also arrange for a kurrajong trees to be grown for us to sell - thanks to our anonymous donor. Joy and Phil Shepherd each worked like Superman before, during and after this exhibition to ensure its success.

**October:** Leading into our photo display we hold a "Back to the Kurrajong" evening at the CWA hall on Friday evening. President Kathie McMahon had been holding these evenings as part of the Scarecrow Festival prior to the formation of the Society, and the Society has been able to build on this.



Back to the Kurrajong evening, CWA hall, 2002



Joy Shepherd



Ross Matheson

Guest speakers included Ross Matheson who talked about transporting crops to the markets; Laurie Duffy talked on agriculture at Grose Vale; Louise McMahon on Louisa Atkinson, who had advocated cultivating native fruits; and Bev Woodman's spoke of her childhood memories of Kurrajong.



Laurie Duffy



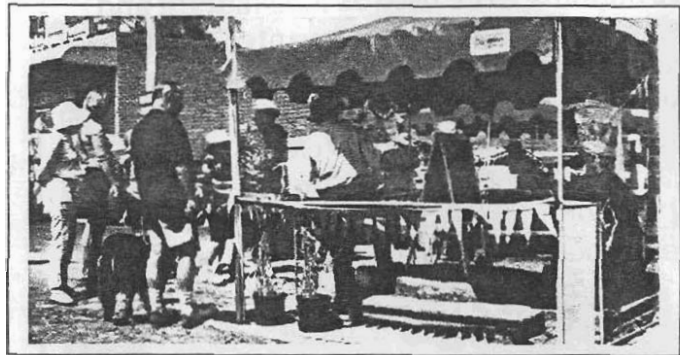
Louise McMahon



Arch Bishop and John Grenginger

On Sunday, October 20 crowds flocked to the millstone display. Les Dollin gave regular talks explaining how the mill worked and how the millstones were used to turn wheat into finely ground flour. I was at the neighbouring stall with a photo display explaining the mechanics of a working mill. I was joined by Ron and Margaret Rozzoli. We sold raffle tickets, kurrajong trees and provided a free "oracle" service, answering all manner of questions.

Jean McMahon worked tirelessly helping at both the CWA photo display and the millstones.



**TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2003**

Our Society has made strong progress in its second full Financial Year. Our membership base has grown steadily, and out subscriptions, along with a few fundraising efforts throughout the year. Left us in a little better financial position at the end of June.

Our funds were helped along at the beginning of the financial year, with an "Establishment Grant" of \$500.00 from Hawkesbury City Council.

Our main event of the year, the "Back to the Kurrajong" weekend in October last year was a huge success. Opening out photographic exhibition on the Friday night 17<sup>th</sup>, with guest speakers, in the CWA hall at Kurrajong, and continuing with our exhibition, throughout the weekend, we managed to make a profit of over \$600.00. Sponsorship of \$250.00 from Kathy McManus Real Estate, and a donation of \$200.00 from Bennett Property helped us to achieve this result. On the Sunday of the same weekend, we were able to set up a "millstone" stall and give regular talks throughout the day at the Scarecrow Festival, thanks to a grant of \$1000.00 from Hawkesbury City Council.

Towards Christmas, as funds dwindled, Louise, my husband Philip, and I took to the streets one weekend to raffle a Christmas hamper. This brought in \$391.00, to keep us afloat a little longer. This was followed up by our very warm Australia Day function. Although this was not meant to be a fundraiser, with a lot of effort by a few of our members, and another raffle on the day, we managed a profit of \$176.00.

For our cold June meeting, our Secretary, Louise negotiated with the Rotary Club of Kurrajong- North Richmond to have a joint dinner at the North Richmond, to raise funds for display boards for our next exhibition. This very enjoyable night left us with a profit of over \$800.00. Our thanks go to all members of Rotary for their great effort on the night, and to our vice-president Jennifer Stackhouse, who allowed herself to be "dutch auctioned" for a free gardening consultation.

Our secretary has also been successful in obtaining a grant of \$500.00 from the Royal Australian Historical Society for a research project on the millstones. Although enquiry on this has commenced, the funds have not yet been expended.

Therefore, although our bank balance of \$1,579.00 is looking good on the surface, our commitments of \$500.00 to millstone research and, approximately \$800.00 towards display boards will leave us seeking funds once more.

We are grateful for the support that we have received from Hawkesbury City Council, the Royal Australian Historical Society and various other local businesses and individuals throughout the year. I would especially like to thank Marguerite Wyborn (our treasurer for most of 2002). Through her committed efforts, the books were handed on to me in excellent order.

Our next big event will be our "Back to Kurrajong" weekend in October once more. We are still a small group, and it is a large task. If you are able to help in any way, either in the preparation for the event, or on a roster some time over that weekend, please contact us. We would be very glad to hear from you.

Our Financial Reports for the year 2002/2003 are included in this Annual Report. The books are currently under audit with the very capable Tony Roberts, CPA, of MYOB fame in the Hawkesbury, and will be complete in time for our annual general meeting on August 17 and we are grateful for his assistance in this matter.

Joy Shepherd  
Treasurer

# KURRAJONG COMLERoy HISTORICAL SOC. INC.

P O Box 174  
KURMOND NSW 2757

## Profit & Loss Statement

01/07/02 through 30/06/03

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Income	
Membership Subscriptions	\$1,185.00
Grants	
Grants Hawkesbury City Council	\$1,500.00
Grants Royal Aust Hist Society	\$500.00
Total Grants	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
Sponsorship	\$250.00
Donations	\$213.50
Work/Dole Project - Insurance	\$80.00
Door Takings	
Door Takings General Meetings	\$15.00
Door Takings Special Functions	\$1,086.35
Total Door Takings	<u>\$1,101.35</u>
Other Function Income	
Barbeque Income	\$139.80
Drinks Income	\$68.00
Auction Income	\$651.00
Total Other Function Income	<u>\$858.80</u>
Raffle Proceeds	\$824.01
Retail Sales	
Retail Sales Kurrajong Trees	\$151.00
Retail Sales Teaspoons	\$82.75
Sale of Louisa Atkinson Books	\$25.00
Sale of Photographs	\$16.00
Total Retail Sales	<u>\$274.75</u>
Bank Interest	\$0.50
Total Income	<u>\$6,787.91</u>
Cost of Sales	
Purchases for Resale	
Purchases for Sale - Teaspoons	\$250.00
Total Purchases for Resale	<u>\$250.00</u>
Total Cost of Sales	<u>\$250.00</u>
Gross Profit	<u>\$6,537.91</u>



# KURRAJONG COMLERoy HISTORICAL SOC. INC.

## Profit & Loss Statement

01/07/02 through 30/06/03

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<b>Expenses</b>	
Advertising	\$110.00
Dues & Subscriptions	\$80.30
Display Equipment	\$288.18
Equipment Hire	\$140.00
Gifts/Flowers etc	\$51.10
<b>Function Expenses</b>	
Function Expenses Catering	\$789.72
Function Expenses- Drinks	\$80.96
Function Exp - Entertainment	\$100.00
Function Expenses - Hall Hire	\$50.00
<b>Total Function Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,020.68</b>
Insurance	\$604.06
Late Fees Paid	\$18.00
Library & Literature expenses	\$29.00
Legal Fees	\$38.00
Maintenance	\$47.50
Office Supplies & Stationery	\$295.41
Photocopying and Laminating	\$1,005.12
Photography & Archiving	\$394.75
Postage	\$354.90
Post Office Box Rental	\$52.00
Audio Visual Expenses	\$458.40
Travel & Seminar Expenses	\$8.80
Electricity	\$26.59
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,022.79</b>
<b>Operating Profit</b>	<b>\$1,515.12</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	
<b>Other Expenses</b>	
<b>Net Profit / (Loss)</b>	<b>\$1,515.12</b>

# KURRAJONG COMLERROY HISTORICAL SOC. INC.

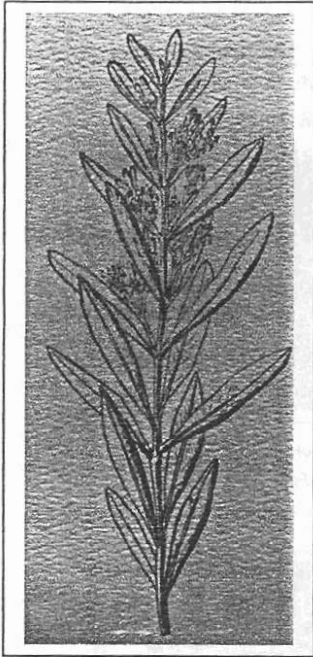
P O Box 174  
KURMOND NSW 2757

## Balance Sheet

As of June 2003

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<b>Assets</b>			
Current Assets			
Cash On Hand			
Cheque Account - Bendigo Bank	\$1,565.15		
Petty Cash	\$14.55		
Total Cash On Hand		\$1,579.70	
Total Current Assets			\$1,579.70
Other Assets			
Prepayments		\$774.10	
Total Other Assets			\$774.10
Total Assets			\$2,353.80
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Current Liabilities			
Membership paid in advance		\$250.00	
Total Current Liabilities			\$250.00
Total Liabilities			\$250.00
Net Assets			\$2,103.80
<b>Equity</b>			
Member's Equity			
Member's Capital	\$588.68		
Total Member's Equity		\$588.68	
Current Year Earnings		\$1,515.12	
Total Equity			\$2,103.80



Louisa's Lost Legacy  
October 27, 2002:  
A tribute day held at  
Mount Tomah. A walk  
to see the plant  
named for Louisa and  
hear talks on her life  
and achievements

A three-way project joining with the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society and Mount Tomah Botanic Garden to foster awareness of the contribution Louisa Atkinson made to botany and the exploration of the Australian bush during the 1870s. Jan Allen from the Botanic Garden led a walk to the rarely accessed part of the property to see the *Atkinsonia ligustrina* in flower. In the afternoon, Society vice-president Jennifer Stackhouse MC'd a series of talks by myself on Louisa's life at Kurrajong Heights and Mary Reynolds of our neighbouring historical society who spoke on Louisa as Australia's first woman novelist and an early newspaper contributor.



The Society has pledged to raise funds to restore and possibly relocate the Louisa Atkinson memorial erected at Powell Park in 1979 by the Kurrajong Heights Garden Club.

### Royal Australian Historical Society National Conference, Nov 4, 2002

During 2002 I successfully applied for a \$500 RAHS research grant, to assist the Society's work in investigating the origins of the water-driven flour mill on Wheeney Creek, dating from at least 1814.

In my application I stated I wanted to discover when the French burr millstones arrived in Australia, as this might lead to more information about the mill. I received the grant on behalf of the Society at the RAHS national conference at Wingham (near Taree) on November 4.

During 2003 I made contact with a researcher whose work I am familiar with and had hoped she would be able to start this project towards the end of this year. Unfortunately the project she is already working on has run over time and I will have to make contact with other researchers who have been recommended to me. It is hoped this research work will start immediately and be complete by the end of 2003.



Louise McMahon, centre, receives RAHS grant cheque from NSW MP Amanda Fazio with RAHS president, Carol Liston.

In addition to the RAHS grant I also successfully applied for a \$1000 grant from Hawkesbury City Council to assist the Society with mounting the display at the millstones as part of the Scarecrow Festival.

The Society appreciated this assistance from council's "Fruits of the Hawkesbury" program.

The stalls, manned by myself and Les Dollin, were seen by several thousand people and were in a prominent position. The short, hourly talks by Les found a ready and interested audience.

**December 2002**

We enjoy a relaxed December meeting at the Comleroy hall, with Christmas cake and other treats. The Society's committee meets in early January to plan an active 2003.

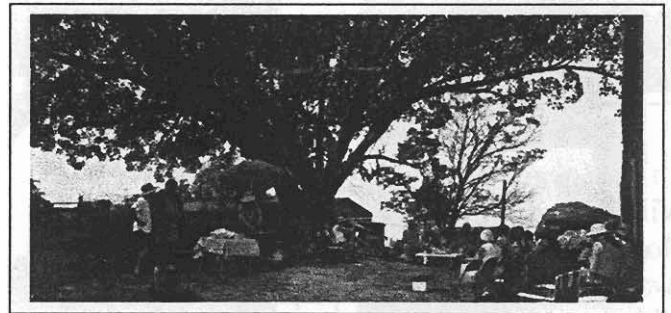
**Australia Day, January 26, 2003**

It's supposed to be hot on Australia Day -but 2003 took the idea to the extreme!. In some ways we were lucky it was so hot, because a lot of people who intended to attend our "Aussie style barbie" at the Comleroy hall stayed away because of the heat. Some 70 or more people did attend through the day and enjoyed a casual, relaxed sausage sizzle accompanied by some fine music from members and friends like Kathie McMahon, Steve Rawling, Ian Henry, Arch Bishop, Ellen Manning, Noella McPhee and guest speaker, John Love, who is researching the Kurrajong picture theatre which opened in 1933, the same week electricity came to Kurrajong! I am still in awe of Roger Holliday who worked so hard barbecuing in the heat! My mother Jean McMahon worked with the energy of a Cathy Freeman or Ian Thorpe and Joy and Phil Shepherd once again each put in a Superman style effort. Thanks also to Valerie Holland and Val Birch who were kept busy in the hot hall with the photo display.

**February:** I worked from November through into mid-January to put in place the many elements to offer members the opportunity to visit a number of the Kurrajong Dunston homes. I had permission from most owners and the date was set. Unfortunately, by the time I realised someone, who had promised to do something, was going to let me down, it was too late for me to step in and do everything myself. Australia Day was a "hit", but the planned Dunston excursion became a "miss" Apologies, as I know a lot of people were disappointed, as was I.

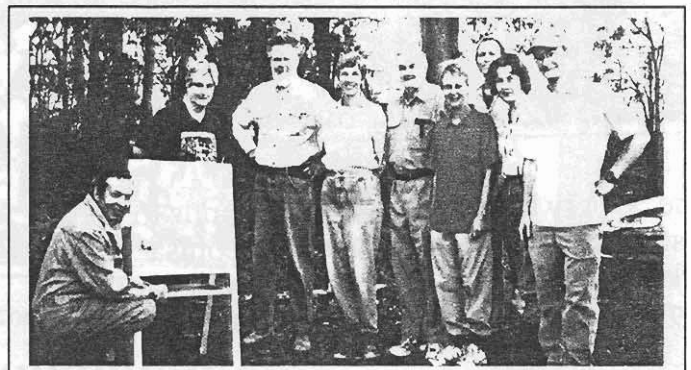


Roger Holliday sizzles the sausages while members and musicians, Steve Rawling, Kathie McMahon Ian Henry (and guest artist, Sonia Bennett) play on Australia Day.



**March: Les Dollin's Mill Walk**

Les Dollin lead a second successful walk along Wheeny Creek to see the two mill sites. The "overshot" mill and the "undershot". Les used his mini-blackboard and props to give a good introductory chalk and talk explanation on what had once been on the creek. This made interpreting the physical evidence that remains a lot easier. We were lucky that Hawkesbury City Council bushcare officer, John Blatch was working with some Landcare volunteers that morning, and they were also interested in learning about the site and its history.



Les Dollin, Louise McMahon, David and Jenny Griffiths, Ian and Pat O'Toole, Robert and Barbara Britton and Steven Males.

## April 2003 - "La Tosca" hearing in the NSW Land and Environment Court

In the very first Millstone of Jan-Feb 2001 I raised the alarm about the deterioration of "La Tosca" and anticipated a "watch dog role" for the Society. Many members and people in the community were expressing their concern at the seemingly rapid rate this once stately home was falling into disrepair.

During 2001, as Society secretary, I wrote to Hawkesbury Council alerting the general manager to the situation with "La Tosca". I also wrote to the Hawkesbury branch of the National Trust and Hawkesbury Historical Society alerting those organisations to the "La Tosca" issue asking them for support and assistance in raising the matter with council.

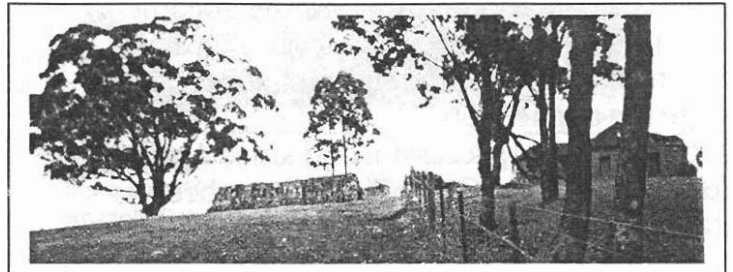
"La Tosca" was discussed at almost every meeting of the Society from February 2001, and when Hawkesbury Council advertised it had received an application to demolish the heritage-listed home, the Society lodged an objection. With the assistance of Jean McMahon a petition was circulated and quickly attained some 235 signatures.

Acknowledging the strong community interest in the fate of the building, and opposition in the proposed demolition, council refused the application.

"La Tosca's" owners took council to the Land and Environment Court which involved a three day hearing, including an afternoon on-site visit and drive-by of the other Kurrajong Dunston homes.

The Commissioner brought down a decision in favour of council, meaning "La Tosca" could not be demolished. The Court also ordered the owners to restore "La Tosca", and refused permission to build a new home on that part of the 33-acre property.

"La Tosca" is still being monitored by council.

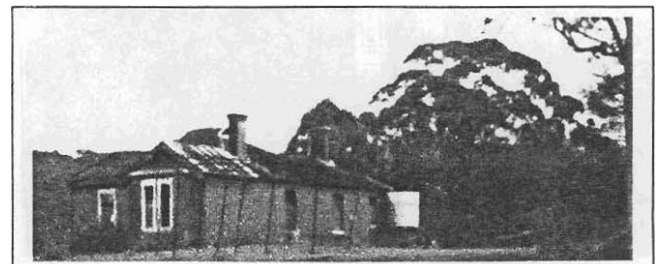


A guest speaker at the February 2003 meeting was Ms Sue Pickavance, the granddaughter of Charles Harold Dunstan who built "La Tosca". **(Pictured, Sept 2002)** Sue spoke about the sequence of events that led to the family home being sold. Her sister, Lola, has completed a lot of family history research and assisted me in putting together material to help make a case to preserve "La Tosca".

Unfortunately, no sooner had the "La Tosca" issue seemed to be resolved, another, even earlier and therefore more significant Dunston home is possibly now under threat.

This is "Spring Grove" on Springrove Road off Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Hills. Spring Grove dates from 1840 and belonged to Rachel Ball who married John Dunston, the father of Charles Harold Dunston who built "La Tosca".

Hawkesbury council is now investigating building work carried out at the Spring Grove property since April 2003.



"La Tosca" languishes, September, 2002

**April - May, 2003 Work for the Dole**

The Society's ever increasing collection of fascinating photos of all aspects of Kurrajong's history inspired treasurer, Joy Shepherd to approach Hugh Mckinnon at Hawkesbury Skills and apply for a Work for the Dole employment training grant. Despite a chunky and intimidating document outlining criteria, Joy spent several weeks making sure we had the right material to lodge the application.

The Society was successful and since April Terry Church and Grace Fisher have been scanning and logging our photos onto disc.

Since the project started Joy has spent hours each week both at Hawkesbury Skills with Terry, or sourcing original photos for scanning. This has involved going back to all the people who have donated pictures over the past two years. The result of Joy's dedication is that many times donors find a few extra photos to include in the collection. Joy estimates the Society will hold close to 1000 photos by the time the project ends in November, 2003.

Energetically assisting Joy in the Work for the Dole project is Society archivist, Val Birch. Val has also spent many hours at Hawkesbury Skills and has made sure the new photos being acquired are accessioned correctly so that we can access them easily when mounting future exhibitions.

The first test for our new digital system will be the "Hidden Treasures of Kurrajong" display at the Kurrajong CWA hall on the Scarecrow weekend of October 17-19.



Joy Shepherd, Ingi Green and Faith Christie of Hawkesbury Skills, Grace Fisher and Terry Church who have been busy scanning our photo collection.

**April 5, 2003**

Rita Crane prepared a tour and talk on St Gregory's Catholic Church at Kurrajong. The brick church will celebrate its centenary in December 2004, but an earlier, wooden church dates from 1840. Rita has spent many hours researching the church and cemetery records.

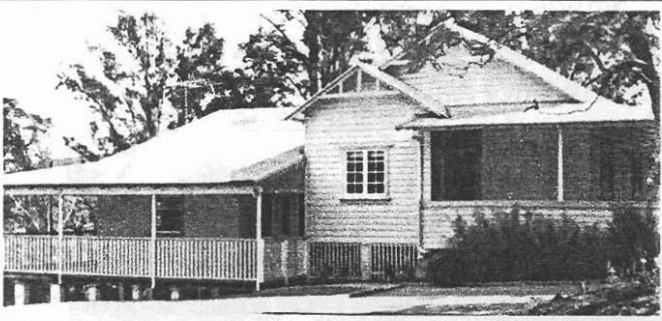


**May: MacKenzie Farm visit (almost)**

Vera and Gerry Bentvelzen offered to open their restored soldier settlement home at Kurmond, MacKenzie Farm, to the Society as a fundraiser in April. Vera paid for a special mail out to advertise the event to members, but unfortunately the first date, and then the next weekend were completely rained out. (Has it rained since? We know how to break a drought!). It might be possible to reschedule the event for early 2004.

Thanks and gratitude to Vera and Gerry for their kind support.

I will continue to work on my **Soldier Settlement** research in 2004. I have prepared a small photo exhibition, which is on display now at Kurmond post office, showing a few of the homes. Stop by and see!



**June 3, 2003: Camp Mackay visit  
Valerie Holland, team leader**

Contributed by Valerie: Our second attempt to tour Camp Mackay was a great success (the first, May 11, was rained out). Eleven enthusiastic members of the KCHS were fortunate to enjoy a fine day, as much of our tour was conducted outdoors. It was rewarding for Val Birch and (husband) Frank Holland and myself to share with members our interest in the history of Camp Mackay that we are endeavouring to unravel. Our friendly and patient guide was Jodi, who is an employee of the privately owned "Life Adventure Site) formerly Camp Mackay. One of our members, Joy Shepherd, was very thoughtful in asking Enid Ezzy and Kevin Corbett to join our tour. They shared with us memories of their childhood and some of those of their family from the time they lived in one of the soldier settlement homes at Camp Mackay, when the Camp was still in its development stage, between the years of 1946 -1953. During the tour of the Camp, as I chatted to Kevin with my tape recorder running, three other intrepid photographers, Louise McMahon, Frank Holland and Val Birch were busy capturing many and varied snaps. While this progressed we all walked from outside the main office, which was once the Camp superintendent's house on a road that leads towards the farm. This took us past two former soldier settlement homes that had housed staff, and the single workman's quarters. From there we viewed the machinery sheds and the small dairy that was once registered and where 50-60 cows were once milked. Further along the road we passed the old grain storage silo, the water tank that hold water pumped from Little Wheeney Creek and down the lance, past the piggery that at one stage was registered and held 30 pigs. From the end of the land we looked across the road to the home where Kevin and Enid had lived. We retraced our steps and were shown through the main building complex that is positioned diagonally opposite the present main office. This complex now contains an

office, first aid room, the main hall, dining room and kitchen.

From there we enjoyed viewing the Camp's theatre, the swimming and sporting areas, the old tuck shop and the "Manor", a small building which was once the Gracie Fields Hospital and First Aid Post. This building had been funded by Gracie Fields during a tour to Australia.

The tour concluded walking by the old "Wills" dormitory building, that is situated below the theatre and is the only one of the dormitories remaining. From there we were shown through "Wilderness", one of the modern dormitories. It was necessary, over the more than 60 years life of Camp Mackay that a considerable program of rebuilding and modernising to meet changing community standards was required before its final sale.

After the tour, those of us who had time, had an enjoyable lunch at Valley View café in Kurrajong Village, where we were able to view the historic photographs that Kevin and Enid had with them. During lunch, Val Birch sought information from Kevin and diligently documented the details of the photographs, that we now have on loan so they can be copied through the valuable assistance of the Work for the Dole program.

Many thanks to those who were able to join us and make the day a very worthwhile occasion.

**- Valerie Holland**

*(The Society's thanks to Valerie for her excellent work in researching Camp Mackay.. - LM, sec)*



Les Dollin, Kathie McMahon, Bryan and Marguerite Wyborn, Valerie and Frank Holland, Pam Bennett with grand-daughter, Annabelle McMahon, Val Birch, Ian O'Toole, Kevin Corbett, Enid Ezzy and Joy Shepherd.

**June 2003: Dining with Rotary**



Va Birch, Rotary Club of Kurrajong-North Richmond president, Rob Ewin, Kathie McManon, Dennis and Dorothy Simmons at the joint Society-Rotary dinner at Panthers North Richmond (Sporties) on June 17.

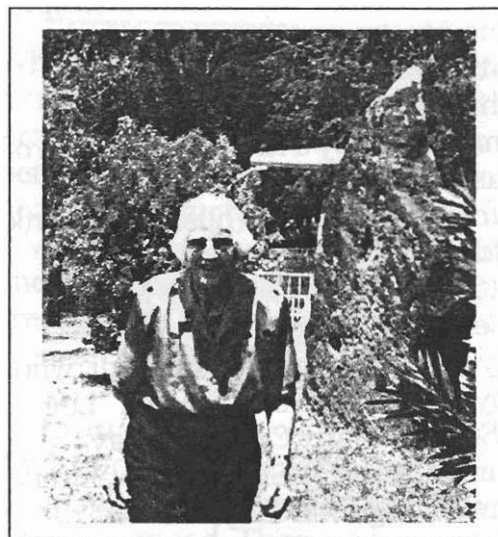
I started planning this event back in January when I met Sandy Cunningham and she told me about her "amazing" father, former Kurrajong resident, Dennis Simmons. I recalled from June 2002 that our mid-winter meeting at Comleroy was bitterly cold. I also know a number of our members are also Rotarians and due to that prior commitment are unable to attend our Tuesday night meetings. Rotary president, and Society member, Rob Ewin, was quick to agree to a joint meeting. The dinner meeting was a most enjoyable evening, with Dennis living up to his daughter's recommendation!. The Society has forwarded its grateful thanks to Rotary for holding this joint event and assisting us with fundraising towards our photo exhibition in October.

Thanks also to Les and Jenny Chalmers who donated their blacksmith bellows for auctioning at the dinner, and thanks to Jennifer Stackhouse who's gardening expertise was "dutch auctioned" very profitably.

Special thanks to Rotarian John Roche who, as auctioneer, worked the room vigorously to raise these important funds for us.

**Tribute to Jean McMahon**

(Nov 4, 1925, March 13, 2003)



**The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society owes its existence Jean McMahon.**

It was her passion for family history and comprehensive local knowledge which inspired me to form the Society in 2001. Jean's interest in genealogy was sparked in 1969 when she started sorting out the cemetery records of St Gregory's Catholic Church, Kurrajong. This led to her being the prime organiser of the McMahon family reunion, held in McMahon Park Kurrajong in September 1973 and attended by some 700 family members. Jean's research located the grave of Catharine (McMahon) Eather in Windsor Catholic Cemetery. Catharine and her five children drowned in the 1867 flood. Her research work has since been used by many Hawkesbury historians. In 2001 Jean gained Council permission to restore Catharine's headstone, which has fallen over. I will be restoring the headstone as a tribute to my mother in recognition of her 35 years of family history and Kurrajong district research.

**Anyone interested in assisting with this project can contact me on 4573 1823.**

**— Louise McMahon**

**Forward Planning, 2003**

The next Society event will be our photo display at the CWA hall on Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19. We will also be holding our traditional "Back to the Kurrajong" evening on Friday, Oct 17 from 7.30pm, at the Valley View Café in the Village. Cost is \$15 for a scrumptious supper with guest speakers, including Mr Phil Peck of the famous Kurrajong Heights family. Bookings with treasurer, Joy Shepherd, (4571 1524). The evening will be popular, and open to non-members, so book early.

**Also: LOUISA ATKINSON TRIBUTE DAY: NOVEMBER 16, Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens.**