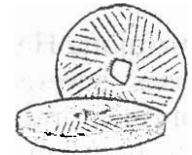


# KURRAJONG - COMLERoy HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 174 KURMOND, 2757



# The Millstone

## 2004: Volume Three, Issue Four: July-August

The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society is dedicated to researching, recording, preserving and championing the history of "the Kurrajong", the district bounded by the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond, the Grose River, Cut Rock at Kurrajong Heights, along Comleroy and Blaxland Ridge Roads to the Putty Road at East Kurrajong, to the Colo River.



- Consultants engaged by Hawkesbury Shire Council in 1986 proposed a "Millstone Park" be built at the corner of Comleroy Road and Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong. In 1988 the millstones were moved to Memorial Park, Kurrajong, where they are now located.

Hawkesbury City Council has now completed construction of a footpath in Memorial Park to the cenotaph, erected by Kurrajong-Colo RSL in 1995. This work is part of a larger program of improvements to Memorial Park. It is interesting to look back at plans and proposals drawn up for some important recreational and public spaces in Kurrajong, and reflect on some of the ideas not implemented, or "roads not travelled".

### Kurrajong Heights Centre:

Poses several problems, in an attempt to improve its landscape and provide suitable commemorative project.

The problem is mainly one of identity, that is, providing the area with an element which will be remembered by the visitor as the identifiable feature of Kurrajong Heights.

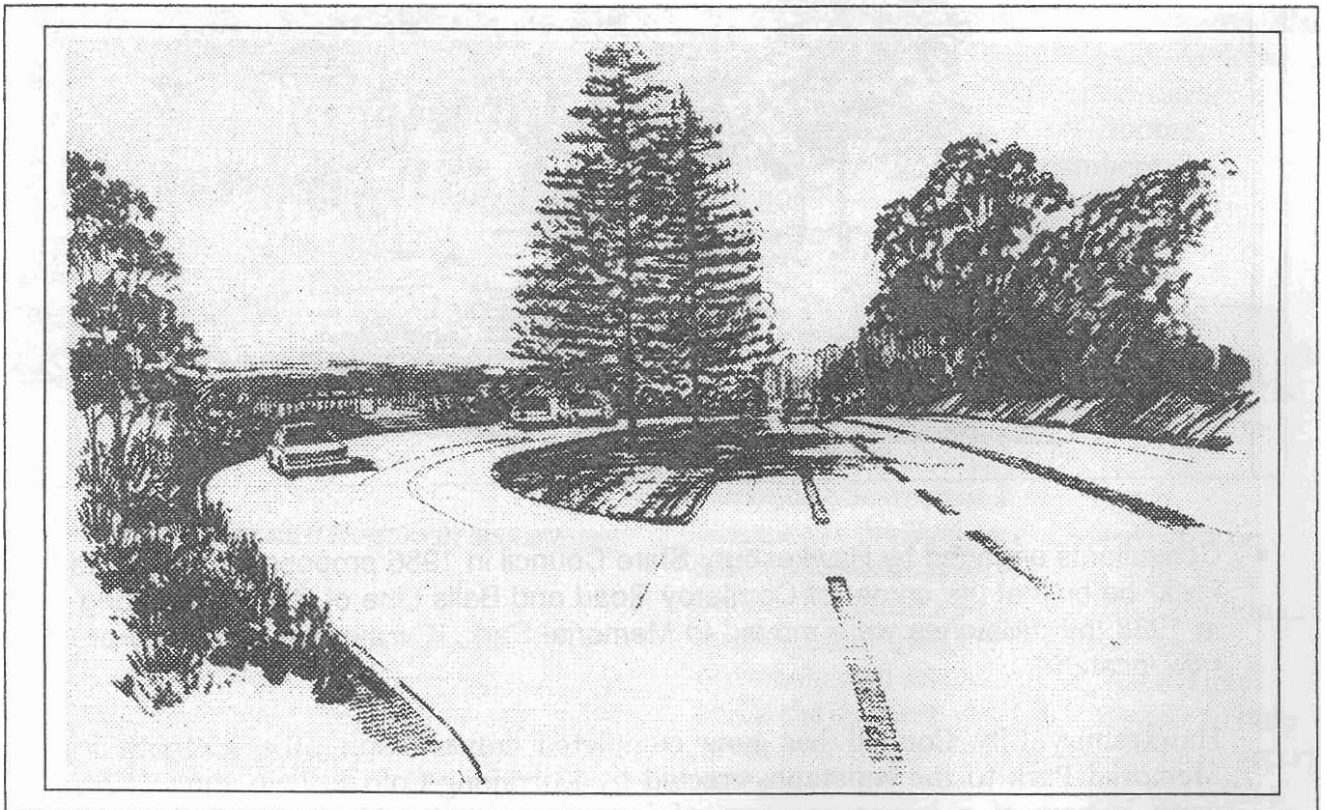
This may be the view, but there is no reason why the area should not be enhanced by landscaping of the point of view.

In this respect, the strongest existing landscape elements are the pine trees. Several pine trees have been removed from near the church. These can be replaced and several more planted where shown on the plan. The recommended species is *Aracaria cunninghamii* (hoop pine), which probably grew naturally in this area.

The proposition of providing trees to support an increased bellbird population can be met by increased planting of native tress on the embankments each side of the lookout and be similar planting near the post office store.

#### Work recommended:

1. Plant native trees on embankments each side of the lookout.
2. Plant out traffic island with hoop pines
3. Plant tress on embankment opposite lookout.
4. Plant avenue of pines at road margin near post office store.
5. Plant mixture of endemic plants in reserves near post office store.
6. Replace missing pines near church with new advanced pines.

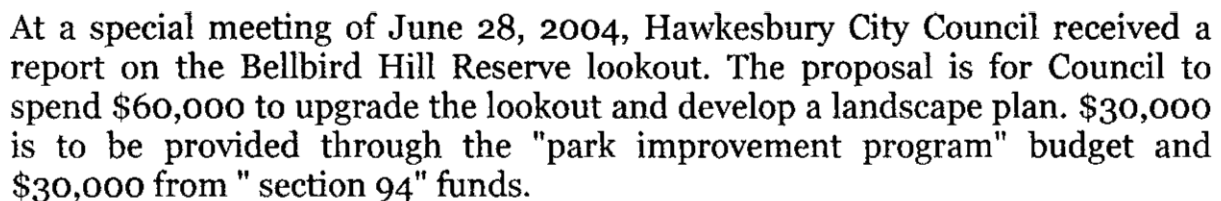
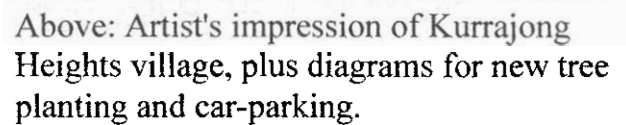


#### Other notes from the consultant's report:

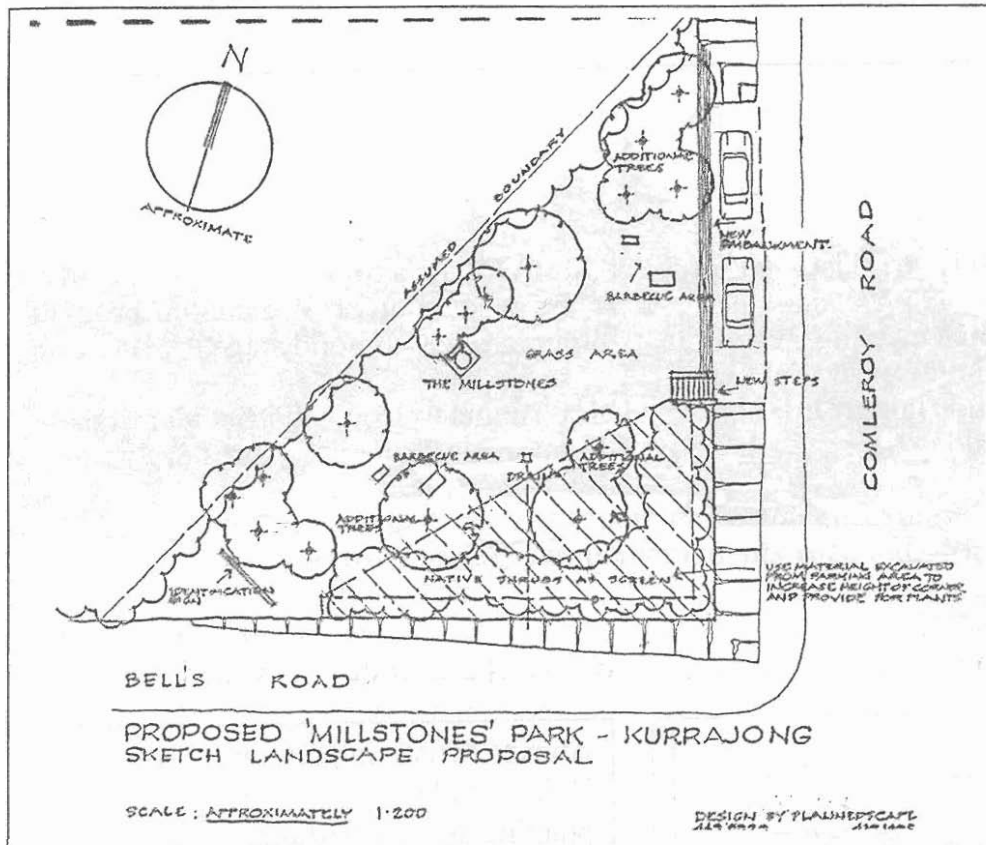
Vacant land offers opportunity for tree planting, form visual edge to road and continue established character of village.

Colonial "feel" of town set by this building, irrelevant signs to be removed.

Defunct service area could be planted continued character set by pines near church by planting, more pines.



"Once the design has been completed, the implementation of cost can be estimated and application made for further funding or grants. A grant application of \$46,130 was also successful for the rehabilitation of bushland and some landscaping of the lookout area", the report stated.



From the consultant's report:

### "Kurrajong Village"

The stone mill wheels presently located at the corner of Bells Line and Comleroy Road are of undoubted historic interest.

Landscape treatment of this reserve to make it an attractive stopping place will increase the dissemination of local history.

The heavy traffic and intersection make this area a difficult one to design, however two parking spaces can be provided in Comleroy Road.

It will be necessary to provide additional soil to permit tree planting.

Work required:

1. Excavate embankment in Comleroy Road.
2. Use excavated material to increase height of embankment at corner.
3. Provide steps
4. Provide top soil to corner area
5. Provide grass and tree planting
6. Provide barbecue and picnic tables.
7. Provide identification of routed timber (as NPWS).
8. Install plaque relating to history of millstones and Singleton's mill.

And on a page of pics of the millstones at Comleroy Road (that will not reproduce clearly enough to include here)

1. No identification of stones. No encouragement to use park. No vegetation, because of rock shelf. Opportunity for picnic space.
2. Intersection and double yellow lines prevent road access to site - attractive rural outlook.
3. Interesting relic, but no encouragement to stay - history needs to be researched and plaque to be erected.

## Historic Links between Richmond School of Arts and Kurrajong

Part two of a paper presented by KCHS member, Ron Rozzoli to the March 22 meeting at the Comleroy School of Arts

In the May-June edition of the Millstone Ron explained the role of School of Arts halls as popular venues for Masonic meetings. Prior to 1928 Richmond was the home of several lodges including the Grand United Order of Oddfellows and the Buffalo Lodge.

"Lodge Kurrajong was one that lasted into the 1960s. In their best form they were the forerunners of the medical benefits funds of today. Some operated pharmacies, an example was at Chatswood.

At the opposite end of the scale they were a male-only gathering for heavy smoking and loud very unmusical ballads, accompanied by a very old honky-tonk piano.....

Ron's presentation continues....

The little opening through which passwords and other very private matters were discussed before entry could be approved are preserved today in the original doors between the foyer and the new Murray wing.

In the 50 years just passed a number of residents west of the river played prominent roles (acting and support) in the many productions of Richmond Players.

Among the leading young women of the day was Lei Garfield, who, as Mrs Timmerman, ran Bilpin post office for some years in the early 1980s.

Elaine Horsfield, made a particular mark in period roles; June Peck, (first wife of Phil, whose article appeared in the Nov-Dec 2003 and Jan Feb, 04 Millstone editions). She lead a small group at the Heights CWA, and was a strong member of the Richmond team, both as an actress and director. Also Karen Hungerford, a dedicated actress and director, whose production of "The Seven Year Itch" was noteworthy.

P.A.M William's role as Col Pickering in June Peck's production of "Pygmalion" brought Bilpin to the Richmond stage.

Of the many welcome district identities attending performances, one family was always most welcome.

Our Society member, Meredyth Hungerford and husband, magnificently attired in an enormous khaki army great coat, braved the very depths of winter to travel down to Richmond in the open Land Rover to see the plays.

In a support role, Cor Timmerman of Bilpin was a dedicated stage manager, who over many productions, brought a real degree of professionalism to this very important aspect of performance presentation.

Ernie Death of Grose Vale made the spotlight as Emile de Beaque in "South Pacific" and Kevon Kemp from Douglass Road at the Heights directed the Dick Diamond Australian musical play, "Ready River". All these characters went up and down Bellbird Hill with monotonous regularity to come to the Richmond School of Arts.

Grose Vale also participated by way of providing interval catering services.

Wally and Meg Clewett, with help from brother Harry, and his wife Dorothy, provided this service from the mid 1950s to the mid 1970s as a fund-raising effort for the Grose Vale P&C. At this time a season was generally Saturday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, then sometimes an additional Monday, so it was a considerable commitment. They never let the Players down.

Duffy's Bus Lines featured in an incident in the early 1950s. Arrangements had been made to perform the musical play, "Sir Marmaduke Unmasked, or Virtue Versus Villainy" at Warrimoo Community Centre.



Almost the entire cast and crew were to be transported by Duffy's. About half a mile below Hawkesbury Lookout (on the Springwood Road), the fan belt broke on the bus, and shortly after the engine began to boil. No spare belt. A small party set out to walk to the top and somehow reached a public telephone. Laurie Duffy and his father Mark set out "post haste" in the big Ford for the site. All this took quite some time. Meanwhile the audience was already seated.

A small number of the company had travelled by car and came across the breakdown. From the Warrimoo end a fleet of cars was organised and began ferrying the cast, who by now had changed into their costumes on the bus. As soon as Mark and Laurie arrived, the problem was quickly overcome and the remaining cast and crew set off. The performance got underway about 90 minutes late.

To conclude this narrative, it is probably appropriate to mention a young man who will be our last character.

Prior to leaving school he regularly attended productions. Following completion of the Leaving Certificate he felt the need to become part of the action. He joined the backstage team, eventually becoming stage manager to the director, Dallas Blake. His first role was Officer Brophy in "Arsenic and Old Lace", an effort he afterwards described as "very callow". The urge to learn much more about theatre craft resulted in enrolment in the Sydney University summer drama school in 1958.

Subsequent years saw him attend a number of these courses and take part with some success in British Drama League competitions held in Sydney.

As a result, a lifelong friendship was forged with the Elizabethan Theatre Trust director, John Trevor.

Continuing with weekly private lessons from a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, he was able to act and direct a host of Richmond productions. Much is recorded about these productions and the roles involved.

During all of this time he enjoyed and benefited from the friendship of John Clark, the long time director of NIDA, and who only now is about to retire.

Our last character was destined to know more about the workings of Kurrajong, Comleroy and its people than most, for he represented this district in the NSW State Parliament as Member for Hawkesbury from 1973 to 2003.

Kevin Rozzoli, MLA, and former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, liked to regard the Richmond School of Arts as his second home.



### DAY TIME "Little History Club"

Because so many of our members are available during the day, but find attending night meetings difficult for a number of reasons, the committee has decided to experiment with informal, day-time meeting on the months between the evening scheduled meetings.

These "get-togethers" with a historical flavour will be hosted by Kathie McMahon at her 99home, 954 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Hills. Phone 4567-7105.

The first meeting will be on Tuesday, August 24 starting at midday. For insurance reasons, these meetings will be for members only. Visitors and guests are most welcome at the Society's regular scheduled (night) meetings.



Les Dollin interviews Alan Smith and Brian Mangold on May 29, continuing the KCHS research into "the Kurrajong". Since then, in fact just days later, Les decided to resign from the Society to concentrate on some of his other projects, including a Church ministry. Many KCHS members will be sorry that Les has decided to focus his energy elsewhere, but will wish him all the best. Good luck, Les.

# Millstone Muster.....

## Land grants, settler families:

A researcher from Victoria, Louise Wilson, has written seeking assistance in locating the site of several original land grants in "the Kurrajong". The sites she is interested in locating are "Thistle Hill", "Forrestville Farm", "Gordon Wood Hill" "Rosemount" at Grose Vale and "Janes Farm" at Nepean. Mrs Wilson is interested in the families of Robert Forrester, Paul Bushell, David Brown and Charles Homer.

If you have information on these locations, please contact secretary Louise McMahon so that the information can be passed on to Mrs Wilson.

## Kurrajong CWA Success with "Weddings of Yesteryear"

The Kurrajong CWA were able to assemble up to 80 wedding dresses for their May 29 and 30 exhibition at the CWA hall. The exhibition was a fund-raising and it brought hundreds of women to the event - but only a few men. The Society loaned a display of photos from our collection, which achieved lots of positive feedback.

Thanks to Joy Shepherd who spent many, many hours supervising the printing-out and laminating of the photos and captions at home and at Hawkesbury Skills. Thanks, too to Pat O'Toole for mounting the photos on cardboard for display. I was busy too, fetching, carrying and making sure everything was where it needed to be at the right time - not always as easy as it would seem.



## Concert fundraiser

The concert at St David's Presbyterian Church, Kurrajong Heights on Saturday, May 8 was a success, with some \$600 raised, almost the exact amount needed to pay the public liability insurance!

The idea was to have a historical flavour to the concert and link the songs together with the story of the Tolpuddle martyrs and the history of Kurrajong. A highlight was the performance by Steve Rawling of some Sid Sheldon poetry he has put to music. Sid lived on Comleroy Road in the early 1900s and documented the changes of the area, especially the passing era of timber-getting and bullock teams.

Thanks to Kathie McMahon and helpers for organising.

## Kurrajong History Walking tour

Following on the "footsteps" of the successful mill walks and the Bowen Mountain walk, Ken Bennett and Louise McMahon are collaborating on a historic walking tour of Kurrajong. Research has been ongoing (if somewhat sporadic) over the past year, but a we have now selected a date Thursday, October 21, as a lead-in to the Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival.

In 2000 long-time Kurrajong resident, Hazel Horan, was amused to hear a new resident proclaiming how Kurrajong "was really starting to progress". Hazel reflected that 50 years earlier Kurrajong had a train, a bank, doctor, chemist, fruit shop, two factories, a picture theatre and a vibrant social scene which included events like balls and dances at the picture theatre, Camp MacKay and Comleroy hall.

The walking tour will attempt to convey the fluctuating fortunes of Kurrajong from the late 1880s. More details in the next Millstone.

The Millstone is researched, written and edited by KCHS secretary, Louise McMahon. Contributions are welcomed and encouraged. Send to PO Box 174 Kurmond, NSW, 2757.

# Minute Millstone....



The next meeting of the KCHS will be a special dinner meeting at the Kurmond Wine Bar and Grill.

DATE: Monday, July 26

COST: \$30 a person (drinks extra)

TIME: 7.30pm

VENUE: 406 Bells Line of Road, Kurmond

GUEST SPEAKER: Marlene Healy.

Marlene's father, Bill Smith, was a WW1 returned soldier and was allocated a Soldier Settlement property.

With husband John, Marlene established a successful restaurant in the late 1950s, the "Kurmond Roadhouse".

Come along and hear first hand about a fascinating story of a long term Kurrajong family, and the early days when the Kurmond Roadhouse was one of only a few eating establishments in the district.

## MENU:

There is a choice between two dishes, Swiss veal, or chicken margarita.

The veal is served topped with ham, avocado, napolitano sauce and cheese.

The second choice is a chicken breast stuffed with cream cheese, peppercorns poached in wine and topped with a red currant sauce.

Plates of vegetables and salad will accompany both dishes.

Desert is sticky date **OR** chocolate pudding. Tea and coffee included, and cappuccinos can be served if people are prepared to wait as this is slower with a large group.

**Bookings are essential** and should be made with Pat O'Toole, 4573-0601 or Jennifer Stackhouse, 4573-0836 By July 19.  
Cheques to KCHS, PO Box 174, Kurmond, NSW 2757.

**AGM:** At the committee meeting of June 30, it was decided to move the date for the annual general meeting to the scheduled meeting date of Monday, September 27. The date had been set at August 23, but it was decided to keep to the scheduled meeting dates.

The AGM will be held at the Richmond School of Arts as the Society was invited to a guided tour by SofA president, Margaret Thorne as a follow-on to Ron Rozzoli's talk of March 22. Meet at the Richmond School of Arts at 7.30pm for tour, followed by AGM at 8pm, followed by an ordinary meeting.

An invoice for the 2004-2005 financial year is included in this mail out. Members must be financial to vote at the AGM.

Also included in this mail out is a new membership form. We ask that members fill this in to allow us to update our records. Also we are seeking your permission to include your name, address and contact details on a members database to be distributed, on request, to other KCHS members **only** This will not be distributed to anyone not a member of the Society.

## September 27 ordinary meeting.

This meeting will follow immediately after the AGM and will be a planning meeting for the Friday, October 23 "Back to the Kurrajong" evening and the Sunday, October 25, Kurrajong Scarecrow Festival.

Since 2001 the Society has mounted a new exhibition with an associated event with fascinating guest speakers. The exhibition and guest speaker evening is popular and extremely well attended, and the Society needs the **support of more members to help** out at over this weekend. As with most groups the "doing" falls to a few people, but with a little more help the load would be lighter for everyone. Come along, get involved, learn a bit and have some fun.

IF YOU WANT TO GO TO THE DINNER, BOOK IMMEDIATELY, DON'T "DO IT LATER" !! DO IT **NOW**