

# THE MILLSTONE

KURRAJONG ~ COMLERoy HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society is dedicated to researching, recording, preserving and promoting the history of the district. Covering the area west of the Hawkesbury River - North Richmond, Kurrajong, Berambing, Bilpin, Grose Vale, Bowen Mountain, Colo, Wilberforce, Ebenezer, Glossodia, Tennyson, Freemans Reach.

## OF BYWAYS NOT HIGHWAYS—OVER THE RIVER *by Deborah Hallam*

The first land grants along the Hawkesbury near what is now North Richmond were in 1794 and by 1799 river-front land was occupied as far as the Grose confluence. Land granted to the south of the Grose was occupied not long after.

In 1804 George Caley, accompanied by three convicts, reached Mount Banks having managed to set fire to the Buralow swamp on the way. In 1809 George William Evans left his mark above Buralow at Bowen Mountain.

The 1806 floods sent some flat-landers scurrying for the heights of Grose Vale and Kurrajong where they settled land that was eventually granted by William Paterson (acting Governor 1809) and for the most part ratified by Governor Macquarie.

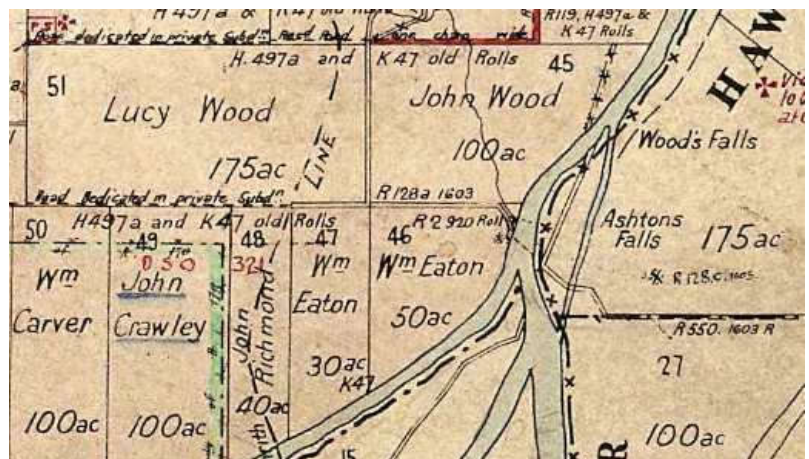
Thus, by the time Macquarie set out on his tour of the colony in November 1810, there was quite a bit of movement back and forth from the lowlands to the Kurrajong area.

This of course involved regular traffic across the rivers and was generally by way of the shallows around the Nepean/Hawkesbury/Grose confluence. Two sets of falls allowed fairly easy crossing though dependent on the river flow at the time.

Macquarie records crossing the Hawkesbury by boat and sending his horse by a bad falls downstream. These falls, more of a cascade than what we consider a falls, was later to be named Ashtons Falls but has long disappeared, victim to the 1867 flood.

Ashtons Falls took their name from William Aston [sic], second husband of Jane Charlotte (Bryant) Crowley. Jane had inherited substantial land from her first husband, John Crowley. Presumably to prevent family discord she purchased a nearby river front farm for William after their marriage in 1836.

Woods Falls was adjacent to the property of Lucy Wood and John Wood, owners of two adjoining grants totalling two hundred and seventy-five acres. Lucy was the daughter of Mary Pitt who with her son, Lucy's brother Thomas, had grants totalling two hundred acres at Yarramundi currently the site of *Bronte*. Another of Mary's daughter Jemima and her husband, Austin



1893 map showing the confluence of the Nepean, Grose and Hawkesbury Rivers, with Ashtons Falls and Woods Falls marked.

Forrest occupied James Badgery's grant *Swilly Farm*.

In 1804 Susannah Pitt married neighbour, William Faithful. Their property was to become known as *Lakeville*. After Susannah's death William was to marry Maria Bell of *Belmont*.

City dweller Matthew Kearns had taken over Obediah Ikin's farm in around 1806 and illegally occupied the adjacent land as pasture. The 1809 Evans sketch of the property shows an example of the development of the properties. Kearns was driving his cattle over the falls to market.

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## President's Report

Hello everyone,

The **AGM** has been held and I am pleased to report the same committee has been returned unchanged. Reports that were presented at the AGM are included on Page 3 of this edition.

Our guest speaker at the AGM was Arthur Pearce from the Australian Maritime Museum who gave a fascinating talk on the *River Boats of the Murray*.

The day before the AGM, we held our **Open Day at Blaxlands Ridge Schoolhouse**. This was the same day as the neighbouring RFB held their open day, which considerably increased the number of people in the area. We had a reasonable number of visitors and sold a few books. The week before, Lesley, Mal, Jenny and myself gave the building some TLC so that it looked its best for the Open Day. Since then the council has repainted the exterior.

In October we welcomed a relative of the **Rev Henry Plume**. See report on Page 4.

On Sunday 24th November I am planning another **Mystery Train Trip**. We will leave Richmond Station as usual, for a fun day riding the rails and seeing various bits of history. Lunch and Opal costs at your expense. Please [book](#) so we know how many to expect (might have to put extra trains on!).

Our **Christmas Party** is going to be a lunch event this year. We will be providing a lunch buffet of BBQ chicken and leg ham carved from the bone, together with potato bake and salads, and dessert. Please [book online](#) for catering purposes. The event will be held in 'The Hut' in Bowen Mountain Park. BYO drinks and picnic kit (plates etc).

We have decided not to produce a calendar this year.

Don't forget to mark in our **Birthday Bash** on January 26th, also at Bowen Mountain.

Planning is under way for our **2025 Grand Excursion**. This time will be to the Southern Highlands, possibly for 4 or 5 days. Self drive or car pool. Please drop me a line if you are interested.

David Griffiths

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### KURRAJONG – COMLEROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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#### Committee

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Frank Holland Valerie Holland

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Content does not necessarily represent or reflect the views or opinions of K-CHS, its committee and members.

Every effort is taken to ensure accuracy of articles.

If errors are found feedback is welcome.

[secretary@kurrajonghistory.org.au](mailto:secretary@kurrajonghistory.org.au)

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Carol Webster

John Williams

### NORTH RICHMOND.

Six herds of cattle passed through during the week, all for Riverstone meat works.

Messrs J. Cullen and R. Drew have gone up country, the former to Milthorpe and the latter to Cowra.

Mr Ernest Myers, the unfortunate victim of last week's accident, has partly recovered his health, although it is feared some time will elapse before he becomes thoroughly well.

On Tuesday evening two young girls, while traversing the main road opposite Mr H. Skuthorp's residence, encountered a large black snake. Fortunately, a gentleman happened to be passing at the time, and despatched the reptile.

*Windsor & Richmond Gazette Sat 14th Oct 1905*

## Annual Reports presented at AGM

### ***President's Report David Griffiths***

This year completes my seventh year as President of K-CHS. My how time flies!

Highlights of the year include having a Christmas Party on the hottest day for four years at Glenhuntly! Luckily there was a nice cool pond to splash in.

Our annual birthday bash at Bowen Mountain was also a hot day but not unpleasant. Jan Barkly-Jack gave a talk on Green Hills (early Windsor) which was followed in June by a walking tour in Windsor.

In February we had a tour of both the SES and RFS Headquarters in Wilberforce. Both sites showed the work of the wonderful volunteers who keep us safe.

Our March GM was held at *The Hangar* and Coral Searle gave a very interesting talk on the WRANS. We were joined by quite a few residents of Kingsford Smith Village.

In April I organised a mystery train tour which included lunch at Watsons Bay. It ended up being a train, bus and ferry tour and seemed to go down well.

At the end of April and early May we ventured west on a tour of Hill End, Sofala, Rylestone, Gulgong and Mudgee. It was a lot of fun and we all agreed another trip in 2025 is on the cards.

The May GM was held at Blaxlands Ridge RFB and Christopher Reeves, Senior Heritage Officer, Hawkesbury City Council was our informative guest speaker.

We held our July Mid Winter Dinner as a lunch event at Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club. A blackout just before lunch sent everyone into a spin, but it all ended well. Our guest speaker was Michael Thomson who spoke on the Burley Griffins and their plan for Canberra.

In August we ventured by train to Wollongong and visited the Illawarra Museum. It was a small group probably due to short notice, but it was a pleasant day out.

A big thank you to the outgoing committee for their time and effort keeping the society going.

As I have reported in previous Millstones, changes by the ATO mean that Not For Profit (NFP) organisations now have to submit a NFP Self Assessment Report each year to justify Income Tax Free status. The catch is that historical societies (and many other community NFP groups) DO NOT QUALIFY!

This means we are liable for 30% income tax on any income not derived from our members, under a concept called mutualisation.

It has been suggested that we apply for charity status to overcome this imposition, however we do not believe we are a charity or that applying for charity status is appropriate.

We have made representations to RAHS and our Federal Member, Susan Templeman. Both have written to the relevant ministers. We await a response.

### ***Treasurer's Report Pat O'Toole***

This is my 9th annual report as treasurer. How time flies! Am still trying to master MYOB and am thankful for the help which David is able to give.

A few members have not renewed but life changes so that is quite understandable.

Book sales have been steady, particularly by Karen of Carey and Co.

The expenses of financing the operations of the society has resulted in only a small profit in spite of considerable interest from the term deposits. With the impending tax on earnings the society in the future will always run at a loss.

Although a Not For Profit association, taxes are now to be paid on earnings. This complicates bookkeeping making it difficult for volunteers who are usually unskilled and hard to find. Assistance has been sought from the RAHS and local member Susan Templeman with the hope that the government will revert to the previous system.

Many thanks to our Auditor, Marilyn McCarthy.

### ***Secretary's Report Jenny Griffiths***

Activities and correspondence have been steady this year. A number of our books were sold to local shops, on-line sales and four village stalls.

Enquiries regarding families and properties have been received and replied to.

Eleven new membership applications were approved and welcome letters sent out. We currently have 110 members.

Official correspondence with the Royal Australian Historical Society has also been dealt with. A new ongoing issue regarding new rules concerning our Not-for-Profit status is being investigated.

## Visit by Rev Henry Plume's relatives *by Valerie Holland*

On 10<sup>th</sup> October, a perfect spring day, K-CHS members Lesley Bobrige and Frank and Valerie Holland welcomed Pam and Russell Saal from Queensland to Kurrajong. The importance of this visit was for Pam to see St Stephen's Anglican Church where her Great, Great, Uncle the Rev. Henry Plume had served the district between 1888-1891 alongside his wife Eleanor (nee Marshall) who assisted him with his duties.

Pam had visited Barker College and donated them various pictures. She provided us with digital copies and family history research.

The Rev. Plume was born and educated in England. He served the Anglican Church in London before he was persuaded to accompany the Rev G.H. Stanton to Queensland as an examining Chaplain. There he served as the vicar of St. James Church in Townsville, from 1879 until his appointment as Archdeacon of North Queensland in 1883.

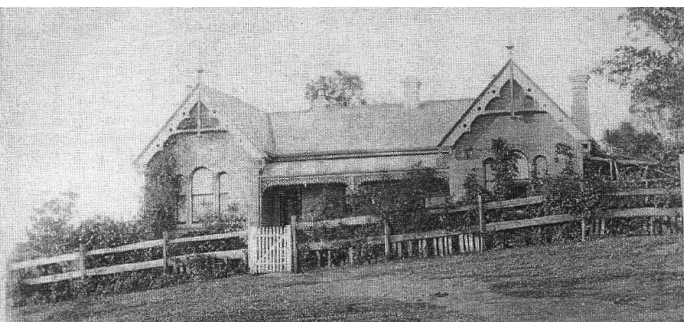
In 1888 after he and his wife moved to Sydney seeking 'fresh fields and new pastures', he was appointed as Rector of St Stephen's Kurrajong by the Bishop of Sydney the Right Reverend Frederick Barker. During this period, he carried out his extensive pastoral duties as well as serving for some months as acting warden of St.



*Russell & Pam Saal in St Stephen's Church*

have two clergy standing on the front verandah. The building was said to be the first Anglican School in the Kurrajong district from 1836-1890. This building had been constructed on the corner of the Bells Line of Road and Hermitage Road in the Kurrajong Hills. One wonders if the Rev Henry Plume may have taught any students in this school before he moved them to 'Stokesleigh'.

K-CHS Secretary Jenny Griffiths arranged this visit through the kind assistance of the current Rector Peter Wood and Erin Shaw the Administration Officer who opened the church for viewing.



*The St Stephen's Rectory Kurrajong—date unknown*

Pauls College at the University of Sydney. Following his return to Kurrajong it is thought that he coached a small number of local pupils for the matriculation level, initially in St Stephen's Rectory.

As the number of students increased, in 1891 Rev Plume moved the school to a larger building called 'Stokesleigh' in Withers Lane, Kurrajong Heights where he eventually took boarders. Rev. Henry Plume named the new school 'Barker College' out of gratitude for the help and kindness given to him and his wife by Bishop Barker. Following the outbreak of Scarlet Fever during 1895 in the Kurrajong district, Barker College was moved from its isolated position at 'Stokesleigh' to the Sydney suburb of Hornsby in 1896, where it grew and continues to prosper.

Another point of interest was an image and details of a former old low wooden slab building which appeared to



*The first Anglican school in the district—corner of Bells Line of Road and Hermitage Road, two clergymen on the verandah.*

## **The Kurrajong Dramatic Club/Society** by Jenny Griffiths

Back in the days before television many people were keen to form and perform in local dramatic groups. It provided entertainment for the local community.

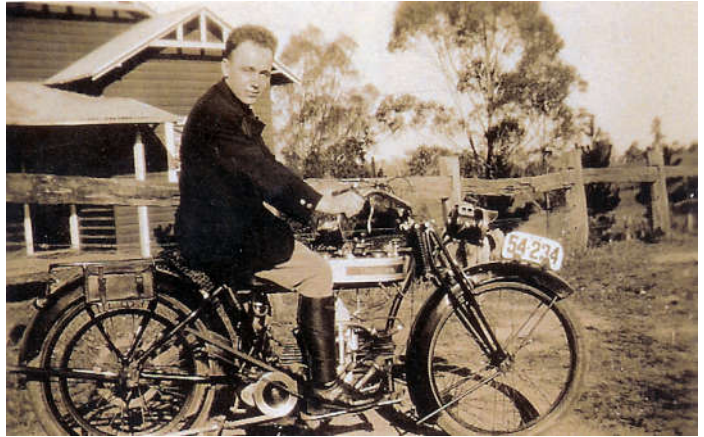
On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1918, the recently formed Kurrajong Dramatic Club held a fund-raising event for the Jacks Day Fund. Jacks Day had been organised that year on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, to raise money for naval servicemen and mercantile marine sailors following their service in World War 1. The debut performance by the Dramatic Club was held at Kurrajong North Public School and consisted of a two-act farce called "The Troubles of a Family Man", together with musical items.

Their next concert, also at Kurrajong North Public School, was on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1919 and called "Kurrajong's Peace Concert". It was organised by Mr and Mrs Knoblanche. They had a full house and proceeds went to the school's P. and C. as well as the Windsor and Richmond hospitals.

Another performance was held in July, 1920. This is the last reference to the club I can find. And the assumption is that it ceased to exist.

Then an article in the "Windsor and Richmond Gazette" of 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1925 highly praises a performance by the Kurrajong Dramatic Society which "was only inaugurated a few months ago". Praise continued for the Society. One article claimed that "It has now given, about half a dozen entertainments and any of them would do credit to a band of professionals."

Some Kurrajong names involved were Mr Ralph Holland, producer of two plays, William "Bill" McMahan of Comleroy Road and Frederick Hays, who lived on a Soldier Settlement property.



*Fred Hays on his motorbike at his Soldier Settlement home. Image 074101*

In January, 1926 Fred Hays, aged 28 years, was sadly killed by a lightning strike while ploughing on his block. The report says that he took a great interest in the Dramatic Society, taking a leading part in several plays. Other well-known people of the Kurrajong area who were involved included Stanley Merriman, Horace Dunston, Benson Robinson and Molly Farlow.

Over the years more productions were held in the Windsor School of Arts, Freemans Reach School of Arts, Harts Hall in Kurrajong Village and the Royal Picture Theatre, Windsor with funds being raised for the Windsor Hospital.

Then, in October, 1933, there is a report that few people attended a performance of the comedy "The Fortune Chasers". Perhaps due to the Depression, attendance had been falling. This was the last reference to the Society.

### **KURRAJONG'S "PEACE" CONCERT**

THE KURRAJONG DRAMATIC CLUB  
will present its **SECOND GRAND CONCERT** on

**SATURDAY, 27th INST., at 8 p.m.**

In the North Kurrajong Public School  
(In aid of Citizens' Association and Windsor  
and Richmond Hospitals.)

Leading district and Special City Vocalists  
and Instrumentalists will participate.

Farce in one act, "**COAXED & HOAXED**"  
and the Sparkling Comedietta, "**My Mother-in-Law.**" (By S. Knowles).

**DON'T MISS KURRAJONG'S "PEACE"  
CONCERT ON THE 27th INST.**

Doors open 7.30, Curtain 8 sharp. Splendid  
programme, every comfort and a  
**GOOD CAUSE.**

**MRS. W. WITTS, Hon. Sec.**

**MRS. H. J. KNOBLANCHE, Hon. Treas.**

*Windsor & Richmond Gazette 26th Sept 1919*

**KURRAJONG DRAMATIC SOCIETY**  
Presents the well-known Farce in three acts,  
**"J E N N Y"**

AT  
**WINDSOR SCHOOL OF ARTS**  
ON

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8.**  
at 7.45 p.m.

To be preceded by a Farce in one act entitled  
**"THE LOVE POTION"**

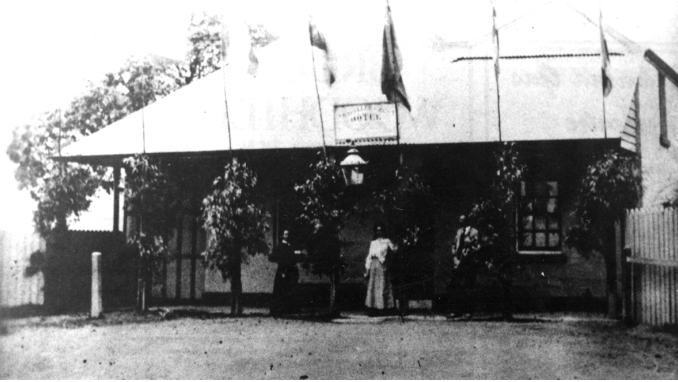
ADMISSION:—3/-, 2/-, & 1/-.

Part proceeds to Windsor District Hospital  
**M. W. LOGAN,** **RALPH HOLLAND**  
President. Producer.

*Windsor & Richmond Gazette 25th Sept 1925*

## “Notes By the Way” by “The Wanderer” Jenny Griffiths from Trove

The man or woman who has a desire to spend a quiet holiday could not do better than put in a few days at the Riverview Hotel, North Richmond, over which Mr. and Mrs. James Walsh preside. Windsor and Richmond, of course, provide excellent hotel and private accommodation; but on the other side of the Richmond bridge, nestling under the Kurrajong hills, so to speak, is a regular farmer's hotel. Jim Walsh 'pitched his tent' in Windsor many long years ago, and is just the same good-hearted, honest Irishman as he was in days of yore — when the hand of old Father Time had not touched him with the strong and 'feeling' touch which touches us all. Right on the riverbank and commanding a view that brightens, the Riverview Hotel needs only to be better known to be better patronized by [? Unreadable] and work weary folk. Everything is kept as clean as a new shilling — good table, every comfort, and that good old homely kindness but rarely met with at hotels in these days of commercial and business competition.



*Traveller Rest, later to become Riverview Hotel c1901*

By the way, during a day or two's sojourn at Mr. Walsh's hostelry during Christmas week, writer happened across a sort of bush poet — if memory serves me correctly his name is Dave Everson. He was as full of poetical quotations as a porcupine is of quills, and in addition, gave the assemblage a couple of his own compositions. I take no responsibility for them, and if there is any shooting to be done after they appear in print — well, Dave Everson is the man who should stop the lead. Here they are: —

*The other day at 'Longleat' there was a bit of fun,  
For Jimmy Hanchett came and chased the whole lot with a gun  
Said he, 'I'll shoot the bloomin' lot, or chase them in a log,  
For some of them, I'm certain, have poisoned my blue dog.'"*

*Old Hanley made for Neilson's Scrub, where Jimmy couldn't see,  
And, fearing half a pound of lead, he climbed an old Gum tree.  
The tree, bedad, was rotten, and of Hanley made a wreck  
The limb gave way, and down he came, and nearly broke his neck.*

*Old Hands ran home at double speed, he felt as good as dead;*

*He rushed into his bedroom, and dived beneath the bed;  
While right across to 'Hoskin's Thorns' poor Carter did a run,  
With Jimmy Hanchett close at hand -of course he had his gun.*

*Frank Norris, hiding in his hut, got so much afraid,  
He packed his traps like lightning, and ran to Charley Wade.  
Big Tom, who lives on 'Fourteen Block,' went down the hill  
like hell,  
He somehow missed the beaten track, and fell in Connolly's well!*

*He must have drowned for certain— of that there is no doubt  
But Gearing heard the awful splash, and promptly yanked him out.*

*No shooting really happened — Jim couldn't see for fog  
But if some day you meet him — don't ask him how's his dog?*

As I said before, I take no responsibility for the above, and it there is any shooting to be done, Dave Everson and 'Old Tom' should carry a few pellets. But here's another gem from the poetic brain of Dave — a libel on the fertility of the Kurrajong:

*Come all you bold, back-country men, I'll tell you some news,  
A verse or two I have composed on Kurrajong cockatoos;  
Poor unfortunate strugglers, they got no rest or ease:  
They try to make a living from growing beans and peas.*

*The weather is erratic, and nearly always dry,  
And when a shower's most needed, no rain cloud meets the eye;  
They plough and sow and harrow, and work from dawn till dark,  
And they sometimes make a bob or two at stripping wattle bark.*

*The white ants eat their fences down, and rabbits eat their peas;  
Their dogs are full of vermin, and doubly full of fleas;  
The bot-flies kill their horses, and moths are in their bees,  
The grubs kill half their wattles, and the 'jumpers' eat their cheese.*

*They're plagued all day with beef ants, and get no rest at night..  
For ghosts and spooks are poking round, and each one has a light;  
There are no birds of any kind, and hares don't seem to thrive;  
If it wasn't for the rabbits — how on earth would, they survive?*

*But still they're all good-hearted chaps — they're solid friends and true;  
And I'll recollect them kindly when I'm on the blank Barcoo;  
And when across the scorching Bland I'm humping of my drum,  
I'll often think of old Tom Bray and Jimmy Walsh's rum.*

*Continued next page ...*

You know, a man who would be guilty of writing those verses ought to be shot at dawn at a quiet spot round 'Sally's Bottoms', or sentenced to be shaved by Jack Lamond with the handle of a pick-axe. However, seeing that it's his first offence, "Drinks for all hands at Walsh's", when the mercury is playfully moving about within the precincts of 110 in the water-bag, should meet the case.

The Hawkesbury district looked splendid at Christmas time — with its pasture lands carpeted in green and its rich agricultural areas under crop. Great district, great people.

*Windsor and Richmond Gazette 11 January, 1918*



*A crop of peas at Rosen Dhu 1910 Image 011005*

## OF BYWAYS NOT HIGHWAYS—OVER THE RIVER *Continued from Page 1*

### Richmond Police Court.

THURSDAY.—FEBRUARY 6th.

Before Messrs D. R. Jamieson, P. M., and C. S. Guest, A. Matheson, R. Skutchorp, D. Clemson and H. Wood, Js.P.

INDECENCY.

Kenneth Hurst and James Hurst were both charged with indecent exposure on December 26th in view of Aston Falls Road, Grose Vale.

Both pleaded guilty.

Senior Constable Ross said that he had four witnesses present and perhaps their worships would like to hear the circumstances.

Mr Jamieson: Yes.

Henry Wood, fruit inspector, (who was off the bench for this case) deposed: About eighty or a hundred yards from the road at the place named I saw the two accused with others playing leap-frog in from one to two feet of water; at the time they were in the vicinity of a hundred ladies, women and children and young girls; I went up as near as I could get and brought under their notice the indecency of the offence they were committing and suggested that there was plenty and better water handy and asked them to beat a retreat there; instead of taking that advice they abused me in strong and vile language, which intensified the indecency of the offence they were committing, and they invited me to do the best I could; they told me I was trying to make a ——— fool of myself; they stood up in the water and thoroughly exposed themselves and asked me how I liked it; I told them I would let them know how I liked it later on.

The P.M. called in the various witnesses that had been subpoenaed to estimate their costs (travelling, absence from employment, etc). From the amounts claimed, they all appeared to be in most lucrative employments.

*Windsor & Richmond Gazette*

*Sat 15th Feb, 1908*

In what is now the village of North Richmond was the large Merrick family amongst others. All these families made up the community of Richmond Hill and movement across the river was frequent. As we complain about the floods it's interesting to consider their resilience. The murder of Kurrajong settler, Roland Edwards, at Paramatta Turnpike on his way home to Kurrajong in 1814 is an indication of the level of movement.

It is noted that Macquarie returned to Windsor via the Richmond Terrace and the punt established by Andrew Thompson. There is no record of a punt at Richmond until around 1827 when Archibald Bell may have established the first. It is unlikely that it would have been the transfer of choice other than in high water times and useless for cattle, thus the falls continued as the main route for many years.

Having navigated the river crossing, various tracks gave access around the area. The most used followed the general line of the ridge along which Grose Vale Road now runs. Heading north the route joined the Terrace and eventually reached Windsor. Westward the track passed the grants of George Loder, Henry Lamb, William Blady and others before swinging north towards the Comleroy Ridge.

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### Dates for Your DIARY

**K-CHS Christmas Party**  
**Saturday 14th December at Noon**  
**'The Hut' in Bowen Mountain Park**

Buffet lunch of chicken and ham + dessert provided. BYO drinks and picnic kit.  
 'The Hut' is air conditioned if needed. \$15 pp. Please [book online](#)

**Mystery Train Trip**  
**Sunday 24th November**

Leave Richmond Station at around 08:00 (tbc).  
 Travel (Opal) and lunch at own expense. Guaranteed to visit stations you have never been to!  
 Please [book](#) so we know how many to expect.

**K-CHS Birthday Breakfast**  
**Australia Day 2025**  
**Bowen Mountain Park at 09:00**



A man walks behind the draught horse, using a hand operated scoop mechanism to turn the soil, at Camp MacKay. The caption on the back of the photograph reads 'Tilling the soil'. Image 044632



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