Transcription Peter Dumbrell 2016
Kangaroo Valley
A. & H. Association

ONE HUNDRED YEARS
OF ACHIEVEMENT

1885 - 1985
Foreword

To research and appreciate the history of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, one must first understand the spirit of the pioneers of the Valley, and their zeal and determination to succeed.

Their determination could only be matched by their friendly spirit, a spirit that has been handed down from one generation to the other. This friendliness has become a watchword for the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, with the result, over the years, the annual show has been advertised as “The Friendly Show”.

Throughout the year the Show Committee works tirelessly to ensure the success of the next show. Mistakes made in the past are noted in order that they may not be repeated. Ideas for new attractions are propounded, and a campaign of activity is worked out with sub-committees being allotted individual tasks. There is a friendly rivalry in order to give of their best. There is no thought of personal gain or reward, and work for the Show Committee has to be slotted in with normal everyday tasks.

As the appointed day for the annual show approaches, activity reaches fever point as the Executive checks and re-checks every detail. There is so much responsibility resting on the shoulders of the President, Secretary and Treasurer. All contingencies must be taken into account, and in particular the weather. for there is so much at stake.

As the visitors to the Show, men, women and children, exhibitors and spectators walk through the entrance gate, there is a friendly greeting and all are made to feel welcome. Though the Valley Show has grown to be big business for a township the size of Kangaroo Valley, it is small enough to be personalised.

This Centenary Show can best be described as the “big Oak” grown from a “small acorn”. It was a bold step by a group of interested residents in the year 1881 to establish the Kangaroo Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Association when a popular resident, Mr. James Campbell was elected President. The first Show was held in 1885 and was reported as being “an unqualified success”. Mr. Campbell held the Presidency until 1909.
Message From The Mayor

Because of my long and close association with both the 'Valley' and the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, I am extremely proud to extend wholehearted congratulations to the dedicated and hardworking members of the Show Society on celebrating its Centenary Show.

The first show was held in Kangaroo Valley in 1885 and the Committee has staged the Show through the rigors of two World Wars, floods and bushfires and the members of the Society have displayed a keen sense of loyalty in ensuring that the Show continue as an annual event to be enjoyed by all.

The progressive development of Osborne Park is to the credit of the Osborne Park Management Committee and the Show Society with improvements still being made and planned for the future.

The centenary of what has become traditionally known as the “Friendly Show” will be a landmark in the long and valued history of Kangaroo Valley and to Show President, Norm Luscombe and his Committee members, congratulations on this outstanding achievement - I am sure that this Show will continue in the vein of dedication, achievement and friendship.

Harry Sawkins. MAYOR

1984 - 1985 COMMITTEE

The President's Message

The year 1985 is of much significance to the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, for its marks another chapter in the record of Kangaroo Valley.

It was in the year 1881 that Mr. James Campbell, a successful Kangaroo Valley business man, called a public meeting to consider forming a local Agricultural and Horticultural Show Society.

The meeting was well attended, and it was resolved to call a further meeting, when according to the records, it was resolved to form the Association.

It took however, almost four years before the first show was staged in Kangaroo Valley, and the 1885 show was voted an outstanding success.

Thus 1985, one hundred years after the first Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Show, is of such importance.

The first one hundred years has shown remarkable development in the Valley. The show has had two previous locations before settling on the present site. The construction of an all-weather bitumen sealed road over the Cambewarra and Barrengarry Mountains, linking the South Coast and the Southern Highlands has been a tremendous advantage to our show.

The reticulation of electrical power lighting the streets and houses, and playing an important part in the working of the farms, has brought progress to the Valley.

Another big advance has been the installation of the town water supply.

The Show Society in any country centre fills an important role, and in particular in Kangaroo Valley, where the residents are dependent upon each other. It stimulates healthy competition and encourages others from outside the district to compete.

For one hundred years this healthy spirit has prevailed. Through two world wars, droughts, bushfires and floods, the annual show in Kangaroo Valley has taken place. With the exception of one or two years during the wars, when through circumstances, the shows had to be cancelled, there has been an annual show. Even then entertainment was arranged on the showground on behalf of the war effort.

A special effort has been put into this Centenary Show, making it a three day event.
We are hoping to have major improvements made in time for this Centenary Show, with a new roof on the pavilion, new cattle tie-ups, and more improvements to the cattle parade area.

A great deal of planning has gone into making this show a-success, and I would emphasize that this has been a combined effort.

It has been my privilege to be President of the Committee this Centenary year, but any credit must be shared by every member, and in particular the Ladies Auxiliary, who have backed the committee all along the way.

The support and advice from Past Presidents has been of great assistance, and is much appreciated.

Of course the work of the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Joan Good cannot be estimated. Her knowledge of the Valley people, and her business ability combine to make her a most efficient Secretary, and her help has proved invaluable.

The work of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association cannot stop at this Centenary Show, for no Show Society can afford to rest on its laurels.

In conjunction with the Osborne Park Committee of Management, the showground must be maintained, and planning must proceed for the future.

Any failures must be looked upon as an incentive to do better, while success must be encouragement to achieve higher things.

Your continued support is much appreciated.

N. C. Luscombe.

The Kangaroo Valley Light Horse Detachment which was successful in winning the Prince of Wales Cup in 1931-32.
In The Beginning

According to the “Town and Country Journal” under the date of 17th February, 1909, in an article titled “In the Rich Kangaroo Valley - the District and the Show”, there is a report of a conversation with a popular old resident, Mr. James Campbell, the foundation President of the Kangaroo Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Association, which he says was formed in the year 1881.

History recalls that Mr. Campbell was a business man in Kangaroo Valley, and in every respect a very public minded citizen.

The public meeting was held sometime in the year 1881 and the venue was the Church of England school room. Mr. Campbell himself presided over the meeting and amongst others who attended it were: Messrs. W. J. Miller, Thos. Randall, G. H. Watson, George Tate, J. Thompson, W. Black, Hugh Hanlon and W. Clark.

The proceedings were characterised by a lot of enthusiasm by reason of the fact that though the settlers of Kangaroo Valley themselves were not jealous of the results obtained by the holding of annual shows in Nowra and Berry, many of the people in those districts, whilst not exactly ridiculing the idea of a mere handful of people as the Valley's population comprised at the time, trying to organise an Agricultural Show, considered the move a presumptuous one, and were curious to see what small degree of success would attend it.

This feeling of course, put the Kangaroo Valley folk on their mettle, and every farmer there laid himself out, not only to assist in establishing the Society, but to bring about the success of the initial show. The meeting unanimously decided upon the establishment of the Association, fixed the membership fee at 10s 6d. ($1.05) and made arrangements for the election of a committee of management. This business was dealt with at a subsequent meeting, when Mr. Campbell was elected President, Mr. W. Black, Vice President and Mr. W. J. Miller, Secretary. Mr. Miller took a very active interest in the young Association and performed secretarial work, until having sold his storekeeping business to Mr. R. Wilkinson, he left the district.

The first show was held in 1885, and turned out an “unqualified success” with many visitors from Illawarra centres declaring it to have been much beyond their expectations.

The site of the show was a piece of land on the bank of the river at the rear of what was then known as the Commercial Hotel, now the Friendly Inn. The livestock exhibits were paraded there, while exhibits of fruit, farm produce etc., were set out in the Church of England School Hall.

In the following year the Society held its second show on the same site on the bank of the river and erected there an improvised structure to house the pavilion exhibits. It also held its third show there, and then shifted to a ground leased from the Osborne Estate, and situated at the east end of the village.

The grounds, which embraced an area of approximately 10.5 acres, and were picturesquely located, were first held on a 10 years' lease from the late Mr. Alex Osborne who lived at Barrengarry when the show was started. At the expiration of the lease, a further fifteen years was obtained.
The Association effected substantial improvements on the grounds, erecting a pavilion, cattle yards, and horse stalls.

Mr. Campbell's record of service as President of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association for 24 years, is something of a State record, equalled only by Mr. H. O. Cox O.B.E, who served two terms as President of the Society, from 1936 to 1943, and from 1945 to 1964.

While Mr. Cox was President, the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association relocated its showground to its present site at Osborne Park, an all-purpose ground centrally situated in the township.

The first show in Osborne Park was held in 1956, and was marked by torrential rain. Despite the downpour, the show was described as a success, being greeted with enthusiasm by all who attended, even though the grounds could only be described as a quagmire.

1907 COMMITTEE


Picture by courtesy the late Mrs. Cullen's family.
The Birth of a New Ground

In the absence of authenticated records, little is known of the first Showground as some of the early Minute Books cannot be found.

It is believed that in 1887 the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association moved from that Showground, at the rear of the Friendly Inn Hotel, to a site one mile east owned by the Osborne Estate. This ground was held on a lease hold basis.

The years ahead were a test of tenacity and endurance. Not only was money or the lack of money a problem, but the committee was called on to give many man-hours of labour to build and maintain a showground. This was in the days of the horse and buggy, and roads were a little more than a dirt track.

To the credit of the early committees, their work was substantial and most of the buildings erected, were later transferred to the Osborne Park showground.

In 1911, the committee was looking to the future, and knowing that the showground site was to be offered for sale, an approach was made to the vendor, Mr. S. F. Osborne to see if he would consider giving the show committee an option to purchase the ground.

On 28th June, 1911, the Committee agreed to purchase the ground for 200 pounds, paying all transfer costs. It was further agreed that the money was to be paid by the 1st October, 1911. The ground was vested in the hands of the Trustees and six Committeemen.

While the showground was being developed, in another part of the town, the School of Arts was growing, being the centre for social activity.

According to records, the School of Arts must have been in use in 1907. The hall was enlarged in 1928, and in 1937 the supper room was added. It also provided a library service and for a time moving pictures were screened.

With better roads, and a fluctuation in population, together with radio and television the social life style changed, and less use was being made of the School of Arts. Still the building has its uses, and not the least has been the provision of a room for technical classes, that has been an advantage to the ladies.

In the minutes of an A. & H. meeting held on the 15th June, 1946, Mr. Roy Walker advocated getting an engineer to give an estimate of cost for the levelling of the old show ring to make a trotting track. Mr. L. W. Vance said he heard three intelligent men say at the last show, that the ground should be on the Barrengarry side of Hampden Bridge, so he suggested that before spending money on the old grounds, an investigation be made as to a better site. Perhaps a new agricultural hall would meet the need for a larger dance hall.

The next reference is in the School of Arts minutes, when Mr. C. H. Dent on behalf of the Diggers, requested the School of Arts committee to take steps to provide a hall suitable to the needs of Kangaroo Valley. The committee decided to call a public meeting to consider the matter. Nine days later, the 23rd October, 1946, the meeting was held. Only fourteen people attended. Mr. A. R. Chittick, President of the School of Arts was chairman, and explained that the returned soldiers had asked the School of Arts committee to take steps to bring into being a community hall larger than the School of Arts.
The Osborne Park Showground – the first Show at that venue 1956 – an extremely wet day
The meeting decided to obtain a further and more representative voice of the people by asking all district organisations to appoint a delegate to attend a meeting. It was held on 13th November, 1946. A. R. Chittick occupied the chair and 21 delegates were present. Every delegate spoke, a large majority favouring the larger hall.

Constable Gibson advocated a community centre undertaken by the Shire and moved that six be appointed to meet the Cambewarra Shire Council to discuss the possibilities.

A. R. Chittick, J. Butler, E. C. L'Estrange, C. Dent, C. Stacey and L. W. Vance were appointed.

They submitted their report on the interview to a meeting on 25th June, 1947, which indicated that council was sympathetic with the move for a community centre, and would investigate the possibilities.

At this meeting, C. Stacey and T. Love stressed the point that the recreation ground be the centre combining a showground. Jack Butler said with adjustment of values, they would exchange land to make the plan possible. Those present formed an inspection committee to see if the plan was suitable. At a meeting held on 5th December 1947, the inspection committee reported that they were favourably impressed. The meeting decided to vote 10 pounds to Council towards the engineer drawing a plan with an estimate of costs.

It was not until 27th September, 1948 that a meeting was held to consider the plans prepared for the Cambewarra Shire. It was a most ambitious plan catering for more than the land could hold, costing 33,000 pounds. At this stage Cambewarra Shire was amalgamated into the Shire of Shoalhaven.

Show Pavilion at the time of erection on the new Showground in preparation for the first Show on that Ground. Some wit hoisted a dummy representing H. O. Cox on to the roof and painted the words “Give H. O. a go for 1956- Vote 1 Cox”, recognising the efforts of this man.
Chairman of the meeting, A. R. Chittick, President of the School of Arts, under the auspices of which all the public meetings for the new hall were held, addressing the meeting referring to the amalgamation said, “Fortunately, Mr. H. O. Cox is President of the Shire and he will ably put our case to Council.”

All district organisations pledged their support to establish a community centre. Armed with this backing, President H. O. Cox, the people's representative gained from Council the undertaking of levelling the recreation ground to make a showground and sports oval, the estimated cost to be 4,000 pounds.

The work started in March 1953, seven years after the first meeting regarding a larger hall. The new hall was forgotten, but Osborne Park thrived, thus making the Kangaroo Valley Showground one of the most picturesque in the State. A new era had opened for the Valley A. & H. Association.

When the Dog Show was introduced into the Schedule, it is understood that there was a Mr. Hayes in Wollongong who was recommended as a Judge for the Dogs. No one quite knew the address, but thinking that he would be well known, the Secretary wrote the address as simply “Wollongong”.

As it happened there was a popular Sports Commentator and it was he who, it is understood, received the invitation. He graciously accepted, but he explained to the Show Committee that he did not know much about dogs, but would do his best. It seems no one was any the wiser, and the Dog Show was successful.

I. S. Nelson. another well-known member of the Nelson family
A Challenging Era

For more than a century the residents of the Kangaroo Valley district, have faced up to many challenges. It has only been the indomitable spirit of both the pioneers and the present population that has enabled the A. & H. Association to prosper.

In the year 1881, it would surely have been easier for Mr. James Campbell, Valley business man to have said to himself, “why should I worry about forming a Show Society in the Kangaroo Valley. My business is prospering and the farmers who wish to take part in Agriculture Shows may do so both at Nowra and Berry.” Instead, he regarded the proposed formation as a challenge, for if successful, it could help promote Kangaroo Valley.

Having successfully met this first challenge, Mr. Campbell and his Committee were faced with another challenge, having to find a suitable piece of land on which to develop a showground. The land on which the initial show in 1885 could not have been entirely suitable, and there is no record of it having a permanent tenure.

Again this challenge was met with foresight and determination and leasehold land was acquired in the eastern part of the town and there for more than sixty odd years, the A. & H. Association established its roots on which to build.
On reflection, this must have been a daunting task, for money would not have been plentiful, roads would have been primitive, and any machinery would have been dependent on farm horses for motivation.

Despite these shortcomings, the pioneer spirit prevailed, and on this ground was erected a Show ring, a section for Cattle, Pigs and Poultry, necessary Booths and most important of all, a Show Pavilion.

When the initial moves came in 1946 for a larger public hall on the lines of a community centre, culminating in the development of the sports and recreation ground, the Committee was in a strong position to consider moving onto the extra land that was envisaged.

The initial plan of action was through the Cambewarra Shire Council and it was not until 1947-48 that a comprehensive plan was produced.

In July 1948, the Minister for Local Government the Hon. J. J. Cahill dissolve seven Local Government bodies in Shoalhaven including the Cambewarra Shire Council and embodied them into what was the Shire of Shoalhaven.

Clr. H. O. Cox former President of the Cambewarra Shire Council, was appointed to the Shire of Shoalhaven and was elected as the Shire President. Mr. Cox was also President of the A. & H. Association, having been elected for his second term of office in 1945. He was fully conversant with what had transpired in relation to the sports ground, and he had the vision of what could be achieved in the future.

In 1956 when the showground was moved to Osborne Park, the north and the south of the district competed against each other in the pavilion. Pictured is the Southern District Exhibit. Picture by courtesy L. Sharman.
With the development now proceeding, and land acquisition on mutual terms, the year 1955 presented another challenge to the A. & H. Association.

Following the 1955 show, and with the prospect of moving to a new ground, the Committee requested a history to be compiled relating to the Association. It cannot be verified if this was compiled, but it is known that the residents of Kangaroo Valley are very proud of their heritage and now have a strong Historical Society and a Pioneer Museum due to the foresight of Committee members Vance and Chittick.

It was on the 19th May, 1955, that the Committee resolved that arrangements be made to shift the buildings etc. from the site of the old ground to what is now known as Osborne Park. A sub-committee headed by Mr. H. O. Cox was appointed to make the necessary arrangements. At a previous meeting held on the 9th May 1955, it was successfully moved that the 1956 show be held on the new grounds.

Mr. Cox lost no time in getting to work, and putting aside his own personal affairs, he and his sub-committee worked tirelessly to make the transition. There were many problems to surmount. The lay-out of the new ground had to be considered. The ring had to be built, drains dug, seating to be arranged and the siting of the buildings.

All the time there was the problem of finance, so much so that those with a lesser heart felt at times it was an impossible task.

So much so did this feeling grow, that at the committee meeting held on July 1955, a motion was put that the movement to the new ground be deferred until the following year.

Enthusiastic young assistants proudly display the Cup won by the Northern Districts in 1956. L-R: Loretta Campbell, Wendy Vance, Beverley Cochrane, Beverley Campbell.
Here reference is made in the Minutes to the feelings of Mr. Cox on this matter and he urged the Committee to hold to the objective of staging the 1956 show on the new ground. He said the Committee owed it to the ratepayers who had been levied a local rate for the job, to see something for their money. Mr. Cox said he was personally involved both as Show Society President and as President of the Osborne Park Committee to see the task completed. He appealed for full co-operation and if the date was deferred he could not see the position materially changing.

This appeal did not go unheeded and with the help of two full time tradesmen and the voluntary help of the committee men and women, the transition went ahead.

It was ultimately decided to shift the existing pavilion, making certain renovations to add to its presentation and utility. The pavilion as it stands today is substantially the same as the original structure.

Work went on unabated right to the eve of the 1956 show. Men and women alike worked side by side and it has been reported that the women were responsible for the painting of the posts and rails of the ring and everything else in reach of their paint brush.

Mr. Cox was meticulous in the overseeing of the task. He coordinated the ordering of materials, the use of private machinery and the detailing of voluntary labour. It was a mammoth task, but the dateline was met. An indication of some of the frustrations encountered by Mr. Cox, may be seen in the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 5th July 1955, when he told the meeting that he had obtained the deeds of the old showground and all the Trustees named on the deeds were deceased. If the committee wished to sell the ground, proof of the death of the named Trustees would have to be obtained, and three new Trustees would have to be appointed. Messrs. H. O. Cox, A. R. Chittick and L. W. Vance were duly appointed Trustees. The ground was subsequently sold for 690 pounds.

In 1957 the Northern District was successful in the competition between the north and south districts. This has now been discontinued.
Pounds, Shillings and Pence

It can be surely said that never before in the history of the City of Shoalhaven in general, and in the village of Kangaroo Valley in particular, has there been an exercise involving so much manual labour, carried out so expediently as the move by the Kangaroo Valley A,, & H. Association on what is now the Osborne Park.

The appointment of Mr H. O. Cox as Chairman of the Works Committee to co-ordinate the move while still Chairman of the Association, was a stroke of genius but it must have been a heavy burden for any one man. Under Harry Cox nothing was slip shod and every shilling spent was faithfully accounted for. His books of account were excellent and looking through the records, one would have to say that if H. O. Cox had chosen to be an accountant, he would have been as successful in that vocation as he was as a dairy farmer.

Work on the project, according to the records, took place in 1953-54 when the Shoalhaven Shire Council bulldozed the ground, and after 1954 the Council finished this stage of the work and the people of the Valley commenced their part in March, 1954. The cost of all voluntary labour was carefully assessed at nine shillings per hour.

The first tree planting on Osborne Park took place on August 2nd, 1954. According to records, seventy adults and ten children were involved in the actual planting, with a total of twenty one hours of labour. Likewise, this was costed at nine shillings per hour.

The floral display each year in the show pavilion is always worth viewing. Pictured are some of the exhibits with visitors in the background. Picture by courtesy South Coast Register.
The oval fence was another interesting item, for it involved 184 posts and 182 panels. A working party comprising Messrs. A. Russell, W. Lawson, J. Sharman, Lidbetter Bros. and H. O. Cox and other volunteers erected twenty three panels daily involving 111 voluntary hours. The fence was completed on June 1st, 1955 and a working party of twelve ladies was responsible for the painting.

The fence was costed at 364 pounds 12 shillings, while the foundation work for the oval and track cost 4,600 pounds. This was financed by a council grant of 1,000 pounds and a loan of 3,600 pounds.

The cost of the pavilion was 2,079 pounds 9 shillings, of which voluntary labour was credited with 1,082 pounds. The first tree planting cost 144 pounds 14 shillings and a second and subsequent planting 132 pounds 2 shillings. The approximate cost of the project in a statement prepared on 30th June 1963, was 12,149 pounds, with voluntary labour contributing 3,913 pounds including a donation of five shillings per day by Mr. E. C. L'Estrange a builder engaged for the project.

As the A. & H. Association had spent considerable money for the erection of the show pavilion and a poultry pavilion, the members of the committee expressed some concern as to whom would have the ownership of such buildings. The President took the matter up with the Shoalhaven Shire Council. The Osborne Park Committee by Delegation was agreeable to the A. & H. Association having control over these buildings and it was only a matter of council agreeing likewise. On 27th February 1961, council agreed to the proposal and on the 10th March, 1961, a legal agreement was signed vesting the control of these buildings in the A. & H. Association.

During one of the annual shows held on the old ground east of the township, almost opposite to the cemetery, a boxing troupe had rented space. This would have been in the early 1930s and it was possibly Jimmy Sharman who had the troupe.

Sometimes the showmen would have a free weekend, between travelling between country shows. However it was unusual to see such side shows at the Valley.

There was the usual spiel, with the banging of the base drum and inviting someone in the crowd to go a round or two for a pound or two.

One man in the crowd who stood head and shoulders above all others, raised his hand and said he was prepared to have a go. When asked which fighter he would take on, he said he would fight them all, but one at a time.

After some haggling, it was agreed that if he was still on his feet after three rounds, he would be paid the sum of five pounds, quite a large sum for those days.

The man said he had not done any boxing in his time, but was prepared to take anything coming to him. Some of the crowd thought this was all stage managed, but no one knows.

Going into the tent, the local man took off his shirt, shoes and socks, and with his trousers held up by braces, he faced his opponent.

The young boxer knew his business, was very light on his feet and danced around jabbing lefts and rights to the body of his opponent, with little or no effect.
Before the round was finished, the local landed an almighty right to the jaw of the professional, spinning him off his feet and laying him out for the count of ten, much to the delight of the crowd.

With hardly given time to take a breath, a second boxer came out of his corner, ready to cut the local down to size, but with the same result and everyone wondered how any human being could take such a beating, but the local still stood there waiting his opportunity to land his one blow to the head.

Four times this happened, with four professional boxers being stretched out in the tent.

The big man collected his fiver, and putting on his shirt, and his footwear, he left the tent. No one knew who he was, or where he came from and no one knows to this day whether it was all an act or was genuine, but it was certainly entertaining for those who liked this ‘sport’.

The village of Kangaroo Valley, looking east, in 1890
The Cattle Exhibits

There would have been much interest amongst the Farmers in Kangaroo Valley when in 1881 it was decided to form the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, for by that time interest was beginning to gather in breeding and improving the dairy cattle in the district.

There were three breeds exhibited at the first show in 1885 - The Ayreshire section in which prize winners included John Randall, Alex Osborne, James McClelland, Michael Kenny, George Tate Jnr., Thomas Somerville and Hugh Hanlon.

The Channel Island section (now known as Jerseys), had successful exhibitors such as Charles McCade, Henry Timbs, Alex Morrison, James Trimble, William Black, William Kelleher, Charles Graham, David C. Pryce, The Tate family, The O'Sullivan family, T. Nelson and Robert Martin.

As time passed many exhibitors mentioned in these results went on to build up herds of high renown, particularly Tates of "Oakdale". They became the best known breeders of dairy cattle in the Commonwealth winning many champion ribbons at the Sydney Royal and at all coastal shows until the herd was dispersed in 1920.

The sale continued for two days and up to that time was the largest sale of stud dairy stock ever held in Australia. The top sale was Oakdale Tot the price being 246 guineas. The famous Melba 15 of Darbalara was descendant of Victor, the bull bred by James Parrish, Kangaroo Valley, and Madam from Tate's “Oakdale” stud. This cow held the world record for milk and butter fat.

Another exhibitor, Dave C. Pryce became Australia's top judge of both Illawarra and Friesian cattle and judged at the Kangaroo Valley Jubilee Show.

The first pure bred dairy cattle to come into the district were 12 heifers brought in by Grahams of “Nellsville” stud. These were purchased from Evan Evans of Dapto in 1856.

There were many exhibitors during the first fifty years of the society apart from the names already mentioned - a few that come to mind are J. J. King and John Nelson of Bendeela, the Cox family of Glen Murray, the Maynes and Watson families of Barrengarry together with H. O. Cox, “Melross”, Barrengarry.

The McRae family would have been the most consistent exhibitors and prize winners at the Kangaroo Valley Show. Other names recorded include Albert White, Jim Priddle, James Lumsden, who later changed to Jerseys, Christy King, Andrew Nelson and his son, Arthur, Jim and Archie Chittick. The Cochrane family showed both Illawarra and Jersey cattle, breeding Sydney Royal Show champions in both breeds. Other local breeders were W. Boxsell, J. Graham and E. J. Good.

Glenorma Mercedes Maiden Ex. Just one of the many champions of Kangaroo Valley Show bred by S. G. Nelson. Mercedes Maiden Ex who with her half sister Glenorma Mercedes Faith, went on to be Reserve Champions at the Sydney Royal Show in 1965 and 1966.
Following the war motor transport became available and outside exhibitors such as J. Wills, P. H. E. Chittick, C. Knapp, J. A. & R. A. Henry, T. Airey, P. V. O'Keefe and Walsh Bros. together with local exhibitors made the competition very strong.

Those exhibiting today are L. Norman, Mrs. J. Whatman, A. McLean, A. W. Gall and G. Cochrane. Over the years the Holstein Friesian section has had many strong supporters. Names like S. G. Nelson, A. G. & K. J. Miller, who showed the Reserve Champion Bull at the first show on the new ground in 1956 and still support the show each year, E. W. King and Sons who can always be depended on to bring a strong team and P. Bruem who has been the most successful exhibitor in recent years. Other exhibitors were V. J. Lamond, J. H. Wilson, E. Armour, B. Noble, H. G. Parker and Sons, W. Stone and in more recent years M. & M. McPhee, K. L. Parrish, J. Walker and W. J. Jarrett.

This section has high hopes for the future with the popularity of the breed increasing together with production and type improvement.

After an absence of many years the Jersey Cattle classes were re-introduced in 1926. Exhibitors over the years up to the present day were G. Parrish, J. Butler, T. L. Cochrane, S. R. Lumsden, C. Emery, G. Ringlands, R. W. Lumsden, K. L. Parrish, Estate of E. Chegwidden, Mrs. G. A. Nelson who in later years exhibited in partnership with her son Michael, and J. C. Webb.

The Meadows Flora McDonald 23rd. owned by S. R. Lumsden, Champion Cow at Coastal Shows and Moss Vale in 1947.
The Guernsey Cattle section has been well represented over the years with such exhibitors as W. McMaugh, H. Smart, J. Sharman, Kellett Bros., C. Sanderson, A. Rutledge, Meadow View Dairies, C. J. Stephens and N. & S. Waine.

The Ayreshire Cattle classes were deleted from the Schedule some years ago, however W. J. Vance and P. H. Morton were successful exhibitors in early years with A. McPhail and Sons and H. Wheatley showing cattle in the latter years.

In the late 1960’s Commercial Beef classes for any breed or cross breed cattle were introduced, but soon after were replaced by Hereford classes which have been well supported by local breeders T. C. Marshall and E. D. R. Mackey and W. H. Ingold from Berry.

As recorded elsewhere in this history, the task of painting the fence around the show ring, when Osborne Park was developed as a Showground, was delegated to a task force of twelve ladies. One lady, so the story goes, was on the last panel with the finishing coat, when the local Constable’s calf rubbed against the fence. This so exasperated the lady painter, that she hit the calf across the rump with her paint brush. It so happened that this calf was to be an entrant in the show to be held in a few days and the owner was highly annoyed, for what Judge would award a prize to a calf with an unplanned white streak across its rump?

Mr. Tom Marshall with his Poll Hereford 1st prize winning heifer under 18 months. Picture by courtesy Roger Chapman.
THE VALLEY AND THE HORSE

The village of Kangaroo Valley and the era of the horse, are so entwined, that they have become synonymous.

It was the horse that provided the motivation power on the farm, means of transport, the delivery of mail over the mountain tops and means for visitation between farms and into the township for supplies. Ministers of religion travelled with horse and buggy for divine worship.

The roads were gravel sheeted, and while they were rough by today's standards, they provided sure footing for the family horse plodding up hill and down dale.

Good horsemanship became a matter of pride and whether it was a matter of driving or riding, it was necessary to have a strong pair of hands and to exercise a firm control of the horse.

The role of the horse in the Show ring has undergone a complete revolution. Up to the turn of the century, ploughing provided a great deal of competition. There were prizes not only for the best furrow, but also for the best horse and sulky, the best buggy and the best pair in harness. The family buggy received almost as much attention as today's motor vehicle.

James Chittick’s horse clearing a high jump at a Kangaroo Valley Show
Picture by courtesy Mrs. E. Chittick.
Riding a horse was as much part of life, the same as walking. A part of growing up was to be able to ride and handle a horse. Unlike the Pony Clubs of today, with riding lessons, being given, youngsters in the twentieth century learned to handle a horse by experience.

As the years progressed, more and more horse events were included in the district Show programmes. There were novelty racers for all comers, Tent Pegging displays by members of the Australian Light Horse and of course the High Jump event.

Visitors to Kangaroo Valley Show have never failed to be thrilled with daring displays of horsemanship. In living memory, names like “Sonny” and Bob Chittick, Ivan and “Casey” Nelson, John and D. A. Nelson and families, Jack McGee, Bob Monteith, Ron Hull and a host of others come to mind who excelled themselves in show ring events.

Local horsemen "Casey" and Ivan Nelson
“Sonny” Chittick particularly, will be remembered for his prowess in the exciting “Tandem Hunt”. It was a pleasure to note the intelligence of his horses and his skill with the reins.

Bob Chittick became a professional rider in 1916 and rode and owned manyamous horses, including the World's record high jumper, Musician.
In 1921, in the presence of the visiting Prince of Wales, he won the High jump and on being presented to the Prince, was asked if he could do it again. Bob repeated his jump on Musician, equalling the record. He competed at the Valley as often as he could.

Ernest Denver Nelson, “Casey”, was born in Kangaroo Valley in 1910 and had his first experience on ponies left by Colleano's Circus in the Valley, while the rest of the outfit was on tour. He won his first High Jump on Masher in 1923. A few years later, “Casey” gained further experience riding for his uncle, Jim Chittick, also of Kangaroo Valley.

“Casey” branched out on his own in 1933, buying a group of horses from John Phillips. They were Coaldust, Domino Warrior and Bay Radium. With other riders, “Casey” travelled the circuit from Cairns to Adelaide, then to Melbourne and up to the Sydney Royal Show.

Unfortunately the Second World War in 1939-45 brought an end to major shows and in 1942 “Casey's” big money winners were turned out for the duration.

Ernie “Casey” Nelson died in Sydney on 10th January, 1984, severing another link in the great days of show jumping and hunting contests by touring teams all over Australia. Casey was truly a good ambassador for Kangaroo Valley. Acknowledgement to “Hoofs and Horns” and Alan Chittick.
The L. W. Vance Memorial Shield

One of the most interesting horse events to take place on the Kangaroo Valley Showground, is the L. W. Vance Memorial Shield Flag Race.

In his life time, Mr. L. W. Vance, who died in 1965, was most interested in Flag Racing and there is little doubt, he would have competed not once, but many times in similar events in country shows. Mr. Vance had a great love for horses and indeed during his forty two years as Hon. Secretary of the Valley A. & H. Association he frequently used a horse to attend the committee meetings.

The rules applying to this race, which are used today, were largely adopted from his suggestions.

Under the rules, any who win with the same horse and rider, for three years in succession, became the outright winners and owners of the shield.

The Shield, as its name implies is a memorial to one who did so much for the Association.

Mr. Owen Ison was one who under the rules won the Shield three times and thus it became his property.
The house in which the late Mr. L. W. Vance was born, where he lived and where he virtually suffered his last illness, was built of cedar, which at the time of building, grew in abundance in Kangaroo Valley.

To provide a further shield, Mr. Ian Vance and his mother, Edith, decided to use some of the cedar from the bedroom in which Mr. Wes Vance was born.

This timber had been carefully preserved when the house was ultimately demolished, it being the intention of Ian Vance to use this for household furniture.

At the Valley Show held on the 18th February 1978, Mr. Owen Ison was again the winner, it being his fourth win in succession. He was keenly contested by Mr. Neville Gilpin, a polocrosse player from the Tablelands.

Mr. Ian Vance who presented the winner with his trophy, remarked afterwards that this would have been his late father's birthday, he was born on the 18th February 1888.

It is certainly a thrill to see the riders take part in this Flag Race, for they appear to throw all caution to the wind, as they race up and down the show ring.

A. & H. ASSOCIATION TURF CLUB

A number of members of the A. & H. Association were interested in horse racing and in order to attempt to raise funds for the Osborne Park project, a picnic sports and race meeting was held on Frank Wallis' property adjoining the old showground. This was held on Monday 3rd January, 1955.

At a meeting of the A. & H. Association Race Committee held on 26th July 1956, it was successfully moved that the A. & H. Society form a registered Race Club. The next meeting held on 23rd August, 1956, the name “Kangaroo Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Turf Club” was adopted. It was further agreed that the object of the Race Club be for the development of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association.

Mr. H. O. Cox was elected President, W. Stuart Vice President, J. A. Allan Hon. Secretary, R. Lumsden Hon. Treasurer and S. R. Reader and Son, Chartered Accountants of Sydney the Accountant. The membership fee was fixed at 1 pound, 1 shilling.

It was agreed to hold the race meetings three times annually, during the New Years Day weekend, the Saturday nearest Anzac Day, and the Six-hour Day weekend.

The race meetings were successful both socially and financially, but problems associated with the weather always seemed to come up.

The last recorded races on the track took place on November 17th 1962, when by a change of ownership of the racing area, pasture improvement was carried out.

On March 22nd 1963, the Club reluctantly went into recess, with a credit balance of a little more than $200 in hand. Efforts to come to an agreement with the Nowra Race Club having failed, the Chief Secretary was duly notified. The Club was licensed as a picnic race club, but was not registered with the A. J. C.
Though the motor car has taken over from the horse, and motorised traction is in use on the farms, horse events at the annual shows have become more popular than ever.

The Pony Clubs have encouraged young riders, exhibiting skills that must be admired.

There never seems to be any shortage of entries in the horse events at the annual show and show visitors can always look forward to some top line entertainment.

Kangaroo Valley Pony Club members Melissa Hardy, Leah Selby and Sarah Cope at the 1984 Valley Show. Picture by courtesy Roger Chapman.
The Rural Youth

In almost all South Coast shows, a particular feature in the Pavilion is the Rural Youth display and to a lesser degree, competition in the Cattle exhibits.

This is so in Kangaroo Valley, where in little more than fifty years, The Junior Farmers' Club, or as it is now known, The Rural Youth Club, has filled an important role in this rural village.

It was in 1934 that Mr. W. Cox, then Show Society President, chaired a large meeting in Kangaroo Valley to meet and hear Mr. George Carse talk about the Junior Farmer Movement. It was resolved at this meeting that a Junior Farmers' Club be formed and to meet again in a month's time to elect Office Bearers. It is recorded that John Graham was elected President, Alf Chittick, Vice-President and Geoff Goodman, Secretary. There were nineteen members, with the Show Committee to act as an advisory committee.

The Meetings were not held frequently because of the distance the Members had to travel, however Mr. Carse visited the School or the properties of the Members each month.

There were no social functions, but members worked hard on their projects with the objective of winning a State Award. Between 1934 and 1950 the Club gained distinction by the number of State champion and major awards won by Members.

Stan Armstrong won three First prizes and John Graham a Third prize in sown pastures and pasture improvements. Barry Smart won several prizes in Calf rearing and a trophy for runner-up in a trip overseas, while his twin brothers Brian and Ross were also successful winning several times the champion prize in Calf rearing. Ross was Dux of a Tractor school in Sydney. John Walker won the Maize growing championship and was runner-up in Vegetable growing and also represented the South Coast in the Commonwealth Exhibit held at the Sydney Show in 1951. Mr. William Cox and the Show Committee laid a firm foundation on which to build the Junior Farmers.

Initially there were no girls in the Movement and in the latter part of 1954 the Junior Farmers' Club was reformed. The need was recognised by the Area Supervisor of that time, Mr. A. J. Chalmers for the opportunity to be offered to the young people of the Valley in leadership training, and for them to be given some practical guidance in the responsibilities of being citizens. As a result of visiting some potential Members and Parents, and explaining the benefits of being a Junior Farmer, Mr. Chalmers called a meeting of all interested persons to the meeting at the Kangaroo Valley Public School. The meeting was a tremendous success with approximately twenty people attending in the fourteen to eighteen age group. John Walker was elected as inaugural President and served for a period of eighteen months. Val Cox (Mrs. Colin McGuire) became Secretary-Treasurer, and likewise served for eighteen months before becoming President. Wilma Lumby and Les Chittick were elected Girls' and Boys' Club Leaders respectively.

In 1956, the Secretary Val Cox was chosen as a finalist to represent the Movement in New Zealand for four months as a guest of the Girls' Young Farmer Organisation. The Club members showed considerable initiative in 1956 to erect an exhibition stand in the local Show Pavilion.
Considerable successes have come to the members through their enthusiasm and participation in competition at Area level which eventually led them to the State Finals at Head Office.

Ian Vance won the 1963 State Champion Pasture Improvement Award, also from 1963 to 1965 inclusive the Rural Youth District Star Award. From 1966 to 1969 inclusive he won a State Major Award and also in 1969 was judged first in the New South Wales A.B.C. Public Speaking Competition and second in the National Public Speaking, and won the Dunlop Award of $4,000. In 1970 Ian was appointed to the State Council (Rural Youth) as an Executive Member.

Max and Geoff Cochrane both won New Zealand tours in 1975 and 1978. Robert Cochrane won the State Pastures Improvement Competition in 1958 and Diane Walker won the Bank of N.S.W. Rural Youth Junior Achievement Award in 1978.

The Club also had representatives helping to stage the Junior Farmer Exhibition at the Sydney Royal Show.

Many who received their initial training in the Junior Farmers have since put their efforts into the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association as Committee members, rising to such positions as Show President and Secretary.

John Walker and Robert Cochrane currently share the responsibility of supervising the Movement in the Valley.

The encouragement of the Kangaroo Valley Rural Youth is reflected in their display at the annual show. Pictured is an early display with a picture of Mr. Harry Cox O. B. E. in the background. Picture by courtesy L. Sharman.
THE KANGAROO VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Kangaroo Valley Historical Society was also an offshoot of the A. & H. Association. When in 1951, the Hon. Secretary, L. W. Vance presented a most interesting secretary’s report, he had gone back in history and gave a resume of the Association's activities over a number of years. It was moved by A. R. Chittick that this information be preserved.

By degrees the ball was set rolling and the game became very absorbing. A sub-committee was formed and in 1953 the “Back to Kangaroo Valley Week” was successfully staged and the first edition of “Kangaroo Valley” by W. A. Bayley was launched. The Kangaroo Valley Historical Society is now a fully-fledged society and works with the Trust that administers the well-known Pioneer Farm Park, adjacent to the Hampden Bridge.

Miller Bros. store located in the village of Kangaroo Valley. Mr. J. Miller, the first Secretary of the A. & H. Association was a partner in this business.
KANGAROO VALLEY RYEGRASS

The Committee members of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association were not only deeply interested in the Show Society, but individually they used their talents for everything that promoted the Valley in general and agriculture in particular.

It is reported that for many years prior to the formation of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, approximately one hundred and thirty four years ago, the Kangaroo Valley variety of ryegrass was introduced by Henry Osborne.

In those days, the method of harvesting was primitive, but though machine power was introduced, much of the same method of harvesting continued until 1957 when the Officers of the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture took a keen interest in the industry and helped to introduce new harvesting methods.

With the encouragement of the Department, Kangaroo Valley farmers set up a system to grow the Kangaroo Valley perennial ryegrass on a commercial basis. From about 1958 until March, 1968, when a Co-Operative was formed, the growers had an Association. The late Mr. Archie Chittick was one who was keenly active, both in the Association and in the Co-Operative.

FIELD COMPETITIONS

The early improvement in many farming practices in the area can be traced to the initiative of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association through Field Competitions held by the Society. Probably the pastures competition must rank as one of the most important in terms of results, as the benefits of the knowledge gained through them is still adding to the prosperity of the district today. The first pasture improvement competition was held in 1931 and it is believed that it was the first held in the State.

The Department of Agriculture Field Officer for Illawarra, Mr. R. H. Makin must also receive credit for his assistance in conducting these competitions. In 1956 Mrs. Makin donated a Cup in memory of her late husband for the Pastures Competition and it was won in the first year by Mr H. O. Cox.

The Maize Growing Competitions were also keenly contested for many years, with yields increasing as the farmers gained knowledge of improved methods.

So keen was the participation and enthusiasm for exhibiting in the first Show on the Osborne Park Showground in 1956, it is reported that a Junior Farmer had an accident with an exceptionally tall stalk of Maize whilst transporting it to the Show with the result the tassel was broken off. With typical Junior Farmer ingenuity he placed a splint around the fracture, and undaunted it had a worthy place among the other Maize exhibits.
WHAT'S ON DISPLAY?
THE PAVILION

Apart from the cattle and the horses, the major attraction over the years at the Kangaroo Valley Show is the general pavilion, followed closely by the poultry pavilion.

It has often been stated that the Show Pavilion is the shop window for a country district, for it is here that a visitor may see what is produced in a district and what may come from the family kitchen or sewing machine.

In the early history of the Kangaroo Valley Show, competition was keen in all sections. From 1885, residents vied with each other to see who would collect the most prizes. It was not the prize money that counted, but the honour and glory of winning and showing what they could do.

For a time there was a competition for the north and the south of the Valley and much effort went into this exhibit. This display did not confine itself to any one type of exhibit, but it encompassed everything grown or made in that part of the Valley.

The vegetable section at each Kangaroo Valley Annual Show attracts keen competition. Pictured is a display of vegetables in the pavilion. Picture by courtesy South Coast Register.
Following the move to the Osborne Park Showground the Pavilion reached new heights in the magnificent displays of all Sections and the trend was maintained for quite a prolonged period. This exhibition was spoken of many times as “the best Pavilion on the Coast”.

Unfortunately in more recent times, the competition in the various sections has waned. It is true that practically all sections have exhibits, but it is often the same exhibitor has made a number of entries.

This could be attributed to the change of lifestyle now enjoyed. The advent of the supermarket with its range of tinned fruits, jams and other prepared foods, has lessened the need to make jams, and cakes, and preserved fruits.

The same may be said of the flowers, dahlias, vegetables and in the various sections of needlework.

There are those who may always be depended on to exhibit the items that they may have grown, cooked or made, but it is a hard fact that a waning population has inhibited some exhibits.

Each year a great deal of work goes into the pavilion and taking a walk through it, there is always something to see.

The Show Committee researches each show to see how the pavilion may be improved. Some additional sections are added, while some may be deleted. Recent sections included have been photographic, and arts and crafts.

Despite its years of service, the show pavilion always looks attractive, and a great deal of thought goes into arranging the exhibits. Pictured are the cutflowers in the mid 1950s show.
The Rural Youth section, since its inception in 1934, has provided a display in the pavilion, besides taking part in the cattle section.

The young people responsible for the display, show a great deal of ingenuity in the manner in which they exhibit.

Besides arranging the display, the young people invariably act as stewards for this section. The Rural Youth is providing the life blood for the adult sections of the pavilion.

Over the years, the Show Society has spent many working hours to ensure that the pavilion looks its best. Through droughts and floods, the exhibits have gone on, with stewards giving freely of their time in order that visitors and exhibitors alike, will see the best laid out before them.

Likewise in the Poultry Pavilion, much thought and hard work has been expended in this section.

It is here that interest has been maintained, not only with local exhibitors, but with poultry fanciers from Nowra and places further south and on the tablelands.

Regular improvements are being made to this pavilion and throughout the shows there has always been someone on hand to answer questions or sort out problems.

The two pavilions combine to see that visitors may view the best under the most comfortable circumstances.

At show time it is the ladies who fill an important role, particularly with the catering pictured is a group of ladies taking a well earned spell outside the luncheon hall during the 1984 show. Picture courtesy Roger Chapman.
PRESIDENTS
KANGAROO VALLEY
A. & H. ASSOCIATION

1885 - 1909 James Campbell
1909 - 1921 John Nelson
1921 - 1924 James Chittick
1924 - 1926 T. A. Cochrane
1926 - 1927 John Nelson
1927 - 1928 T. A. Cochrane
1928 - 1933 John Nelson
1933 - 1936 William Cox
1936 - 1943 Henry O. Cox, O.B.E.
1943 - 1945 D. A. Nelson
1945 - 1964 Henry O. Cox, O.B.E
1964 - 1975 R. A. N. Cochrane
1975 - 1977 Mr. J. J. Walker
1977 - 1979 Mr. I. W. Vance
1979 - 1981 Mr. L. T. Lidbetter
1981 - 1983 Mr. R. L. Cochrane
1983 - Mr. N. C. Luscombe

HONORARY SECRETARIES
KANGAROO VALLEY
A. & H. ASSOCIATION

1885 - 1889 Wm. J . Miller
1889 - 1890 R. H. Bell
1890 - 1897 H.Joyce
1897 - 1901 W Randall
1901 - 1907 George Campbell
1907 - 1910 E. G. Williams
1910 - 1918 J. J. Moffitt
1918 - 1960 L. W. Vance*
1960 - 1963 L. T. Chittick
1963 - 1970 E. G. Jarrett
1970 - 1975 A J. Tyler
1975 - 1976 J. Edwards
1976 - 1977 G. N Bannister
1977 - (Mrs ) J A Good

*The late Mr. Wes Vance's term of office of 42 years could be a record
THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

One of the most important offices in any organisation and in particular a show society, is that of President. While it is the committee that makes the decisions, the Secretary who has to implement the motions, it is the President who has to see the policy is carried out.

The sub-committee system is extensively used in the work of the A. & H., and it is this delegation of authority that helps smooth the way towards a successful show.

The President not only has to preside over the business meetings, but it is he by whom the Association is recognised. The fact that on show days, he wears a badge of office, is not for his own pride and glory, though he is entitled to be proud, it is so that he may be readily recognised by those needing his help and guidance on some matter.

On show days when there is an official luncheon, it is the President who acts as the host and extends a welcome to the guests. In most instances he would be accompanied by his wife or a lady who will act as hostess.

This also highlights the role of the ladies who form the Ladies' Auxiliary. While often working in the background, it may be said that the women constitute the backbone of the A. & H. Not only do they raise finds, but more importantly their extra help at show times is invaluable. Since its inception more than a century ago, the Valley Show Society has been led by very dedicated men. Other than James Campbell, the foundation President, names closely associated with Kangaroo Valley have appeared on the Presidential roll. There are names such as John Nelson, James Chittick, T. A. Cochrane, William Cox and of course Harry Cox and D. A. Nelson, all associated with the early history of the Show.

Within the last twenty years, the name Cochrane appears again with R. A. N. Cochrane upholding the standard set in 1924-26 and 1927-28 by T. A. Cochrane. Then comes John Walker and Ian Vance, a younger generation together with L. T. Lidbetter and Robert Cochrane. These gentlemen put the heart and soul into the position and gave of their best. Their hours of service could not be measured in dollars and cents, but they added to the heritage of the Valley.

Now the office is in the hands of Norm Luscombe, who will make his contribution to this high office. May the Show Society long prosper in Kangaroo Valley.

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From the records, it would appear that up to the year 1910, the Secretary of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association had to be elected to the Committee, before taking up the office of Secretary.

At the annual meeting held on the 21st April 1910, the Secretary, Mr. E. G Williams was defeated in election to the committee and was after three years of service, as Secretary, no longer eligible to fill the office.

According to the Minutes two of the committee men expressed surprise at the defeat of the Secretary and thought that his political ideas must have been the cause, The Minutes failed to say what political ideas the Secretary had.
CONSOLATION FOR SECRETARIES

Pasted inside the cover of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association Minutes Book for 1956-1960, there is a cutting that sums up the duties etc. of a Secretary. It is titled “Consolation for Secretaries” and it reads:

“If a Secretary writes a letter it is too long.
If he sends a postcard, it's too short.
If he issues a bulletin he is a spendthrift,
If he attends a committee meeting, he's butting in.
If he stays away, he's a shirker.
If he offers a suggestion, he's a know all.
If he says nothing, he's useless.
If the attendance at the meeting is slack, he should have called the members up.
If he calls them up, he's a pest.
If he asks a member for his subscription, he's insulting.
If he doesn't, he is lazy.
If the meeting is a big success, the committee gets the praise.
If it is a failure, the secretary is to blame.
If he asks for advice, he is incompetent.
If he doesn't, he is swollen-headed.
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
If the others won't do it, the Secretary must.”

*Writer unknown.*

Mrs. Joan Good, Honorary Secretary
“LATE ENTRY”

Show fever strikes annually. It causes the adrenalin to flow freely and often busy workers become victims. On one occasion Pavilion Stewards reported “too many unauthorised people wandering around hindering Stewards and Judges work”. The edict went forth - no one but Stewards and Judges to be admitted after the set time and “Jock” C. was duly instructed.

It so happened that a valued Highlands exhibitor was a little late with his entry of fragile blooms. He met a closed door and an adamant “Jock” who said “orders were orders”. Feelings ran high and words were exchanged. After a little time the proverbial “oil was poured on troubled waters” and Mr. Norman was quietly arranging his competitive and non-competitive display of choice Dahlias and Gladioli - just time enough for a local wit to contact the Secretary – “a late entry please, one aged and enraged bull - pedigree, Norman out of Pavilion, by Jock”. With widening smile, the genial Secretary accepted the entry.

Mr. Herb Norman was a keen Competitor in the cut flower section of the Kangaroo Valley Show, Pictured is Mr. Norman proudly displaying the Championship ribbon won at the 1958 show.
Throughout the history of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association mention is made of the assistance of the ladies, most of whom were Committeemen’s wives.

In 1970 the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association Ladies' Auxiliary was formed and has been exceedinglly active ever since. It was in the field of catering that the ladies excelled. Apart from catering for the Show Luncheon, a most successful Dinner Dance has been conducted annually and also the Debutante Ball.

These forms of fund raising have been of invaluable assistance. In this Centenary year, a tribute must certainly be paid to the Ladies' Auxiliary.

Some of the Members of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association Ladies' Auxiliary:
Back Row, L-R: Mesd. June Luscombe, Peggy Synold, Joan Good, Audrey Lidbetter, Alison Warran. Front Row, L-R: Mesd. Elwyn Shelley (Vice-President), Lorna Smart, Dorothy Nixon (Secretary), Phyllis Hill (Treasurer, Inset: Shirley Walker.)
Mr. Henry Osborne 'Harry' Cox O.B.E. late of ‘Melross’ Kangaroo Valley, leading Dairy Farmer, Business Director, Local Government councillor and shire President. A gentleman who worked untiringly on behalf of the community, his years of service as President of the Kangaroo Valley Show Society, helped make it what it is today.
TO THOSE WHO SERVED
HENRY OSBORNE COX O.B.E.

In most small rural centres scattered throughout New South Wales, there are amenities such as halls, parks and sporting grounds dating back for almost a century, built through the foresight, energy and enthusiasm of one or two community minded citizens.

Since the year 1881 in the days of James Campbell, followed by John Nelson, Kangaroo Valley has benefitted through the talents of energetic leaders, who were prepared to place their community before their own self interests. One such gentleman who at the time of writing had for health reasons, retired from public life, was Mr. Henry Osborne Cox O.B.E.

“H.O.”, or Harry, as he was known, was recognised as being one of the Shoalhaven City's all-time greats, a gentleman who in his working life, has made a considerable contribution to the dairy industry, Local Government, and the Valley Show Society.

Naturally in this limited space, this tribute cannot be regarded as a biography of H. O. Cox O.B.E., but simply some thoughts on this gentleman as a civic leader, a company director and a progressive dairy farmer.

Harry Cox was born to lead. He believed in total involvement and would not ask any to do what he was not prepared to do himself.

President of the former Cambewarra Shire Council, and later foundation President of the amalgamated Shoalhaven Shire Council, Harry Cox still found more than forty years of time to work with the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association. Of this forty odd years, twenty six years were spent in the Presidential chair, spanning from 1936-1943, and again from 1945-1964.

In the crucial post-war years from 1945 to 1964, his talents were critically put to the test and his zest and enthusiasm helped carry the Society into this Centenary year.

During the year 1955, when plans were being formulated to move from the old Showground, there were some who felt that twelve months was insufficient time to make the transition to Osborne Park. When one committee man voiced the opinion that the move should be deferred from 1956 to 1957, it was Harry Cox who said that the move could be made and the same problems would still be there even if further time were available.

As show president, he assumed responsibility for the engaging of labour and materials and he meticulously costed all the voluntary labour that was given. In his clear handwriting, every hour spent on a particular job was debited to that job and those records have been carefully preserved.

Henry Osborne Cox O.B.E. loved the Valley, he loved his home and family and he loved his fellow man. A Christian gentleman in every sense of the word, the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association is the richer for his service.
VALEDICTORY

While compiling the history of the Kangaroo Valley Show Society, the courageous life of Henry Osborne Cox O.B.E. came to an end, leaving a substantial heritage for the Community and an example that all may follow.

Harry Cox was an outstanding gentleman, one with a strong faith in God and a determination to do that which he considered to be right. He used his God given talents for the good of Kangaroo Valley and his fellow man.

The Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd occupied a very precious place in his life. It was in this Valley church that he worshipped and sang in the Choir. In his life time he was a member of the Church Board of Management and he capably filled a number of Church offices.

It was in 1955, when as President of the A. & H. Association, that Harry Cox inspired the Show Society to develop Osborne Park as a Showground and Recreational area. He would be the first to admit that the Showground was not entirely the work of one man, but of many, but it was the courage and determination of this man that inspired others to emulate his example.

Likewise, it was this same sort of courage that enabled him to endure for six years the disabilities associated with his last illness. Over these years he was lovingly cared for by his daughter and son-in-law, Wilma and Jack Lumby and other members of his family. No longer having his wife to share his burden, he was never alone, and until a week prior to his death, he was able to reside at his “Melross”, his beloved farm.

It was a moving sight, so many people at the Church of the Good Shepherd on Monday, 28th May 1984, to join in the funeral service. As the funeral cortege left the Church for the Kangaroo Valley Cemetery, members of the A. & H. Associations from Kangaroo Valley, Berry and Nowra marched in the front of the hearse and into the Showground before proceeding to the Cemetery. It was a last farewell to a great leader, a man amongst men.

The Church of the Good Shepherd
ARCHIE

REGINALD

CHITTICK

Any historic reference to Kangaroo Valley in general, or the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association in particular, would not be complete without reference to the Chittick family, and in particular to Archie Chittick, one of nature's gentlemen.

Archie, the youngest of eight children, was born in 1902 to James and Mary Jane Chittick. He was born and lived his whole life in Kangaroo Valley.

The “Valley” Chitticks were an exceptionally close family and it was Archie who did much to keep the family ties with the old home “Ellerslie”. Archie, with his sister cared for his ageing parents for many years until their deaths in the late 1930. His interest in cattle and horses goes without saying, however it was as a farmer of the soil that he showed great skills, winning many Pasture Improvement competitions and countless awards in the coastal show pavilions for maize, sorghum and grasses.

Archie could perhaps be even better known as being the instigator of the very successful Kangaroo Valley Perennial Ryegrass Association, which gained world recognition for this unique strain.

He was the President of this Association from its inception in 1958 until his death.

Very community minded, Archie served for 27 years as Vice-President of the N.S.W. Primary Producers Union, later as a delegate to the M.Z.D.U., on the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, the Valley School of Arts and was a stalwart of the former Methodist, now Uniting Church.

He was a historian of much ability and he was particularly proud of the “Back to Kangaroo Valley Week” celebration held in 1953, for which he worked as President.

He loved Kangaroo Valley and anything that eulogised the Valley and its people, and at the time of his death on the 1st February, 1973, Archie was working on the erection of the Kangaroo Valley Historical Village, a dream of his for twenty years. On Show days at the Kangaroo Valley Show, it was always a pleasure to meet Archie Chittick, who, as he walked amongst the visitors, was ever ready to welcome those he recognised.


Acknowledgement to “The Chittick Family History”.

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LUTHER WESLEY
‘WES’ VANCE

In this record of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, a special mention must be made of the late ‘Wes’ Vance, a gentleman who served the Association in an executive capacity for forty two years.

Wes, whose sudden demise took place on the 4th July, 1965, was one of the Valley's truly great gentlemen.

Living to the age of 77 years, Wes was born at Barrengarry and remained there on the farm for the whole of his life.

He married Edith Cochrane of Kangaroo Valley and daughters Wendy (Mrs. Wilson), Dorothy (since deceased) and son Ian, comprised this devoted family. His wife Edith and the family shared with their father, his love for the Valley and worked together for the good of its people.

Wes was devoted to the Methodist Church and led a life of Christian inspiration.
He was a lover of bird and animal life and was very interested in the problems associated with soil condition and fertility restoration. He thus became prominent in Agriculture Shows, where his store of knowledge was invaluable.

His service to the Valley A. & H. Association as Secretary for forty two years, must stand as a record. His attendance at committee meetings could always be assured. Through flood rains and droughts, Wes would always be there, having ridden a horse with the Minutes Book and correspondence in a saddle bag, from his home at Barrengarry. This was after having completed a full day's work on his farm.

Earlier in his life he was a most successful competitor in the horse events at South Coast and Tablelands annual shows and also at the R.A.S. His training of his horses and their obedience to his commands, was something to be admired.

Whilst Hon. Secretary to his local show, he was also Hon. Secretary to the School of Arts Committee for many, many years and Hon. Secretary to the Osborne Park Committee (since its inception) functioning for the development of the district Sports and Show Ground.

As if these activities were not enough, Wes always took an active part in historical matters, being the Hon. Secretary of the local Historical Society, which was responsible for the publication of the District's History, coinciding with the holding of the successful “Back to Kangaroo Valley” week.

In all his community activities, Wes had the wholehearted support of his wife Edith and his family, and though there were times that Edith may have felt that he was doing too much for the good of his health, she backed him all along the way.

On his retirement as Hon. Secretary to the Kangaroo Valley Show Society, he and his wife were the recipients of a combined District Complimentary Social and Presentation, as a token in appreciation of valued services rendered in so many varied ways.

Mounted on the wall in the hall at Osborne Park, there is a framed portrait of Wes Vance, a tribute to one who gave service above self.
JOHN NELSON

Following the example set by James Campbell, the foundation President of the Kangaroo Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Association, who served the office for twenty four years, some of the others who followed him likewise served for lengthy periods of time.

When James Campbell relinquished the position of President of the Valley A. & H. Association in 1909, he was succeeded by John Nelson, who served an initial term of twelve years.

Like his predecessor, John Nelson was an outstanding public figure in the Cambewarra-Kangaroo Valley area, for in addition to his thirty odd years as a Cambewarra Shire Councillor, he was active in many of the district's organisations.

According to Mrs. Edith Chittick, who supplied this information, John Nelson was born at Gerringong in 1865 and received his schooling at Toolijoa. Because of a leg injury in his early life, he received a little more education than was usual at that time. This was to contribute to his later interest in public affairs.

The Kangaroo Valley district became home for John Nelson in 1885 when he married Susanna Keys, and they settled on a farm at lower Bendeela. They later purchased the Bendeela homestead property where they lived until 1919, when it was subdivided for repatriation purposes.

John Nelson was a foundation member of a debating society which prepared him and many others for public life, particularly in Local Government. When Cambewarra Shire was proclaimed in 1906, he was appointed chairman of the provisional council and his work in those first six months laid the foundation for the Shire's operations over the next forty two years. In all, he served a record nine terms as Shire President during his continuous thirty two years on council.

While successfully conducting his farm, John Nelson made time for many other activities. He was President of the Kangaroo Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Society for no less than three terms and according to the Minutes he was President from 1909 to 1921, from 1926 to 1927 and again from 1928 to 1933. Later he was invited to be Patron. Sport also attracted his interest and he served as President of the golf, race and rugby league clubs. He was also actively interested in the School of Arts, the Berrima Pastures Protection Board, the Cemetery Trust and the Barrengarry Factory Board.

John Nelson died in 1941, aged 76 years. His only daughter, Daisy, married Gus Chittick in 1923.
JAMES CAMPBELL

James Campbell, who had the foresight to initiate a meeting to form the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association and become the founding President, was a most respected business man in the Community, conducting a Butchery business. He was of great assistance to all organisations and was in much demand as a Chairman for many functions. Mr. Campbell was most helpful with the local school children, addressing them on many topics and offering valuable advice.

Mr James Campbell (seated) with his wife and members of his family
KANGAROO VALLEY POPULATION

In summarising this history of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association spanning ten decades, it is surprising to find so little detailed information concerning the trend in population.

In the year 1891 there was a recorded population of 552 persons, but there appears to be no information as to what part of the Valley the population lived.

Ten years later, in 1901, there was a marked increase, with a population in Kangaroo Valley of 483 persons, together with more than 760 scattered around the adjoining area. By the year 1911, this had decreased by 300, though in the Kangaroo Valley Village area, the population had grown to 561.

The years of the 1st World War must have had a marked effect, for in 1921, the population had dropped to 709, with the Village area declining by half to 281 persons. Barrengarry remained fairly firm with 231 persons.

The overall population in 1933 remained fairly static, though in the Village the population had dropped by 37 to 244 persons.

By 1947 there was another decline when the population dropped to 666 with the Village recording 227 persons.

In 1954 there was a slight rise in population to 307 persons, but the Australian Bureau of Statistics did not supply the figures of the adjoining areas. There was a dramatic drop in population in 1966 and 1971, when the population dropped to 174 and 135 respectively. This trend was halted in 1976, when there was an influx of population, but it dropped again in 1981.

From figures available at the Shoalhaven City Council, in 1981, Upper Kangaroo River and Barrengarry had a population of 230, Tallowa Dam and Mount Scanzi area had 200, and the Kangaroo Valley Village had 186, a total of 616.

Until now, the Kangaroo Valley has been almost solely dependent upon the rural industries for its economy and the movement in population reflects the trend in the dairy and allied industries. Larger holdings have been broken up, and hobby farms are taking their place. Tourism is showing a marked potential and there are strong indications for an increase in population.

The N.S.W. State Government has approved an allocation of $350,000 for improvements to the Kangaroo Valley Public School and from 1981 to 1983, the Shoalhaven City Council granted approval for 34 dwelling applications.
Eighty years ago, the Kangaroo Valley Show Society awarded illustrated certificates for certain sections in the exhibits. Pictured is a certificate awarded to Lily Parish for printing. Signed by James Campbell, President 18th February 1904.
IN RETROSPECT

Having come to the last chapter in this simply written and pictorial record of the history of the Kangaroo Valley Agricultural & Horticultural Association, it is fitting that one should reflect on all that had passed.

In putting this record into words, the writer has endeavoured to portray something of the characters of the pioneers and the contributions they made for the well being of the Association and Kangaroo Valley in general.

Volumes could be written from the Minutes of the Committee meetings and the Annual General meetings, regularly held over the last one hundred years, but each would tell the same story.

Every Committee member from 1881 to 1984 had a character of tenacity and fortitude that enabled the Committee to surmount the many problems that arose from time to time.

One point however that must be noted, is the fact that whenever a crisis arose, there was a Presidential leader who could arise to the occasion and provide the impetus to proceed.

On reflection, every President from James Campbell, who pioneered the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association, to Norman Luscombe who now occupies the Chair, has had something to contribute.

No two have been alike, but all have been imbued with the will to succeed, certainly not for any personal honour and glory, but for the good of the Show Society.

Some names on the roll of Past Presidents will be another page in history, but all successfully laid the foundations for what there is today. There is the name of John Nelson, followed by James Chittick. Both names are synonymous with Kangaroo Valley.

Then comes the name of T. A. Cochrane, another well-known Kangaroo Valley family name which appears regularly in the Minutes Books. The name of COX stands above shoulder high in the annals of the Show Society. The first is William Cox who was President from 1933 to 1936, very crucial years of the A. & H. Association. It was in 1934 that William Cox presided over a successful meeting held to form a Junior Farmers' Club in Kangaroo Valley.

Of course the work of H. O. Cox O.B.E. has been touched on previously but note must be made of the part played by Mrs. Cox and their three daughters. If it had not been for their continued support through the years, Harry's public life must surely have been limited to a degree.

Again, the name Nelson appears with D. A. Nelson, President from 1943 to 1945.
The Pioneer Hotel situated in the centre of the village of Kangaroo Valley. This photo was taken at the turn of the century.
The name Cochrane comes to the fore once again when R. A. N. Cochrane became President from 1904 to 1975. It was at the time of Mr. Cochrane's decision not to seek reelection, that it was resolved by the Committee that in future each president should serve only two years in that office.

J. J. Walker was the first President to hold office following this resolution.

Ian Vance, son of the late Wes Vance and his wife, Edith, is a Past President who it could be said was nurtured in the Show Society where both his mother and father were involved.

Following was L. T. Lidbetter, another popular President who approached his duties with the same zeal as his predecessors.

R. L. Cochrane came in from 1981 to 1983, living up to the high reputations of his forebears.

While much honour must go to the past presidents for the running of the Show, it should never be forgotten that many Chief Stewards and Committee members alike have been the backbone of the Society, while they were on the Committee. In living memory Ring Stewards like the late Arthur Nelson and also the late Ross Smart must stand out as the kind of men that have made the Show the excellent exhibition it has been over the years.

Throughout the Minutes, there was rarely a Committee meeting, but motions of condolence were passed, with the Hon. Secretary having to write to the bereaved. There could be as many as three or four at a time. For forty two years, Wes Vance had to write all his letters with pen and ink, and it must have taken him many hours writing these letters as well as the other Show committee correspondence. There were no typewriters in those early days.

The reticulation of electricity into Kangaroo Valley in 1947 brought about a cultural and industrial change in the life of the Valley. Advantage was taken of this amenity when the Show Society moved to Osborne Park.

Gradually as the lighting of the Showground has been improved, changes have taken place in the annual Show programmes. The Show night dances have given way to open air night entertainment with the Rodeo being a popular attraction. With the use of electricity, a loud speaker system was introduced for announcing the Cattle judging results and the Ring events. Mr. Hedley Johnson's voice has a familiar sound as he announces the Cattle judging results.

In this condensed booklet, it is impossible to make mention of all who have assisted the Society in so many ways. Surely the Exhibitors from all over the years must deserve mention, but for their continued support and participation, no Show Society could continue to function at all. The Committee is appreciative of all support from past years to this present Centenary year.

Spurred on by what has taken place in the past the A. & H. Association looks forward with confidence to what lies ahead.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Town and Country Journal
The South Coast Register
The Nowra News Leader
The Kangaroo Valley Historical Society
Mrs. Edith Vance Chittick
Mr. Norman Luscombe
Mr. John Graham
Mr. John Walker
Mrs. Joan Good
The family of the late H. O. Cox, O.B.E.
Mrs. Vivian Henry
Mr. Cyril Dent
Mr. Jim Allen
Minutes Books of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association
The Committee of the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd Kangaroo Valley

Photographics:
Mr. Roger Chapman, Barrengarry
South Coast Register Newspaper
Kangaroo Valley Historical Society
Members of the Kangaroo Valley A. & H. Association

APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Committee and myself, I wish to extend to Mr. Doug Glass our most sincere appreciation for his compiling of this book.

Doug has undertaken this project with great enthusiasm and sincerity, the research necessary was most time consuming and extensive.

We gave Doug a most unenviable task ~ one hundred years of history to be condensed to comply with the Committee's directions regarding the size of the book.

Thank you Doug.

N. C. LUSCOMBE, President.