

SPRING EXHIBITION IN THE TURKISH BATH MUSEUM

HISTORIC 'WYNSTAY' and EARLY MT WILSON opened when 'WYNSTAY' was open in September 2004. The 'GREGSON HOUSES EXHIBITION' has been postponed to 2005. THE TURKISH BATH was open every Sunday in OCTOBER and will be Open on THE THIRD SUNDAY in NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2004 from Noon to 3.00pm.

A PROPOSAL FOR ENHANCING THE MT. WILSON REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY

The proposal is for the November 11th Remembrance Day ceremony at the War Memorial to become a joint event co-sponsored by the *Mount Wilson Progress Association* and the *Historical Society*. To make the ceremony more specific to the community, two names will be taken each year from those listed on the Memorial and a short talk about the lives of those two, possibly by a family member, will be included as part of the ceremony. This year it was Vivian Clarence Lancelot Kirk and Percy Pedder Scrivener.

In addition, the proposal includes the future development of a *Book of Remembrance* to contain information about the people whose names are on the Memorial. This might be a 'work in progress', and could be exhibited in the Village Hall, open at a different page from time to time.

Arthur Delbridge

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: *Avis Bills, 'Trelm', 5-7 Hay Lane Mt Wilson*
Anthony and Mary Clark, Bowral
Milba Newburn and Julie Townend, 'Milparra' Mt Wilson

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 28th November 2004 — *Louisa Atkinson Day* at Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens. Supported by 'The Friends of the Gardens' Walk in the morning \$15; Picnic Lunch \$10 supplied by Friends; Talk in the afternoon \$5. Bookings: (02) 4567 301

2003/2004 Management Committee & Sub-Committees

At the 8th AGM on 6th November 2004 the outgoing Management Committee was warmly thanked for its enthusiasm and achievements

Chairman:	Bruce Wright,	Executive, Finance Committee, Turkish Bath Volunteer
Vice-Chairman:	Darrel Conybeare,	Executive, Newsletter, Publicity, Design, Mt Wilson Village Hall, and Grounds, Project Director
Public Officer:	Mary Reynolds,	Executive, Collection Management, Archival Storage, Research, Exhibitions, Turkish Bath Volunteer
Treasurer:	Ellis Reynolds,	Executive, Finance Committee, Turkish Bath Volunteer
Committee Members:		
	Helen Cardy:	Fund raising, Exhibitions, Collection Management, Turkish Bath Roster, Volunteer
	Robin Leonard:	Fund raising, Exhibitions, Research, Grant Applications
	Florence Smart:	Fund raising, Publicity, Minute Secretary
	Arthur Delbridge:	Finance committee, Editing Newsletter and Historical Papers, Turkish Bath Volunteer

Sub-Committee Members:		
	John Cardy:	Fund raising, Collection Management, Turkish Bath Volunteer
	Helen Freeman:	Fund raising
	Barbara Harry:	Rose Garden
	Richard Knight Brown:	Maintenance, Special Events
	Pauline Michell:	Fund raising, Garden
	Libby Raines:	Fund raising, Landscape Grounds Advisor
	Julia Reynolds:	Fund raising
	Wendy Smart:	Fund raising, Garden, Landscape, Archival Collection

2004/225 Management Committee

2004/2005 Management Committee was elected at the 8th AGM 6 November 2005

Helen Cardy	Ellis Reynolds
Darrel Conybeare	Mary Reynolds
Arthur Delbridge	Florence Smart
Robin Leonard	Bruce Wright

Regretably Elly Gunn did not renominate. However, Louise Weingott of Mt Irvine indicated her willingness to work on the Committee

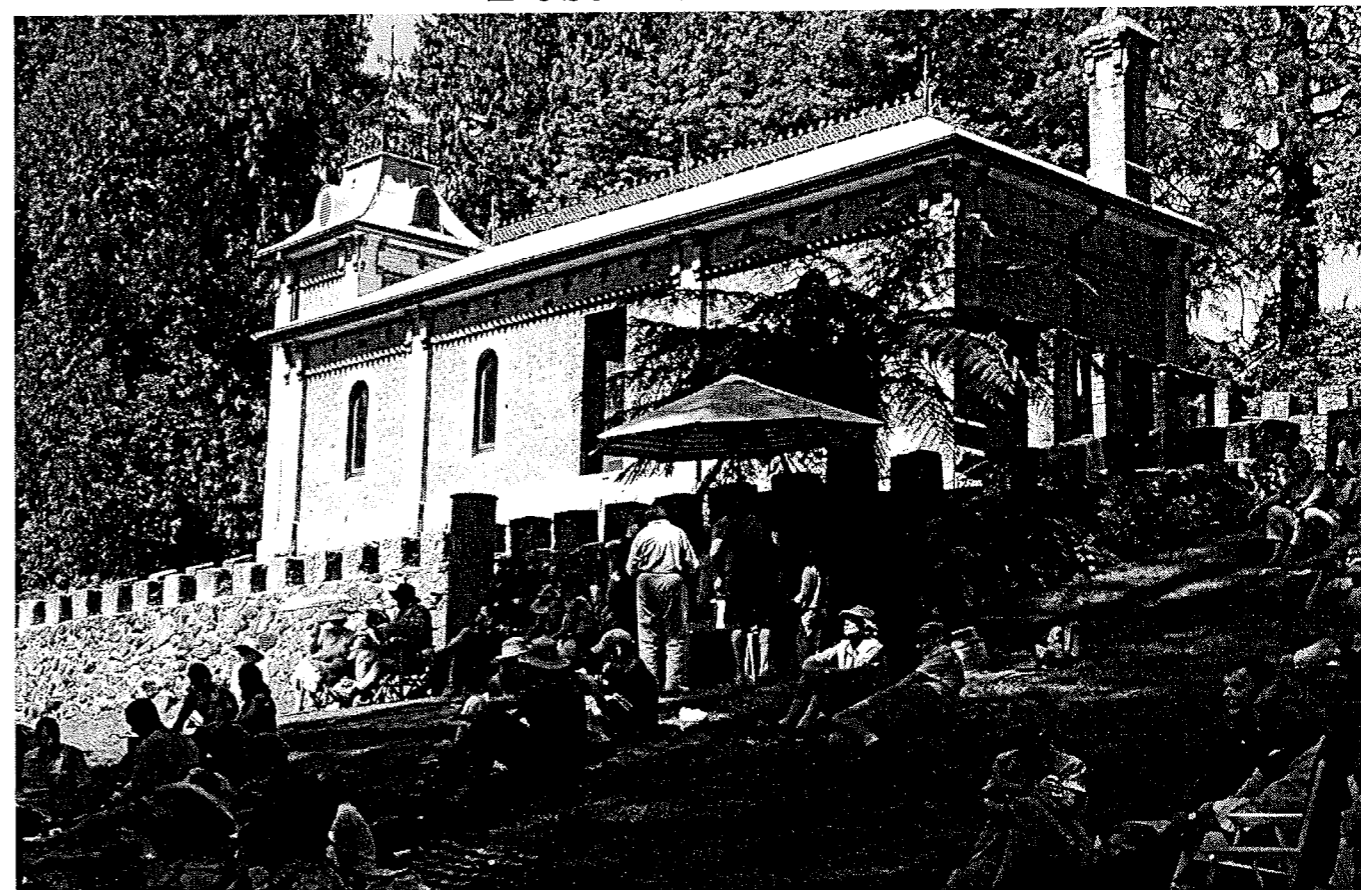
November 2004

Number 11

Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society



'Best Ever' Jazz!



Jazz enthusiasts relax in the shade in front of the Turkish Bath

Many of the over 200 people who attended our annual 'Jazz at the Turkish Bath' this year on March 20th declared that it was the 'best ever', with perfect weather, excellent music and high spirits all contributing to a most successful event.

The grounds of the Turkish Bath precinct were looking particularly good, thanks to Richard Knight-Brown's maintenance and Mother Nature's having sent a timely shower or two. Our dedicated group of musicians 'Bill and the Bloweys' was augmented this year with a second combo, 'Mr Fats and Friends', so the music was non-stop and highly entertaining.

Volunteers were kept busy on the sausage sizzle. John and Helen Cardy sold out early this year—will we ever get it right? The cakes and desserts were as popular as ever; our thanks to sisters Julia Reynolds and Susan Oakman and Susan's daughter Rosalie for staffing this popular stall, and we also thank all those who baked, decorated and packaged goodies that were irresistible. As children, Julia and Susan lived at 'Painui', Mt Irvine, and they enjoy their continuing involvement with the community. The drinks stand was well attended, as usual, thanks to Robin and John Leonard and their family for organising and staffing this essential part of the festivities.

The raffle was a resounding success this year, raising over \$700, thanks to the spectacular prizes—two nights' accommodation at 'Chimney Cottage', generously donated by Margaret Wickins and Bruce Knott, and three lovely hand-made cushions, donated by Mrs Floss Finato who lived at Mt Wilson many years ago and who keeps up her interest and support for our local events.

Publicity is always an issue for an event like this in such a small community. We rely on our members to spread the word, and this year we had an especially welcome boost from Len Ashworth, Managing Editor of the *Lithgow Mercury*. Len generously ran four articles leading up to the concert, and he was there himself on the day, with the result that we were featured on the front page, with a marvellous photo and a glowing report. Thanks, Len, for your continuing support.

Each year we think to ourselves: 'Will we do it again?' Well, this time I'm pleased to report that we will! Bill Boldiston, our tireless and generous bandleader has just completed a new composition, 'The Megalong Suite', with the 'Magpie Stomp' and the 'Wombat Shuffle'—and much more. Next year's event is tentatively set for Saturday April 23, 2005, on the Anzac Day long weekend, so pencil that in on your calendar.

Florence Smart

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the president has been away on leave, there will be no contribution from him in this issue of the newsletter.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our May 2004 report covered the disastrous house fires which destroyed ‘*Applecot*’ and ‘*Wyndham*’; the wonderful ceremony when the Memorial Seat to Jane and Bill Smart was unveiled in November 2003; the excellent Jazz Concert in March 2004, which raised over \$2,500, and the successful opening of the Turkish Bath Museum in the autumn of 2004 (where we opened on Saturdays as well as Sundays), raising over \$1,000 in April and \$700 in May. During the autumn there were two tours from Historical Societies—*The Kuringai Historical Society* and the *Blue Mountains Historical Society*—, which raised \$800. The use of the Village Hall for lunch was a great plus for the first tour and a useful money raiser. Other issues presented at the May meeting covered items such as: Exhibitions; Heritage Protection; The National Trust and ‘*Wynstay*’; The Pioneer Register; the Mt Wilson Study Centre Vestibule; Our Permanent Sign; Remembrance Day, and research. Below is a summary of important events since May 2004. Some of these will refer back to items already listed above.

The Special General Meeting held on 22nd May 2004 was an important step forward for the Society as the guest speaker was Wayne Brennan, a consultant Archaeologist, who, with Paul Tacon (Australian Museum Principal Research Scientist in Anthropology), was co-leader of the 2003 expedition to Eagle’s Reach in the Wollemi National Park that led to discoveries of previously unknown outstanding examples of Aboriginal rock art. Some 50 people attended our meeting and were carried along by Wayne’s passion and enthusiasm for his topic: ‘Aboriginal Rock Art of the Blue Mountains’, illustrated by wonderful slides. Significant for the Society, as well, was Wayne’s knowledge of sites closer to Mt Wilson, which surely will, in time, shed light on the occupation of this district by indigenous people. We hope to have a tour of some of these nearby sites, led by Wayne, in the near future. Present also at the May meeting was Shaun Hooper, World Heritage Support Officer of the Aboriginal Co-Management Project for the *National Parks and Wildlife Service*, who displayed interesting artifacts, many made by him in the traditional way, and answered many queries.

The Pioneer Register: True to its promise, the Society wrote to the descendants of six families associated with this district before 1920, asking if they would agree to their ancestors being listed in a Blue Mountains Pioneer Register. While there were some minor difficulties in the early stages, it is pleasing to announce that the work undertaken was successful and the Society now has a copy of the ‘*Blue Mountains Pioneer Register Pre 1920 Volume 1*’ produced by the *Blue Mountains Family History Society*, in which the following families are listed: Kirk, Gregson and Wynne (Mt Wilson), and Knight Brown, Morley and Scrivener (Mt Irvine). The cost of this Volume is \$40. Copies can be obtained from the BMFHS, P.O. Box 97 Springwood 2777.

Grant Success: 2004 has been a year of considerable success for the Society in this area. It has applied for three separate grants and has been fortunate in having these acknowledged and granted—in part, in two cases, and fully, in the other.

Our Permanent Sign: In May, under the guidance of our Vice Chairman, Darrel Conybeare, the Society applied to the NSW Ministry of Arts for funding for a permanent sign. (It had already been approved by the Blue Mountains City Council for the Turkish Bath Museum.) In addition, with the approval of the Village Hall Committee, the application also asked for a sign at the Village Hall—an Historic Village Map Sign—, which would focus upon, and celebrate the heritage significance of, the whole Mt Wilson Village and would play an important educational role for visitors and the residents of the village. The grant requested totaled \$10,000. On 5th October 2004 we received a call from Bob Debus’s office telling us

that the Premier’s Dept had granted the Society \$10,000. As yet, we have not received confirmation in writing, but it is great news.

Land Title Research and a Publication. In June 2004 the Society applied to the *Royal Australian Historical Society’s* History and Archives Grant Program for assistance with its Land Title Research, to strengthen the placement of Mt Wilson Village and Precinct on the State Register, requesting \$1200. In July, the Society also applied, with considerable help from Darrel Conybeare and his office, through *The Royal Australian Historical Society* to the Ministry of Arts Cultural Grant Program, for financial help with the publication of a small book titled *Mt Wilson’s History Along its Gracious Avenues and Rustic Lanes*. The Society’s application requested \$5000.

Early in September 2004, the Society received notification that the Land Title Research request had been granted \$1000 and the publication request had been granted \$1000. We are most grateful that, while our requests were not totally met, nevertheless, the funds will be very helpful for both projects.

The National Trust and ‘Wynstay’: You will read much about the outstanding success of the opening of ‘*Wynstay*’, in September 2004, in another section of the newsletter. It is important to mention the role of *The National Trust* in helping to make that possible. During much of this year there has been contact with members of *The Trust*, especially the Historic Buildings Committee, under the Chairmanship of Zeny Edwards who has been a tireless worker in getting together a group of people to become The Friends of ‘*Wynstay*’. This project achieved success when, on the last weekend in August 2004, ten volunteers gathered here to help at ‘*Wynstay*’. They worked tirelessly for two days, and achieved wonders in the garden. Wendy Smart was deeply grateful, providing a special dinner for the volunteers on the Saturday evening.

It would be very remiss not to also mention the incredible efforts of Helen and John Cardy in helping Wendy to sort out the Stables at ‘*Wynstay*’, and many other tasks.

The Vestibule in the Mt Wilson Study Centre: Some great changes have taken place there, too—again largely due to the efforts of Helen and John Cardy, along with Darrel Conybeare’s generous contribution of shelving. The walls are now nicely covered with cream shelves, a filing cabinet is installed and a special file for maps is awaiting its contents. The teacher’s desk and the sewing machine table have been placed in the Turkish Bath Museum for display. Some archive boxes are now on the shelves!

Exhibitions in the Turkish Bath Museum: There have been some changes in this area. With the opening of ‘*Wynstay*’ on two weekends at the end of September 2004 it was thought that an exhibition devoted to ‘*Wynstay*’ would be more appropriate at this time, and so it was decided to delay the Gregson, Wyndham, Applecot Display until later, and have a full display in Room No.3 focusing on Early Mt Wilson and ‘*Wynstay*’ for the rest of this year. The plans for the Bells Line of Road Exhibition have been placed on hold for the moment.

The Eighth Annual General Meeting of the Society took place on Saturday 6th November about 3.30 pm in the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Foundation members Bruce and Sue Gailey were presented with a farewell gift by Ellis Reynolds, the Treasurer. [See page 4 for a Tribute to Bruce and Sue.]

Secretary’s Report continued on page 4

FROM THE TREASURER

NOTES ON THE JAZZ CONCERT

As for last year, the weather on the day was near perfect: this despite the preceding days which were wet and unpleasant. The following day, rain fell, and the day after was as cold as charity.

Raffle: Bill Boldiston drew the raffle, publicly, on the day. This year three prizes were awarded. Brian Taylor won the First Prize, which was for two days and nights free accommodation at ‘*Blueberry Lodge*’. Winston Readford and Elizabeth Planner won the Second and Third Prizes, decorative cushions. The prizes were duly advertised in the Public Notices columns of the *Blue Mountains Gazette* on the 7th April and have been collected. Our congratulations are extended to these winners; our sincere thanks to the donors; and our appreciation to all who supported the Raffle. Letters of thanks have been sent by the Secretary to those who helped towards making the Jazz Concert a most successful day.

Special Tribute to the *Lithgow Mercury*: The Society is particularly indebted to the *Lithgow Mercury* and its Editor, Len Ashworth, for the wonderful publicity given to the Jazz Concert. In addition to the paid advertisement, there were three articles published, one on the front page with a photo of a section of the audience taken by Len on the day. The accompanying article was overflowing with praise, and greatly appreciated by the Society. Naturally, the *Mercury* has been thanked both personally, and by letter, from the Secretary.

COMPARISON OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE JAZZ CONCERTS HELD IN THE TURKISH BATH PRECINCT ON SATURDAYS: 5TH APRIL 2003 & 20TH MARCH 2004

05/04/2003	INCOME	20/03/2004
\$2 293.00	ADMISSION AT GATE	\$2 648.00
600.00	RAFFLE (PRIZES DONATED)	717.00
25.00	WINNER’S ONE YEAR PREPAID MEMBERSHIP	25.00
69.60	DONATIONS TO SOCIETY	28.40
62.00	SALE OF BBQ ITEMS—DONATED	309.00
237.00	CAKE SALE—DONATED	250.00
244.00	JAMS SALE—DONATED	200.00
333.00	DRINKS SALE—DONATED	182.00
FREE	TEA/COFFEE – CONTINUOUS SERVICE	FREE
\$3 863.60	TOTAL (GROSS) INCOME	\$4 359.00
005/04/2003	EXPENDITURE (\$)	20/03/2004
440.00	PRINTING & DISTRIBUTION OF FLYERS	677.00
250.00	HIRE & ERECTION OF MARQUEE	250.00
150.00	ADVERTISEMENT IN <i>LITHGOW MERCURY</i>	192.61
199.98	ADVERTISEMENT IN <i>BLUE MOUNTAINS GAZETTE</i>	185.41
229.00	GST***	36.00
17.25	NOTIFICATION OF RAFFLE WINNERS IN <i>BMG</i>	44.69
	COMPULSORY TAFE COURSE	110.00
	LIQUOR LICENCE (SERVING ALCOHOL AT PUBLIC FUNCTIONS)	50.00
DONATED	HIRE OF PORTALOO	165.00
\$1 286.23	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$1 710.71
\$2 577.37	NETT PROFIT	\$2 648.29

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FROM 01/07/2003 TO 30/06/2004

RECONCILIATION STATEMENT FOR PERIOD FROM 01/07/2003 TO 30/06/2004

BALANCE OF ACCOUNT AS AT 01/07/03	\$5 055.72
INCOME FOR PERIOD 01/07/2003 to 30/06/2004	17 235.06
EXPENDITURE FOR CORRESPONDING PERIOD	16 538.91
BALANCE SHOWN IN ACCOUNT BOOK AT 30/06/2004	*5 751.87
BALANCE SHOWN ON BANK STATEMENT AT 30/06/2004	*RECONCILED *5751.87
PETTY CASH ACCOUNT	UNCHANGED AT \$110.33

TERM DEPOSIT HELD WITH CBA BLACKHEATH

This account was renewed on 15/06/2004 with an investment of \$10,358.86 at compound interest of 5.300%, having accrued the sum of \$451.67 in interest for the full financial year. It matures on 15th November 2004.

SOME GOOD NEWS

At a time when public liability interest premiums have gone through the roof, we have been advised that the cost of coverage for the ensuing year, on a policy of \$10 million, will be \$533.50, compared with \$630.30 last year—a reduction of \$96.80. Our congratulations go to Mari Metzke, Outreach Officer for the *Royal Australian Historical Society*, whose tireless efforts on behalf of those covered by the RAHS Group Insurance Scheme, have always resulted in the best available policy outcomes.

AMOUNT BANKED ON 1ST OCTOBER 2004

GATE MONEY	4 820.00
SALE OF FULLY DONATED FOOD	3 143.00
DONATIONS	556.45
SALE OF JAM	403.00
RAFFLE OF FULLY DONATED FOOD HAMPER	700.00
TOTAL BANKED	\$9 622.45

ADDITIONAL MONEY RAISED TO 20TH OCTOBER 2004

DONATIONS	90.00
RAFFLE	20.00
REVISED (GROSS INCOME)	\$9 732.45

EXPENSES	
DONATION TO GOLDEN RETRIEVER SOCIETY	1000.00
PRINTING OF FULLY COLOURED ADVERTISING BROCHURE	990.00
ADVERTISING IN LITHGOW MERCURY (2 ADS)	88.00
PRINTING/LAMINATING	424.00
VILLAGE HALL RENTAL	216.00
ALTERATION TO WORDING ON SIGN	88.00
HIRE OF TWO PORTALOOS	330.00
GST (ESTIMATE)	200.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	+3200.00
PROFIT TO SOCIETY	\$6 396.45

Ellis G Reynolds (Treasurer), 20th October 2004

'NAMING PLACES AND PLACING NAMES'

Some of you will undoubtedly remember the recent formal change made to the old name *Farrer Road*, to the anguish of some Farrer Road residents. Those with longer memories know about the dispute over the name *Hillcrest Lane*. That was, and still is, the official name, with an official-looking sign post *in situ*. But one resident wanted a different name (no matter now what it was). So under cover of the dark someone pulled down the sign post and put up the other name. Next night, someone else put the old name back. How long this interchange went on for I don't remember, but the two incidents show how deeply people can feel about place names.

Perhaps that was at least part of the reason why thirty to forty members and friends turned up to our last November AGM to hear a talk on placenames by a person who ought to know all about them (but says he doesn't yet). David Blair has had a distinguished career at Macquarie University as linguist, lexicographer and administrator, and the name of this Report (above) was the title of his talk. Despite his youthful look, he has recently retired from his position, only to fill the honorary role of Director of the Australian National Placenames Survey. This Australia-wide survey is the last of a trio of objectives embraced by the Australian Humanities Council, the others being an *Encyclopedia of Australian Biography*, and a *Dictionary of Australian English on Historical Principles*. Clearly a big task for a trusted researcher!

Asked at the meeting how many Australian placenames there might be, he confessed not to know—yet! Based on estimates made in similar surveys overseas in terms of area of land to be studied, the answer might be about 5 million, but because of the rather peculiar usage of land in Australia he thought it might not be so many—but still a huge job!

But first, he said, let's see if there is anything truly Australian about our place names. So, without trying to argue this point, he sang (?) the familiar *I've been everywhere, man*' song:—

*I've been to Tullamore, Seymour, Lismore,
Maroochydore, Kilmore, Nambour, Moolimbah...etc.*

This he compared with the later American version:

Been to Reno, Chicago, Fargo, Minnesota...etc.

And the still later NZ version:

I've been to Kaparoa, Wharangaroa, Akaroa, Motueka....

A fair demonstration. But after all, what *is* a placename? It is not, he said, a name for places, but a place **and** its name. The technical term is a *toponym*, and a toponym is identified by

- * its name
- * its feature type
- * its location (latitude / longitude)

Thus, for example: * Mount Haystack
* hill
* -33 53 33 /150 40 00

The Survey itself is not a naming authority: it doesn't give names. There are other parties to do this. It concerns itself only with habitations and geographical features, not with street names, and for the moment not with names of parks, reserves, schools, etc. Its principal concern is with names that are important in the history of places.

Of such names there are two systems, the indigenous system and the introduced system. Of these, the indigenous system is the harder to investigate, since it calls for knowledge of how Aboriginal people themselves, even before the European occupation, saw the land and (as it were) 'mapped it' in their own traditional ways, involving their own languages, their songlines, their stories, their dream time. David's survey is not actively involved with this system, which calls for a knowledge

of many Aboriginal languages and the contributions of anthropologists and of Aboriginal people themselves. Work is continuing on this system in the hands of specialists. Familiar placenames like *'Turramurra'* are definitely not part of this system, since they came into the introduced system in a way quite unrelated to any concept of indigenous naming, even though they may be Aboriginal words which have become known to non-Aboriginal people.

The introduced system consists mainly of names assigned by the Geographical Names Board. They can only be changed by the Board (shades of Hillcrest Lane!) Many of these names have fascinating histories. *'Coonamble'*, for instance, is a properly assigned placename, but it has its origin with Aboriginal men working on settler properties that used bullocks. In their language the word which eventually became the name meant 'a place of shit', bullshit, in fact. The name caught on and became in the end the assigned name of the town. There are many ways of making names! *'Kurmond'* was an easy way to a name, by simply making it out of the parts of the names Kurrajong and Richmond.

The hardest names for the historian are those for which many conflicting explanations have been offered, all of them without any supporting evidence. David's worst case has been *'Dee Why'*, for which twelve different origins have been suggested, all supposedly historically true, but none with even a grain of real evidence. But with the support of fellow academics and post graduates and a large number of Historical Societies around Australia, searches of written sources and legend are progressing well. Every issue of the *ANPS Newsletter* tells the story of progress in relating place names to their history.

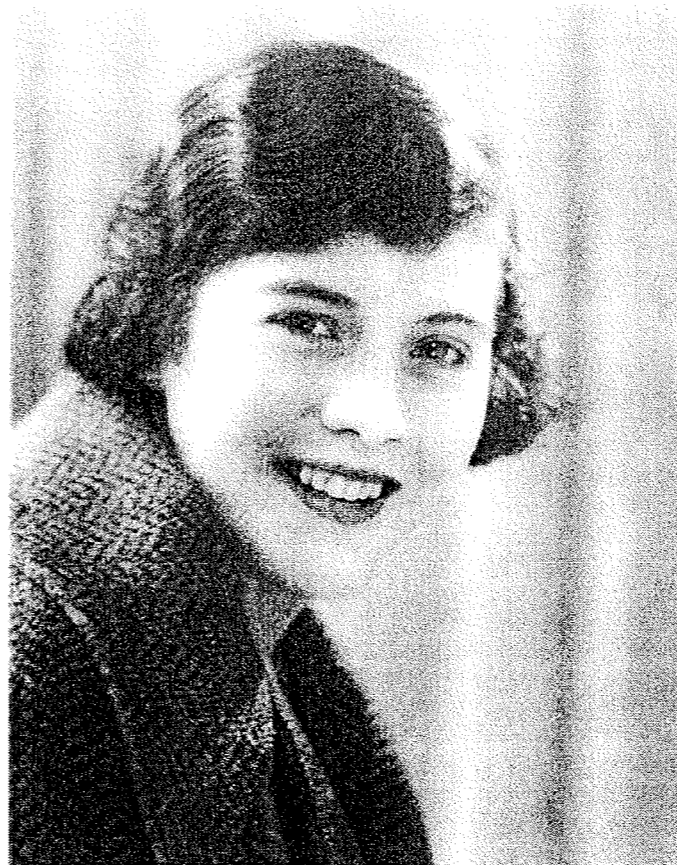
To get onto the distribution list for the Newsletter, just get in touch with Clair Hill, ANPS, Division of Humanities, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW, 2109.

In the meantime, what is the story behind these local names: Lambs Hill, Silva Plana, Arkinstall, Fields Selection, Mt Irvine, Mt Wilson? Ring any bells?

Arthur Delbridge



'Linocut of 'Wyndham', by Meg Fromel. Compare with photograph on page 10



MEMORIES OF MY LIFE AT MT. IRVINE BY BETTY CLARKE

I lived on Mt Irvine for sixty-eight years. In May 1919, we came to Mt Irvine from Alison, seven miles beyond Dungog, NSW.

My parents had sold their dairy farm. Father was a chartered accountant and had worked with the *Orient Shipping Company*. Mother was a triple certificated army nurse. Rather than return to Sydney with three small children, when pneumonic influenza was raging, they decided to accept Mr C P Scrivener's offer to sell them a forty-two acre block of rugged, virgin land. A friend, Mr Robson, drove us here by car. We arrived in pouring rain and were met by Mr Scrivener in his typical wet weather gear: a chaff bag around him as a skirt, another as a peaked hat and cape. (Mr Scrivener and father had been friends since they were together at Sydney High School.)

We had been offered the use of a small, two-roomed cottage, but this was not ready, as it had yet to be moved half a mile to the owner's property. We stayed with Mr and Mrs Scrivener and their six children for six weeks. Then we moved to the two-roomed cottage and my father worked to clear an acre of his land to build our home. The only tools used then in clearing land were the mattock, axe, hand jack and gelignite. When the framework, roof and weatherboards of our house were completed, we were asked to vacate the small cottage, as Mr Scrivener wanted it so that he could employ someone to work on his farm. Again, we had to move, but this time into a 'shell'. By using a ladder as a 'slide', Father moved our few possessions—a bath and double-oven fuel stove—and after setting these in place, we had ample hot water always. In the evenings and in the wet weather my father nailed down the floor and put up the partitions of chaff sacks pasted over with newspaper, so that our living and sleeping quarters were separated. Later they were calcimined.

By day, he cleared the land and planted vegetables and fruit trees. We had brought two cows and two draught horses from Alison. These came by train to Bell and were then let loose. Then they had to be found and driven to Mt Irvine, a distance of about 16-20 miles. My sister and I soon

all three of us would ride one of the draught horses. Before the copper and tubs were set in, all laundry was done outside, involving boiling the clothes in water in a kerosene tin and rinsing them in a tub on a stump.

Once our home could be called liveable, father went to work at whatever was offering—on the road, at the sawmill, or building, at which he was self taught. The local mill was just above our place and we would play with the employees' children. We were advised to raise pigs: that was a failure. Then we turned to poultry farming, which was more successful, but the cost of freight for the distance swallowed up our profits.

At first our meat was home-killed, and shared with our neighbours. It was hung under the house in a mosquito net; some was corned. Groceries came in bulk twice-yearly by train from Moran & Cato's in Sydney. With the order nearest to Christmas, the firm always included a box of lollies for the 'children'. Flour came in 150-pound sacks, sugar in 70-pound bags. *The Sydney Morning Herald* came by the 'paper train' and library books once a month. Not until we could buy our own car did we go to the movies. Then it was occasionally to Kurrajong, Richmond or Blackheath.

We had very few visitors in the early days. An Aunt might come for a holiday, but it took nearly a day to travel from Sydney. After the evening meal we would usually read, knit or play games such as Rummy, Table Croquet, and Snakes and Ladders. At the weekend, Father often took us for bushwalks, looking for wildflowers, while Mother cooked the Sunday dinner. Sometimes we would all go for a picnic with friends to an open area in the bush, playing cricket after lunch.

While we were still at primary school, my father and a friend, our teacher, built a tennis court on our only area of flat land. This was frowned on by some of the locals who said we would play tennis and not attend their Church on Sundays. Christmas and birthdays were always celebrated, even if there was only a plain cake for the latter. We always hung up our stockings at Christmas and had our small tree on the dining table: often it was only a gum tree. The verandah was always decorated with ferns and other greenery. There was the traditional baked dinner—all home grown—and plum pudding with threepences, sweets and nuts in it.

Community Activities: A Progress Association was formed, meeting
Continued on page 6

'IF YOU MISS THE TRAIN...'

Betty Clarke called in to see me recently. As we often do, we talked about Mt Irvine's rich history. It gives me so much pleasure to hear her recall the days when she was a very young girl. (Betty has her ninetieth birthday next year.) One incident she remembers very clearly occurred in 1919, when she was about four years old. The Clarke family was looking forward to the much-awaited arrival of two draught horses and two milking cows. The draught horses *Prince* and *Nugget*, and the cows *Nancy* and *Maggie* (she was black and white) were to arrive at Clarence railway station from Dungog. —The Gunns have had more than a share at transporting livestock, but not quite like this—. Pedder Scrivener, who had a horse drawn wagon, took Betty's father to pick up the animals as planned. Arriving at Clarence railway station, they were told that the precious cargo had been unloaded, the animals were now running free in the bush, and the train gone! After some searching through the thick bush, all four beasts were rounded up to travel the long way back to Mt Irvine. The horses were used for farm work. , the larger of the two horses, would also be used for riding, carrying Betty, her brother Rollo (Roland), and sister Rosemary together on his back. The cows supplied fresh milk, cream and butter.

Elly Gunn

'Willowbank' Mt Irvine

29th April 2004

Secretary's Report continued from page 2

The President and the Management Committee invited members and their friends to celebrate the close of another successful year with refreshments, wine and nibbles in the garden at Robin and John Leonard's home, 'Sylvan Close', 103 The Avenue, Mt Wilson.

Remembrance Day 11th November 2004: Cooperation with the *Mt Wilson Progress Association* continues with this project. At the morning tea in the Mt Wilson Village Hall, following the Remembrance Day ceremony at 11.00 am, Professor Arthur Delbridge spoke about two of the World War I soldiers whose names are listed on the memorial. The names selected were: Vivian Clarence Lancelot Kirk, and Percy Pedder Scrivener.

Members: Two of our members have recently had serious illnesses. We send David Howell and Avis Bills of Mt Wilson our very good wishes for a return to good health in the very near future.

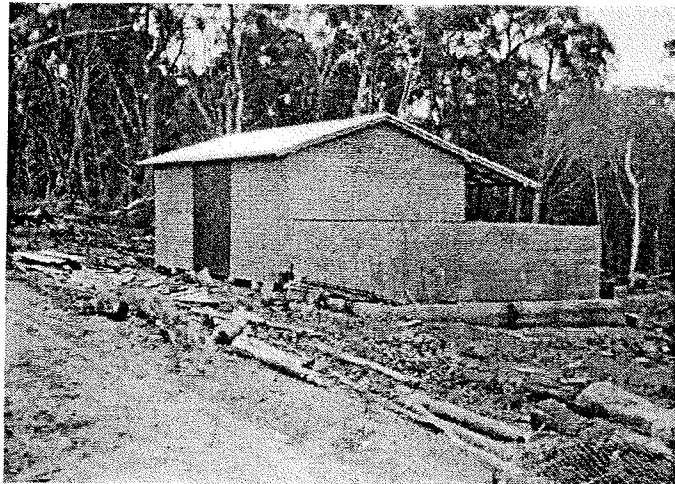
Bruce and Susanna Gailey: The imminent departure from Mt Irvine of Bruce and Sue Gailey will be devastating for us all. They are truly wonderful friends and have been devoted workers and supporters of our *Society* since its foundation, and even long before that. There has never been a time when they have not been there to help when needed. When 'Wynstay' was open between 1995 and 1999, Bruce and Sue never missed out helping throughout those years. The working bees at the Turkish Bath constantly come to mind when they were there, armed

with the right equipment, and no matter how tiresome the task, would stay until all was solved. The roster for the Turkish Bath is another part of their valuable contribution. Many a time they have come in from Mt Irvine to fill a gap, quite apart from those times when they were listed for duty. Sue has been a constant supplier of food for every function we have held. Everyone loves those delightful lemon cheese tarts she produces, not to mention the supply of jams and craft. Bruce's contribution has been endless on the technical side. His erection of the lighting in the Mt Irvine Community Hall for the Scrivener Exhibition in 2001 will never be forgotten by those involved. Then, there was the Craft Exhibition in the Turkish Bath Museum when Sue was a major contributor, with her magnificent skill with wool, and her gentle art, and Bruce was there, too, always ready to fix, or deal with, any problem.

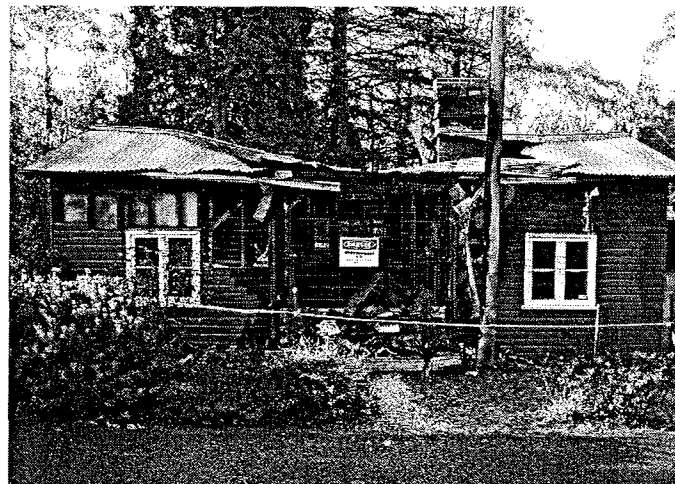
Beyond all those examples of their generosity of time, knowledge, experience and energy are their deep concern and kindness for their fellow human beings, their compassion, tolerance and their belief in the protection of the environment, their love of the natural bushland and their total gentleness of spirit and dedication to the struggle to make this world a better place for ordinary people.

We know that more recently, health difficulties have plagued them and made their life more trying. We understand their reasons for leaving, but there will be an awful gap for those left behind. Our hearts and friendship go with them.

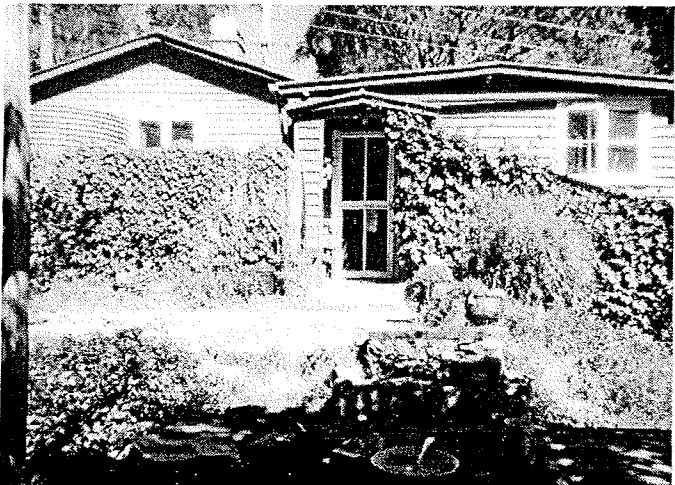
Mary Reynolds



The old Appleshed



Ruins of 'Applecot'



'Applecot' in happier days



'Wyndham' after the disastrous fire

'Applecot' story continued from page 12

a maypole, and Nellie dispensed lemon syrup and biscuits. She believed that children should be challenged while enjoying themselves.

Nellie was deeply concerned about recognition of the sacrifice made in the First World War by the local community. Before 'Windyridge' was built, she was one of three Trustees in charge of having the War Memorial built, in 1919, and carried the burden of the secretarial work involved ably assisted by Charles Robert Scrivener from Mt Irvine.

When Mariamne Wynne of 'Wynstay' initiated the committee to establish a Village Hall in the mid 1930s, Nellie again was a very active person in assisting that project. As we now know, it was not until after WWII that the Village Hall materialized, but it was the bequest of £500 in Nellie's will, following her death in 1949, that changed the pace of achievement for the Hall and the balance of the money was found to build it in 1951.

The present generation of Gregsons, although no longer members of this community, is still following in the traditions established by Edward and Nellie and their father. They are wonderful contributors to this Society,

having lent many photos for copying, and provided much in the way of documentation of their life on this mountain. Helen Warliker and Meg Fromel continue their devotion to the conservation of our native vegetation by participating, where they live on the Central Coast, in organizations with those objectives, and working for National Parks. Meg, a fine artist, has a wonderful record of this mountain. In 1968, for the 'Centenary of the Surveying of Mt Wilson in 1868', she presented an Exhibition of her work as part of that celebration in the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Helen and Meg's sister, Troath, who lives in England, continues to have a great interest in Mt Wilson. All three sisters were responsible for the plaque which is near the Jefferson Bridge over Waterfall Creek. The plaque pays tribute to the Kirk brothers who constructed the first bridge over that creek early in the 1930s. They also assisted with the cost of plaques on the Memorial seat to the CWA in Wynne Reserve opposite 'Withycombe'.

Sufficient to say that the above stories could not have been related without the complete cooperation of the present generation of the Gregson family. We express our deep appreciation for their total support.



A pre-War picture of Jesse Gregson and family - Seated left to right: Bessie, Jesse, Nellie (Helen) and Grace (Willie's wife) Standing left to right: Edward, Willie

'*Applecot*' story continued from page 11

Peppermint gums.'

'Orchards and paddocks and virtually undisturbed bush ran down to the creek. Across a lawn outside the back verandah was a little cabin inhabited by Cyril and later other employees, and still later by us children as a playroom when we were older and indulged a temporary passion for making sweets on a kerosene stove. The vegetable garden ran from here to the cow bail and later to the apple shed. As we were largely self-supporting, our fruit and vegetable needs were met from here. I remember particularly the asparagus with its tall feathery foliage glistening with dew and mist. I would be sent with the special asparagus fork to collect the spears. I had mixed feelings about the prickly and tart gooseberries and loganberries, the latter in such abundance that picking the fruit seemed a never-ending chore in summer, and the bottled fruit was too constantly on the menu for dessert. We children preferred the raspberries, which were sweeter. ... There was a pigsty where in now the outside laundry, tool and woodshed and little dramas occurred from time to time when the pigs got out. Once a year the old potatoes were boiled up in kerosene tins on a big outside fire which I helped my father to stoke and these were given to the pigs to supplement the usual household scraps and the skim milk. There were dramas too in the fowl yard when birds fell victim to foxes and native cats. I remember one of these native cats—or tiger cats, I have forgotten which, but now rare [probably the quoll], with its beautiful spotted fur, lying dead in a trap beside the fowl yard. I never liked fowls....'

'But I liked milking, and in common with other children on the mountain at that time, learnt to milk early, unlike my father who learnt in adulthood and therefore never properly acquired the art. The job, therefore, fell more and more to us children as we grew older. The less than half dozen cows we owned, never milking more than two or three at a time, were much loved, so too the heifers we helped to feed, the bull calves usually being knocked on the head at birth. ... The ritual of milking was very satisfying once the tricky business of securing the cow in the stall, complete with leg rope, was achieved.... One sat on the stool, bucket between knees, leaning against the warm flank of the cow while she munched contentedly on the feed in her box.'

'Next to the milking pen was a room full of sweet-smelling hay and bags of chaff and other feed, the smell mingling with that of the leather of saddles and harnesses. We played in the hay when we were small and our cat Tabitha usually had her kittens there.'

These images relate to survival in Mt Wilson from orcharding and farming, labour intensive work with little to create ease and comfort in the 1920s and 1930s: a vanished era, but recaptured so vividly in this delightful book, and made even more significant, now that the houses of that time have disappeared.

As recorded earlier in this article, when, in 1930, the Gregson girls' maternal grandfather, Charles Jefferson, arrived from the USA with his housekeeper, Emma Ashdown, inevitably, changes took place. '*Chimney Cottage*' was built and, in time, there was a transfer of occupation from '*Wyndham*' to '*Chimney Cottage*'. With the premature death of Margaret Gregson and the coming of World War II, '*Wyndham*' was first rented and then sold in the 1940s. As yet, we do not have a complete record of all those who have lived in, or owned, '*Wyndham*' since that time, but we do know that the MacCallum family, who were friends of the Gregsons, became owners about 1950, in particular, Duncan MacCallum, brother of Mungo MacCallum. Those of you who recognize the name Mungo MacCallum will appreciate the contribution that the family has made in the world of literature and journalism, starting from Professor M MacCallum of Sydney University in the early 20th century. Duncan MacCallum's name appears, frequently, in the records of the Progress Association and in the history of the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Later, Phillip and Rose Burkins who were in occupation in the 1980s bought '*Wyndham*'. Rose, in particular, was an active member in the community for some years, quietly supported by Phillip. On the passing

of Phillip Burkins in the late 1980s, '*Wyndham*' was purchased by David and Kath Norrie. David played a role in the re-organizing of the Mt Wilson Progress Association in 1989-1990. The current owners, Raoul and Lesley Wilson became owners early in the 1990s. They both played a very important and active role in establishing our Society. Indeed, Raoul was our first Chairman and made it possible for the Society to become well established. We have much to thank them for.

We understand that the Wilsons intend to re-build '*Wyndham*'. This is a reassuring piece of news for all.

Mary Reynolds

A Brief Note on the Contribution of the Gregson Family to Our Community

The Gregson contribution began with Jesse Gregson and his family in about 1880. Plants and the garden captivated Jesse and, as a result, he became an accepted authority. In recognition, his collections of specimens were stored in the National Herbarium of NSW. J H Maiden of the Sydney Botanical Gardens wrote in 1919, following Jesse's death, '*He knew the sandstone gullies with their basalt tops well and took a delight in exploring them and began to systematically collect flora in the early 1890s. He became an authority on certain exotic plants and experimental tree planting, keeping records of failures and successes.*'

This abiding absorption with plants and our native flora was to be perpetuated by Edward Gregson, his younger son, and his eldest daughter, 'Nellie' or Helen.

In spite of the demands of farming, Edward (or 'Greg' as he was more usually called in Mt Wilson) contributed widely to our understanding of Mt Wilson's remarkable vegetation, through his dedication to a study of our native flora. He was, in his own right, an authority on the flora of Mt Wilson, particularly the eucalypts, on which he wrote a paper in 1952. You only have to ask people like Dr Peter Valder to learn what influence Edward Gregson had with the young generation of Mt Wilson in the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Today, near the Bogey Holes in Mt Wilson there is a small mallee-type eucalypt, or Mallee Snow Gum, known as *Eucalyptus gregsoniana*, and among those lovely ferns you might observe on Walks such as the Waterfall Walk or down Happy Valley there is one known as *Blechnum gregsonia*. Both are lasting tributes to the work of Edward Gregson. It must not be forgotten that Edward Gregson was also an active participant in local affairs, being active in the Progress Association and, of course, was one of the original shareholders in the private company that in 1922 established the Post Office and residence in The Avenue Mt Wilson. Then there is Gregson Park, leading down to the Waterfall Bridge, or now called officially Jefferson Bridge, since 1993, over Waterfall Creek. This area of land was, of course, once part of the Gregson estate, but was generously given to the community by Edward Gregson about 1940. At one stage rather neglected, it is pleasing to see that it has been retrieved from that state and that the bush regeneration work undertaken by the Blue Mountains City Council has partly restored it to its natural state. Being *Gregson* Park, it should always be representative of our native bushland.

Margaret Gregson played an active role in this small community when her many tasks permitted it, especially in the local CWA, which was established in 1929, covering both Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. She was also a fine pianist and brought an appreciation of cultural and artistic values into the community.

Nellie (or Helen) Gregson, who built '*Windyridge*', gave much of her energy and life to this district. She was the true bush woman who shared with her brother a devotion to native flora and bush walking, demonstrating this by establishing at '*Windyridge*' a native garden. For the children of that era '*Windyridge*' became a special place of fun and adventure where games of all kinds were played, with equipment including merry-go-rounds, swings, monkey bars, a very high seesaw and

'*Applecot*' story continued on page 13

THE STORY OF ‘APPLECOT’

'*Applecot*' was a simple timber residence in Wyndham Ave Mt Wilson. In April of this year it was destroyed by fire, which was a great disaster for its present owners, Duncan Peppercorn and Dawn Kanelleas, members of our Society, but as well, it was a misfortune for the community of Mt Wilson. The flames destroyed history and heritage from a period of vital social change in Mt Wilson, following the First World War.

Now, too, we are appalled and confronted by the loss by fire of '*Wyndham*', nearest neighbour to '*Applecot*'. A whole chapter of Mt Wilson's past, let alone its contemporary history, has now vanished from our sight. Both buildings were part of the legacy to Mt Wilson from the Gregson Family, whose name and contribution would not be well known to most residents. We should like to extend to Duncan Peppercorn and Dawn Kanelleas of '*Applecot*', and to Raoul and Lesley Wilson, owners of '*Wyndham*' and Life members of our Society, our deepest sympathy and sorrow for their respective loss of house and treasured contents.

Our endeavour is to tell something of the human story concerning '*Applecot*', and to introduce some of the colourful background attached to '*Wyndham*'. At the beginning of the 1990s, sisters Helen Warliker and Meg Fromel (both *née* Gregson), produced a charming publication called *A Mount Wilson Childhood*, which revealed much of the spirit of the times from the end of the First World War to the 1950s. To some degree, this account will rely on the recorded memories of their life in Mt Wilson during those years, and on an account written especially for the *Society* by Helen and Meg, a few weeks ago, following the fire at '*Applecot*'.

'*Applecot*' began its life as a utilitarian shed for the packing and storage of apples and other fruits, after Edward Gregson had decided to make his life permanently in Mt Wilson, following the First World War. He wanted to create an income from orcharding and farming. Edward was the younger son of Jesse and Katherine Gregson who, in 1878-1880, had built the simple, but elegant, stone residence, '*Yengo*', in Queens Avenue Mt Wilson.

Jesse Gregson arrived in Australia about 1855, aged 18. He had met Alexander Busby on the ship coming out and became associated with him for some years in the pastoral industry, first near Cassilis in NSW and then in Queensland. In 1870, Jesse married Katie (Katherine), the widow of Alexander McLean, a former Surveyor General of NSW. By 1874, Jesse had decided to leave Queensland, as the climate was difficult for Katie. Alexander Busby had recommended Jesse to the Chairman of the Australian Agricultural Company to follow E C Merewether as Superintendent of the A A Company once Merewether retired in 1875. (Merewether built '*Dennarque*' in Mt Wilson.) After travelling to London for an interview with the Directors of the A A Company, Jesse Gregson was appointed an assistant to E C Merewether, in January 1875, with the right to succeed him. It was Edward Merewether's account of Mt Wilson that persuaded Jesse Gregson to purchase eight acres of land, or Portion 17, where he built '*Yengo*' between 1878-1880. While the Gregsons' main residence was in Newcastle, every year they came to Mt Wilson.

Jesse and Katherine had four children: Nellie (Helen), Willie, Bessie and Edward. Both Willie and Edward were in the army in WWI. Willie joined the AIF and Edward joined the Canadian Army. Willie did not survive the War. Jesse Gregson, weakened by ill health and grief for the loss of Willie, died in 1919 in Leura. Edward returned to Mt Wilson following his father's death, determined to stay and farm, even though his two university degrees—one from Sydney University and an engineering degree from Cornell University, Ithaca, in Upper New York State—might have suggested a different vocation. In 1920, Margaret Jefferson, who had met Edward in Schenectady, New York,

joined him, marrying him in Hunters Hill, and traveling—first, by train to Bell, then by horse and sulky—to Mt Wilson.

As Margaret Gregson probably found '*Yengo*' rather cold, it was decided to sell it in 1923. Fred Mann, whose family then owned '*Dennarque*', bought it.

So began the life of '*Wyndham*', and what was to be '*Applecot*', on land owned by the Gregsons. Margaret Gregson wanted a timber house! Across the track Nellie (Helen) Gregson was organizing the construction of '*Windyridge*', another timber home. Both houses were to be in the popular Californian bungalow style. The name '*Wyndham*' was chosen to recognize the contribution made by the Surveyor, Edward Sandham Wyndham, who carried out the initial survey of Mt Wilson in 1868. Indeed on this land, too, was the site where Wyndham had camped in that year. This site was also known as '*Nutman's Camp*', named after a builder who constructed, or helped construct, at least two of the first houses on Mt Wilson. In June 1922, Edward Gregson began the building of a water tank, a vital necessity. By December 1922 the tank and shed (later to become '*Applecot*') had been completed.

In *A Mount Wilson Childhood*, Helen Warliker (*née* Gregson) created a very simple clear picture of life as it was lived about the mid-1920s in Mt Wilson. '*Applecot*' fitted well with that image.

"On this small property my father established an orchard of apples, pears and plums, mostly apples, cleared virgin bush with the help of bullock teams for the planting of cash crops, principally potatoes and milked a few cows for household needs. The plough, dray and Myrtle, the draft horse, were his main tools of trade.... I was a willing helper with the picking of the plums, particularly the Wicksons which were heavenly to taste. I was less willing when it came to helping with the packing of the fruit, each in its square of tissue paper, to be placed in new wooden boxes. But the smell of fresh fruit and new wood in the apple shed was intoxicating and remains with me to this day. The Appleshed had a big concrete tank adjoining it and is still there many years after this shed became a cottage 'Applecot', and eventually, our last home on the mountain." [Page 5]

In the 1930s, some changes took place for the Gregson family. '*Chimney Cottage*' in Waterfall Road had been built, initially, for the serving of teas by Margaret Gregson to create more income for the family. Her father, Charles W. Jefferson, and his housekeeper, Emma Ashdown, had joined the family from the U S A. In 1930, they initiated and helped with this project, using the Kirk brothers as builders. Also, they built the bridge over Waterfall Creek. By the time WWII had commenced, the Gregsons had left '*Wyndham*', where 'Daddo' Jefferson and Emma Ashdown now lived, taking up residence in '*Chimney Cottage*'. Then, tragically, Margaret Gregson developed cancer and this meant a return to '*Wyndham*', as she was unable to carry on. For a while, '*Chimney Cottage*' was run by the O'Rourke family (from Bell), but closed a year or so later. Once more the Gregsons returned to '*Chimney Cottage*', as a residence only, remaining there until it was sold. Margaret Gregson died in 1943. Meanwhile, '*Applecot*' was being transformed into a cottage, with additions to it undertaken by Albert Kirk. After the tearoom closed at '*Chimney Cottage*', Edward Gregson joined the army, putting his age back! On discharge, he worked with the Department Of Munitions until retirement.

From 1946, as both '*Wyndham*' and '*Chimney Cottage*' had been sold, '*Applecot*' became the final home in Mt Wilson for the Gregson girls. Their father lived there alone until his death in 1955. *References: A Mount Wilson Childhood*, by Helen Warliker, with sketches and linocuts by Meg Fromel. Published 1990.

See Memories of 'Applecot' page 11

Betty Clarke's story continued from page 3

monthly in private homes. Members had to be approved! A social evening usually followed. The main item of business was The Road: *ie.*, the Bowen Creek Road.

A branch of the Country Women’s Association, combining Mt Irvine and Mt Wilson, was formed in 1929. A highlight of its activities was the Sports Meeting held each year in Mt Wilson on ‘*Silva Plana*’ on New Year’s Day.

Electricity came to Mt Irvine in 1962. Sewerage never came, nor did reticulated water. Most homes later put in septic tanks. Where a home was built near a creek, the creek was dammed and the water laid on.

Education: There was no school here when we arrived. In 1921, parents and several friends built a three-roomed residence with a schoolroom at the back. In October that year, a one-teacher, subsidized school was opened. My sister was then nine years old and I was seven years old. We walked the three-quarters of a mile to school in all weathers. Our first teacher was a very young lady. The next teacher had taught in England. Her daughter, son-in-law and the grandchild stayed with her for some time. Then she came to board with us. Six to eight subjects were taught, including woodwork for the boys and sewing for the girls. My favourites were Maths and Grammar. The text-book we used was the *Primer*, and ‘Clancy of the Overflow’ was a favourite poem. We played rounders, cricket and football, and climbed gum trees in windy weather. After school, and sometimes during the lunch hour, or on a Saturday, we would follow the bullock team, watch tree-felling and snagging logs, riding on the loaded wagon and generally get in the way, but the bullock driver [Viv Kirk] was most patient.

Empire Day was always remembered with songs that we had learnt during the year. Sometimes, there was a bonfire and fireworks made by my father. A very special occasion was the visit, in 1927, of HRH, the Duke and Duchess of York. Some of the pupils, the teacher and several parents waited on the side of the road leading to Jenolan Caves to see them. The police escort came along and said the Royal car was just behind, but we heard later they were taken on a shorter route to save time. My father wrote about our disappointment and the teacher received a letter from the Duke’s private secretary regretting the change and asking that we be given a day’s holiday! Then my father set about making a box of picture blocks [to send as a gift to Princess Elizabeth]. The box was inlaid with local timber, and the pictures were of the Royal Easter Show.

At the end of sixth class we traveled to Blackheath to sit for the ‘Entrance to High School’ exam. Later, we went to Sydney to continue our education, staying with friends or relatives. I had to leave when just fourteen, owing to an accident my mother had suffered several years before. My sister and I worked at home, packing apples locally, doing housework or helping at the Mt Wilson Tea Rooms.

Religion : When we first came to Mt Irvine, church services were held in private homes and then, later, in the schoolroom. The Minister came from Katoomba or Mt Victoria, four times a year, and on the first and third Sundays each month two lay preachers would take the service. This was called ‘Free Church’ by several visitors, as no collection was taken up. I usually attended, until these services were discontinued, being replaced by radio and later by television in our own homes.

I well remember one minister, Mr Dorph, who must have been at Mt Victoria for over thirty years. He would travel regularly by train to Bell. Then he would accompany the mailman to visit his parishioners at Mt Irvine and Mt Wilson during the year.

Health: Having been trained as a nurse and being fully qualified, my mother was usually called out first in cases of illness and emergencies. Two babies were born at our house. Our nearest doctor was at

Blackheath, thirty miles away. He would come to very serious cases, but it took him hours, as the roads were so bad. I remember Dr. Woolnough and, later, Dr Richards, as both attended my parents. When we were ill, mother looked after us. For a cold or flu—off to bed with a hot lemon drink and a poultice of ‘Antiflo’ on our chest. I recall when my brother gashed his leg. As he lay on the kitchen table, I fed him with lumps of sugar, while Mrs Scrivener stitched the cut with her darning needle and horsehair that we had collected from a barbed wire fence.

Transport: At first, as we had no transport, we walked everywhere. We saved our pocket money and my sister bought a pony, ‘Gipsy’. Then the three of us learnt to ride. In 1938 we bought our first car. Shortly afterwards, when petrol rationing began with WWII, I bought and learnt to ride a pushbike.

The first motorized vehicle on the mountain was called ‘Mutta Putta’. It belonged to Basil Knight Brown. It had no hood or cover and could be heard coming for miles. But it always got from A to B, regardless of the road conditions. As the Bowen Creek Road passed near our property, I remember well its construction in the early 1930s. While the local residents, through the Progress Association, were often petitioning to have the road put through, so that it would bring us many miles closer to Kurrajong and Sydney, it was my father who wrote to Mr Hamilton-Knight, our State Member, suggesting that this work be part of the Government unemployed relief programme. Mr Hamilton-Knight replied that he would put this suggestion before the Government at their next meeting. Shortly afterwards, a second letter came, stating that this idea had been received favourably and a grant of £22,000 had been made. Work would begin at the Mt Irvine end. My father was in charge of the bridge building; he also donated some of the timber for it from our bush paddock.

Communication: Our first wireless was given to us—a little crystal set. After climbing forty feet up a gum tree near the house to erect an aerial, we could sometime hear voices and noises. Later came the wet batteries, which were rechargeable. Many programmes soon became favourites, such as: Jack Davey; Wotto; ‘Dad and Dave’; ‘Blue Hills’; William Winter (a WWII commentator); ‘Evensong’; ‘Community Hymn Singing’ (6.30pm Sundays) and always the ‘National News’ and the ‘Country Hour’.

At first, our mail came as far as Mt Wilson. Someone would ride from Mt Irvine to Mt Wilson to collect and deliver it. Then a mail contractor was appointed. He delivered on Wednesdays and Saturdays, coming from Bell (16 miles) by horse and sulky: He also brought any small parcels from the railway station and any passengers traveling by the ‘Paper Train’, which departed from Central Station at 3.00am. When returning to Sydney, there was a late afternoon train.

About the late 1920s, the telephone was brought from Mt Wilson during the construction of the Bowen Creek Road, and a Post Office was opened. Both of these were at “*Kookootonga*” (Mr C P Scrivener’s residence).

Bushfires: These were always a summer dread. While the sawmill operated and the bullock team was here, the animals grazed along the roadside and through the bush. A section would be burnt each winter. The worst fire I remember was in 1958 when back-burning got out of hand and several homes, some out-buildings and fences were lost. For a time we were encouraged to keep our fences clear and regular winter burning was carried out. This lapsed for a while for various reasons but seems to have been resumed in part.

I remember one snowstorm when we were small, and the joy we had making a snowman, freezing the ice cream, and the fairyland picture, generally. A more recent snowfall was heavier, isolating us for about a week, cutting off power, stopping phone and mail deliveries, bringing

Applecot Story continued from page 5

SOME MEMORIES OF ‘APPLECOT’

By Meg Fromel & Helen Warliker in 2004

There will be many people who have stayed in ‘*Applecot*’ for holidays who will be sorry to learn that it was burnt down on 6th April 2004. They will have happy memories of their stay in ‘*Applecot*’. After our father, Edward Jesse Gregson, died, suddenly, from a heart attack there on 25th November 1955, we three girls [Troath was the youngest, born in 1930] inherited it and decided to keep it on for people who wanted to stay for short periods as well as for us. People enjoyed the homely atmosphere of books, the piano, and sitting in front of the open fire making toast and drinking tea, or just gazing into the fire. The kitchen was especially a warm place with the Beacon Light Stove cooking merrily away and the crackling of the fire. The chip heater added to the attraction, as someone always had to use the hand pump (outside the kitchen door and which sometimes leaked) to increase the flow of water into the bath, which was never more than a few inches deep. The big concrete tank outside was our main supply of water from the roof, so there was very little water pressure unless you pumped! People were reminded to keep the wood box filled, so with an axe and crosscut saw in the woodshed below, one regarded this activity as part of the holiday. For over thirty years ‘*Applecot*’ survived wonderfully this way. Sometimes, holidaymakers found it very challenging when the toilet became blocked, the cause usually being tree roots, or something else would happen. People from all walks of life came—musicians, artists, and many families.

It was built as an apple shed near our home, ‘*Wyndham*’, which was constructed at the same time by a contractor, W H Warner. Our father used much of the land for growing apples, pears, plums and cherries, but mainly apples. Later, in the 1930s, it became a cottage. Cliff O’Rourke of Bell built the chimney and, possibly, some additions. It was let during World War II to the grandparents of the Gunn Family and their daughter, Margaret, from May 1939 to February 1940; and to our American grandfather, C W Jefferson and his housekeeper, Emma, and others. Incidentally, one of the later tenants asked if it was haunted, as he/she had heard someone walking along the hallway past their bedroom at night. Whose ghost was it?

After World War II our father retired, in 1945, and lived there for ten years until his death in 1955. His main interest was the Australian indigenous flora, particularly the eucalypts, an interest he inherited from his father, Jesse Gregson. His older sister, Nellie, or Helen, who built ‘*Windyridge*’, had a large bush garden devoted to native plants, an indication that she was well ahead of her time in the 1930s. That particular interest has been passed onto us with a deep love for the Australian bush. Dad also loved exotics, as you can see from the garden, and he grew his own vegetables and fruit trees. He always had a ready source of manure from the cows that wandered around the mountain. As he had sold ‘*Wyndham*’ and ‘*Chimney Cottage*’, he did not want the burden of property and, therefore, subdivided the portion of ‘*Applecot*’ from ‘*Wyndham*’. Then two bedrooms and a room for the Steinway piano were added on the northern side of ‘*Applecot*’. Albert Kirk, one of the seven Kirk brothers, was the builder.

Dad planted a yellow *Banksia* rose, which was a wonder to behold on that side in the Spring, while outside the windows on the roadside he planted two poplars, protected by tree guards, to provide privacy. Later, the porch on the southern side was closed in to give more warmth to the sitting room.

Dad was very averse to cleaning out grease traps and drains, so the plumbing was minimal and a kerosene tin collected the water from the sink, but after he died we improved on this method! The Kirks were always on hand to help him and, later, the Gunns were called often to clear the WC pipes when they became blocked by tree roots. Dad was very dependent on Cecil Kirk’s cow for milk, as we were dependent on Cecil for transport from Bell when we came by train from Sydney, or to

take Dad or us for picnics. We had no car! We did a lot of walking.

The Lithgow Co-op would come out once a fortnight, while meat would be put on the train to Bell, as well as bread, and collected by the mailman, along with the mail, and delivered to the door. (Very different from earlier times on the mountain when there was no mailman!)

Our father gave us a good sense of values, which has lasted. He liked to sit in his old rocking chair outside ‘*Applecot*’ on the road at night, smoking his cheroot and gazing up at the stars. How brilliant they can be on a clear frosty night! The early mornings were always enjoyed sitting in the sun beside the tank at the back door. In the evenings, we sat outside listening to the frogs croaking from the tank surrounded by the Virginia Creeper that turned a brilliant red in the autumn, as well as the Ornamental Grapevine that changed its colour from green to browns and reds. The Chestnut tree, where the pergola is, was a golden yellow in the autumn, while in the summer it provided great shade. It died suddenly, after Dad died, from a fungus disease.

[Helen, in her book, *A Mount Wilson Childhood*, recalls how ‘*Applecot*’ got its name (see above, for an excerpt) and she mentions ‘*Applecot*’ in her book *We Three Sisters*, pages 5 and 6.]

‘*Applecot*’ remained in the hands of the Gregsons until it was sold in the mid-nineties to Duncan Peppercorn and Dawn Kanelleas. Inevitably, there is a little repetition in the above account as we try to clarify issues in the story, especially for those who are unfamiliar with this period of Mt Wilson’s history. It would be quite marvelous if any of our members who stayed at ‘*Applecot*’ could send us their memories of those times so that they could be recorded and retained in our archives, and presented in a future newsletter.

From an interview with Helen and Meg at Killcare.

Mary Reynolds

WHAT OF ‘WYNDHAM’?

‘*Wyndham*’ was commenced in mid 1922 and was close to completion by December 1922. Helen Gregson was born on 6th June 1924 so that her very clear memories, recorded below, are more reflective of the later 1920s and early 1930s.

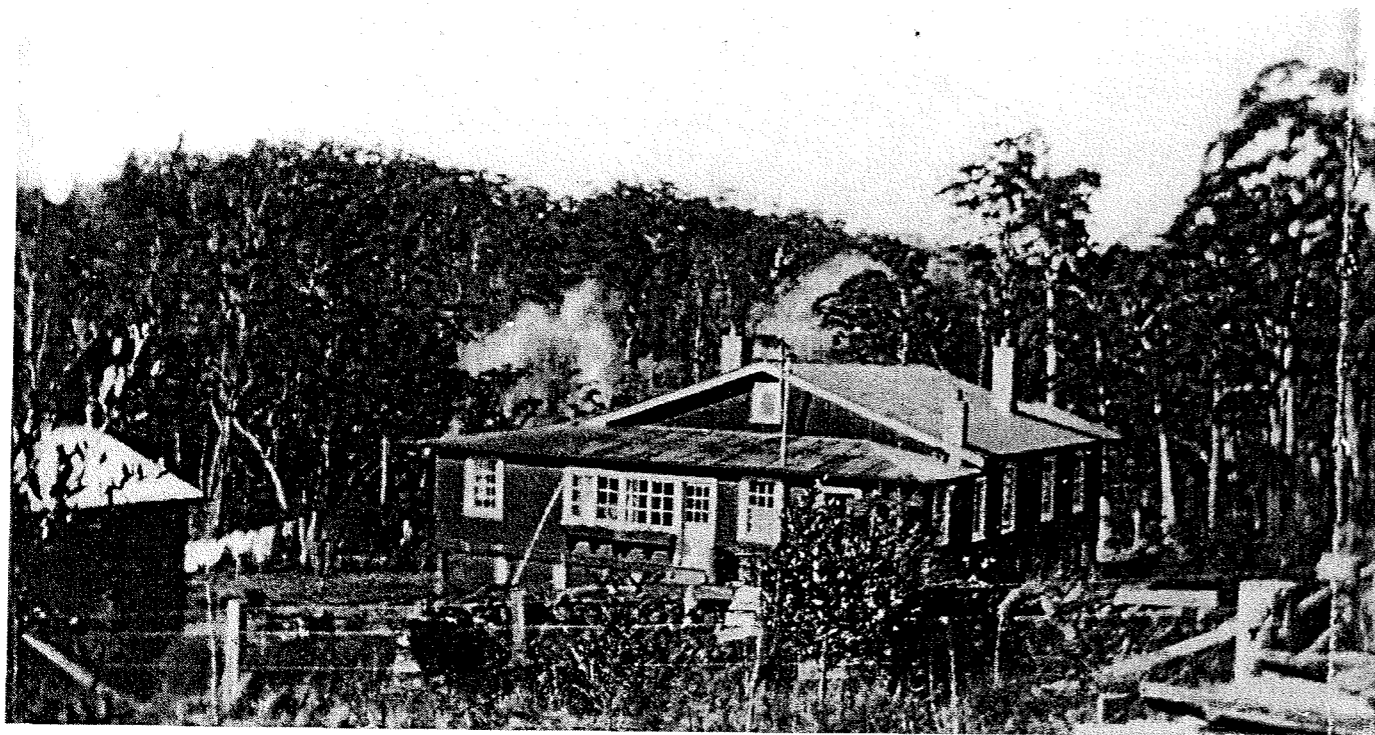
Extracts from *A Mount Wilson Childhood* Published 1990

‘Wyndham’ was a ‘weatherboard house with an iron roof surrounded on three sides by verandahs.’
‘The sights and sounds and smells of early life sharpen memory, and this house was rich in them. ... On the verandah was a table on which I helped churn the butter...it seemed an interminable task.’
‘In the pantry, on the shady side of the house, large pans of milk were set for cream. Also setting in pans but high up on a shelf was homemade soap, my father’s province—.’
‘Roses clambered up the railings of the verandah and a fragrant Lisbon lemon reached almost to the roof.’
The Kitchen—‘wood boxes for the fuel stove and open fireplaces, and with fruit and vegetables in and under the long table. There was the “whirr” of the separator when the pails of milk were brought up from the cow bail to be turned into skim milk for the calves and pigs, and cream for the butter.’
‘The smell of kerosene pervaded the whole house in those days before electricity. It fuelled all the lamps—the beautiful Aladdins, the more humble Sconce, the little night-lights and the lanterns; also the primus stove—the prima Donna....’
‘Surrounding the house was a garden of cold climate shrubs and trees—rhododendrons, azaleas, silver birches, cypresses, deodars, maples and oaks. Still small, as it was a newly established garden.... Wallflowers grew by the shady side of the house, nasturtiums on the sunny side by a stone wall.... Beyond this European garden was a little bush garden with wattles and tree ferns and a swing between two big

continued on page 7



Front of 'Wyndham' completed 1922



Rear of 'Wyndham', 1927

Betty Clarke's Story, continued from page 6

down trees and branches in both the bush and gardens. It delayed the week-enders return to the city.

I remember attending a meeting at Mt Wilson to form a branch of the A F A (All For Australia) in 'Old' Wynstay, when Mr Lang was Premier. We went to meetings to hear our State and Federal Members speak, sometimes at the Sawmill, in the days when they would come out. I cannot remember any local person standing, but Mr P P Scrivener, who once ran the Sawmill where my cottage 'Many Trees' now stands, was the Shire Clerk for the Blue Mountains, at Lawson, for a number of years.

To earn pocket money, my sister and I used to milk a neighbour's two or three cows, feed the chooks and fill the wood boxes morning and evening seven days a week, in all weathers, for two or three shillings per week between us. From after school until 5.00pm, and all day Saturday, we would pick or pack apples during the season for one penny a case, walking half a mile each way to work. When we finished school, we undertook any work available and were generally quite happy with conditions, for it was the time of the Great Depression. We were never asked to join a union and I don't remember any problems or disputes. I still keep in touch with the folk for whom I worked.

The Depression was grim—'poverty and hard work' is how my brother described it—, but life had a brighter side. We formed a 'Younger Set' on Mt Irvine, meeting at different homes for social evenings and playing games such as 'Up Genkins'. Then, by arranging a number of working bees, and with the loan of a horse and scoop, we built a tennis court. To help raise the money to buy the netting, we baked little cakes and sold them for one penny each to the men working on the Bowen Creek Road. Only this week, I met one of the men who had worked there and who remembered this and the steamed fowls with a jar of soup my mother would prepare for two shillings and sixpence.

From 1936 to 1940 my sister and I ran a small guesthouse and made many life-long friends. This was 'Taihoa', which was leased from Miss Dora Scrivener. Our Aunts helped us out for the first year. Among the guests were: a cousin of the Duchess of York, a Mr Bertram Stephens, and his daughter (although they stayed also at 'Woodstock' and 'Wildflower Hall'), Rosemary Game, the daughter of the then Governor of NSW, Sir Philip Game, and Lady Game,

I was older when WWII broke out, and better able to understand the tension and the stress my parents were having, for the second time, as many families they knew, and relatives and friends, joined up to go overseas. Some of us formed a group to knit for the 'Australia Comfort Fund' and we met each week to hand in the finished garments and get more wool. I was asked to take charge of this. Some of us learnt to make camouflage nets and we would do our quota, daily. We managed to cope with rationing, and remain ever thankful the war ended before we were successfully invaded. April 25th will always be very special and though small, I shall ever remember the return of one ANZAC.

Betty Clarke

COPY of a LETTER from the EARL of CAVAN, Private Secretary to H.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of York. May 18th 1927

Dear Mr Jolly,

I am invited by Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of York to thank you and the children most warmly for the charming little box which was delivered today at Fremantle.

Her Royal Highness will take it home with much pleasure for her daughter.

Best Wishes

Cavan.

GIFT FOR PRINCESS ELIZABETH

'A letter has been received by Mr C.R. Clarke of Mt Irwin [sic], Blue

Mountains, from the Earl of Cavan saying that the Duchess of York accepted for Princess Elizabeth, a gift of picture blocks made by Mr Clarke, of Australian woods grown on the mountains. When the royal party visited Jenolan Caves the school children of Mt Irwin [sic] were waiting on the route but owing to the altered arrangements the Royal party did not travel that road. Mr R. Clarke wrote to the Earl of Cavan telling him of the children's disappointment, and a letter was received saying that the Duke and Duchess regretted having missed seeing them, and asking that a holiday be granted them. Later Mr Clarke made the picture blocks of Australian woods and pictures from the 'Sydney Mail' of the Royal Tour. They were enclosed in a box bearing on its lid a seven-pointed star and the little princess's initials. The Earl of Cavan has written saying how pleased the Duchess was with the gift.

[This is an extract from an unnamed newspaper, date not known. Could be *SMH* about 1927?]

GWEN SILVEY OBITUARY

On 3rd June 2004, Gwen Silvey, one of our foundation members, passed away in Springwood after a long struggle with cancer. In 2001 Gwen received the Order of Australia for her outstanding services to history and the protection of heritage in the Blue Mountains. This award recognized Gwen's extensive work as the research officer for the *Blue Mountains Historical Society*; her involvement with the preservation of 'Lilianfels' at Echo Point and the saving and restoration of the 'Woodford Academy' at Woodford. In 1998 the *National Trust* awarded Gwen its Commendation Medal for her achievements at 'Woodford Academy'. Gwen also planned the building of the *Hobby's Reach History Research Centre* in Blaxland Road Wentworth Falls. She was Local History Adviser to the *NSW Heritage Office* and the *National Trust of Australia [NSW]* and liaison officer with the *Royal Australian Historical Society*. In 1994 she set up the Heritage Advisory Committee for the Blue Mountains City Council. In between, she produced a fine publication, *Happy Days; Blue Mountains Guest Houses Remembered*, a wonderful source of information.

In 1998, Gwen was our Guest Speaker at our Second Annual General Meeting when she spoke about those very Guests Houses. She was always happy to help us in our early days of functioning as a Society and was very helpful with material when, in 1993, we put up a display in the Village Hall for the *125th Anniversary of the Surveying of Mt Wilson*. For Ellis and me, Gwen was a dear friend, with warmth, understanding and wise advice on many issues, and an inspiration for those seeking to save our heritage. We extend to her sister Shirley and family, and to Reg Baumgarten, her devoted partner, our warmest sympathy and understanding.

JAN KENNEDY OBITUARY

Jan passed away on 1st July 2004. Jan built and lived in 'Rolands', Wynnes Rocks Road, during the 1990s, and in that time was a very loyal supporter of our Society. Quiet, gentle and self-effacing, Jan remained devoted to the Society's aims.

She and her family of four children had a long association with Mt Wilson, going back to the 1970s when they frequently stayed at 'Applecot'. It was in that era that Ellis and I first met her. At that time she was deeply shocked by the sudden loss of her husband, George, from a heart attack, and had found her life almost shattered. It took many years for her to come to terms with that loss. However, she did succeed, eventually, and had some happy years at Mt Wilson. To all her family, we extend our warmest sympathy and gratitude that we were her friends.

Mary Reynolds

POEM

By Meg Fromel, 1990

Old houses breathe of people's lives once lived
Recording steps in passages of time
Softened by gardens, flowers and trees
That whisper secrets to rustling leaves

Built of fibro, wood and iron
They sit on rugged blocks of stone
And watch o'er mountain tops and seas
Like birds when resting in tall trees

Before a fire of cosy warmth
When mountain mists and frosty days
Give people time to think upon
Life's rocky path of changing ways

Summer nights of scented air
Stir one to thoughts and times elsewhere
We cannot help but to remember
When families gathered in December



Sunken garden pathway, 'Wynstay'



The Italian Gates and Garden, 'Wynstay'



'Wynstay' Residence

SPRING GARDEN OPENINGS AT 'WYNSTAY'

For the first time in five years, the gardens at 'Wynstay' were opened to the public on the last two weekends in September this year. Thanks to absolutely wonderful weather and a successful publicity campaign, several hundred people came to enjoy the peaceful grandeur of these majestic gardens and historic buildings, which were established more than 120 years ago.

Visitors were enchanted by the meandering pathways, stone walls and buildings, towering trees and many unusual ornamental shrubs and perennials, which added colour and perfume along the way. Many people told us that they had visited 'Wynstay' many years ago and were delighted to have the opportunity of a return visit, and to find the gardens just as appealing as in their original form.

The Turkish Bath Museum was a very popular attraction, with an excellent new exhibition of early days in Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine, including many scenes of 'Wynstay' and its residents from years ago. Lunches and teas were available at the Mt Wilson Village Hall, as well as local art for sale, hand-made jewellery, jams, daffodils, and a raffle, all of which added to the festive atmosphere and overall success of the event.

The four days proved to be a great financial success as well, with gross takings in excess of \$10,000. Sunday September 19 was designated 'Golden Retriever Day' with proceeds from entry to the garden going to 'Golden Retriever Rescue', a non-profit organisation set up to save dogs that are abandoned, neglected or abused. The remaining profit goes to support the work of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society.

The Society is very grateful indeed to Wendy Smart and Amne Hugan for making the 'Wynstay' property available. Many members and friends gave their time, energy and skills to planning and preparation and to ensuring that the Open Days ran smoothly. Dozens of people were involved, and the Society thanks them all, with special mention of just a few who gave particular contributions: Helen and John Cardy for organising the excellent food service at the Village Hall, and their energetic team of helpers. Helen and John also helped with work at 'Wynstay'. Thanks to: Mary Reynolds for innumerable tasks, including setting up the exhibition; Lawrence Cryer for preparation of the brochure; Zeny Edwards and a working party from *The National Trust*, Wendy Smart and Shane Jeffery for preparation of the grounds and gardens at 'Wynstay'.

Florence Smart