



Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society

Newsletter N° 14

August 2006

We warmly welcome the following **new members** who have joined the Society in the last six months:

**Lawrence Cryer
& Shane Jeffery**

*

**Margaret & Stephen
Dean**

*

**Nancy Fox & Bruce
Arnold**

*

Nickie Garret

*

**Graeme & Susanne
Over**

*

**Rosie & David
Taylor**

*

**Anna & Rod
Brennan**

(sadly, we note Rod's untimely accidental death with a tribute on page 13)

The Luigi Strano Story

It is perhaps not too surprising that there is at least one resident of Mt Wilson who is a poet. More surprising, however, is that Luigi Strano is not only a poet but is competently judged to be the best Italian poet living in Australia, writing his poems in both Italian and English. That he is a resident of long standing is quite apparent from his poem called *Zircon Creek*.

*To stay sane
I must feel
the rugged bushland
beneath my feet
see a wallaby or two,
the lyre-bird,
and quench my thirst
at Zircon Creek...*



It's quite some years since Zircon Creek, at the point where it reaches the high side of Mt Irvine Road just where the road widens on a bend, was a favourite place - special, even a sacred site! - for quenching your thirst with the clearest, sweetest water ever, and a place well loved by residents of both of our villages. Sadly, now, the access to it is somewhat cluttered (temporarily, one hopes) by a large fire-fighters' tank standing there, waiting. But Luigi's poem pre-dates all this by many years. The poem is to be found in a small volume of Luigi's English language poetry called *Fifty Years Ago*.

(continued on page 7)

Opening Times of the Turkish Bath

The Turkish Bath Museum is open to the public from 12:30pm to 3:00pm on the third Sunday of every month throughout the year, plus some Saturdays and every Sunday in spring and autumn. Group tours are welcome, by arrangement, and can include an informative walking tour along The Avenue. Light lunches and teas can also be provided by arrangement. Contact Mary Reynolds for information and bookings.

Spring Fundraising Activities

Since Mt Wilson at present has no tea-room facilities, the Society plans to serve Devonshire teas and light lunches at the Village Hall on one or two weekends during the coming tourist season. Any offers of volunteer help will be gratefully received.

Contact: Florence Smart by phone on (02) 4657 2063 or by email at westring@bigpond.com.

President's Report

The year 2006 has so far been very successful for the Society. Our membership has now passed the 200 mark and we welcome several new members who have joined since February this year.

Your committee has had a busy year, especially in arranging our 10th Annual Jazz Concert held on the Anzac weekend, again featuring Bill Boldiston and his band of musicians. We enjoyed a great afternoon entertained by two groups. Bill led his usual band the Bloweys and the second half was given over to Jeanne's Jazz, with thumping keyboard, terrific tuba with that great trumpeter Jeanne Hope leading the group. Clearly, by now, we have a devoted band of followers for these concerts – our last two have each had record attendances, resulting in record profits! Our thanks go to the hardworking organising committee.

Thanks to the group of trustees who manage the Mt Wilson Study Centre we now enjoy the use of the whole of the vestibule area of that building for storage of much of the Society's archives, books and papers. Volunteers have installed excellent shelving and other custom-fitted facilities, and we are installing dehumidifiers to keep our materials in a good environment. We are indeed grateful to the Study Centre Council for their response to our need for storage and work space. We are also hoping that our members might take note of our request in this newsletter for possible donations of much-needed office equipment.

This will be the last newsletter before our AGM scheduled for November 4th and I would like to thank all members who have supported our activities by generous donations and hands-on work. We need both if we are to keep on keeping on.

Arthur Delbridge

10th AGM

The Society's 10th Annual General Meeting is planned for Sat 4th Nov 2006. Notices will be sent out closer to the date. Instead of our usual guest speaker, this year we will review and celebrate a wonderful 10 years of growth and success with discussion of progress to date and directions for the future.

Progress Report on Research, Archives and the Turkish Bath Museum

Research

Tom's Mill on Mt Irvine Road

In November 2005 the Society purchased a copy of a conservation report on *Tom's Mill* carried out in 1995 by Warren Day, a retired police officer in forensics and now an archaeologist living in Blaxland. Des Barrett, a member from Leura and a curator at the Power House Museum, made that possible and the Society purchased a copy from Mr Day. The new owners of *Tom's Mill*, Bob and Angela Korogiannis, now have a copy. Their interest in the Mill has inspired them to have an historical sign erected near the mill to inform passers-by of the structure's story, the wording for which will be provided by the Society.

C R Scrivener

Late last year the Society was contacted by Mr Greg Wood, a retired public servant in Canberra, for material and information on C R Scrivener. Mr Wood visited the Scrivener Exhibition in Bathurst and then *Donna Buang* to photograph a large number of relevant documents. He joined our Society and gave a donation. More recently, a fourth year surveying student from the University of New South Wales, Andrew Choi, visited Mt Wilson to research C R Scrivener. His intention is to set up a surveying website as part of a course project. He gave a donation to the Society.

Mt Wilson Garden Book

The authors of a planned publication on the history of Mt Wilson gardens, Alison Halliday and Jo Hambrett, have been in contact with the Society over the past few months to gather further material. The Society has contributed considerable time and work to this project including making its photographic collection available for selection of photos for possible use in the book. Both authors are members of the Society.

***Beowang* Photos**

A wonderful collection of more than 50 old photos held by Elizabeth Hartnell, whose grandfather owned *Beowang* (*Withycombe*) from 1916-1919, was recently copied onto disk for the Society by the Kuringai Historical Society with the help of Alison Halliday. We are deeply grateful to Elizabeth Hartnell for allowing the albums to be copied and to Alison Halliday for donating the disc to the Society. Kuringai Society did not charge any fee for this work and for this we are also very appreciative. Our Society entertained Kuringai Historical Society in 2004 with a tour and lunch.

Richard Prentice's Album

The Society was lent Richard Prentice's photo album last year for the Gregson Exhibition. It contains a great collection of photos of *Cherry Cottage* and *Windyridge*, many taken by Fred Huber who owned *Windyridge* 1945-1993. The album has now been copied onto disc at Fletchers Photographics Lithgow for a reasonable cost (\$53.00) and is an excellent addition to our collection. Our gratitude to Richard for lending the album to the Society.

Mary Edwards

The artist Mary Edwards has close links with Mt Wilson. She lived at *Denmarque* when it was known as *Wildflower Hall* around the 1930s. Through Milba Mewburn the Society made contact with Colin Fullagar of *Berambing* who has carried out detailed

research on Mary's life. Meg Fromel also has some remarkable memories of Mary Edwards, who was one of two Royal Art Society members who took legal action against William Dobell claiming that his 1943 Archibald Prize-winning portrait of Joshua Smith was a 'distorted and caricatured form' and therefore not a portrait. The Society hopes to have Colin as a guest speaker at a future meeting.

Our Research is of Wide Interest

In addition to the above, we have had requests for research and information on the history of the Bowens Creek Road, copies of photos from our exhibitions in the Turkish Bath and the history of 'The Explorers' Rock' at Mt Tomah for a retired surveyor wishing to revive interest in some of our early surveying history.

Chimney Cottage

The Society has been giving some assistance to Margaret Wickins of *Chimney Cottage* in her application to restore the original *Chimney Cottage* tearoom. You may be aware that Mt Wilson now has no tearoom facility since the closure of the Tulip Tearoom earlier this year and the Society has written a letter supporting the restoration of the tearoom at *Chimney Cottage* as it was built in 1930s as a tearoom and is on the local heritage list.

Land Title Research

Looking back to the end of 2005 and the early months of 2006, I am stunned at the time spent on the continuing work on Land Titles and research for individual and group requests.

This work has been very demanding: first in recording the information from the title research and then using it in research. At this time, Portions 1 to 38 have been recorded manually. In November and December 2005 and January and February 2006, much time was spent sending copies of titles to those who had requested them and I hope all those titles have now been received. The recording



still has to be completed and a copy sent to the Royal Australian Historical Society. We have received \$900.00 of the grant of 2004-2005 of \$1000.00. The \$100.00 owing has not as yet been received as we have to lodge a proposal for State Heritage listing for an item or building in Mt Wilson. Again, it must be stressed that this work could never have been achieved without the generous donations from members and residents of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. The final figures for costs and donations are as follows: donations & grant: - \$6,830.00; costs - \$6,593.00.

Voluntary Environment & Heritage Grant Application

An application was lodged with the Federal Department of Environment and Heritage in November 2005 seeking funding for administrative costs and specific items totalling \$9,500. The Society was recently notified that it will receive \$1,800, which will provide much needed humidifiers for the archival storage area. Grant applications are an ongoing challenge.

Archival Work

This work has advanced quite rapidly over the last few months due mainly to the much

appreciated regular working visits of Society members John and Helen Cardy. John has concentrated on cataloguing material while Helen has sorted new documents we have received and kept up the filing of photos into appropriate albums. All newsletters and magazines in the vestibule of the Study Centre have now been filed in holders and suitably identified. There

are also now 30 archival boxes lodged in the vestibule which have all been catalogued, listed and labelled.

As the material has

Windyridge in the snow - 1960s (from the album of Richard Prentice)

to be accessioned before it can be catalogued, which is my task as Research Officer, documents up to the middle of 2005 have been accessioned while the photos are somewhat behind at 2002. John has evolved a simple catalogue which is easy to follow and use. Some of the subjects listed are: Gardens, the Village Hall, Post Office War Memorial, *Nooroo*/Valder, *Windyridge*/Huber, Bush Fire Brigade, Mt Irvine, Knight Brown, C R Scrivener.

On 17th June a full-on working bee achieved the transfer of archives, records and exhibition panels into the storage facility at the Mt Wilson Study Centre. Large maps and posters were sorted and catalogued and a large assortment of schoolbooks from the original one-teacher school were listed and stored. The Society has a small library of books relevant to the study of local history and this collection is now housed for easy access on the shelves at the Study Centre. We are very grateful for Des Barrett's expertise with the maps and to the six or eight hardy souls who spent the day working in the chilly winter conditions.

Turkish Bath Roster

This roster is now organised by Julia Reynolds and has been well responded to this year. Almost every place was filled with little difficulty throughout the busy autumn and the Society is most grateful to those members who have rallied to provide so much support and to Julia for her energy and persistence.

Tours of the Turkish Bath

The Society would like to see more group tours of the Turkish Bath and The Avenue. Those undertaken in the last six months have all been rewarding both financially and socially. In October 2005, a group of elderly bushwalkers toured the Turkish Bath and the Society provided them with lunch. This netted close to \$400.00 and we sold \$50.00 worth of raffle tickets at the time. In late February, a vintage car group (organised through Milba Mewburn) visited the Turkish Bath, The Avenue and the Church in a tour led by Arthur Delbridge and John Cardy. The group was most appreciative and the Society gained approximately \$190.00.

During May this year, there have been two very successful tours of the Turkish Bath and The Avenue. On 9th May the Graduate Garden Club were led by Robin Leonard, which brought in \$240.00 and on 17th May, 39 members of the Southern Highlands Garden Club undertook the same tour on a beautiful Autumn day, from which the Society collected \$312.00. The Prospect Heritage Group will be visiting on 15th October 2006.

Scrivener Exhibition

During Heritage Week in Canberra, Surveyor's Park (near Old Parliament House) was opened by the President of the National

Trust of Australia (NSW), Mr Barry O'Keefe. The Society had been of the understanding that the Scrivener Exhibition would be on display in Canberra at that time, but this did not happen. The Society learnt this by chance from a retired surveyor, Bill Moore, who rang the Society seeking information on Explorer's Rock at Mt Tomah. It was very disappointing indeed. Bill Moore asked for details of the Scrivener Exhibition and promised to pursue the matter. At the same time, the Society contacted the Surveyor General at Bathurst, expressing dismay and disappointment. Paul Harcombe was most apologetic stating that every effort had been made to find a venue for the exhibition without success and that he should have let the Society know. Bill Moore contacted the Society again to convey the sincere apologies of the Commissioner for Surveys in Canberra, Frank Blanchfield, who is now trying to negotiate a venue for the exhibition in Canberra.

Beowang c 1918
(photograph from the collection of Elizabeth Hartnell)



Wollemi Pine

The Society has purchased a Wollemi Pine which will be planted within the Turkish Bath Precinct. The Society has the certification and guidance required to make sure the pine is properly cared for and protected.

Rainforest Vegetation Encroaching on the Mt Irvine Road

Community organisations in Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine have been consulted by the Blue Mountains City Council as it prepares to undertake essential trimming and clearing work along a stretch of road which passes through a rare, beautiful and precious World Heritage Area. The Society is pleased with the level of consultation and have been

informed that the work is to be carried out by Council staff, rather than contractors, under the supervision of the Horticulturalist from the BMCC, Mark Vickery, who the Society believes will approach the task with a proper appreciation of the environmental and heritage issues.

Mary Reynolds
Research and Public Officer

An Image of Mt Wilson Road



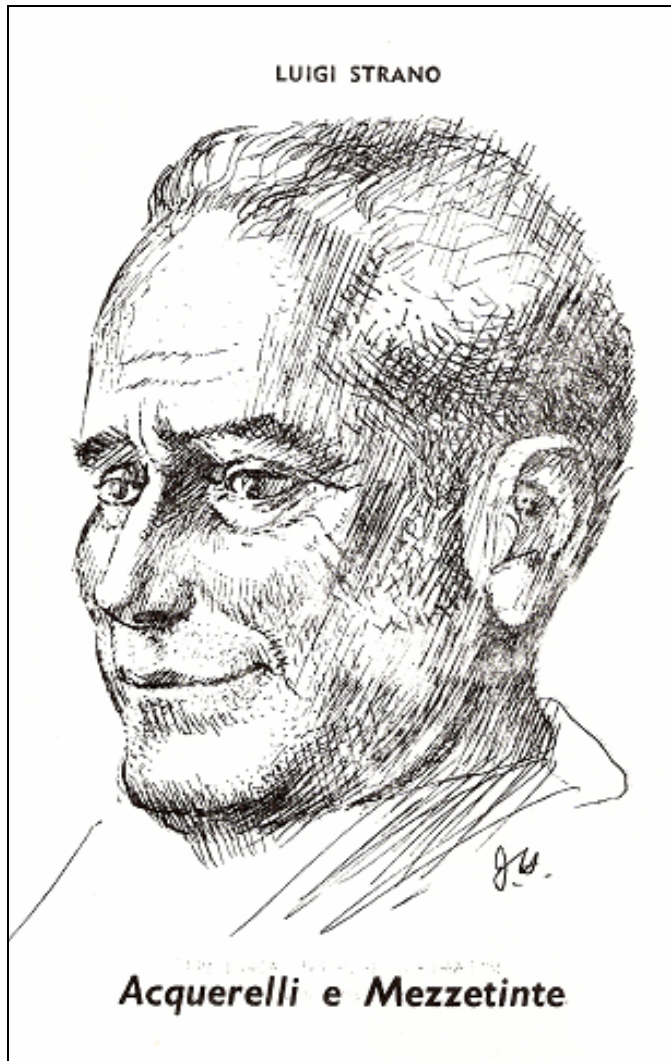
An article entitled 'Mt Wilson Artefacts at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences' written by Society member Des Barrett (Curator, Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo) appeared in the last newsletter (no 13). The article discussed the two objects in the Museum's collection that relate to Mt Wilson. These are an earthenware mug by the late Frederick Mann, a photograph of which also appeared in the article, and a half-plate glass negative of Mt Wilson Rd taken between 1884 and 1901 believed to be at the upper side of the zig-zag as one approaches Mt Wilson. An image of this glass negative (left) was promised to appear in this newsletter.

The negative was produced by Sydney's leading photographic studio during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Kerry and Co. The object on the

road between the two wheels on the right-hand side of the horse-drawn vehicle has not, as yet, been identified by Des Barrett and remains a mysterious element of the photograph.

The Luigi Strano Story (continued from page 1)

Luigi is a familiar figure in Mt Wilson, emerging from his garden to visit the churchyard, riding on his motorised chair, driving with Beth Raines to go shopping in Blackheath, even going, at times, to village meetings where he is attentive and quiet, although anything he does say is sure to be remembered. At 93, he is active, quick-witted, perceptive and discriminating.



*If you are not peddling
any religious
or political orthodoxy;
if you are not nursing
resentment and hatred
against any race,
religion
or country;
if you can keep
an open mind
to whatever I may say
or do ...
then, my friend, come right in:
we may have a glass of wine
and crack a joke or two.*

“When the world was mad, (he said) I went on the land to grow flowers and vegetables.” These were his days as a farmer. Among his writings is a 100 page booklet called *Rocciosa é la via* (*Rocky is the Road*) and it is his own story of his life. But there is a shorter version written by John Taylor as an introduction to *Fifty Years Ago* and I have Luigi’s permission to quote from it – a one page version of a very rocky life, much in contrast to the quiet peace of his life here now.

Luigi Strano became a scholar and a poet against all the odds that society could reasonably provide.

He left school and his native land at the age of sixteen was forced into uncongenial work at a time of economic depression – and naturally enough ended up before the courts. Except that it was as an expert translator, helping his countrymen that had coped less well than he had with a new environment.

It is rather puzzling to an observer how he did cope, since he has remained at heart what one might call a citizen of the past. In all the languages which he has absorbed, his interest has been centred on the Golden Ages – Greek, Roman, Italian, Spanish, French, German. In English he quotes Shakespeare, Jonson and Johnson as freely as he quotes Dante in Italian. He is unfamiliar with most modern writers, which is a great blessing to a finely-tuned mind.

His Italian vers libre has wrung compliments even from Professor Giuseppe Morabito, whose refined classicism excludes most “modern” poetry as nonsense. It is, I dare say, because of the paradox of a classical approach in a modern form: old wine in new bottles, but without the awkwardness one would expect.

English is not his second, but fourth language. (His daily communication is mostly in Calabrese, a language older than Latin; I suspect him of actually thinking in Latin.) But in so far as one can say such a thing, he has led most of this life in English, and these poems are the expression of it. They are the work of Luigi Strano JP, a busy Australian. Luigi Strano MA, a time-traveller in the Golden Ages, inspired them.

His later years are distinguished by the ready contact he enjoys with professional scholars of Italian language and literature in Australian universities: Frederick May, Gaetano Rando, Colin McCormick, Giovanni Andreoni, John Scott, Barry Leal and many more, all teaching Italian (as Luigi puts it) *con amore e contagioso entusiasmo*. In 1985, it was one of these, Barry Leal, then Professor of European Languages in the University of Wollongong, who presented Luigi for the award of the degree of Master of Arts (Hons), *Honoris causa*. It is very unusual for such a degree to be awarded to someone so thoroughly self-educated in all the languages he knows, except in his native Calabrian dialect of Italian. Professor Leal’s regard for Luigi shines through his citation, from which the following is extracted:

*Today the University of Wollongong wishes to honour Luigi Strano and in so doing to manifest the importance it attaches to the cultural contributions brought to Australia by those born in other lands ... He migrated to Australia in 1930 at the beginning of the Great Depression and found varying types of work. During this time he pursued his literary and linguistic studies in his free time, attending classes in English and German, and privately studying Latin, Greek, French and Spanish... He also worked as an official court interpreter and translator, a task which he still occasionally undertakes. In 1959 he founded the St Johns Park Real Estate Agency. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1966 and now lives in active retirement in Mt Wilson in the Blue Mountains... Chancellor it is my privilege and pleasure to present to you Luigi Strano for admission to the degree of Master of Arts (Hons), *Honoris causa*.*

Today there is an especially local reason for an article on such a distinguished member of this Historical Society. Luigi has recently announced that in his will he is leaving his entire library of Italian and English literature of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries to the Society. This is a huge gift and a huge responsibility. The collection concentrates on early editions, many of them extremely rare. We are taking steps to have the 3000–4000 books catalogued and valued and are pondering the practicalities of Luigi’s generous gesture.

Our thanks to Luigi for his great gift to the Mt Wilson community and also to the advancement of scholarship in both languages.

Arthur Delbridge

Land Title Research

Original Purchasers of Mt Wilson Land

*How did names such as **Stephen Lane**, **Lamb's Hill** and **Shadforth Road** come to be used? How many local residents are aware of their own or their neighbours' links with Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine's past? The Society aims to compensate for the lack of recently published historical material on the district by studying the land title documents and answering many as yet unanswered questions about the local area.*

In 1868, Edward S Wyndham, a young surveyor from England, was directed by Philip Francis Adams, the Deputy Surveyor General for NSW at the time, to survey this then unnamed mountain. Edward soon discovered that he had to approach the area from Mt Victoria and the Darling Causeway. He restricted his survey of the mountain to the land covered with the rich basalt soil.

Wyndham's work was a challenge when confronted with virtually impenetrable bush and rain forest. During that year of 1868, Philip Adams visited Wyndham at his campsite (later named *Nutman's Camp* and now on private land) and officially named the mountain Mt Wilson after the then Minister for Lands in the NSW Government of Sir James Martin, John Bowie Wilson. Sixty-two portions were finally produced and it is these which are the basis for this research.

Wyndham is today remembered by Wyndham Avenue. This road was not officially named Wyndham until around 1950, but Edward Gregson (son of Jesse Gregson of *Yengo*), who built the cottage *Wyndham*, had already recognised Wyndham's contribution in that way. Sadly, *Wyndham* has since gone; that part of our history was destroyed by a severe fire.

Where did Stephen Lane develop from?

Portion 53 was a very large area to the north and west of the Cathedral of Ferns and consisted of 56 acres, sold at one pound per acre to Septimus Alfred Stephen in the second half of 1875. At around the same time, Septimus, or Seppy as he was called by his family, also purchased portions 43, 45 and 47. The total sum for those grants was 136 pounds, 16 shillings and 10 pence, which was a substantial sum of money in 1875.

Who was Seppy Alfred Stephen (1842-1901)?

Seppy was the seventh son of the Chief Justice of NSW, Sir Alfred Stephen (1844-1873), the latter of whom was married twice. His first wife, Virginia, died in Hobart in 1837 following the birth and death of their ninth child. In 1838, Sir Alfred remarried and his new wife, Eleanor Bedford, produced nine children. Eleanor was Septimus's mother. As Sir Alfred fathered 18 children, it is hardly surprising that there are quite a number of descendants of this family in Australia. In the book *Think of Stephen: A Family Chronicle* by Ruth Bedford, one of those descendants, Seppy, was described as, at the age of nine, already 'loving a lord' having enjoyed an attendance at the swearing



in of the Governor General at Government House.

Further comment in this book reveals Seppy to be a bright, energetic, intelligent and generous human being. The photo on the previous page is of Seppy as member for Canterbury between 1882-1887 in the Legislative Assembly of NSW.

As was the pattern in these 19th century families, when boys turned eight they were sent away to school and Seppy was no exception. He attended Meads at Ashfield and the Collegiate School, Cooks River. His older brothers, Consett and Matthew, had followed the law so it was almost inevitable that he would also eventually become partners with Consett, which he did in about 1864. In that year he also married Lucy Campbell, daughter of Robert Campbell. There were 15 bridesmaids!

It is interesting to note that Seppy had a large practice in conveyancing. This may explain his investment in land at Mt Wilson. In the 1880s, he represented Canterbury in the Legislative Assembly at the same time that he was investing in cattle stations in Queensland, but the 1890s brought severe losses there.

It was not unusual for men of his means and background to be heavily involved in racing, gambling and speculating. Yet he was a lay member of the St Andrews Cathedral Chapter in 1896 and a lay representative to the general Synod in 1890s, also holding positions in charities such as the Hospital for Sick Children. He had a country house, *Elvo*, at Burradoo but not at Mt Wilson and I suspect Mt Wilson proved to be too isolated. In 1896 Seppy left Sydney to live in England where he continued his legal work and wide business interests until his death in 1901 in Hampshire.

What of his land in Mt Wilson?

Portion 43 (11 acres) was sold in either 1882 or 1892 to a relative. Portions 45 (35 acres) and 47 (8 acres) were held until his death. Later, all these portions as well as 44 and 46 were amalgamated under one ownership of the three Baldry brothers in 1951 and later by Sir John Warraker Austin from 1958 to about 1980 when they were separated under new titles and sold to different buyers, some of whom are the current owners. Today, Stephen Lane bounds Portion 47 and part of Portion 43.

What of Portion 53?

Septimus Stephen was not the owner for long as on 2 July, 1878 he sold these 56 acres to Walter Lamb Esquire of Sydney and it remained with the Lamb family until 1963, hence Lamb's Hill.

Who was Walter Lamb Esq?

Walter Lamb Esq (1825-1906) came from London in 1829 with his parents. His father established Lamb, Spry & Co in which Walter became a clerk and then a partner. In January 1855, Walter became an original shareholder and director of the Colonial Sugar Refining Co and then Chairman in 1880. From 1860 Walter was a director in a number of banking and insurance companies and on the committee of the Union Club.

After 1880, he resigned from the business world and turned his attention first to pastoral interests in the Darling Downs and then to farming on the Liverpool Plains

and later at Rooty Hill. In this area, most significantly, he established the first fruit cannery in 1887, setting up orchards nearby to provide fruit until 1893.

Henry Parkes offered him a seat in the NSW Legislative Council which he finally accepted (1889-1893). Walter favoured the payment of parliamentary members and was sympathetic towards labour interests while being very concerned about the proliferation of gambling. Walter Lamb's first wife was Jane Cox, daughter of William Cox. She died in 1855. His second wife, Margaret, was the daughter of Henry Dangar. Walter had three sons and five daughters and died at Plumpton (near Rooty Hill) in 1906.

What of Shadforth Road which runs off Stephen Lane?

Portions 44 and 46 introduce us to Henry Tudor Shadforth. He was the son of Thomas Shadforth, an active officer in the British army who arrived in Sydney with the 57th Regiment in 1826. Henry, a lieutenant in the 57th regiment arrived in Sydney in 1825. In 1831, when the 57th regiment was ordered to India, Thomas Shadforth resigned. He bought *Ravenswood* at Mulgoa and for the next 30 years was a leader in the commercial and social life of Sydney.

Henry, Thomas's eldest son, married Marianne in 1828. Marianne was the sister of Alfred Stephen who was to become the Chief Justice of NSW. Henry became the first sergeant-at-arms of NSW Legislative Assembly (1856-60) and usher of the Black Rod of the Legislative Council (1860-1883).

What of Henry Shadforth's interest in land at Mt Wilson?

Henry bought Portion 44 in March 1876, which was over 12 acres. It seems that Henry remained the owner of this portion until his death in 1890 when it must have passed to relatives; however, these names are not listed on the title documents until 1903. In 1909 it left the Stephen and Shadforth families. Portion 46, which was over eight acres, appeared to follow a similar pattern. After Henry died, Matthew Henry Stephen and Seppy Stephen were joint tenants; however, when Seppy died in 1901 Matthew remained the owner until 1909. Both these portions were eventually amalgamated with Portions 43, 45 and 47 under the ownership of three brothers called Baldry who came from Wallendbeen in 1951. Later, this very large area of land was bought by Sir John Warraker Austin in 1958.

Who was Matthew Henry Stephen?

As Matthew Henry Stephen's name appears on one of these titles, it is worth mentioning that of the many members of this family who bought land in Mt Wilson, he was the only one to build a home on the mountain. This was *Campanella* on Portion 40 on the corner of Davies Lane and Mt Irvine Road, but the original building was destroyed by a house fire in the 1930s. Matthew was the third son of Sir Alfred and his first wife, Virginia, and was born in Hobart. Like his father, Matthew followed a legal career and became a Supreme Court Judge. Matthew married his cousin Caroline Shadforth, daughter of Henry Tudor Shadforth and Marianne of *Ravenswood*, Mulgoa and later of Ashfield. So the name Shadforth is linked with *Campanella*. Matthew sold *Campanella* to John Joshua in 1898. As he also had a home in Sutton Forest I suspect that he resided there for the later years of his life.

Sir Alfred Stephen himself purchased Portion 34 in Mt Wilson in late 1875 but sold half of it to Edward King Cox in 1878 and the other half to Richard Wynne. Edward's

half was to become *Bebeah*. Meanwhile, Sir Alfred had built a modest home, *Alphington*, near Faulconbridge where other NSW dignitaries like Sir Henry Parkes and Sir James Martin had built (c 1877).

Ruth Bedford, in her book *Think of Stephen: A Family Chronicle*, quotes a delightful verse written by Sir Alfred about his 18 children. Its title is *Twice Nine* and it seems a fitting conclusion to these rather scattered tales, revealing much about the man who penned these lines, described after his death in 1894 as “as a picturesque figure whom the whole of the Colonies delighted to honour. His name will live in history as that of a sincere patriot, a great judge, and a noble and notable man” (p 248 – *ibid*).

Twice Nine* OR *Judicial Impartiality Exemplified

*Of children this Knight had no less than eighteen—
Twice nine little heads with a marriage between
He had nine when a barrister nine when a judge,
And of –"sex" – thus to Nature he owed not a grudge—
Nine precisely were girls, the other half boys,
An equal division 'twixt quiet and noise;
While if by marriage the number be reckoned,
There were nine of the first and nine of the second
Nine in Tasmania, nine New South Wales,
Then, to show with what justice he still held the scales,
Since nine it was clear he could not divide,
(A third sex as yet having never been tried),
And four sons, five daughters might Sydney adorn,
Twin daughters, twin sons complete the strange story
Of this patron of "Wigs," though constant old Tory.*

[Sources: *Members of Parliament Online*; *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1976; *The Australian Dictionary of Biography Online*]

Mary Reynolds- Research Officer

Getting Equipped

To support our research and archival work, the Society needs to be able to scan and make colour photocopies of documents and photographs and build up a database of our collection. We think our best solution would be to obtain a laptop computer and an all-in-one printer which would provide all these functions. Plan A is to ask whether any of our members might consider donating this equipment as the cost as buying it would be about \$2,500.

For more information, contact Florence Smart on (02)4756 2063 or by email at westring@bigpond.com.

Well Balanced

Bank balance as at
June 30 2006
\$22 518.14

Petty cash account:
\$110.33

Term investment:
\$14 059.48

Obituaries

Rodney Brennan

Following his childhood passion for rocks, nature, and outdoor activities, Rod gained his Honours Degree in Science (Geology) from Melbourne University in 1972.

Then, for some 25 years, Rod was involved in the manufacturing, marketing and distribution of health foods and supplements for a large Australian company, gaining qualifications along the way in Naturopathy and Osteopathy in 1979 and 1980 respectively. Rod later worked as a Managing Director of Blackmores' UK operations for five years - a subsidiary of Australia's best known health supplement company. After Blackmores, Rod took up a position as co-director and joint owner of Nature Care College with Bonnie Moorcroft in 1993. There Rod enjoyed a successful, rewarding and fulfilling time for the next 12 years.



Rod also contributed to the health industry for some years as a member of the executive of the Nutritional Foods Association of Australia, serving seven years as a Governor of the Southern School of Natural Therapies in Melbourne and as an executive management committee member and Vice President of the Australian Traditional Medicine Society - the country's largest Professional Association of Natural Therapies - for the past 12 years.

After selling his share of Nature Care to Bonnie & Julian Moorcroft in 2005 and embarking on semi-retirement, Rod enjoyed more time with his beloved family and at his chestnut farm at Mt Irvine in the Blue Mountains whilst retaining his presence at the College on the Governing Board as well as serving as a valuable member of the noted associations.

Rod possessed a passion and was a great advocate for natural therapies. He truly believed in what he spoke of and where he placed his energy.

Rod was a man well-liked and respected in the education, health supplement and, pre-eminently, natural therapies industries. He was known for his admirable ethics and ongoing, untiring commitment in the areas he choose to both work and play.

Article and image reprinted with permission of the authors, Bonnie & Julian Moorcroft.

Rod Brennan lost his life in a sudden, horrific motor accident in Mt Wilson on 16th June 2006. He is greatly missed by his friends in the two villages.



Alison Turtle

Alison Margaret Turtle, who died recently at 67 from cancer, spent most of her life in Sydney and Mt Wilson. She graduated from Sydney University in 1961 with double first class honours, in psychology and history. Intellectual life at Sydney University was particularly lively in the 1950s and 1960s, when the student ranks included Les Murray, Robert Hughes, Clive James, Germaine Greer and Bob Ellis. Alison Turtle's mind was brilliant and probing. She enjoyed conversation about philosophical, political and

ethical issues, about films, plays and books, about people and their foibles. After further study in London, she returned to the Psychology Department where she made her name and published widely, mainly in the field of the history of psychology. She also pursued her broader interest in the cultural and social contexts of psychological research. The university's psychology museum, a collection of 19th and 20th century psychological artefacts - early experimental scientific apparatus, photographs, demonstration materials and cartoons - is to be named after her. Alison's memorial service was held in the Great Hall.

Alison bought land at Mt Wilson in the late 1970s and soon built a house there. She adored her dogs and her home at Mount Wilson, where she welcomed her many friends. Her brother, Emeritus Professor John Turtle, also of Sydney University, said at her memorial service: "Alison developed the groves of trees, planted chestnuts, controlled wombats, dealt with a tiger snake in her wood bin and enjoyed sitting on her ride-on mower. She took five hours to complete the mowing, passing the time by singing hymns". Her many Mt Wilson friends miss her greatly.

Alison's final wish was for her ashes to be placed under a plaque beside a tree in the churchyard at St George's, Mt Wilson. A brief dedication of this memorial will be held on Saturday 2nd September 2006 at 12 noon. Her family also kindly gave a copy of this poem she wrote to be published in the newsletter that expresses the love she had for Mt Wilson and her place in it.

Christmas at Mt Wilson

Driving up the mountain, / I heard a bell bird call,
I stopped to buy some cherries / From a cheery mountain stall.

The hilltops loomed above me, / The eucalypts leaned down,
Then suddenly, the tree ferns / Were standing all around.

On the eternal mountainside / Cicadas hum throughout the days,
Rosellas flash beneath the skies, / While fat, small lizards drowse and gaze.

At twilight in Mt Wilson, / Wombats and lyrebirds are about,
And on misty summer evenings, / The fireflies come out.

Fireflies flitting, champagne sloshing, / Father Christmas visits stocking,
Friends assemble, food galore, / Dark First Footer through front door.

On New Year's Day the village meets, / To gossip, race and play.
The Gunns show how to shear a sheep, / A picnic meal completes the day.

The ties that bind. Shared constant dread / Of bushfires yet again,
Parched ferns and smoke screened tawny sun - / Dear God just send us rain!

Those paradisal summers, / With rainforest in full bloom,
Coachwood, sassafras, tree orchids / Gleam against the glowing morning
Gild the dreaming afternoon.

A chain of kookaburra laughter / Marks the closing of the light,
And underneath the Milky Way / The frogmouth skims across the night.

Vale, Alison Turtle

Objectives of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc

Membership is open to all who accept and support these objectives.

1. To make a substantial contribution to the account of Australian history by promoting the study of aspects of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine districts and their communities, especially in terms of their:
 - cultural history
 - exploration history
 - settlement history
 - Aboriginal history
 - industrial history including agriculture, horticulture, the timber industry, mining and tourism.
2. To conserve, preserve and protect the heritage and heritage values of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine.
3. To set up and maintain a museum in the Turkish Bath building to house the collection and to serve as a centre for its public display and for the Society's educational programs and research.
4. To maintain close links with other societies and associations in the local communities and beyond by way of meetings, functions, newsletters and occasional historical papers.
5. To lend support to like-minded societies or associations, where possible.

***For information and tour bookings contact Mary Reynolds (20 Church Lane, Mt Wilson, NSW, 2786) on tel: (02) 4756 2006,
fax: (02) 4756 2176 or (new) email: mary_reynolds@internode.on.net.***