

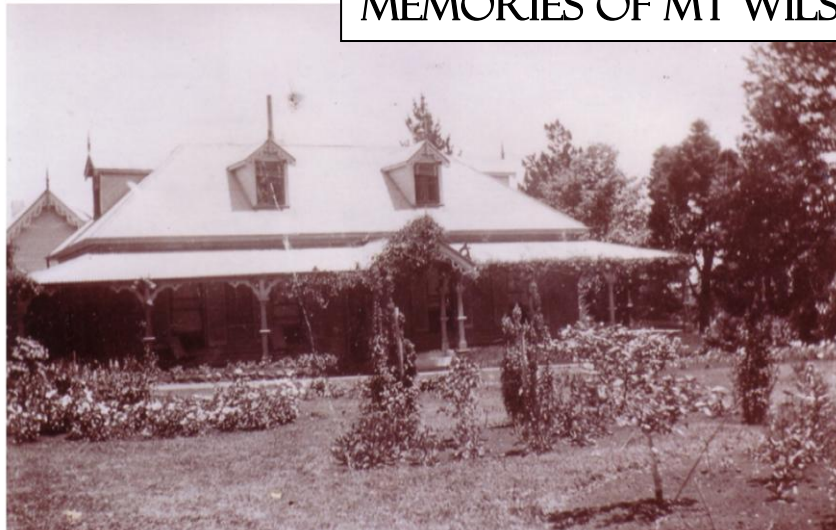


Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society

Newsletter N° 17

February 2008

MEMORIES OF MT WILSON AND *BEBEAH*



Bebeah after the Sloan Family added the dormer windows in the early twentieth century

In 2006, at our request, Alison Vaughan, who is and has always been a very supportive and generous member of the Society, wrote a letter in which she described her memories as a child visiting *Bebeah*. Alison is a niece of Miss Marjorie Sloan whose family owned *Bebeah* from 1902-1984 and who was the sole owner for many years after the death of her mother, Helen Sloan.

My main memories of 'Bebeah' are the smells. The smell of drying lavender and herbs in the attic; the pines out the back; the lily-of-the-valley growing under the dining room window; the apples ripening on the trees (and the parrots eating them) and when my grandmother was alive her cooking in the kitchen. As my Aunt Marjorie found children in the house rather difficult to cope with, we spent much of the time outside. However there was one task I was allowed in the house to do and that was to make butter in the wooden churn and when it was ready to pat it into shape with the butter pats. I loved doing that!

The garden was always a magical place for me. I adored the Smoke Bushes, the Dogwood and the rhododendrons. Under one of these was a bower bird's nest which I watched while the bower was made.

Around the back of the house were the vegetables and fruit trees. I had never seen Asparagus grown before. I loved being there when the raspberries and gooseberries were ripe. In the back paddock there was a huge white cherry tree. In my 'garden' here (Normanhurst, Sydney) I have a Holly Bush which has berries. I grew it from a cutting from the hedges on

CONTENTS

Memories of Mt Wilson and <i>Bebeah</i> : A letter by Alison Vaughan.....	1-2
Remembrance Day 2007.....	3-6
Wheatmeal & Beef Marrow: Stan Boulton is remembered... 6	
Des Barrett - Profile: Everything you need to know about the Society's new President.....	7
Annual Matters: What's been going on and what's planned for 2008.....	7-8
Axeman of the Mount: The Tom Kirk collection at the Powerhouse Museum.....	8-10
The Magic of Mudgee: The Society's historical trip.....	11-13
Summer in the Hills: A Literature review.....	13
Obituary: A farewell to Neville Waller.....	14
Objectives of the Society.....	15
Historical Paper No 7: The Distinguishing Features of Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine.....	Supplementary

either side of the path leading to Bert's Cottage [Bert's Cottage is, today, Bebeah Cottage in Waterfall Road while Bert was Herbert Kirk, the third of seven sons of Sydney and Mary Kirk].

As it was during World War 2 my Aunt had patience in teaching me how to make camouflage nets which she made for the war effort.

As my mother was very ill my family did not go to Mt Wilson as often as my cousins the Thirkells. They also had a car but we did not. But I remember being at 'Bebeah' one Christmas which was

exciting for a young child. To come out in the morning and find an enormous tree in the 'little' sitting room and to be amazed that Santa had come all the way out there with a doll for me!

I remember too the smell in St Georges Church filled with November Lilies; their perfume still reminds me of Church at Mt Wilson. I recall the Reverend Dorph who was the minister when some years later at Jenolan Caves he was doing his rounds. I knew it was he immediately when we shook hands and his little finger was curled underneath! [The Reverend Dorph came from Mt Victoria and was much loved by those who came into contact with him. He was a true gentleman, humane and kind].

Among more active occupations I can remember trying to find zircons in Zircon Creek and the trek to the Wollangambe River to catch crayfish. We did not catch any!

A great memory is the gorgeous chocolate fudge Mrs Margaret Gregson made at 'Chimney Cottage' which to me was something out of a fairy tale.

I remember being enthralled hearing Michael Mann, the nephew of Fred Mann of 'Stone Lodge' and 'Cherry Cottage', playing a piano concerto. It was the first time I had heard real classical music played.

Not a day goes by that I do not think of 'Bebeah' as on the wall in my dining room is an oil painting of the house that my husband commissioned for our 30th wedding anniversary.

Alison's letter of memories deeply reflects the lasting impact Bebeah and Mt Wilson had on children who were fortunate enough in the 1920s and 1930s to be part of that community for some of the time. Many years before, in the early 1890s, Alexander Hamilton, a teacher and amateur botanist, visited Mt Wilson and described the garden of Bebeah. His description, although in a more formal context, expresses a similar impression to Alison's, as shown in the following extract from *Bush Rambles* (1937, p. 241):

Another turn of the road, and we are in front of the prettiest garden we could see, shut off from the road by a splendid laurel hedge, shaded by sycamores and other English trees on one side, and blazing with flowers. Here are great rhododendron bushes – now only a mass of green – ericas with a few flowers left – lilies and amaryllids in full bloom, and a pretty cottage covered with roses and mandevillea.



The driveway into Bebeah 1930s

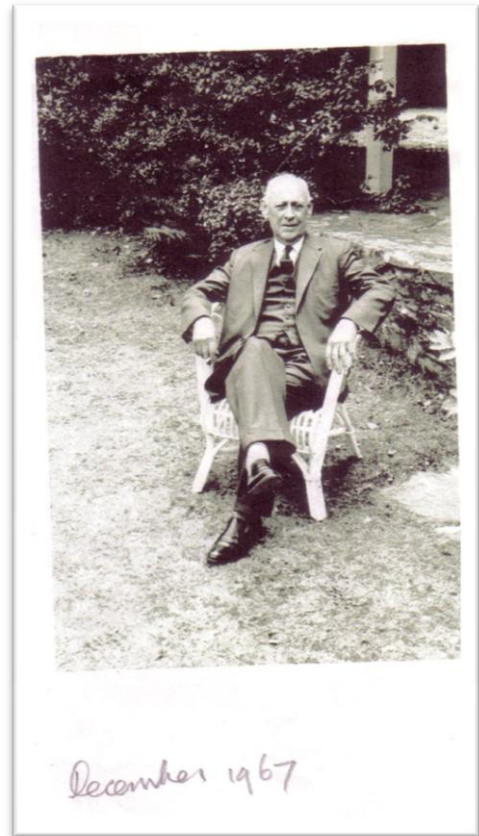
REMEMBRANCE DAY 2007

It was in 2001 that our two societies, Progress and Historical, began this series of annual services of remembrance at our war memorial. I believe it was a response to a feeling shared around the Australian community that war and the other faces of terror were necessarily now bulking larger and more urgently in our consciousness than they had for some time past. As a result the national official memorial services in our cities were becoming ever better attended, and the marches more sombre, and overseas the memorial services at Anzac Cove and many other military cemeteries were attracting more and more visitors, with increasing numbers of young Australians making the long journey to them. Possibly also revisiting, especially by old soldiers, to war sites where they had fought and their mates been killed.

The number of new books about the Great War is also a sign of a growing readership, and there are at least two recent books about Australian war memorials that put this small local memorial of ours into a wider context. The first of these books is by a leading Australian historian, K.S. Inglis, with the title *Sacred Places* and a subtitle *War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, first published in 1998 and reprinted five times since then. The other is newer: *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and The Great War* written by Bart Ziino (2007); a book that concentrates on the fact that the Imperial War Graves Commission in England was given the whole task of burying all dead allied soldiers more or less where they fell, and of raising memorials to the British dead whose bodies were never recovered or identified - the so-called missing. It was not the custom in those days for soldiers' bodies to be brought home for burial and it wasn't until 1993, in response to public urging, that the body of an Australian soldier (buried in a war cemetery on the Somme) was exhumed and returned to Australia and placed in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, to become our own Unknown Australian Soldier. Otherwise we have memorials, not cemeteries.

Today I thought I would speak about two of our local soldiers, who did come back when the war was over. What effects, if any, did their war experience have on the rest of their lives? Perhaps this is, for them (and for us) an unanswerable question. Maybe no visible effect. But I have vivid memories of being taught Latin in high school by a returned soldier, a notable classical scholar who had been gassed in the Great War. He had the most cracked voice, the most awful fits of coughing, the worst temper and the sweetest smile at unexpected moments - he was a post-war wreck physically, a returned soldier who never got over his experience of war.

Fred Mann and George Valder both came back to Mt Wilson. Both of them could have read their own names on our memorial and possibly did. But Professor Inglis, in *Sacred Places*, stated quite firmly that 'Only in Australia could most men, home from the war, read their own names on its memorials'. Elsewhere, especially in Europe, memorials were exclusively to the dead and the 'missing'. And in Australia at first that seemed to be right and fair. But then a strong movement emerged in favour of listing also the names of returned soldiers. Sir John Monash, who commanded the Australian divisions in France, declared: 'We were all men of one nation - and all volunteers!' That was the key to it. Of course not all volunteers were accepted when they had tried to enlist, for either health or occupation reasons. And volunteering didn't necessarily get you into



George Valder

the front line, where most casualties occur. Behind the front lines are many lines of command and support essential to any engagement. For example, in WWI, 1800 graduates and undergrads of Sydney University went on active service and 197 of these were killed in action. Comparatively a smallish number. But it reflects the fact that a high proportion of those volunteers came from the faculties of medicine and engineering: they were directed to serve where their special skills were needed.

When in the early 1920s Sydney University began to plan its memorial, it was 'for those who have given their lives ... as well as for those who have voluntarily engaged in active military or naval service'. What the university finished up with for its memorial was a carillon of 47 bells fitted into its clock tower to be played from a rather special sort of keyboard. I could speak at length about the various ways, from that day to this, that the carillon has kept alive the memorial function it was intended to achieve from its first appearance. It's enough now to say that its biggest bell weighs 4.2 tons, the smallest bell just a few pounds. A carillonist can play on it virtually any tune or theme, and harmonise it into two or three parts, with bells playing simultaneously. Its principal function is memorial. In 1938 I took lessons in playing this great instrument and became a member of the Carillon Family, a small group of



The Mann brothers, 1916:

A photo of Fred Mann (right) with his two brothers Alfred (left) and Furneaux (centre).

appointed players who between them provided carillon music for occasions in the university year,

particularly celebrations of national days of the allied countries of World War I.

So there is no limit to the structures that can serve as war memorial, be they

hospital, club, park, plaque, pillar or post – or carillon! Inglis says that there are 4000+ war memorials in Australia. Ours is one of the simplest sort, but none the worse for that. Many of them take the form of utilities – a hospital, a community hall, a church, a sports ground that could be undertaken in the expectation of getting a government grant in terms of subsidies and tax concessions for the donors. No such thing happened here. The local impetus was from generous gifts of land and material, plus determined community effort. The crucial gift was of a piece of land cut off from the *Dennarque* estate, given for just this purpose by Flora Mann, the mother of the Fred Mann whose name is, with 26 others, engraved on our memorial: Frederick Farrell Mann (1894-1962).

The research on Fred Mann's life is well covered in Mary Reynolds's excellent article contained in Newsletter No. 12 of the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society (July 2005). The Society has a large and growing archive, all expertly catalogued, with photographs, letters, official documents and news items housed in the Study Centre and accessible through the Society's personnel, as many of you know from when you sought information on the history of your land titles. Mary is our only professional historian and a very approachable source of historical information on our two villages.

In 1894 the Mann family bought *Dennarque* from its original owners, the Merewethers, and in that same year Fred was born, the youngest son of James and Flora Mann. He was educated at Riverview in Sydney and in 1915, not so long after schooling was over and work had begun, he and his brother Alfred sailed to London on the *Orontes* and enlisted – Fred in the Royal Field

Artillery, Alfred in the Royal Navy Air Service. Fred's older brother James Furneaux also enlisted. Fred served with his regiment in Salonika (a seaport area in the Baltic Peninsula), and also in Egypt and Northern Italy. It is difficult to get detailed information on his service history from British sources, but he survived. Sadly though, his brother Alfred was killed on 19 November, in France. This death in the family was undoubtedly a heartfelt motive with Flora for her donation of a portion of *Dennarque* land as the site for the war memorial – our war memorial.

Flora died in 1921, and Fred was by then a man of means: he bought *Yengo* when it came on the market in 1923. He developed both house and garden, changing its name from *Yengo* to *Stone Lodge*. He turned the stables into a workshop, called *Cherry Tree Cottage*, and here he developed his name as a potter of some note. He became a much loved member of the community, with music, and parties always enjoyed by the local children. He once made quite a social splash around the village by inviting the touring Russian Ballet to stay at *Stone Lodge*.

But he was not yet quite finished with war. He rejoined for WWII as a lieutenant, working first with the Red Cross, at Ingleburn, then on a hospital ship, and fund-raising in support of the Free French. Then in 1944 he was sent to England 'to organise the furnishing of houses for Australian prisoners of war on their return to Britain'. Back in Mt Wilson he contributed generously to funding for the construction of this very place, the Village Hall.

He left Mt Wilson in the early fifties for Sydney where at length he fell ill and died, aged 69. John Valder perhaps summed him up, saying: 'He was a lovely, warm, generous, cheerful, friendly man', and we can be grateful that he, this way, fulfilled the agreeable and worthy life of a returned soldier.

Let us now follow the fortunes of another returned soldier who, with his wife Isa, established *Nooroo*. He was born in Wagga Wagga in 1896 and spent his early years there. His father, also George, had come to Australia from his native England in about 1880. Two things about him for this story are that he became the Principal of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College and in 1902 he bought and developed a piece of land in Mt Wilson.

When he was not quite 20, George (the son) enlisted for overseas service in the army. After initial training as an army driver he was transferred to an Australian field artillery brigade as a driver. Within months from enlistment he sailed on the *Orontes* and did further training and service as a driver in the 6th Army Brigade, no doubt as a driver carrying supplies and ammunition to wherever they were needed. Dangerous work indeed! He was there, doing that, until the end of the war, but he had to wait until July 1919 for transport home. He spent the waiting time, as many soldiers did, furthering their education with special studies. He arrived back in Sydney for discharge in good health and he took a sulky and drove it to Mt Wilson and lived here for the rest of his life.

He bought land in Church Lane and established *Nooroo* as an apple and pear orchard. He married Isa and they had Peter and John, both of whom were destined to have remarkable careers well away from Mt Wilson (though with a heartfelt connection to it, to this day!). Both boys started their school education in the one-teacher Mt Wilson Public School, then moved on to Shore, as boarders – clearly straining the parent's financial resources). Their father, our George, abandoned the orchard enterprise, and changed it into a flower-growing venture, with the flowers taken to Sydney for selling to florists. Later, urged on and assisted by son Peter (by then a well-known botanist), it was turned into a viewing garden, which is as we see it today, and as it appeared, famously, on an Australian postage stamp in 1989.

Meanwhile Peter became famous as botanist, university lecturer, broadcaster, universal plant collector and author. He was awarded an Order of Australia for his contributions to botany and horticulture, and is still much sought after as a witty and informative public speaker.

His brother John first became a Sydney journalist then a man of business whose catch words were 'enterprise, incentive, reward'. He became a stock broker, and for three years the chairman of the Stock Exchange. Although he had no wish to become a politician, in 1982 he became president of the NSW Liberal Party – a truly liberal Liberal, not a conservative. His words: 'I'm essentially a simple person. My whole career has been a constant surprise to me.' Both men are great supporters of our Historical Society.

Well, for George, the father of all this, post-war life was pretty hard, but he had huge support from Isa, his wife, and his sons Peter and John. He died here in Mt Wilson, but Isa carried on with all the work of the property and its place in Mt Wilson life, until she reached the age of 90, when she removed to Sydney. In 1993 a village function was arranged to pay tribute to the outstanding contribution made by George Valder and his family to the community life and spirit of Mt Wilson.

Arthur Delbridge

WHEATMEAL & BEEF MARROW

Stanley Cleve Boulton was born in Macksville on the NSW North Coast in June 1886. He became a life-long friend of George and Maria Smart and later of their son Hubert (Tudie) and his wife Florence of *Carisbrook* at Mt Irvine.

He was known to the Smart children as 'Tanner'. From time to time Stan would go away and work as a cook in various institutions around New South Wales but would always return to look after the Smarts if he thought they needed looking after. In the early 1940s, while the property at *Carisbrook* was being established, Florence and the younger children lived at the Smart's nursery at Marsfield. Stan would cook and keep house at either place, as he felt he was needed. He was a great believer in wheatmeal - porridge, scones, rock cakes, bread, dearly remembered with cream and brown sugar, butter and honey - yum!

At the age of 80 Stan was working at St Anne's Rest Home in Lismore and decided to send his much-loved collection of recipes, hand-written in an ancient exercise book with newspaper pasted on the covers, to Rosalie Knight-Brown (nee Smart) with a fascinating covering letter.

This tattered book is filled with recipes and household hints, many handed down from his mother and her friends and identified with their names: Myrtle, Una Connolly, Ethel's, Rosey Vale's.

This one is included, handwritten on an old slip of paper tucked inside the book:

The Everett Family Cake

The yolks of 6 eggs, 1 cup mixed peel, 1 cup raisins, 1 cup milk, 1 cup sultanas, 3 cups wheaten meal, 1 cup beef marrow, essences and spices to taste.

Warm marrow & beat to a cream, add yolks of eggs, then flour and wheatmeal in wh. you have mixed baking powder, or two teasp. of bicarb or cream of tartar, add milk etc, & bake two hours.

Underneath is written:

Dear Mrs Boulton, I send you the recipe in my nearly = ninety = two hand writing as a birthday gift – whenever that comes –

*Yours sincerely,
Mary Gilmore*

And the signature looks identical to the one on an Australian \$10 note!

Florence Smart

ANNUAL MATTERS

The Society's 11th Annual General Meeting was held at the Mt Irvine hall on 24 November 2007 with an excellent attendance even though the federal election was diverting attention for some on the day.

Ellis Reynolds resigned from the position of Treasurer after 11 years of careful management of the Society's coffers. Patrice Fletcher also stepped down from the management committee after providing excellent secretarial support. Both will be greatly missed.

Mary Reynolds presented a very comprehensive report of ongoing research and conservation work which continues thanks to her interest, knowledge and persistence. Helen and John Cardy provide great support in this area. It is our intention to circulate a copy of Mary's report with the AGM minutes. One item of particular note concerns three wooden signs from the 1920s and 1930s. Two signs, donated by Milba Mewburn, relate to *Wildflower Hall* (now *Dennarque*). The third, which Richard Prentice has given us, was made and painted by Fred Mann to signify *Cherry Cottage Pottery Shop*. A grant of \$800 (plus GST) was received from Museums & Galleries NSW to help with the cost of conservation, now in process at International Conservation, Chatswood. These will be on display at the Museum in due course.

Ian Jack, Professor of History at Sydney University and President of the Royal Australian Historical Society, headed up the 2004 heritage review of the entire Blue Mountains. He gave a truly entertaining and enlightening address at the AGM on why the heritage of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine is distinct from the other 900 heritage items in the Blue Mountains. The text of Ian's talk is published as a supplement to this newsletter.

The Society's officers for 2008 are:

President Des Barrett

Vice Presidents Arthur Delbridge,
Darrell Conybeare
Bruce Wright

General Secretary Florence Smart

Minute Secretary Louise Weingott

Treasurer Kath Harrington

Public Officer and Researcher Mary Reynolds.

We have two vacancies on the committee for general members so PLEASE JOIN US. Contact Florence Smart for details.

The roster for helping as guides at the Turkish Bath is being set up for the coming busy Autumn season. During April and May we open every Saturday and Sunday and on public holidays so need all the help we can get, and are very grateful indeed to

Des Barrett - Profile



Des Barrett first *discovered* Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine in the early 1960s when he travelled with his parents to the Blue Mountains from Sydney for the weekend and then further afield to the Mounts. He settled in the Blue Mountains with his family in 1982 and over the years has come to Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine to bushwalk and generally to admire the beauty of the place. He joined the Society in 2005 and has enjoyed his time in various activities, including showing visitors through the Turkish Bath Museum.

Des graduated from the universities of Sydney and New South Wales where he studied Science and the History and Philosophy of Science (HPS). He was awarded his doctorate in HPS from the University of New South and since 1983 has been employed as a curator (Science and Technology) at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Powerhouse Museum) in Sydney. His most recent publication (2007) is on the Museum's model of the ancient Strasbourg Cathedral clock.

everyone who can fit a shift or two into their busy lives. Last year, at this time, over 300 visitors came and enjoyed seeing the Museum. And we send our thanks to Julia Reynolds who has taken on the rather difficult job of Roster Coordinator, with quite a bit of help from Mary Reynolds! No, Julia and Mary are not related but don't they work well together.

Thanks to all members who have renewed their support for the current year, and we warmly welcome new members who have joined in the last six months: Carole Haitzler, Martin Barge and Anne de Salis, Alex and Stuart Donaldson, Councillor Terri Hamilton, Catherine Smart, Timothy Sterling-Levis, Judy and John Teulon.

Florence Smart

AXEMAN OF THE MOUNT

THE TOM KIRK COLLECTION AT THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM



Patrick White, Australia's one Nobel Laureate in literature and Mt Wilson resident for a short time in the early 1920s, when he was a boy, apparently described Tom as 'a saint'. Another has remarked that Tom lived 'a simple and even ordinary life' (Halliday, 2001). Tom's life was lived in Mt Wilson.

Septimus Boyd Wilson Kirk [Tom] (1914-2001) is remembered as the man who won 22 world championships in wood chopping and sawing at the Royal Easter Show - originally known simply as the 'Show' - which opened at Moore Park in Sydney in 1882 having previously been located at Parramatta (1823-1869) and Cleveland Paddock (Prince Alfred Park, Sydney) (1869-1882). The Show was the brainchild of the Agricultural Society of New South Wales (est. 1822). In 1891, Queen Victoria granted permission to use 'Royal' in the title.



As a recently employed curator at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Powerhouse Museum), I received a message that a Mr Tom Kirk of Mt Wilson was prepared to present a number of items to the Museum (see list and photographs). Tom first contacted the Museum in March 1984 and the acquisition was finalised in May. At that time, the Museum had facilities other than those at its central location in Ultimo, Sydney; Sydney Observatory and The Hyde Park Barracks in Macquarie St being a case in point. Fortunately, Tom's collection arrived at the Museum when preparations were in hand for a room display at the Barracks: *When the Country comes to Town: A View of Yesterday's Show, 1880-1959*. A similar display (*Going to the Show: Images and Memories of Sydney's Royal Easter Show*) was mounted again at the Barracks in 1996; however, the Hyde Park Barracks had by then been transferred to the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. There was a section in the 1984 display on Tom Kirk. The introductory label read: 'Tom Kirk was a world champion axeman who regularly competed and won wood chopping and sawing events at the Show from 1931 to 1959'.

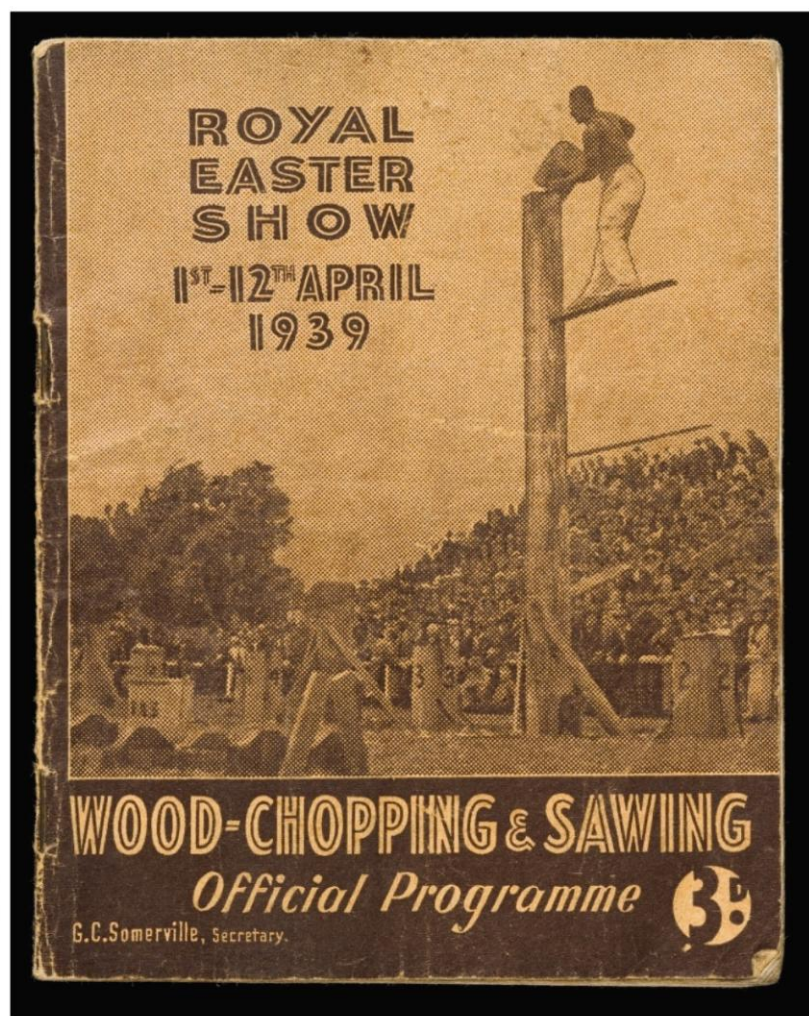
The material in the Museum comprises the following items:

Pit type 2-man cross-cut saw (opposite page, top):

Pit saws were often used for cross cutting and felling. The tooth form is in the shape of an 'M', which was introduced in the fifteenth century. The M remained a popular form, with spaces between the groups of teeth to hold the sawdust and carry it clear of the cut.

Wood chopping axe (opposite page, bottom):

This axe was used by Tom at the Show. It was made by the nineteenth century American axe maker, Plumb, and dates from the 1930s. On the axe head there is a motif of an axeman standing on a log. Interestingly, 'E. Kirk' is scratched into the axe head's leather case.



Wood chopping and Sawing Programme (1939) (above)

Pewter Medal (following page): These medals were awarded to Tom in 1948 by the Royal Agricultural Society for the 'Standing Cut' and 'Under Hand' wood chopping events. They were designed and manufactured by Stokes, Melbourne.

Gold Medal (not shown): There is a miniature Plumb axe affixed on the obverse and engraved 'Royal Easter Show, 1950'. On the reverse '15 Silent Knight/Worlds Championship/Standing Chop/Sydney/1950/Won By/Tom Kirk'. The medal was designed and fabricated by Angus and Coote, Sydney.

A tree-felling wedge (not shown): The wedge is used to support the weight of a tree's trunk (bole). Its purpose is to keep the saw or axe from binding, or for changing the direction of fall during tree harvesting. Tom used this wedge at the Royal Agricultural Show during the 1930s and possibly for general tree harvesting.

Prize Ribbon (not shown): This ribbon, styled with blue and gold stripes, was awarded by the Royal Agricultural Society to Tom in 1941 for winning the world championship sawing contest.

Prize Ribbon (not shown): This ribbon was awarded to Tom in 1938 for the World Championship sawing contest (double handed). It is made from silk and styled with green and gold stripes.

Wool flannel trousers (not shown): These were worn by Tom when he was engaged in competition wood chopping or sawing events.

Cotton singlets (not shown): These were a standard dress code item for men taking part in wood chopping and sawing events.

Correspondence between Tom and the Museum in 1984 recorded his address as:

Tom Kirk
'Axeman'
Queens Ave
Mt. Wilson 2785

Des Barrett

References

Halliday, A. (2001) *Tom Kirk: Champion Axeman (1914-2001)*. Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Tom Kirk object files.

When the Country comes to Town: A View of Yesterday's Show, 1880-1959. Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences archives.

Wynne, L. (2000) *Seven Good Men*. Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc.



THE MAGIC OF MUDGEE

In September 1999, our Society had a visiting speaker from Mudgee, Mr John Broadley, who gave a memorable paper on some of the historic houses of Mudgee, the families that lived in them and their links with Mount Wilson. 'Four pioneer settlers of Mt Wilson,' he said, 'came from the Mudgee district'. They were

George Henry Cox and his wife

Henrietta of *Beowang* (now *Withycombe*), George Henry's brother James Dalrymple Cox of *Balangara* (now *Sefton*) and their cousin Edward King Cox of *Bebeah*. He also showed how the Merewethers of *Dennarque*, the Stephens of *Campanella*, the Gregsons of *Yengo* and the Wynnes of *Wynstay* were either related by marriage to the aforementioned or had a connection in some way with the Mudgee district.



Starting the tour at Heaton Lodge



Havilah Homestead

He also suggested that members of our Society might care to visit Mudgee to see for ourselves the properties he had spoken of - an opportunity not to be missed. So planning for an expedition soon got going, with Helen Cardy bravely offering to put it all together in terms of

publicity, transport, accommodation, meals and finance. At the other end

we had John Broadley who planned the route, spoke to the owners of the properties to be visited and led us with on-the-spot historical accounts of each property and where possible an introduction to their owners.

We could not have had a better guide! John is President of the Mudjee Historical Society, the chairman of the Mudjee Heritage & Environmental Committee and a leading member of the National Trust. He is also the author of a book entitled *The Historic Houses of Mudjee*.

Our party of 13 members and friends gathered at the Mudjee Getaway Cottages situated on nine acres of riverland park bordering the Cudgegong River. There were farm animals and pick-your-own vegetables and creamy white frosts at night. These cottages were a perfect base to start our visits to the heritage properties.

On our first morning John came to meet us there and shared morning tea while we heard his plans for the day. Our first visit was to *Heaton Lodge* on Mortimer St. This substantial house is set in extensive landscaped grounds with a garden designed by Paul Sorensen in the 1930s and 1950s. Heaton Lodge has been home to the Loneragan family since 1855. Liz Loneragan kindly welcomed us into her home which had many fascinating treasures brought from Europe - one of these was a Richard Wagner grand piano, which Arthur Delbridge was able to play for us (greatly to our satisfaction).

From here our next stop was the Colonial Inn Museum (formerly the West End Hotel) at 126 Market St; a two-storey building constructed in 1856. In 1966 this building was acquired by the Mudjee Historical Society which has developed it as the Colonial



Burrundulla Homestead

Inn Museum. Originally it had been part of a grant to Mudjee pioneer George Cox, who had connections with Mt Wilson and *Beowang*. The Museum gave us an excellent overview of early days in Mudjee.

Our next visit was to the Mudjee Railway Station and in this stunning building we had a very good lunch. The afternoon was occupied by a visit to the *Havilah* homestead where we were greeted by the owners James and Sue Ann White. This magnificent two-storeyed veranda-ed homestead has fifty rooms. It was completed by prominent merino breeder Nicholas Paget Bayly in 1872. In 1881 it was purchased by Henry Charles White, father of Mrs Marion Wynne of *Wynstay*, Mt Wilson. In the 1880s he enlarged the house (the architect was Horbury Hunt). The property is also noted for its sizeable stables and its stone chapel (1905) dedicated to Henry Charles White.

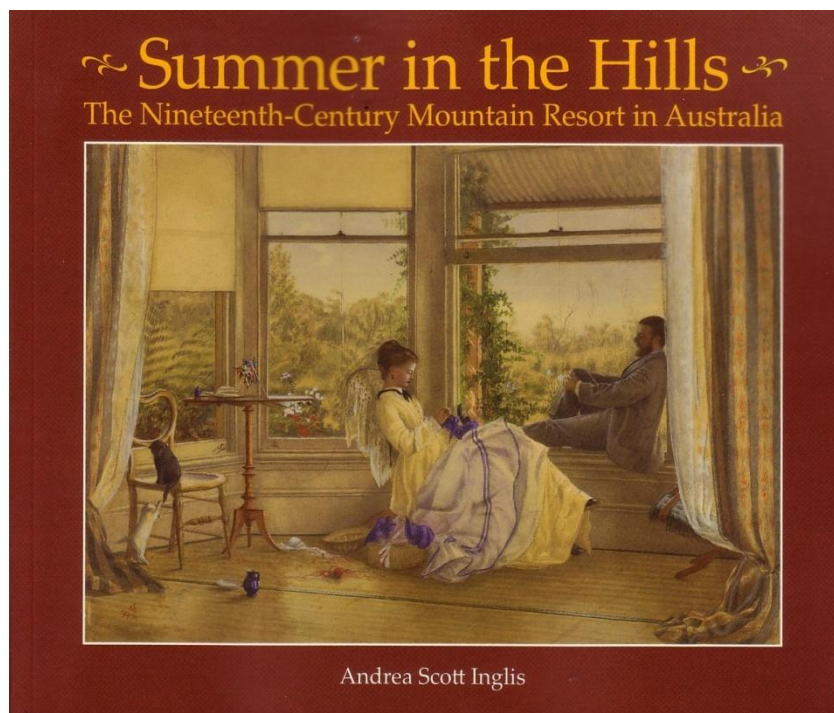
In the evening fourteen of us gathered for dinner in the Farmhouse cottage, where over delicious food we were able to enjoy each other's company.

On Thursday morning we visited the *Cullenbone* homestead built in the mid 1870s by James Dalrymble Cox later of *Balangara*, now *Sefton*, Mt Wilson. The property was leased from his cousin Francis Cox. *Cullenbone* was built in the Gothic style with impressive main rooms and an extensive library. James D Cox was a keen gardener and bird watcher. His was one of the most celebrated merino studs in the district, though unfortunately after the 1950s the homestead was abandoned and partly demolished. Today it is part of *Gooree Park*, renowned for its bloodstock and viticulture. We were able to view James D Cox's grave on a hill overlooking the surrounding countryside.

From *Cullenbone* we travelled to *Burrundulla*, a Georgian and Victorian-style homestead with Palladian overtones. This was built in 1846 by George H Cox. *Burrundulla* is still lived in by William Cox's descendants, Jeremy and Petrina Cox, and we were made very welcome by them. The colonial architect William Weaver from Sydney designed the homestead. The building is constructed of very fine Australian red cedar. We were able to visit the beautifully restored library, with bookshelves and joinery also of red cedar. Jeremy found a surprise here - an old convict boot was discovered in the ceiling after a piece of plaster board fell down. There was an original leadlight window above the staircase with the family crest *Fortitude in Adversis* (courage in adversity). The door-knocker was a sheep's head, appropriately, as they made their wealth from sheep. Plate glass in the windows was shipped from England and probably brought over the Blue Mountains packed in sawdust.

We were very fortunate to be able to see through these beautiful houses, all a part of Mudgee and Australian heritage. A special thank you to John Broadley whose historical knowledge of all these houses was amazing. Thank you also to everyone who made this such a successful event.

Robin Leonard



***SUMMER IN THE HILLS:
THE NINETEENTH-
CENTURY MOUNTAIN
RESORT IN AUSTRALIA***
by Andrea Scott Inglis

This marvellous new book examines antipodean hill-stations in detail, discussing their antecedents and the sometimes surprising variations found in the Blue Mountains. The book is beautifully presented and illustrated and there are several references to Mt Wilson. Mary Reynolds was consulted by the author several years ago and the Society's

contributions are included. We will have a limited number of copies available for \$50 including postage.

OBITUARY

Neville Waller

On 20 March 2007 Neville Waller died suddenly in his beloved Mt Wilson garden. He was 89.

Neville's association with Mt Wilson began early in life. He and his family made visits to *Withycombe* during Neville's early childhood.

Decades later, in the mid 1950s, Neville returned with his wife Edith and young son Paul and found the *Church Lane* property which was to become a treasured retreat for the family over the following fifty years.

Though Neville's early childhood was comfortable, the family's situation was altered irrevocably with the sudden death of his father from heart failure when Neville was nine. There followed many changes of address over the following years as the family struggled to cope with financial insecurity. As the eldest of three young boys, Neville found himself burdened with practical responsibilities.

During this time Neville's mother formed a friendship with a clergyman from St James Anglican Church, King Street, who offered to sponsor Neville's schooling in exchange for the lad participating as a regular chorister with the church choir. And so for a number of years Neville was engaged several nights a week and on weekends, singing at weddings, christenings and funerals. This period may well have been quite significant in his formation. Though he retained a lifelong love of music, Neville also sustained a profound distaste for conventional institutions and more particularly maintained a passionate contempt for all religious belief.

Though he was a promising student, Neville left school at fifteen and started work with a city firm. He continued his studies at night, matriculated and later undertook an Arts degree at Sydney University. It was here in an evening philosophy class that he met his future wife Edith. Both Edith and Neville were students of Professor John Anderson, whose sceptical rationalist world view was deeply influential on them both.

The war years saw Neville recruited to military intelligence. He was posted to New Guinea, Malaysia and North Queensland. At the end of the war he had a role as interviewer of the returning prisoners of war. He had lost his youngest brother during the war- an escapee from Changi who never returned.

Post war, Neville returned to the business world and the city firm Wilson's Fabrics (retailers of furnishing fabrics and wallpapers). As a capable and hardworking employee Neville was soon promoted up the ranks. He often made overseas trips to Britain and North America.

In 1948 Neville and Edith married. They settled first in Manly and then in 1957, with their three young children, moved to a house in Seaforth, which remained the family home until Neville's death.

Neville was popular and respected in his business role. He became Managing Director of Wilson's Fabrics in the 1970s but heart problems forced him into early retirement.

Against all odds, that retirement was a wonderfully long one. A major factor in maintaining good health was the weekly Mt Wilson visits he and Edith made over the next three decades. Neville was never more content than when mooching about in the garden, in all weathers and for hours on end. He and Edith created a beautiful forested garden on a property that had begun as a bare hillside. They loved to share the cottage and garden with friends and family. There were many convivial fireside dinners over the years with regular guests, discussing books, politics, travel and cultural issues.

Throughout his life, Neville was an avid reader. He applied his forensic mind to philosophy, history, biography and contemporary and classical literature.

Following Edith's death in 2003, Neville continued to live in Seaforth. He maintained a characteristically stoic independence to the end.

He is survived by his son Paul Laris, daughters Ruth Waller and Marian Waller, granddaughter Skye and great granddaughter Anika.

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 all information and bookings contact Mary Reynolds ('Donna Buang', Church Lane, Mt Wilson, NSW, 2786) on tel: (02) 4756 2006, fax: (02) 4756 2176 or email: mary_reynolds@internode.on.net.

I hope you've enjoyed this first newsletter of 2008. I also hope that nothing has been taken away from it by the fact that the editing and layout weren't, on this occasion, done in a mud hut with the odd chameleon hanging from the ceiling front-first (not unlike Tom Cruise in Mission Impossible, but just a bit greener ... I mean yellower ... no browner) and the distant sound of chimpanzees screeching their songs of love to each other from swaying trees wafting through the gauze windows or with the haze of the well-travelled Saharan dust in the form of



the *Hamatan* hanging in the hot air and tickling my throat. Living in Sierra Leone is now just an amazing memory for me - a new part of my own history - and the mud hut has already been delivered back to the earth again, or so I've heard via the jungle e-telegraph, having been toppled to make room for modern local houses of cement bricks that the rats can't build nests in and zinc roofs that don't let the rain leak through during the annual wet season. Makes sense. Anyway, it's good to be home.

Elspeth Callender
