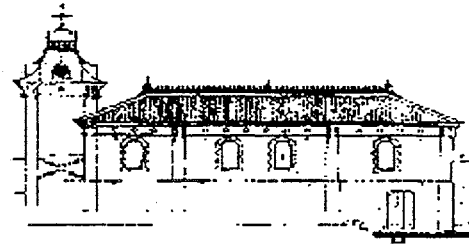


Mt Wilson Historical Society



An Evening of Jazz...

... on the lawn at Wynstay historic gardens, The Avenue, Mt Wilson with THE BLOWEYS - Multi-instrumental Traditional Jazz Group led by Bill Boldiston (As seen at Maritime Museum, Sydney Opera House, etc)
 4:30pm Saturday 28th March 1998
 Entry \$15.00 (\$10.00 for those who have paid admission to Wynstay Gardens on the day)
 Bring a blanket and relax on the lawn
 Refreshments available
 Tel: (02) 94892230, (02) 94981526 or (02) 4756 2006

Autumn as it Oughta'

Visit historic Wynstay (1875) gardens and unique Turkish Bath (1892) museum
 Historical exhibition, The Avenue, Mt Wilson (off Bell's Line of Road)
 11am - 4pm weekends
 March 28 to April 26
 Entry \$5, Dev. Tea \$3
 Tel (02) 4756 2006



All proceeds to the Mt Wilson Hist. Society Inc. for the conservation and restoration of the Turkish Bath

*A window glimmering in wheeltracked clay
 and someone skipping on the windowsill;
 spins of her skipping-rope widen away.
 She is dancing light and water
 out of the cold side of the hill
 and I've brought rhyme to meet her;
 rhyme has been ill.*

- Spring by Les Murray [1990]

Springtime Opening of the Turkish Bath and the Wynne Prize Centenary Exhibition

The day of the official opening of the Turkish Bath Museum and the Wynne Prize Centenary Exhibition (Saturday 17th September, 1997) saw Mt Wilson drenched in warm spring sun. To the north, the familiar ridges and ravines of the Blue Mountains, from delicately pointed Tayan Pic to sturdy Mt Yengo, were timeless and serene, blessed with clarity and colour. Days of mist had hampered preparations during the previous week, but just in time the sun shone, the lawns were mown, the paths were raked and the camellias along the borders had shed their petals providing a rose red carpet for the event's visitors and guest speakers.

Among the earliest of these arrivals were the cheerful volunteers who descended upon the Wynstay kitchen bearing armloads of food to create a happy atmosphere with chattering and laughter. From this kitchen emerged a delicious buffet-style luncheon which our visitors, including guest speakers Mrs Hazel Hawke Chairman of the Heritage Council of NSW, Ms Maggie Deahm representing Mr Bob Debus MP for the Blue Mountains, and Miss Victoria Lynn Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of NSW, were soon enjoying. Refreshed, everyone then made their way to the next scene of activity. [continued on page 2]

Spring Garden Opening

Over the six weekends following this day, the Spring opening saw over 2,200 visitors at Wynstay, proving indeed that the Wynne Centenary Exhibition in the Turkish Bath was a special attraction to many people.



To all who helped with the roster at Wynstay, and gave donations, our grateful appreciation for your energy, cheerfulness and positive help.

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Springtime Opening of the Turkish Bath and the Wynne Prize Centenary Exhibition

[continued from page 1]

At half past two all were assembled beside the Turkish Bath for the opening ceremony. Raoul Wilson, Chairman of the Mount Wilson Historical Society, gave a warm welcome to those present. Amongst these were Michael Neall, Mayor of the City of the Blue Mountains, and Mrs Pauline Neall; Mr Kerry Bartlett, Federal Member for Macquarie, and Mrs Bartlett; Councillor Terri Hamilton; Mrs Rosalind Strong, the



Acting Director of the Heritage Office, and Mr Tony Strong; Mr Dennis MacManus, Heritage Office Program Co-ordinator; Mrs Jyoti Somerville, Conservation Architect and former Heritage Adviser to BMCC; Mrs Kate Chidlow, Conservation Outreach Officer from Museums Australia Inc.; Mr Alan Crocker and Mr Peter Todd, *Design 5* Architects; Mr Stan Hellyer, the Conservation Builder, and his team; representatives from the Blue Mountains Historical Societies and local organisations; and the Lithgow Mercury and Blue Mountains Gazette. We also welcomed the presence of Ms Jo Holder, Curator of S.H. Ervin Gallery and a number of artists whose work was being exhibited. These included Suzanne Archer, Ian Bettinson, Rosemary Madigan, John Peart, Margaret Woodward and Reinis Zusters. We were also delighted to have with us Lily Lynn, widow of the artist Elwyn Lynn and mother of guest speaker Miss Victoria Lynn.

Volunteer cooks [from left] Lesley Wilson, Robin Leonard, Helen Freeman, Alison Hazel and Helen Cardy in the kitchen of Wynstay after a morning of basting, beating, heating, grating, grilling, coating, pummelling, stirring, stoving, cloving, churning (while avoiding any burning) to produce a magnificent buffet-style luncheon for guests.

To welcoming applause our special guest, Mrs Hazel Hawke, was introduced. She expressed her pleasure in being present "to celebrate the achievement of the Mount Wilson Historical Society in the restoration of the Turkish Bath on the Wynne Estate... important evidence of the life and times of Richard Wynne".

Mrs Hawke went on to explain that her past work with charitable organisations had shown her the importance of both individual and community values. She has personally discovered that the best way of appreciating value when dealing in heritage is to give the community the responsibility for maintenance, with the Heritage Council adding the benefit of their expertise only when required or desired. Mrs Hawke recognised the restoration and preservation of the Turkish Bath as a fine demonstration of the sort of creative partnership between local community and state and local government that the Heritage Council encourages. "I am very pleased," Mrs Hawke continued, "that the Heritage Council has played a part in the conservation of this very special place with the contribution of \$18,500 from the Heritage Assistance Program, and a further \$6,000 has been approved by the Minister as part of the first round of the Heritage 2001 program."

2

A certificate to celebrate the work already accomplished was to be presented to Mrs Hawke, but could not be found (to delighted laughter). Mrs Hawke then declared the Turkish Bath officially open, and was thanked for her kind words by the Chairman with a promise that the certificate would be permanently hung in the Turkish Bath Museum. Another lovely occasion for laughter then arose when the gift previously organised for presentation to Mrs Hawke could also not be found.

Our next speaker, Ms Maggie Deahm, former Member for Macquarie and former adviser on art within the ministry, was then introduced. Ms Deahm commented on the (coincidentally) appropriate timing of this occasion, coming as it did at the end of History Week, especially because landscape painting is very much tied up with our history and heritage. It has marked the development of this country, being a most enduring and important record of Australia when so much of our landscape has been destroyed.

Ms Deahm discussed the fact that in the 1890s landscape painting underwent a dramatic change. This included a transition from the rather gloomy paintings of early artists to the effect created with the increasing recognition of the peculiar light - the 'white' light - of this country. This latter period, Ms Deahm asserted, assisted in or coincided with the emergence of a national identity and was consequently an appropriate time for a bequest for a landscape prize. Before closing, Ms Deahm paid tribute to Graham Whale whose notes "had given a fantastic backdrop to the Wynne bequest". Ms Deahm was then thanked by the Chairman and presented with a gift, and "going back in time" said Raoul Wilson, he was able to present the gift, now found, to Mrs Hawke (to laughter and applause).

Miss Victoria Lynn was introduced and began by reminding us of the history of the Wynne bequest when, in 1895, Richard Wynne made a donation of £1,000. So this prize is one of the oldest and most respected



Mrs Maggie Deahm [right hand side of photograph] delivering her speech to the crowd assembled outside the Turkish Bath. To Ms Deahm's right is seated Mrs Hazel Hawke and to her left, Miss Victoria Lynn.

in Australia, and in Victoria's words, "very dear to the hearts of the Art Gallery of NSW".

Miss Lynn expressed her opinion that those who had won the prize had given us an abiding sense of the Australian landscape. She spoke of the way in which we have seen landscape

vary in the hands of artists, from pastoral landscapes of the last century to examples seen here today, which seem to be made of the very earth and light of the Australian landscape. From the ideas and history of art which Victoria presented to the audience in lovely prose, I will mention the quote she gave from the historian Simon Schama, who had written:

The human interaction with our natural environment has been a mixed blessing but it is a relationship that can be seen in positive and cultural terms.

“Landscape,” Victoria said, “has been comprised as much of memories that have formed around it as it is of the rocks and earth that make up its many layers. The paintings in this exhibition remind us of the artists’ abiding interest in maintaining a cultural relationship with the landscape. Painting a landscape need not be an accurate depiction of scenery. It can also represent a journey - a journey through the spaces, places and cultural memories that have arisen from that scenery and I think this is what makes painting a landscape a contemporary activity. As the paintings in this exhibition show, the Wynne Prize continues to be a forum for both the artists’ contemporary interpretation of landscape and the audiences’ appreciation of contemporary Australia.”

Victoria was then thanked and presented with a gift, and our three speakers were presented with bouquets of flowers arranged by Libby Raines from her lovely garden *Merry Garth*. The Chairman gave well merited thanks to Graham Whale for all the time and expertise he had given as Curator of the Wynne Prize Exhibition in the Turkish Bath; to the members of our Historical Society, particularly Mary and Ellis Reynolds for their unstinting support; to Mr Rob Scowcroft for the lighting; and to Bill Smart of Wynstay.

All that then remained was for the rent to be paid by the Society to Bill Smart of one dollar per annum for the Turkish Bath and one dollar for use of the precincts. These coins, embedded in their silver plaque - destined to be used and re-used annually for the fifty year period of the lease - and contained in their camphor wood box, normally reside under the care of Bill Smart. These were ceremoniously handed back to him by Raoul Wilson, amidst amused murmurings about being six months overdue.

So a very happy day ended not only in laughter, but hope and optimism for the future of this project, which has already given such pleasure to so many who have offered support and who found delight in the treasures revealed behind Richard Wynne’s old stone walls on that special day in the restoration story.

written by Wilga Smart



William Robinson's 'Late Sunlight and Afternoon Cloud, Bezzehmont' (1994) was on display at the Wynne Prize Centenary Exhibition - courtesy of Ray Hughes

Oil on linen, 137 x 152cm

John Valder - Tales of a Prior Paddock

[John Valder's speech, which he delivered at the Mt Wilson Historical Society's 1997 Annual General Meeting in the Village Hall on 26th July, filled, in its entirety, over eight typed pages. Therefore, in the interest of clarity and sanity, I have taken it upon myself to perform the necessary (under these circumstances) task which my role as editor entitles me to - that of carefully calculated and precisely regulated 'slashing and burning'. I have not indicated where these changes have been made for the purpose of providing you with a more easily flowing narrative. However, John Valder's personal speaking style, which added so much to the already amusing and interesting content of his talk, has not been lost here; nor have any main points been excluded, merely shortened. Please feel free to contact me if you desire a copy of the unedited version. Ed]

Thank you for inviting me here today. It's conventional for people giving a speech to stand up and say "it's a pleasure and honour to be here" - they normally don't mean a word of it and it's a damn nuisance and a chore. However, I've given lots of talks in my life and I don't suppose there will ever be one that will give *me* more pleasure (whether it does to you is a different matter) because what has been involved in preparing myself has been simply thinking about my childhood in Mt Wilson. As one who was born and grew up here, Mt Wilson is an unusual place... and I suspect it really is unique.

Firstly let me congratulate all of you who have been involved in forming this Historical Society. I think it's a terrific initiative... as is getting the Turkish Bath going as far as you have, thanks to the generosity of Bill Smart and all the work of other people. You are really well under way.

When Mary Reynolds rang me a few months ago and asked me to speak today I thought "Good heavens! What do you speak about to a group such as this on an occasion such as this?" So what has come to be is really a few reminiscences of my childhood here and to those of you who don't like reminiscences I suggest you leave at this point.

I was born in 1931 and so was growing up through the thirties. What I remember most of those days is the *bush*... the sight of the bush, the sound of the bush, the smell of the bush. [continued on page 7]

Hot Air from the Turkish Bath

Restoration Process

Work commenced on the first stage of the restoration process on the Turkish Bath on 17th March, 1997. That stage is now complete and some additional work has also been carried out by the highly skilled builder, Stan Hellyer and his team, guided by Peter Todd, the dedicated Conservation Architect to whom the Mt Wilson Historical Society is most grateful. At this time, the building almost glows with revived energy and spirit, standing above the Mt Irvine Road, especially as the western sun catches the warmth of that remarkable polychrome brick work, still so decorative and intact after more than 100 years.



'Seznys in a Turkish Bath' [1904] (East 70s near Lexington Avenue) The Byron Collection, Silver gelatin print. The Byron Collection.

The Mt Wilson Historical Society Inc has spent \$55,630 on this work so far. Much of this money has been raised from the opening of Wynstay Gardens by its owner, Mr Bill Smart, who has leased the Turkish Bath to the Society so that it can eventually be used for a local heritage centre and museum. The Society has also been supported by a grant of \$15,000 from the Heritage Office and the Heritage Council of NSW.

The Turkish Bath is significant as a rare example of a private Turkish Bath and is also important as a contributory element in the Wynstay estate founded by Richard Wynne in 1875. It makes a significant aesthetic contribution to the village of Mt Wilson.

Stage One of the restoration work involved the dismantling of the cast iron cresting and its restoration; and the complete repair of the main roof which required the corrugated steel cladding to be removed sheet by sheet, repaired, treated for rust, painted with galvanising paint and placed back in position. Existing gutters and downpipes were removed and new galvanised steel guttering and downpipes were fitted to match the existing ones. Similar repairs were carried out on the tower roof including removing the lead sheeting which was repaired and then returned to its place. Structural failures in the masonry were repaired.

In addition, all outer window sashes have been repaired and reconstructed where necessary to match the originals. Basement doors have been repaired and rehung, and redundant plumbing has been removed. The original floor tiles (1892) in all three rooms have been lifted, cleaned and replaced. In one room it was necessary to purchase some replacement tiles to complete the floor. All this work has been carried out with great care to maintain, as closely as possible, the original fabric of the building.

Outside, similar care has been taken. The basalt retaining wall has been completely restored, using the same type of sand as was used originally; it came from Blackheath. The cobbled stone path has been uncovered as has the drain next to it, while collapsed sections of the stone and rubble wall have been stabilised and restructured. Archaeological work has been carried out resulting in some very interesting finds, which include some sections of the original concrete cope ceiling, pieces linked with the original furnace and many fragments going back in time when the Turkish Bath was used as a domestic dwelling. Additional work has been carried out in the establishment of an electrical service and a Telstra line. Remnants of the 1920s verandah have been dismantled, with the stone being repaired and set out attractively.

There remains some reconstruction/reinstatement work to be done in order to complete the conservation of the Turkish Bath. This includes the reconstruction of two windows and the reinstatement of original door joinery currently reused in another building on the estate.

Another important item will be the return of the beautiful decorated glass windows which were originally part of the Turkish Bath. These windows were set as part of a double-glazed effect with clear glass on the exterior of the walls, and these coloured windows on the inside. Some of these were on display for the Spring Opening of the Turkish Bath.

Value of work done to date: Contract	\$22,000.00
Variations	\$24,278.00
Total value of work done to date:	\$46,278.00

Variation	Approved	Completed
	\$	\$
<i>Open up super floors</i>	350.00	350.00
<i>Floor tiling</i>	3500.00	3500.00
<i>Electrical Service</i>	4800.00	4800.00
<i>Telstra Service</i>	250.00	250.00
<i>Stormwater Drainage</i>	240.00	240.00
<i>Removal of redundant pipe work</i>	85.00	85.00
<i>Reconstruct stone retaining wall</i>	6200.00	6200.00
<i>Stabilise draw tunnel and grid over</i>	950.00	950.00
<i>Reinstate cast-iron cresting</i>	5500.00	5500.00
<i>Dismantle verandah</i>	650.00	650.00
<i>Completion of floor tiling</i>	520.00	520.00
<i>Purchase and treating of window wares</i>	570.00	570.00
<i>Repairs to fibrous plaster ceiling</i>	448.00	448.00
<i>Reinstate timber linings to Bath</i>	30.00	30.00
<i>Reinstate cast iron grate in floor</i>	35.00	35.00
<i>Resecure picture rails in all areas</i>	150.00	150.00



Mt Wilson has always been surrounded by a vast amount of bush. With the bush one remembers the walks... the short walks and the long walks. I believe there is no more beautiful walk than that little one around the waterfall. I was just showing my wife, as we drove up, another walk which we knew, and is no longer there, as the Dolly Path walk. Noellie [McLean] and Wilga [Smart] and a few others might remember the Dolly Path which went through bushland from the school to the road down the hill from Applecot. It gained its name when someone - Troath Gregson I think - dropped a plastic doll there one day, which somebody picked up and nailed onto a tall tree. It remained there for many years and became a landmark of the Dolly Path. I must also mention the Cathedral of Ferns - such a beautiful area which I will always remember for the fireflies on a summer's night around the end of December, early January. When all the little lights are flickering around in the Cathedral of Ferns, it is magic.

There are longer walks such as to the Wollangambe, which *was* a very rough walk. It must be fifty years since I went to the Wollangambe and I don't think I'm likely to see it ever again for it's a pretty easy walk down but it's a hell of a walk back. We used to go down with the Wynne family and the Gregsons, in particular. The three Gregson girls were very keen bushwalkers and would stride ahead while I, the youngest of the group (I'll make that the excuse), always dropped behind and as you know, when this happens, they all wait for you to catch up and the moment you get there they set off again before you've been able to catch your breath and pursue them. So I survived a few trips to the Wollangambe but I think I'd have to be winched back these days.

Communications at Mt Wilson in the thirties and forties were pretty primitive. The roads were rough and you didn't zip up 'the zig-zag' as I did just a few minutes ago on a sealed road. On a wet day you didn't get up the zig-zag at all - you got stuck on it just as on lots of roads

around this area. Very few people here had cars so we were dependant on the mailman for many things, who was located at Bell and came out each morning with the mail, newspapers, certain supplies, and people off the train. There was even a train called the mail train which, after leaving Sydney at three in the morning with the papers and the mail and stopping everywhere along the way, got to Bell at about eight. The most famous mailman was 'Cherrynose' Osbourne (as a small boy I didn't realise why he might have been called 'Cherrynose'). He did two trips a day (that's progress - fifty years later you don't get that service), taking all sorts of things back to the train for us. By the forties, my father was running a flower farm and sent big boxes of flowers to florists in Sydney. They'd get loaded onto 'Cherrynose's' vehicle along with cages of birds such as parrots that my brother and I would catch in homemade *figure four* traps and send off to pet shops in Sydney, receiving two and sixpence a parrot.

The other main communication line was with the Lithgow Co-operative Society (Lithgow Co-op), which came round once a week on a Friday. Mr Williams, who delivered goods for many years, would arrive in his dust coat, bringing groceries, bread, meat and produce for the livestock. It was a very big event and because we were towards the end of his run for regular supplies, there'd be a terrible crisis when my mother would find that something had been left out or the wrong thing had been put on, but there wasn't too much you could do about it for another week. The telephone did exist, as did radio (though only in its infancy), but television was not even a gleam in anyone's eye. You were very lucky if you had an AWA Fisk Radiola somewhere in the house which when you turned it on crackled and popped and you may have heard highlights such as Winston Churchill delivering one of his wartime speeches from the BBC or the voices of Jack Davey, Bob Dyer, Dick Fair or John Deace or world famous tenors.

Many of us began our schooling in the building across the road [from the Village Hall] when it was a one teacher school, always of precarious



existence as the Department of Education required a minimum of twelve or fourteen pupils for there to be a school at all. It was an enormous achievement when anybody even sat for the intermediate certificate, let alone passed it. I can remember some of those long-suffering school teachers, such as Mr Martin, Mr Mottershead and Miss Palmer. How she came to be here poor woman... but she did. But we all got through this education and some of us more successfully than others. My own brother went on from here to school in Sydney and then to Sydney University where he scored a university medal in agricultural science, and then to Cambridge to get a Ph.D in some obscure branch of botany. Needless to say, his younger brother didn't succeed anything like as well as that.

The school numbers were then supplemented by some part-Aboriginal children. Around 1941 some of the 'stolen children' of which we're all now so familiar came here to Mt Wilson under the auspices of some Anglican church mission. A man named Harry Cottrell-Dormer and his wife Dorothy had, at Sylvan Close, about ten boys who had been taken away from their families in the Northern Territory. One of them was John Moriarty with whom I've happened to come in contact with again just these last few years. He, from this distressing start to life of being taken away from his family at age four or five, claims that his time in Mt Wilson was one of the happiest parts of his estrangement. He thought they were pretty well looked after by the Dormers; there was plenty to eat and Mrs Dormer, a good cook, introduced him to butter and honey and, as he told me the other day, she made a great blackberry pie.

These children had all sorts of experiences around Mt Wilson, including teaching people like me to throw spears and boomerangs - John still sports a scar on his forehead from a spear thrown by one of the other boys. He also taught us to throw boomerangs and at age ten or so I was actually a reasonable hand at a boomerang though I think it would be wise not to give me the opportunity today. John Moriarty has gone on to be one of the most renowned Australian Aborigines in the country, running, with his

wife, a very successful Aboriginal design business based in Adelaide and now in Sydney. They, incidentally, created the mural-like Aboriginal designs on the QANTAS 747 flagship.

For entertainment in such an isolated and remote place, we rode horses and bikes. Bill's [Smart] wife Jane had a horse which gloried under the name of 'Packa' before the name 'Packer' required quite the connotation that it might today. Noellie was a great hand at horses and entered at the Royal Easter Show... we were all very proud of you and your horse-riding skills. Our horses gloried under names like 'Flannel-foot', 'Trixie' and 'Cloudie' and goodness knows what.

There were also some fairly remarkable parties. Most people at Mt Wilson had very little if any money in those days, but a few people did and the Wynne family was one. They threw some pretty good tennis parties and parties at night for the grown ups... my brother was recalling to me this morning that our father went to one of those fancy dress parties dressed as a woman - he was very much ahead of his time, wasn't he. Apparently he was a huge success and the Scrivener family could not work out who this woman was that they hadn't met before. The Gregson family's grandfather had an American housekeeper called Emma, I can't think of what Emma's name was... [Mary Reynolds (unhesitatingly): "Ashwood"] Emma Ashwood. Well done! Goodness Mary, there's not much you don't know is there?! Anyway, at the height of one of these parties - and Bill, I suppose there's still this pond on the terrace below the front door of Wynstay, is there? [Bill Smart: "Yes there is"] - well, inevitably, Emma stepped backwards into this pond and instantly became the highlight of that party.

On New Year's Eves we all got up to various pranks. I remember up at the top of the hill, there where the Armitages used to live, a family called the Shellers lived. While we were up to some sort of mischief, Mr Sheller rushed out into the night and fired a rifle into the air, which we thought was going a bit far - but it certainly scattered us. What an irony that his son Simon is a judge in the Supreme Court - I wonder if he rushes out into the night and fires shots.



Down at the cottage at Withycombe lived Mrs Jackson with her tiny little dog called Biddy, which made a lot of noise like tiny dogs sometimes do. We once dug up the church notice which said 'Services will be held here on the second Sunday of every month' and planted it in Mrs Jackson's front garden (she was a very religious woman). Of course she arrived, outraged, at our place first thing in the morning. My father (knowing what we'd done) looked out the window and saw her striding in with Biddy yapping away, and always a very calm man said, "Good morning Mrs Jackson, and a Happy New Year to you". "A Happy New Year indeed!" she said in great indignation.

On New Year's Day there was often a 'sports carnival' on Silva Plana. The Kirk family would display its wood chopping prowess, there were car races and so on. Mrs Wynne had a marvellous old Morris Minor with a dicky seat in the back and would weave this thing through some stakes like people did on horses.

During the year was a day called Empire Day - long since forgotten by most. May 24th (Meg Gregson's birthday was always synonymous with Empire Day) was always an occasion for bonfires. With no shortage of material around Mt Wilson there would be two or three good bonfires to go to. On this special occasion my father would get us the only type of takeaway food there was in those days - a meat pie. And this small boy, at least, thought it an absolute thrill.

Finally (I can't quite classify it under entertainment or I shall offend someone here) there was the church itself. Church services were, in a sense, an event because in communities like this, where not all that much would happen in those days, most everyone did go to church. There was this marvellous old church organ and people like Math and Flo Davies, Marjorie Sloan and others would pound away at this thing. Being small and not as deeply religious as one should be, it was entertainment!

Mt Wilson had no shortage of characters. Dr C H Curry, who wrote a book on the history of Mt Wilson about thirty years ago, lived across the road from us for years. They had a house up in the corner of the property and no more than a hundred yards away we had a cow bail. It must have been the best situated bail (this side of Switzerland anyway), facing north-east with a magnificent view over the gullies and bush. My brother and I would be milking cows there morning and evening - there were two cows (two too many), and when Dr Curry was up from Sydney he would get a billy of absolutely fresh milk from us. As we were milking the cows he would stand at the edge of the cow bail admiring the great vista over the mountains and the bush, and give my brother and I the benefit of his views on almost any subject he chose, interrupted only by the cows opening their bowels or bladders, causing a scatter by both my brother and I and Dr Curry to get out of the line of fire. However, he hardly missed a beat in whatever story he was telling.

Dr Curry's other great pursuit of enjoyment was blasting rock, especially basalt. For some reason he believed it should be blown up. It was a marvellous sight on a Saturday when he and Bert Kirk (who would work for him) would blow this rock up with what was probably gelignite. They would be lighting a fuse on some great bolder and we would see them scrambling for safety from these massive explosions (so they seemed to me). He was a lecturer at Sydney University in Law and Australian History and I became a pupil of his in Australian History. His university lectures were a bit like his cow bail lectures. He tended to go on a bit and digress from the main theme. He was meant to cover Australian history from 1788 to 1950, but by the time we got to the end of the year exams he hadn't even got to Federation. I remember his closing words were that we "shouldn't be too concerned, there won't be any compulsory questions after the period of Federation". He was a great character.

Another great character was Fred Mann, who owned Yengo (then Stone Lodge). Fred Mann was best known really for making pottery and we were all very proud of our pieces, which I managed to hang onto. He did some lovely distinctive work, from, I think, local clays.



However, my memories of Fred Mann are also for his parties for children and grown ups. I can remember him hanging Chinese lanterns up around the garden and it all looking very glamorous. Fred Mann wasn't married but he had a nephew called Michael Mann, who was a highly accomplished pianist, even as a school boy, and would visit for holidays. So Fred Mann thought he ought to put on a bit of entertainment for his nephew and invite the rest of the children over to stay at Stone Lodge to play games. I remember one day we were playing a game of Boules out the front. Fred Mann had developed a liking for alcohol at this stage of his life so while we played these games he would slip into the house and have a drink and another drink and so on. On one such occasion he came back out of the house when we were playing this game and Troath Gregson looked up and said "Whose shot is it?" and a voice said "I'm shot" with a perfect sense of timing. He was a lovely, warm, generous, cheerful, friendly man.

Another character was the Gregson's grandfather [Daddo Jefferson] whom I remember as "Old Jefferson" because that's what my mother called him. He would have lived at Wyndam I suppose. He'd frequently come round to our place for a cup of tea with my mother. He had a big moustache and Panama hat. Although English, he'd lived a long while in America and was (or had been) an engineer with General Electric there. He was quite old in those days and as he got older he got deafer (as happens to quite a few of us). And as also happens to quite a few of us men as we get older, we seem to let off more wind than is good for us. So as he got deafer he thought he was letting these slip quietly while he was having tea with my mother. With two small boys there with these wonderful blasts of wind, you can imagine the hysterics it would send us children into. He, of course, was quite unaware.

Another person I'd like to mention is Archbishop Mowell who was the Archbishop of Sydney at the time. He would come up here for holidays, in fact he (or the church) owned Wythicombe at some stage - probably after the

Whites sold it. He and Mrs Mowell would come up for holidays, and after Wythicombe got sold would stay with the Davies over in your territory, Libby. It was always an event when they came and had afternoon tea with us (at least once during this holiday). Archbishop Mowell was an ample person and wasn't up to walking round from there - his wife was more of the good Christian walker stepping out - and so my father would go round in the first vehicle we ever owned, a Bedford utility truck, and get the Mowells. The Archbishop sat in the front alongside my father while Mrs Mowell would get into the back where my father had a cane chair, and this little chariot would come round to our house. As they'd been missionaries in China and all sorts of places over the years, this was nothing.

The Mowells continued to be a part of my life years after, when I left school in Sydney in 1949 and accommodation of any kind was an extraordinarily difficult thing to get. At the time the Church of England was running a hostel in the city called CENEF, which grew out of the Church of England National Emergency Fund [which, coincidentally, my grandfather ran. Ed] and it was only by my family prevailing on the Archbishop to use his influence that I was able to get a sort of cubicle in that hostel, that would certainly be banned by the Health Department these days, but for which I was duly grateful.

Mine was obviously a marvellous and a happy childhood although maybe all of us look back at our childhoods a bit through rose-tinted spectacles. Happy as it was for us as children, however, I don't think it was an easy time for our parents and the other adults on the Mountain. Life was extremely tough for many people as very few people had much money, few people had cars and there was no electricity so you had kerosene lamps, fuel stoves, chip bath heaters and wood fires. As a result one of the great pastimes was sawing and splitting wood to keep up the supply of fuel. People had to live very much off their own bit of land where they would run chooks to produce eggs. Occasionally one of those chooks would get its head chopped off and would be steamed as an old boiler - a far cry from today's barbecued chicken. Everybody grew vegetables and most had



a few fruit trees. So they got by with a lot of their own things that they grew and produced themselves. However, the weather made life very hard. A number of people, my father included before he had a flower farm, had an apple and pear orchard and just as the crop was coming to ripen, along would come a hailstorm and wipe out an entire year's income in ten minutes. I can remember my mother sitting crying over just such an event. Bushfires were a threat, coming in close to our small community. Then just plain drought made life very harsh when there's no

town water supply and you're dependant on rain water off the roof all year round, as residents would know today.

Not so long ago, in this very room, Jack Garnan, whom I hadn't seen for years and whom I'm sorry is not here today, greeted me and then looking at me and my ample girth said "They've been keeping you in a good paddock haven't they". Of course it's one of those lovely Australian expressions. I thought to myself since, Mt Wilson was a mighty good paddock for me to start life and I've luckily been in a good paddock in my life ever since.

Correspondence, Contacts and Connections

Following is a letter to the Mt Wilson Historical Society Inc received on 16th December, 1997 from Craig Knowles MP. We thought it might be of interest.

I am pleased to advise that on the recommendation of the Heritage Council I have approved of funding being made available under the 1997/8 'Heritage 2001' program for the purpose of assisting your organisation to continue the conservation of the Turkish Bath House at Mount Wilson... I have approved of a pro rata grant of up to \$6,000... The 'Heritage 2001' program presents a great opportunity to undertake excellent conservation and presentation work to important heritage sites in this state. I commend your interest in our heritage and wish you well with your project.

Craig Knowles MP
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning
Minister for Housing

Winsome Henderson ~ A Tribute

On 29th December, 1997 Miss Winsome Henderson passed away peacefully at her home in Mt Irvine at the age of 92.

Possessed of remarkable artistic skills, Winsome produced exquisite needlework and was responsible for the formation of a craft group in Mt Irvine in the earlier years of the mountain's settlement.

Winsome Henderson was a most gracious and gentle lady, and although physically restricted at times, her mind was both active and sharp. Those living around her and all who were fortunate enough to know her were always touched by her charm, beneath which lay strength, determination and a will to make the most of life.

Winsome Henderson was one of the earliest supporters of the Mt Wilson Community History Group (est. 1994) and a generous contributor to its funds. Although not able to participate actively in the organisation due to physical difficulties, Winsome maintained correspondence with the Group and expressed her interest in all its developments. Consequently, when the Group became the Mt Wilson Historical Society Inc., Winsome joined up immediately and continued to give generously.

We are so glad that she died in the place she loved so much; at *Winbourne*, Mt Irvine.

Geological Matters of Mt Wilson ~ thrown together by Peter Valder

The sandstone and shales of which the upper levels of the Blue Mountains are composed were laid down on the coastal plain over 200 million years ago. This coastal plain was slowly eroded by rivers running from higher ground to the west and it was not until 200 million years later that a further layer was added as a result of volcanic eruptions which occurred over a period of perhaps 4 million years from 18 to 14 million years ago. This produced a vast continuous sheet of volcanic rock which covered the earlier landscape and which extended over a large area of eastern NSW. Following the uplift of the mountains in more recent times there has been considerable erosion resulting in the removal of almost all of the volcanic rock except for the basalt caps of Mounts Wilson, Irvine, Banks, Hay, Haystack, Bell and Tomah, all of which are the youngest rocks remaining in the Blue Mountains. The clay which underlies the basalt of Mount Wilson was used by the Wynne, Valder and Gregson children to make pottery at Wynstay and was also used by Fred Mann for some of his pottery at Yengo (then Stone Lodge). This clay produced objects which were a cream colour when baked. The Wynnes also found some reddish-brown clay on their land below the post office and used that to make pottery, which made us Valdersons a bit jealous.

When we were children we were greatly intrigued by the history of gold mining. Occasionally, on outings to the Bathurst district, we would look for specks of gold in fragments of quartz in creek beds. This interest was increased by the activities of Mr Draper, who, with his wife, lived for some years during the 1930s in the school cottage, our father's fruit shed and at Talbingo, now Breenhold. As part of his search for a solution to his economic problems he sank shafts in various parts of the bush in the hope of finding this elusive metal. With sound geological knowledge he would have been able to spare himself a great deal of hard work.

Quite unwittingly and with an equal lack of understanding of the local geology, we adopted a more sensible course of action. We spent a lot of our time with the Gregsons on the banks of Waterfall Creek near the house Chimney Cottage. There was a dam there in whose icy waters we occasionally swam, and where we caught water beetles, tadpoles and so on, and were engaged in constructing cubby houses amongst the trees. Since we were beyond sinking mineshafts, we panned the deposits of the creek bed looking for gold. We didn't find any but we found lots of dark red zircons, which looked wonderful when still wet but rather uninteresting when they dried out. We didn't know then that the zircons didn't occur in any of the local rocks and that they must have been washed there by a river well over 18 million years earlier from much further west before the basalt covered the land. Waterfall Creek had cut into an ancient creek or river bed, part of an ancient landscape dating back to the days when rivers flowed east from much further west; from somewhere where the zircons had originated. If we had been more fortunate I suppose gold might have been brought there too.

What we found even more frequently than the zircons were chips of chert; a hard striated rock with some affinities with flint. This doesn't occur naturally at Mount Wilson either and must have been brought there by Aborigines from further west, who chipped away at it to make stone implements. The fact that they actually made these at Mount Wilson suggests that they must have spent time there, probably camped on the banks of Waterfall Creek. A more striking indication of their presence is afforded by the axe-sharpening grooves at Du Faur's Rocks. In the 30s, people also occasionally dug or ploughed up stone axe heads. I wonder if anyone has kept any of them. Our father ploughed up the odd lump of 'Blackfellow's Bread'; rock-hard, whitish, heavy objects which were said to be dried out and more or less fossilised remains of dampers. They are, however, the resting bodies of a large toadstool.



Passed to the Wright hands

On 15th January, 1998 Mary Reynolds submitted her resignation as Project Director for the Turkish Bath Restoration Work (one of her many positions) to the committee of the Mt Wilson Historical Society Inc. At the committee meeting on 17th January, 1998 the group expressed their appreciation for the work that Mary had done in this particular role. In her letter of resignation, Mary expressed that her decision centred around the need to devote more time to her other responsibilities within the Society. These include the collection of local history and listing of cataloguing and conservation; storage of the collection now that the Turkish Bath is at the stage where this is possible; and the various administrative tasks which her role as Public Officer requires her to undertake, such as being the first point of contact for the Society.

Bruce Wright, was approached and invited to consider filling the position due to his relevant experience in this area. Possessing a degree in archaeology with specific training in Australian historical archaeology, and a strong interest in Aboriginal rock art (which led him into the field of archaeology and into positions such as the Registrar of Sacred Aboriginal Sites for the Western Australian Museum) the representatives of the Society present at that

meeting were very pleased to see Bruce accept this invitation.

Financial Statement from 1/7/97 ~ 17/1/98

Total Expenditure for 1.7.97 - 17.1.98	\$36,055.39
Total Income	\$25,606.70
Plus balance at 30.6.97	\$29,200.65
Less Total Expenditure	<u>\$36,055.39</u>
Balance at 17 Jan 1997	<u>\$18,751.96</u>

New Working Groups

On November 22nd 1997 a decision was taken to set up Working Groups or sub-committees within the Society. Each Group would welcome additional contributions. If you would like to be involved in any way please contact Mary Reynolds on (02) 4756 2006.

Working Groups:

- Archaeological and Archive
- Exhibitions, Collection Management Mus.
- Publicity
- Treasurer, Financial Management
- Newsletter
- Special Fund Raising
- Wynstay Openings

Little Treasures

In *Little Treasures* this edition, we offer you some historical information on Turkish Baths, juxtaposing the original cultural and social implications of the Turkish Bath with some common attitudes and uses of Turkish Baths within Australian society around the turn of the century, respectively. [Source 1: <http://giris.htmlgiris.html>]:

*The tradition of the **Turkish Bath** extends far back, to a time before Turks had reached Anatolia. When the Turks arrived in Anatolia, they brought with them one bathing tradition, and were confronted with another, that of Romans and Byzantines, with certain local variants. The traditions merged, and with the addition of the Moslem concern for cleanliness and its concomitant respect for the uses of water, there arose an entirely new concept, that of the **Turkish Bath**. In time it became an institution, with its system of ineradicable customs.*

*The **Turkish Bath** was much more than just a place to cleanse the skin. It was intimately bound up with everyday life, a place where people of every rank and station, young and old, rich and poor,*

townsman or villager, could come freely. Women as well as men made use of the "hamam" (as the bath is known in Turkish) although of course at separate hours.

From the individual's point of view, the hamam was a familiar place from the earliest weeks of life right up to its very end. Important occasions during a lifespan were, and in some townships still are, celebrated with rejoicing at the bath. The newborn's fortieth day, the brides bathing complete with food and live music, and the Avowal are instances. The latter requires some explanation, for it involved the custom common in Anatolia of making a promise or vow, contingent on the fulfilment of some important wish. The celebration of this in the hamam was arranged and paid for by the person fulfilling his vow, and was open to one and all... The hamam ceremony of mourning, on the other hand, was far different, but also widespread. The Hospitality bathing was simply the taking of one's house-guest to the hamam for a wash. Then there were the Circumcision, Groom's, and Off-to-the-Army bathings, and others besides. As we see, the whole culture of a people had the **Turkish Bath** as one of its important nexus... The **Turkish Bath** was also, in its own way, a beautician's school where one learned and practiced care of the body and hair, the donning of make-up. And it was here that women, kept almost exclusively indoors, could best relax and enjoy the freedom of a day to themselves... The fame of the **Turkish Bath**, then, resides in its bringing together many dimensions of the society's culture to create a new phenomenon. The hamam has long been an institution in Türkiye, with a deep-going social character that is capable of shedding light on many aspects of Turkish life.

[Source 2: excerpts from Michael Cannon's *Life in the Cities* (1975) (one of a three part trilogy called *Australia in the Victorian Age*)]

Launceston at the end of the 19th century was, in contrast with other cities in Australia, the tidiest little city in the world, operating efficient sewerage, water, electricity services, providing museums, art galleries, swimming and **Turkish Bath** facilities. This was an extreme case of municipal enlightenment. By and large local government in Australia was a sorry tale - the wrong men doing the wrong things for the wrong reasons [page 21].

Melbourne's first [shopping arcade], the Royal Arcade, rose imposingly among the small shops of Bourke Street in 1869, its airy ceilings of cast iron and glass attracting as much admiration as its cool fountains and steaming **Turkish Baths** [Page 32].

Private **Turkish Baths** offered more advanced facilities for those of the middle class who did not wish to mingle with the general population. Two such establishments opened in Hobart in the 1860s with Tuesday and Friday set aside for use by the ladies.

In Adelaide Thomas Bastard advertised his establishment in verse:

We'll go and take a **Turkish Bath**,
T'll make you supple as a lath,
T'll set you up from tip to toe,
And put your system in a glow.

Sydney's original **Turkish Bath** was described as a "veritable cock chafer trap", but a Mr Wigzell opened 5 new bathrooms for gentlemen and two for ladies in Oxford Street, allowing half an hour's scrubbing upon payment of one shilling.

In Melbourne, James Hosies's modern **Turkish Bath Palace** in the Royal Arcade was opened by the State Governor, Sir George Bowen, in 1873. Ladies and gentlemen who wished to bathe every day were invited to live permanently in 'comfortable bedrooms' in the palace and be supplied from a first class kitchen with "tit bits to please sharp appetites such as a good bath creates".

Gentlemen were requested to enter the bath with their boots on and to refrain from smoking and spitting.

All clients were given a fig leaf to wear and were cautioned against 'casting it aside' while other bathers were present.

Regular clients included Police Superintendent McCullen, the Town Clerk Edmund Fitzgibbon, a future Baronet W.L. Clarke, the actor George Coppin, mining magnate J.B. Watson, physician-politician Dr D.L. Smith, Ned Kelly's lawyer David Gounson, prominent preacher Reverent R.K. Ewing and many other wearers of the 'fig leaf' [p.163-4].

You're Invited...

If you are planning a return visit to Wynstay gardens and the Turkish Bath during the March/April opening and if you have not previously joined the roster as a volunteer, why not think about signing up for a shift, or a day.... We can really use the help, you can get to know more about the work of the Historical Society and meet fellow members who share your interest in the development of the Turkish Bath Museum and preservation of the history of the Mt Wilson community.



We need at least 6 people for each 2-hour shift, and with 3 shifts a day for the 11 open days this adds up to quite a number of people. Whether staffing the gate, directing visitors in the gardens, answering questions in the Turkish Bath, or serving teas and scones, it's always fun meeting fellow volunteers and making a contribution to this wonderful project.

All offers of help are warmly appreciated! In return we offer free admission on the day, free tea and scones, and yet another reason to visit Mount Wilson in its glorious autumn colours. Bring your lunch and spend the day!

Sign up by completing the enclosed form and returning it to the roster co-ordinator by 16th March. You will receive a copy of your schedule in the mail. And thanks for your help!

A Note from the Editor

Thank you to all those who contributed to this newsletter, especially Wilga Smart and Mary Reynolds, and for all the positive feedback and support which I received as a response to the August 1997 edition. I would also like to offer a very large and very belated thanks to Caraline and Frank McLeod of Canyonleigh (Southern Highlands, NSW) for the use of their computer equipment, study, spare bedroom, coffee plunger and unsuspecting mangos for the final layout of both this and the August 1997 editions of the newsletter.

My address has changed since the last edition and I can now be found at 13 Mortlake Street, Concord, 2137 [ph. (02) 9743 2910]. Please feel free to write or contact me by telephone with any questions, concerns, queries, complaints, quibbles, quetzals (oh, I think that might in fact be a Central American bird with golden-green and scarlet plumage), quotations, concepts, confessions, confusion, considerations or conclusive contemplations with regard to the newsletter. Many thanks.

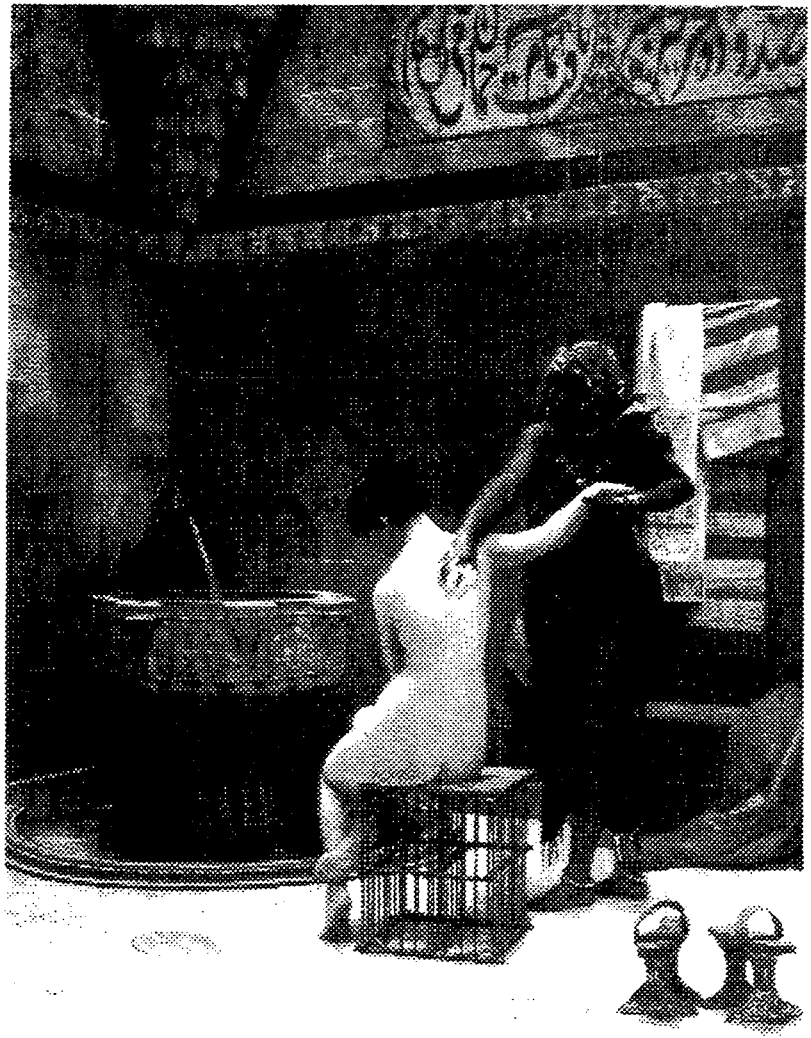
Elsbeth Callender



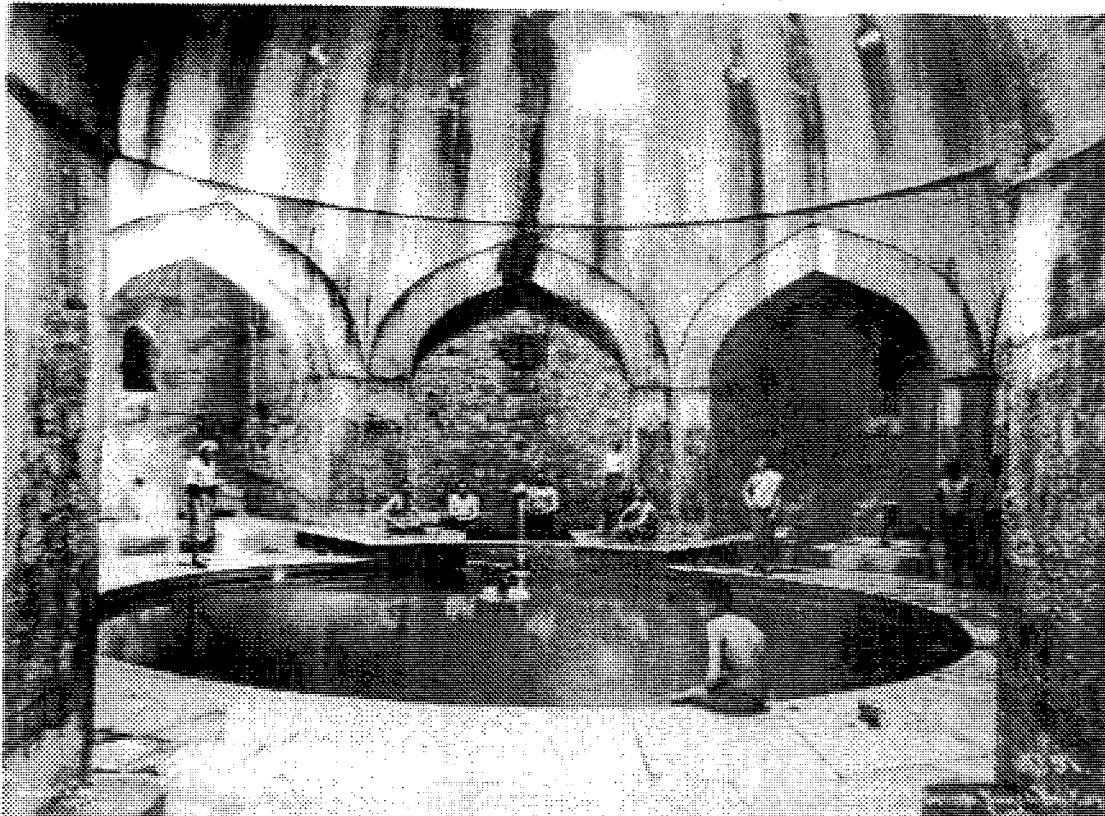
As part of the Art Gallery of NSW's recent exhibition entitled 'Orientalism: Delacroix to Klee', Jean-Léon Gérôme's painting [right], 'The Bath (Le Bain)' [c. 1880-85], was on display. Contemporary opinion regarding this European artist's particular impression of the 'Orient', as found in the exhibition's catalogue (edited by Roger Benjamin), asserts that:

While Gérôme is known to have visited bathhouses in Egypt and Turkey, the architectural details of this work may derive from several disparate sources. The striking green tiles were possibly inspired by the famous ceramics used on the Green Mosque in the Turkish city of Bursa. The stalactite squinch supporting the unseen dome is typical of those found throughout the Islamic world...

...In the foreground a pair of 'nalin' or pattens, decorated with inlaid mother-of-pearl, can be seen. Pattens were worn in the bathhouse to protect bathers from slipping on the wet marble surface and elevated them above the dirty water and corrosive depilatories swirling around on the floor. Stools or up-ended buckets were used for seats in the bathhouse, not the red boxes depicted here. These props are possibly bird cages and appear in a number of Gérôme's paintings... [p.102].



Within the same exhibition appeared this 1885 photograph [by Sébah & Joaillier] of the 'Baths of Yéni Kaplidja' (Bains de Yéni Kaplidja). The caption in the catalogue reads:



This scene of a Turkish Bath bears no direct relation to the bath scenes of Gérôme or Ingres. Taken in the interior of a real Turkish Bath during the men's session, it is a very rare photograph in the history of 19th-century photography. The panoramic view of the location, with its distribution of standing and seated, front and back poses, accentuates the genuine character of the shot... [p.221].