



# NEWSLETTER

Working together for a better community

March 2006

## EDITOR'S NOTES

### ***Broadband is here***

Well, the long-awaited broadband has at last arrived and a number of people are now revelling in fast downloads and (more or less) instantaneous responses to internet searches. Basic plans start at about \$30 per month and go to about \$70 per month for a very high usage plan. There is a one-off charge of approximately \$200 for a self install modem and \$350 to have someone come and install the system for you. Charges increase if you want extra features. BigPond (Telstra), Optus and Lisp all provide broadband services, as do other providers. Graham Tribe, our MWPA President, has been active in lobbying and working to get broadband up here; his report to the Special General Meeting of the Progress Association provides useful information about the benefits of this technology, so I have placed a summary of it as a separate item in this newsletter. As a user who went the 'self install' route, I can report that making the actual connections and going through the set-up steps is fairly straightforward - Telstra provides a disc with instructions geared to the totally non-technical person. We had some problems, but the technical support is good and the young people at the other end are unfailingly polite, helpful and patient - whatever may be said about Telstra it deserves full marks in that area. Also note that, if you have a long-standing e-mail address, its perfectly possible to arrange to continue using it.

### ***Toilets at Cathedral Reserve***

The BMCC draft capital works budget for 2006-2007 allows for new toilets at Cathedral Reserve. However, there is no guarantee that this item will survive into the final budget and that we'll actually get the toilets. The PA therefore urges you to write to the Council during May to emphasise that this is a matter of urgency, for reasons of health and public hygiene and to preserve the beauty of the area. Be as expansive and specific as you like. The Association does not recommend a form letter, since no matter how many of those are sent in they are counted as one.

### ***Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI)***

I have recently become involved with the BMWHI, a not-for-profit research organisation with its offices in Katoomba, that aims at providing improved knowledge to support policy development for, and management of, the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage area. An interesting activity planned by the Institute is a series of 'Feedback Forums', at which matters of local, national and international interest will be discussed by experts. The discussions will be moderated/facilitated and extended to include the audiences. If anyone would like information about the Institute and its activities, please get in touch with me.

**Joe Landsberg**

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## **MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE NEWS**

### ***News from the Special General Meeting***

The meeting held on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, was well anticipated because of the inclusion in the agenda of a resolution to change the constitution, reducing the quorum from 20% to 10% of the membership. Despite the delay in starting, while we waited to achieve the required quorum, the feeling of those who attended was very obvious when the vote overwhelmingly opposed the resolution. While it was recognised that there was a potential difficulty in getting enough people to meetings, most people were keen to discuss ways in which attendance might be encouraged. The Committee is receptive to ideas so please let us know your suggestions. Most importantly, we are looking forward to seeing lots of members at the next Annual General Meeting.

### ***Progress in relation to the Marcus Clark Reserve***

With regard to negotiations relating to the acquisition of the Marcus Clark Reserve by the MWPA; contracts are ready for exchange of ownership from two existing trustees and we are waiting on a stamp duty waiver from State Government. The stamp duty will be \$6000 - \$12,000, depending on the assessed value of the land. Last year the Office of State Revenue declined our application for stamp duty to be waived so the President met with Bob Debus and wrote to him. In January Debus made a further submission to OSR. If the application fails MWPA will pay stamp duty to acquire the land

### ***Date of the Annual General Meeting***

This will be held on Saturday, **26<sup>th</sup> August, 2006**. Please note that the previously announced date has been changed to avoid a clash with another event that day. The tentative time will be 4.00 p.m. There will be no General Meeting in June this year.

### ***New Committee Member***

For the last two years, election of the Committee has resulted in a vacancy in its membership, having only 7 instead of 8 members as required by the constitution. We are pleased to announce that Frank Fletcher has accepted the Committee's invitation to fill this vacancy.

### ***New Members***

Welcome to Margaret and Peter Richey, who have joined the Association. Although familiar faces on the mountain for a long time, they have now become residents in the cottage at 'Gowan Ross'. Please note their phone number in your directory, **47562049**.

### ***Village Maintenance***

If you have driven along Mount Wilson Road, The Avenue and Church Lane recently you will have noticed that some resurfacing work and line marking has been completed by Council.

There is still no news from Council of a requested plan to clear protruding vegetation from sections of Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine Roads. This has become quite dangerous, particularly when passing large vehicles, which keep to the centre of the road to avoid vegetation. When the plan is ready, the communities will be consulted before work commences.

We are still waiting for a number of dead trees in Hillcrest and Church Lanes to be removed and branches lopped in some areas, despite numerous requests to Council for this to be done. A tree has come down in Wynnes Reserve. Anyone needing firewood is welcome to cut and collect it.

Plans to revegetate and protect sections of Waterfall Reserve have been approved and work will commence soon.

### ***Clean Up Australia Day***

Thanks to Robert Chesney and those who assisted him in the Clean Up Australia Day. This year the day was very successful in that the weather was kind and we had a pleasing number of volunteers, in fact 21. This included, thanks to Captain Peter Raines, members of our Rural Fire Service who gave up time from their normal training day to render vital assistance.

**COMMITTEE NEWS** (contd)

The problem areas were the tracks into the bush leading off the 'Five Mile' into Mt Wilson. Two dumpings, perhaps by tradespeople, caused considerable work for our volunteers. One was of bathroom tiles, mortar, concrete, etc - even a small snake. The other consisted of kitchen cupboards and other building supplies. The Freeman's utility was fully loaded when transferring this to the skip.

Strategic spots in the village were trawled for the usual bottles and plastic and were found to be in fairly good shape. These included the Cathedral of Ferns site despite a large number of overnight campers there. By the end of the day the skip was full to overflowing. Many thanks again to all who participated.

**Mount Wilson Leisure Library**

The use of the library is slowly increasing as is the supply of books and the offers of donations. This leaves us with the problem of housing them. So please come and borrow books. Don't forget opening times are **Thursdays, 3.00 to 4.00 p.m. and Saturdays, 10.00 to 11.00 a.m.** If these times are difficult, arrange a more convenient time with me on 4756 2162 or my new email address, [rm.green@bigpond.com](mailto:rm.green@bigpond.com). You can also arrange for a catalogue to be delivered and books left at your home if you are unable to leave your home.

Thank you to Luigi Strano who has donated a new, leather bound copy of his book of poetry. It will be well valued and appreciated as the work of one of our own residents. Congratulations, Luigi and thank you.

**Moira Green**

**VILLAGE HALL JOTTINGS.**

Last Saturday the Village Hall Management Committee held its Annual General Meeting where the Annual Report, Financial Statements and Booking Officer's reports were tabled and received.

The financial statement showed that the Committee raised \$4,292 during the year ended 31st December, 2005, and spent \$2,515, leaving a balance in hand of \$5,084, including an amount of \$3,307 brought forward from the previous year. Of the amount of \$5,084, \$3,250 has been allocated to placing a stable door in the north end of the kitchen and \$785 was held for special purposes (an Audio/Visual system), leaving an uncommitted balance of \$1,049.

As at the 10th February the amount donated to the Audio/Visual system has risen to \$3,250 with a further \$500 promised.

After much work a decision in principle was made to landscape the front half of the Hall grounds, i.e. that outside the front doors. The plan aims to make the area more attractive and usable for functions in good weather. The plan will now be sent to Council for its approval and advice on this most difficult site, which used to be a gravel pit.

The MWPA is holding an amount of \$693 for this purpose and a further \$1,000 has been promised by two members of the community.

The meeting was told of other initiatives being followed up by the Committee, such as stage 2 of the redevelopment of the hall, a new kitchen tank is being provided, ceiling fans are being considered, and sundry other matters are under consideration.

Additional members of the Committee are being sought so if you feel this Committee is of interest to you, please let me know.

**Ron Green**

### IN THE GARDEN

Autumn is not far away: already there is a coolness in the morning and evening air, growth is slowing down and there is a touch of colour creeping into some of the leaves. We love the season with the cooler weather and beautiful colours and everyone is familiar with the maples, cherries, birch, beech and tulip trees, but there are other trees and shrubs, less well known and harder to find in the nurseries, which provide superb autumn colour and are worth a place in mountain gardens.

*Darotia persica* is one of the finest of trees for autumn colour. Found in the wild in north Persia (Iran), it is a small tree with wide, spreading growth habit. The bark on the older stems is a delightful patchwork of mottled green and grey and the flowers are small crimson stamens appearing early in spring on the bare branches. The leaves turn gold in autumn, with crimson highlights, and last for a long time on the tree.

Enkianthus is a small, outstanding and distinct group of shrubs from the Ericaceae family, all of which have small cup or urn-shaped flowers held in clusters in spring. *Enkianthus sinensis* and *E. campanulatus* have upright growth habit and will reach up to 3 m in height; the flowers are soft pink, beautifully veined with maroon, looking rather like many exquisite thimbles. *Enkianthus perulatus* grows to 1½ m and has many small, white urn-shaped flowers; it is one of the most consistently good autumn shrubs, with intensely scarlet leaves when grown in the sun. If it is grown in shaded areas the colours are a wonderful blend of reds, orange and yellows. The latter two species come from Japan while *E. sinensis*, as its name suggests, comes from western China.

Fothergilla is a small genus from North America, with cream bottle-brush flowers in spring and wonderful rich autumn leaf colouring. The two varieties we have, *F. major* and *F. gardenii*, grow to about 1½ m high and wide; their leaves in autumn are a mixture of scarlet, orange and yellow. In shaded areas some of them turn a soft, clear yellow.

These shrubs all do well in our rich, volcanic soil; they don't seem to be affected by disease or insects and once established do well without extra watering.

#### Libby Raines

##### ***A note on Agapanthus:***

It's time to take the heads off before the seeds spread!

#### Wandering wombat trap

Bill Scrivener asked me some time ago (at the Christmas party, actually, but I forgot to include this in the short Christmas newsletter) to enquire whether anyone has his wombat trap. Apparently the local wombat(s?) do not respect Bill's vegetable garden, despite an excellent fence that should give a very clear 'keep out' message. Bill had a wombat trap, which he thinks he lent to someone in the area. It has never come back, so could the borrower please find it— no doubt in the back of the shed— and return it to Bill, who assures me that the wombat(s), when trapped, will be humanely relocated. Hm!

**Ed.**

#### For Sale

Two 2 seater sofas and two matching armchairs in burgundy leather made to order by Artifex and still like new. Of ample proportions and very comfortable.

Also, one 1500mm x 1500mm (approx) coffee table made to order from recycled Australian timber by Original Finish.

The price is \$1,000 each for the sofas, \$750 each for the armchairs and \$500 for the coffee table. The price for the set as a whole is \$3,500.

Phone Frank Fletcher on 0417 237 422.

### THE TULIP TEAROOM - MT WILSON.

In the next few months it is likely that the Tulip Tearoom and the associated property will pass out of the ownership of the Gunn family, as it is to be auctioned. Since 1965 the Tearoom functioned under the hospitable and kindly guidance of Mrs Amy Gunn, Alan Gunn's mother, until her health prevented her from carrying on. The sale will bring to a close an era of Mt Wilson's life.

There have been a number of leaseholders since Amy stopped running the tearoom, commencing with Sheree Lang, Wai Davidson's daughter. However because of the nature of Mt Wilson and its visitor pattern the Tearoom cannot generate enough income on its own to sustain a family unless there are other sources of income. Yet Mt Wilson more than ever needs a Tea Room! Visitors to the Turkish Bath Museum often ask if there is a place they can purchase a cup of coffee or tea.

The site of the Tulip Tearoom was originally part of Portion 3 in the survey of Mt Wilson carried out in 1868 by E H Wyndham. It contained more than 10 acres and was purchased on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1875 by William Hay, a grazier and member of NSW Parliament. Hay actually bought 8 of the Portions created in the survey of 1868. (He built 'Nooroo' on Portion 30.) In 1876 he subdivided Portion 3 and sold over 4 acres to Eccleston Du Faur, Chief Draughtsman in the NSW Lands Department, whose name is closely associated with Mt Wilson's early history. A shack (pictured) was built somewhere on this block to house Lewis Thompson, for whom Eccleston Du Faur arranged a Government allowance. Written accounts by visitors to Mt Wilson in the 1880s (James Inglis Visit to Mt Wilson 1880) suggest strongly that this shack was situated not far from the road (today the Avenue). In return Thompson, for the next two years, provided for the immediate needs of the early settlers and carried out important maintenance and repairs. He also assisted Du Faur with his famous excursions

into the Grose Valley (ref. Du Faur's Diaries, Mitchell Library)

In 1912 Eccleston Du Faur sold his part of Portion 3 to Henry Marcus Clark, a successful retail merchant from Sydney, who was buying quite extensively in Mt Wilson. Unfortunately, Clark died at his newly constructed home, 'Sefton Hall' in 1913. The land was inherited by his eldest son, Reginald along with Joseph Airey, solicitor & William Day, General Manager of Marcus Clarks. It remained with Reginald Clark, later Sir Reginald Clark, until 1931 when Roland Clark, his brother, joined him as a joint tenant in common.

Cecil Robert Kirk, the 5<sup>th</sup> son in the Kirk family, married Alice Gunn (Alan Gunn's aunt) in 1933 and in that year he purchased those 4 acres from the Clarks. He built a home, 'Talbingo' (although Alice assured me in 1994 that it was called 'Yurunga'). In ca.1947- 48 Cecil subdivided the land into two Lots. Lot A, consisting of over 2 acres, was purchased by Jack Gunn (Alan Gunn's father) while Cecil Kirk retained Lot B. This land was purchased in the 1960s by Tom Breen Senior and Cecil Kirk and Alice moved out to Mt Irvine. Lot A remained with the Gunn Family and in 1965 'The Tulip Tearoom', suitably named because of the fine Tulip Tree nearby, was opened with Mrs Amy Gunn in charge. By that time other tearooms had ceased operations in Mt Wilson.

We have many warm memories of visiting Amy in those early days to purchase milk or some other small item, although its main function was as a tearoom. I am sure there are many wonderful tales that can be recorded about those 40 years.

**Mary Reynolds**  
Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society  
Ref. Land Title Research



The shack housing Lewis Thompson, the first supplier and caretaker at Mt Wilson.

## BROADBAND INTERNET NOW AT MT WILSON

If you still have a copy of the July '05 newsletter, it contains a good, simple technical description of what broadband is all about.

### *Notes from the President's report*

Mount Wilson Exchange was enabled for ADSL Broadband in late January:

- Some residents have been connected
- Other residents have been contacted to change to broadband

Thanks to all residents who registered following Joe Landsberg's newsletter campaign, and to Mt Irvine Progress Association, Bill Moss, Barry Freeman and Kerry Bartlett for lobbying Telstra

### *Advantages of ADSL broadband*

You are:

- connected to the internet whenever your computer is on;
- charged a monthly fee, not charged for the time you are connected.
- You can talk on the phone at the same time as you are on the internet.
- The connection is much (more than 6 times) faster, which makes it easier to use the internet.
- It's easier to pay bills, order online or download big files
- E-mails arrive automatically. .

### *How far are you from the exchange?*

Normally Telstra says ADSL reaches **4.5km** from the exchange. This covers residents on the Mt Wilson side of Cathedral Reserve.

Recently there are two potential changes which should extend this distance:

Telstra is testing whether they can extend ADSL to **8km** which would enable ADSL to reach the end of Farrer Rd.

In addition, Telstra has commenced trials of a line booster which will extend the reach to **20km**.

This would enable ADSL to reach Mt Irvine residents.; we are advised the booster might cost about \$150-200 extra.

It appears that within a few months we could have broadband covering all Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine residents.

### *How to get Telstra BigPond ADSL Broadband*

Well, you have a number of options:

A Telstra reseller has been calling those who registered an interest.

**You can call Telstra** on 131 282

**You can join online.** You can order a Self Install Kit, arrange a Professional Installation, or choose the BYO Modem option.

**You can join in-store.** If you go to Telstra Shops, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith, Tandy, Retravisson you can pick up a Self-Install Kit or arrange Professional Installation, and sign up with BigPond.

**You can get a Self-Install Kit** and join later. You can purchase from any of the above shops. Then sign up for your BigPond account at [www.join.bigpond.com](http://www.join.bigpond.com).

**You can also register through Optus or your internet service provider**

## COMMUNITY DIARY

### **St Georges Church:**

With the choir of St Swithins, Pymble: **Monthly services** on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 3 pm: i.e Sunday April 9 and Sunday May 14

At 3pm on Sunday April 16 : **Easter service**

Saturday October 14: **Garden day** at Merry Garth to raise funds for St Georges Church

**10th Annual Jazz Concert:** Saturday 22nd April 2006 at the Turkish Bath. Gates open 12.30 pm. Music commences 1.30 p.m. Entry \$15.00 Adult; children Free. Organised by the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society.

**Special General Meeting,** Historical Society; Saturday 27th May 2006 Mt Wilson Village Hall Guest Speaker Jan Allen, Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens on The Wollemi Pine.

**Bushcare.** The group still gathers to work 9 am on the **second Friday of each month.** Support is lagging; come on folks—let's have a few more turning up. Contact 'Beth Raines.