

the  
**MOUNTS**

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THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE

Feb  
2017



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The column formerly known as "Ask the Neighbours"

This months cover photo was taken by Jess Delbridge on the Avenue outside the gatehouse at Wynstay on the 9th Feb . If you would like to send in a cover photo for the April Edition please send it through to us at [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com)



## FEBRUARY 2017

Welcome to the February 2017 edition of the Mounts, our first edition for the year and my first as editor at the helm.

It has been a bit daunting taking over from Tim Gow, whose tireless efforts, as well as those from our regular contributors have made the publication such a vital source of information for residents of the area. I'd like to thank everyone who have provided content, ideas and guidance while I've been learning the ropes and also the community, especially the MWPA for giving me the opportunity to give back to the area which has given me so much.

Many of you may not know me but the Mounts is a special place for both me and my family, this place has been a home for us since 1969.

The house 'Westring' was built by my grandparents after they bought an acre of land from Mr Cecil Douglas West of Greenacre in August 1969.

It was used a weekender until my father Nick accepted a position at Blue Mountains District Anzac Memorial Hospital and moved into the house in 1979. Dad spent a number of years here before my mother Ann joined him in 1984. Being of similar age to Ash and myself, it is fair to say my parents enjoyed living here, spending time with friends including my godparents Michael McLean and Di Bennett, exploring the area and its walks with their Cairn Terrier 'Buster' and working on the gardens. The house was undergoing major renovation in the latter part of 1986 when I was born but once completed in 1987 we returned home as a young family. Some of my earliest memories are of walks on the Avenue, feeding the horses at Arkley at the end of Church Lane and 'helping' my parents in the garden. Although we were very happy here as I approached school age it was clear that we could not stay at Mt Wilson for much longer and so on 24th August 1989 we bought a house at Wentworth Falls. Almost a year later my younger brother Tom was born.



*Me at Westring in 1987,  
my christening at St Georges  
Church, feeding the horses at  
Arkley at the end of Church  
Lane with my Mum Ann*

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Even though we had moved, Westring was still the true family home for us. It was a place for family celebration, birthdays and holidays, Christmases and Easter. My grandparents Arthur and Jean would often spend weekends here and we would visit, spending the day flying kites at Cathedral Reserve before us kids would have our bath then fall asleep on the way home in the car.

After my grandmother suddenly passed away while visiting Westring one weekend in October 1995 a period of limbo with the house followed, with the property being used less frequently and my father trying to keep it maintained while working full time and living away from the Mounts.



However after a period of time Arthur and his partner Florence Smart began spending their time between Mount Wilson and Sydney. They spent many happy years here and were heavily involved with local organizations including the Historical Society and Progress Association until Arthur's deteriorating health meant they had to relocate to Sydney fulltime.



In 2010, my partner Ash, who was working for the Department of Education in Bathurst, and I, who was working as a freelance graphic designer, were given the opportunity to care-take the house until my parents retirement, which was then planned for 2 to 3 years time. We've now been here for 7 years, and hopefully with a few more years ahead of us here I can honestly say they have been the happiest of my life. The community has been incredibly welcoming and I am pleased that I can use my skills to give back to the area in a meaningful way.

As I'm sure you've realised, a couple of things have changed, most notably the layout, however all of the old favourites are still here, as well as a few new additions. I hope you all enjoy reading the new edition as much as I have putting it together.

*Helping Mum in the garden,  
my Grandfather Arthur, Mum  
and I at Westring,  
Ash and I at home on the  
balcony*

*Jess Delbridge*

## AROUND THE MOUNTS

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Friday 10th Bushcare 9:00 -12:00 Wynne Reserve	Friday 10th Bushcare 9:00-1:00 Mereweather Lane	Sunday 9th Church Service 3:00PM
Sunday 12th Church Service 3:00PM	Sunday 12th Church Service 3:00pm	Good Friday 14th No Bush Care
Friday 17th Bushwalk Katoomba Falls, Echo Point, Giant Stairs to the Furber Steps	Friday 17th Bushwalk	Sunday 16th Easter Day Church Service 3:00PM
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### BIN CALENDAR

16 <sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY
23 <sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY
2 <sup>ND</sup> MARCH
9 <sup>TH</sup> MARCH
16 <sup>TH</sup> MARCH
23 <sup>RD</sup> MARCH
30 <sup>TH</sup> MARCH
6 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL
13 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL



Recycling



Green Waste

### SAVE THE DATE - SPRING BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

The Spring Blossom Festival which will be the RFS' major fundraiser for the year will take place on the weekend of 23rd and 24th September 2017.

Please Save the Date in order to support this important local fundraiser either as a volunteer or as a patron.

For more info please contact Sarah Howell [sarahhowell@ozemail.com.au](mailto:sarahhowell@ozemail.com.au)



## RFS STATION CENTRE OF OPERATIONS FOR POLICE RESCUE OF CANYONING SCOUT BITTEN BY SNAKE

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The Mount Wilson Fire Station was once again the centre of operations during the recent rescue of a group of Scouts from the Wollangambe Canyon. Late in the afternoon on 2 January police were notified that a member of the group had experienced a snake bite while abseiling into the canyon. Police Rescue and specialist paramedics arrived at the Mount Wilson Fire Station to co-ordinate the rescue. The younger members of the Scout group who were visiting from South Australia walked out of the canyon, while four older members of the group stayed with the 22 year-old casualty. Two paramedics were winched in by helicopter to assess the patient who was showing no ill effects from the bite. As darkness fell and the weather closed in, police rescue and ambulance decided against sending a walking party and the group spent the night in the canyon with the paramedics.

Early the following morning, the Fire Station was once again the scene of much activity as members of the Brigade prepared breakfast for the rescuers. Eventually the five Scouts were winched out by helicopter and landed safely on Breens Paddock. Happily the snake – thought to be a copperhead - did not appear to have injected venom with the bite, so all the Scouts were healthy and well, and appreciative of the warm welcome and breakfast they received on arrival. NSW Ambulance and Police Rescue thanked the Brigade for their support in the operation and thanked Tom Breen for the use of Breenhold as a Helipad.

- Sarah Howell



Police and rescue plan the operation in the Mt Wilson Fireshed



Stephen Dean at the barbecue providing breakfast with Libby Raines, Beth Raines, Deb Griffin.



Libby Raines greets three of the rescued Scouts in Breens Paddock

## HAVE YOU 'LIKED' THE MT WILSON MT IRVINE FACEBOOK PAGE?

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The Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Facebook page is an excellent resource for info on open gardens, local events and fire danger warnings as well as a great way to stay in touch whether you're at home or away from the Mounts.

We love receiving submissions so please send us your photos, info about open gardens or upcoming events and even local accommodation options to [gowanrossfarms@gmail.com](mailto:gowanrossfarms@gmail.com)





## LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER STEALS THE SHOW AT THE INTERNATIONAL GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

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Many Mount Wilson residents know of the contribution that Dianne and Ian English have made to the success of past Spring Festivals by leading groups on photographic excursions through some of our village gardens while offering skilled advice to keen camera enthusiasts. Recent editions of "The Mounts" have also featured stories of Dianne's achievements by capturing images of our own pygmy possum, "Percy."

Once again, Dianne's outstanding ability was recognised last week by her being awarded one of the highest international photographic awards at the International Garden Photographer of the Year annual competition and exhibition at Kew Gardens – First prize in "The Beauty of Plants" section with her stunning Bergenia, a flower growing in her own central coast garden.

To view Dianne's winning entry visit  
[www.igpoty.com/competition10/winners\\_beautyofplants.asp?par](http://www.igpoty.com/competition10/winners_beautyofplants.asp?par).

- Judith Teulon

## SIZZLING SNAGS FOR THE SHED

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Thankfully, the autumn season is nearly upon us and it brings lots of good things - the promise of cooler weather, amazing colours, long weekends and public holidays, building an extension to the Mt W Shed (slipped that one in!) and visitors - lots of them!

Hoping to add to the coffers for the build, the RFS will be holding sausage sizzles on weekends during April from 8 - 30 April at the Hall. It will be a very streamlined affair, sausages with onions, drinks and hopefully, home made sweet treats, operating from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm or until sold out. We need bakers, sausage swirlers, putters togetherers, and most importantly, money takers who can count or thereabouts!

Ladies & gentlemen - this is your opportunity to be involved, numbers are strictly limited. It is harder to get a spot on the roster than getting tickets to Bruce Springstein and with apologies to (of all people!) Al Capone - Sign up early and Sign up often! Please contact Lesley Wilson at [lesley@stacklaw.com.au](mailto:lesley@stacklaw.com.au) to secure early spots on the roster.

- Lesley Wilson

### BOWENS CREEK FIRE TRAIL UPDATE

THIS IS AN UPDATE ON BEHALF OF THE MT WILSON / MT IRVINE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE.

The community may recall that after several years of campaigning by the RF Brigade, MWPA and MIPA, in the July 2016 Federal Election the Federal Government committed to providing Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) and Hawkesbury City Council (HCC) with \$100,000 to fund work towards the restoration of Bowens Creek Rd, Bowens Creek Bridge and Mt Irvine Rd, being the route between Mt Irvine and Bilpin, as a fire trail for emergency vehicles access. The Labor candidate and now Member for the Federal electorate of Macquarie, Susan Templeman also pledged this sum for this purpose. We have received verbal advice from the Federal Government that the promised \$100,000 funding is still available. We are waiting for confirmation of this. Ms Templeman is also working to have this confirmed.

As the route is owned by BMCC and HCC, the agreement of both councils is needed to undertake this project. BMCC resolved in October 2015 to work with HCC to make a joint bid for funding and to proceed with the fire trail work. Whilst this was very welcome news, to date HCC has not resolved to work with BMCC on this and so the project has not progressed.

Following the September 2016 Council elections for both BMCC and HCC, the Brigade has been working to encourage this project to go forward. On 4 February, Beth Raines, David Howell and I briefed new BMCC Ward One Councillors Kerry Brown and Kevin Schreiber on the background to the route, work to date and why it is important for both Mounts residents and the many thousands of visitors to the area that this alternate route for emergency services vehicles be established and maintained. We also took the Councillors on a site visit through the BMCC owned section of the route and onto the Bridge. As you



know, Councillor Don McGregor, our third Ward One Councillor who was re-elected in the September 2016 election, has shown strong support for this work and continues to do so.

Councillors Brown and Schreiber have advised that they will pursue this with their HCC counterparts and obtain briefings on BMCC's progress to date on its part of this work.

I have recently been in contact with Trish Doyle our State MP asking her to continue her efforts to draw the attention of relevant State Ministers, including Minister Perrottet, to the significance of this route for both the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury. Minister Perrottet is the Member for Hawkesbury. We also continue to encourage the RFS Blue Mountains District to pursue this with Hawkesbury RFS District.

In past updates we have asked residents, our visitors and all interested parties to write to BMCC, HCC, State and Federal Ministers and local Members to urge them to cut through any cross jurisdictional impediments and restore the route as a fire trail for emergency vehicles. New contact details will shortly be posted on the Mt Wilson website and we would again urge you to write to or email our representatives to let them know that you think this is an important public safety issue.

*- Elizabeth Montano  
Member of the Executive  
Mt Wilson/ Mt Irvine RF Brigade*

## AROUND THE MOUNTS

### YENGO AND DENNARQUE OPEN GARDENS IN SEARCH OF A CURE FOR FSHD



Enjoy the magical autumn colours of two supreme gardens at Mount Wilson - Yengo Sculpture Garden and Dennarque Estate. Both gardens were designed in the 19th century by Charles Moore, Director of the Sydney Botanical Gardens and include many rare specimens of trees and native plants in the idyllic village setting of Mount Wilson.

SATURDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017  
SUNDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017



9 am to 5 pm

Entry: Adult \$20 per person for both gardens  
Children under 8: FREE. Coach Groups welcome

All proceeds are donated to the FSHD Global Research Foundation dedicated to finding a cure for Facioscapulohumeral Dystrophy (FSHD), the most common form of muscular dystrophy in adults and children. 100% of all tax deductible donations are allocated to current or future medical research investment, grants and education.

Book tickets online or purchase at the gates.  
Cash payments only.

- Vanessa Kredler

### SKATING BRIDE AND GROOM ON THE AVENUE



Thanks to Tom and Suzanne Bassett for sending in this fantastic photo of a summer bride and groom skateboarding together on the Avenue.

### PLANNING A LARGE EVENT? CALL THE DOCTORS

Having a big party soon? Planning a wedding in the Villages? You will probably need TRAFFIC CONTROL!

Call the local experts - The Doctors' Traffic Control!

We are authorised traffic controllers - as of the 23rd of November.

Don't forget - Use the Doctors' Traffic Control For a Cure for your Traffic Control Problems!

- David Howell

### FUR AND FEATHER RESIDENTS OF THE MOUNTS : LIBBY THE GREYHOUND

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On the 23rd April this year we drove to Dapto on the south coast to pick up our rescue Greyhound .

Registered racing name – “You Betcha Libby “ but we call her Libby with kind permission from her namesake at “ Merry Garth”.

Her mothers name is “ Tarra Magic “ and her father is “ Droopsy Maldini” who we believe is more than willing to serve the industry from his compound.

Libby, who is now four years old, was leading in her first race when near the end she collided with another dog and broke her front leg. Her owners thought so highly of her potential they spent a considerable amount of money in having her leg fixed and looked after her during the long recuperation. When she was fit again she went in another race but was not the same so they retired her and kept her as a companion dog. Sometime later they decided to try and find someone to adopt Libby which has been our good fortune.

We have never had a dog before so we are lucky that Libby has managed to survive our quite pathetic attempts at training and is now in complete charge of the house. However, we did have to draw the line at her habit of repatriating wine bottles from inside the house to her favorite spot in the garden.

As the fastest dog in the world Greyhounds have some very unusual traits such as sleeping most of the day and requiring very little exercise. They are masters of the sleep and whilst enjoying this favourite pastime manage to get their body into the most outrageous positions. Never thought it could be so much fun watching a dog sleep.



But the most exciting thing is seeing Libby do what her magnificently muscled body does best and that is to run very very fast. Our daily walks often end up at Silva Plana where sometimes she can be coaxed into running at top speed in a wide circle around us – it is breathtaking.

Libby is very inquisitive and finds open gates and people irresistible . She becomes very stubborn if she is not introduced properly to anyone she encounters on her walks – even people she sees 100 metres away.

Can't imagine what life would be like now without Libby.

If anyone is interested in adopting a Greyhound ( not Libby ) we would be pleased to introduce them to Libby and discuss all the things we have learnt in the last nine months about these wonderful dogs .

- Peter Laving

If you would like to write a short piece about your fur or feathered companions living on the Mounts please send us an email with any photos you would like included - [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com)

## AROUND THE MOUNTS

### NEWS FROM ST GEORGES CHURCH

To mark the Centenary of St Georges last year, the Mount Wilson Progress Associate generously gave the church \$2,500.00 to mark the occasion. The church wardens, Moira Green, Helen Freeman and myself, after much thought, decided a seat in the grounds of the church would be a suitable way to use the gift. Visitors often wander around the church grounds, and it will be a very pleasant place to sit quietly for a while. A Cotswold seat similar to the one in the war memorial reserve has been purchased and will be installed shortly. The church congregation thank the Progress Association for this generous gift.

The damage to the church building following the falling of a large blackwood tree in October has been completed. The wardens have decided now to replace the old wooden fence – erected in 1979 – with a new post and rail fence. Work on the new fence will start shortly.

We do encourage you to join us on the second Sunday of the month for the church service and a cup of tea following the service.

- Libby Raines



### VILLAGE HALL AGM



You are invited to attend The Mount Wilson Village Hall Management Committee Annual General Meeting to be held in the Mount Wilson Village Hall on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 4.30pm

The agenda of the meeting will include reports from the committee and an opportunity to put forward your ideas for the next phase of improvements for our Village Hall.

This is an election year. Our 377 committee liaises between community and council to maintain and upgrade hall facilities, we also hold two fundraisers, the Yulefest and a Melbourne Cup Lunch. We would love to have more committee members, if you would like more information about the role of the committee and how to join, please contact me

Please join us after the meeting for afternoon tea before the Mt Wilson Progress AGM at 5.30pm

- Judy Tribe  
Chair, Mt Wilson Village Hall  
Management Committee

### WHAT'S ON FEB / MARCH 2017

#### BLACKHEATH GROWERS MARKET - MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>

Held on the second Sunday of each month at Blackheath Community Hall (cnr Great Western Hwy and Gardiner Cres) 8am - 1pm the Blackheath Growers Market offers a great variety of fresh local produce including vegetable seedlings, flowers, local cheeses and dairy products, breads, organic meats, deli products and antipasto as well a selection of beers, wine and ciders.

Get there early to avoid disappointment - if you have to miss breakfast there is freshly squeezed juice, espresso coffee and bacon and egg (or sausage) rolls to sate your appetite.



#### THE ELEMENTS: EARTH, WATER, AIR, FIRE EXHIBITION MOUNT TOMAH BOTANIC GARDENS MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup> - 26<sup>TH</sup>

" Ancient cultures refined the complexity of all matter into four elements - earth, water, air and fire. Each physical element related to philosophical, mythological and cosmological concepts. Aboriginal culture recognises the infinity of relationships between all of the elements, and their shaping of human activities, cultures and beliefs.

In the immensity of the Blue Mountains natural environment, the elements of earth, water, air and fire surround us. In our daily experience, we live with the grand scale of canyons and etched peaks, changing atmospherics over endless forests, spectacular cascades and reflective pools, torrents of rain and gentle mists, always anticipating the destruction and renewal created by fire. "

The Elements - Earth Water Air Fire is a thematic exhibition developed by Guest Curator, Susan Cochrane, with Assistant Curator, Saskia Everingham, for the Blue Mountains Artists Network. The participating artists are Ian Brown (photographer), Adrian Gilbert (painter), Gary Hayes (photographer), Caitlin Hughes (mosaic artist), Shane Smithers (painter), Regine Wagner (installation, mixed media).

#### BLUE MOUNTAINS' ROARING 20'S AND ALL THAT JAZZ FESTIVAL FEB 2017

Relive the 1920's golden age of extravagant balls, decadent high teas, vintage vehicles, period comedies and swingin' music.

This annual month-long event pays tribute to an opulent era when Australia's first tourist destination held a decade-long party, celebrating breathtaking architecture, iconic art and outrageous music. Don your best 20s frock and 'kick up your heels' in the Charleston Challenge, eat to excess for Australia's highest (unofficial) Long Lunch, or revel in the jazz, blues and ragtime music that shaped an era (or pick up a ukulele yourself and strum along at the Blue Mountains Ukelele Festival).

Find out more info about what's on this February visit [roaring20s.com.au](http://roaring20s.com.au)



## FEATURE ARTICLE

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# AN ERA ENDS : Elly Gunn returns to Lithgow

The Mounts say farewell to one of it's most beloved and long serving residents

There was a full house at the Mt Irvine Hall on Saturday, January 14th to say goodbye to Elly Gunn who is returning to Lithgow after 50 years in the district. With the family home, Willowbank, sold, the presence of the Gunn dynasty that has been an integral part of both mountains for four generations, has come to an end, although Elly's younger son, David, continues to do contract work here.

Henric Nicholas presided over the simple ceremony, the first such at the newly expanded and renovated Mt Irvine Hall, and noted the particular appropriateness of the occasion given Elly's long-

standing contribution as a member of the Hall Trust Committee.

Helen Naylor was the first of three speakers. She recalled some of Elly's earlier days: how she had come to Australia with her parents from Holland in 1950. They had settled in Lithgow where Elly went to School and later worked at the Lithgow Co-op and the Small Arms Factory. (In later years Elly wrote and illustrated a history of the Co-op.) It was marriage to Alan Gunn in 1967 that brought Elly to Mount Irvine. Her two sons, Stewart and David soon came into the world and went to school at Mt Wilson. Always busy,



**From left to right**

*Henric, Huw, a line up of guests and Elly (seated).  
Elly and her son Stuart.  
Ray Harrington. Elly and her grandson Haydon.  
Helen Naylor.*

Elly joined the local CWA, was Secretary/Treasurer of the Tennis Club and, as mentioned, was a member of the Mt Irvine Hall Trust. She also worked for a time with Dorothy Scrivener and Gwen Artlett at the Taihoa Nursery.

Always keen to paint and draw, Elly was first to join Ray Harrington's Art Group at Chalumeau, closely followed by Libby Raines. Ray had built a studio and had been encouraged to teach there by the late Kathleen Howard-Smith. Ray described Elly's progress as an artist, starting from nowhere with watercolours and taking several years before deciding, as Ray put it, "that oils caused far less suffering and that the joy of painting was what this was all about." Elly, he said, had developed her own style, and had painted subjects that were close to her heart, old buildings and farmyards, cows, chooks, mills and so on. And he urged her, after sixteen dedicated years with the Art Group, to go on painting, no matter where she went.

Huw Evans, a near neighbour to the Gunns at Mt Irvine, drew attention to the remarkable contribution the family had made to the district since the very early days. Jack's father (Alan's grandfather) had once been caretaker at Sefton Hall. Amy's parents

(Alan's maternal grandparents) had run the Post Office. Elly recalled that there had once been an awning outside the Post Office where she thought Amy's mother had served teas to visitors. Later, Jack and Amy were to run the Tulip Tea Room (since demolished); Jack also did the mail run. (Alan's contribution to the district was exceptional: he took a close interest in everything that happened here, gave of his time to all manner of committees and, of course, the RFS. The huge turnout at his funeral gave ample testimony to the appreciation of his work.) Huw paid special tribute to the courage and resilience Elly had shown at the time of the tragic accident that took Alan's life, and to the support she had given her sons and the support they had given her during those difficult days and weeks.

As an example of good family values at work, he said, one need look no further. As neighbours over four decades the Gunns had always shown themselves to be helpful, kind and generous, non-intrusive, practical and competent. Elly's new neighbours in Lithgow, he said, didn't yet know how fortunate they were.

A little overcome by emotion, Elly cut a large and handsome ceremonial cake, thanked everyone for their kindness and the ceremony ended with three traditionally rousing cheers.

*- Author preferred not to be credited*

# MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

## Committee News

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Perhaps it's the heat of summer but there has been little activity to report as we said farewell to 2016 and welcome in 2017. There have been some misty days to remind us of what summer used to be like in the mountains – cool! This edition of The Mounts is the first under the guidance of Jess Delbridge and I am sure she will do a great job of stepping into the shoes of Tim. Please help her make our newsletter as useful and informative as possible.

Robby Feyder is representing us in our dealings with the BMCC and in that capacity he will be attending a day-long community forum where future planning for the Blue Mountains area will be the prime objective. Peter Raines has continued to do a great job in keeping the mountain beautiful, and Silva Plana looks magnificent. He has also worked on renewing a walking track from the corner of Mt Wilson Rd and Queens Ave, on the higher side, down to the old quarry. Across the road from here it is now possible to trace the route of the old Zig-zag road, one that had to be made less steep, and longer, once cars became the preferred mode of transport.

I had the pleasure of attending the Mt Irvine Progress Association's AGM and it seems that a new kitchen is on their agenda; I am envious of their large outside covered area next to their Hall. There was discussion

about a number of issues including traffic. The issue of speeding was raised and everyone is encouraged to ask their tradesmen to drive carefully on the two Mounts. I was also delighted to go to Elly Gunn's farewell – her departure from Mt Irvine really does mark the end of a very long and special association between the Gunn family and both Mounts.

Communication between us all is vital and to this end Sue Woolfenden is updating the local telephone list. Any changes or additions to your information can be added via the website or email/phone Sue and she will update for you.

On behalf of everyone a warm welcome to Connie and Nino Pulice who have bought Milparra, we wish them much happiness as part of our community. I am also sad to report of the recent death of Tom Harding who contributed a great deal to our community in the time that he and his wife lived here, at Tolimount Cottage.

The General Meeting for the MWPA is on 18 March at 5.30 p.m., in the Village Hall. Please come and let us know of your concerns and interests, and of course there will be cheese, wine and conversation following the meeting.

- Alison Halliday

# MT IRVINE PUBLIC HALL UPGRADE

New grants allow for further upgrades to community hall

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The Mt Irvine Public Hall Trust is very pleased to announce that we have been successful in obtaining another grant to continue the work of upgrading our community hall.

This most recent grant of \$18,480, was the result of a successful application to the NSW Government's 2016 Community Building Partnership (CBP) Program. The application was successful because it demonstrated our hall project can deliver important social, environmental or recreational benefits to our community. The grant money will be spent on roof works, new ceiling, concealed electrical wiring and new lighting. A special thank you is due to our local member Ms Trish Doyle MP Member for Blue Mountains for supporting and prioritising our submission for funding. These works will be completed by 31 March, 2018.

Throughout 2016, the Trust has been busy with ongoing building works funded by the NSW Government's Public Reserves Management Fund Program. A grant of \$49,982 enabled us to replace the existing timber framed pergola with a covered

steel framed pergola and paved area underneath (see photo above). In addition, the Trust is in the final stage of upgrading the kitchen including new laminated benches, gas hot water system, new ceilings and lighting.

Another vote of thanks goes to local BMCC councillor Don McGregor, former councillors Sarah Shrubbs and Michael Begg for their welcome donation of \$600 towards the equipping of our new kitchen.

Finally, the Trust would like to acknowledge the generous donation of \$5,000 from the Mt Irvine Progress Association towards the kitchen works.

We are still seeking donations and fund raising for the purchase of appliances such as a commercial dishwasher, gas stove and under bench refrigerator. Any donations can be made at the Mt Irvine Easter BBQ or by contacting Carol Carrigan on 0418294968.

- Carol Carrigan  
Trustee - Grants  
Mt Irvine Public Hall Trust



**Sadly, Tom Harding, ex resident from Tolimount Cottage, passed away on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**

**Tom and Liz were always very welcoming and contributed much to making Mount Wilson a special place, he will be very much missed by our community.**

## IN MEMORY of Tom Harding

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Tom Harding was christened 'Warren Thomas Harding' but, not liking his Christian name, took the opportunity to use his preferred second name when enlisting during the Second World War. Not surprisingly, his children and grandchildren remember him as a perfectionist in addition to being a man of impeccable taste with a great knowledge of art, music and gardening, all valuable skills for his subsequent career.

After the war he established a very successful interior decorating firm, 'Décor'. He was invited to all the best parties in Sydney along with other interior decorator luminaries of the time such as Lesley Walford and Barry Burn ('definitely my worthy competitor' reminisced Barry) and was regarded as the Fairfax family's preferred decorator. He donated his decorator skills to a number of fund-raising charities of the era such as the annual Black and White Ball.

He and his wife, Liz, moved to Mt Wilson in August 1988 after converting a building on the block, now known as Tolimount, into a beautiful home. Visitors were always served with the best silver, crystal and china. Good friends and neighbours, Graham and Beverley Thompson, remember the impressive decorating touches and attention to detail of separate lounge covers for spring/summer and autumn/winter and with cushions plumped the moment a guest left the room.

Naturally, Tom paid great attention to the garden. One feature was a wonderful semi-circle of dogwoods and, according to Libby Raines, the white ones gave a stunning display of flowers last spring.

## IN MEMORY OF TOM HARDING

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*Tom and other community members at the notice board and Mount Wilson sign opening (Photos provided by Suzie Hope)*

Tom volunteered his many skills to the community, taking an active role in the Mt Wilson progress Association and the Village Hall Committee. It was a time of great change and Tom was involved in all the conversations that the community had to have on its future (he was also very keen on letter box drops, according to Graham Tribe). The results of those conversations have made Mt Wilson the vibrant and thriving community it is today.

He was also President of the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire brigade and a great support to the then Captain, Barry Freeman, who was also making major changes to how the Brigade operated.

Tom and Liz loved Mt Wilson but eventually managing the property became too much and, after 16 years at Mt Wilson, they returned to Sydney. There they bought a large garden unit in Cremorne where they continued to entertain with great style and courteousness. Tom continued to be involved in local affairs and became President of the unit's body corporate.

Tom had not been in good health after a fall late last year. He and Liz moved to a nursing home but he died, aged 90, later that week. He is survived by his wife, Liz, their four children, Richard, David, Christine and Dianne, and their families.

Thank you to those residents who provided me with their memories of Tom Harding, especially Susie Hope.

*- Kathleen Oakes*



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

FINAL REPORT  
2010-2016

## RFS NEWS

# RFS NEWS: The Impact of Bushfires on Your Health



The Beyond Bushfires: Community Resilience and Recovery study was conducted to examine the impacts of the Black Saturday and related bushfires of February 2009 on community members' physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The six year study involving over 1,000 participants across Victoria was conducted by The University of Melbourne in partnership with community members and a range of agencies. The study has presented its final report and the results highlight the influence of close friends and family, social networks and community groups, and natural environment on resilience and recovery.

The following are a few of the recommendations the Report makes for individuals:

### Consider mental health planning

When planning for bushfire emergencies, be mindful that your decision will impact on both your physical and mental health. Exposure to a bushfire for you and your family can increase the risk of mental health problems.

### Plan ahead for how to find each other

Separation from family members during a disaster is highly stressful. This stress can have a lasting impact, even when everything turns out (relatively) okay. Have a plan about where or how you will reconnect, especially if communication and road systems are affected.

### Be kind to yourself and others

It can take more than five years for some people to recover from a disaster experience and its aftermath, particularly in high impact communities.

### Be open to the possibility of positives

Positive outcomes can come from a disaster experience, even for those who have had the most severe losses. This is referred to as posttraumatic growth.

### We are all different

People can respond differently to the same experience and have different recovery needs, including within families.

### Community groups can make a difference

Being involved in community groups leads to better mental health outcomes. However, share the load: Don't leave it to just a few people to make sure these local groups keep going. Local groups need leaders

and members to survive, and those who do "too much" might become overburdened.

Changes in the natural environment can influence recovery. Many people find watching the bush regrow and recover helpful for their own wellbeing.

The full report and further information can be found on the Beyond Bushfires website – [www.beyondbushfires.org.au](http://www.beyondbushfires.org.au)

### The Emergency Personal 'P's'

Craig Lapsley, Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner, recommends that, when packing to leave in the event of a bushfire, you remember the Emergency Personal 'P's':

- People and Pets (family and companion animals)
- Papers (important documents ie Passport)
- Phone (with charger) and Phone numbers (loved ones, emergency numbers)
- Prescriptions (medicine, vitamins, eye glasses, hearing aids)
- Photos and irreplaceable memorabilia
- Personal computer (information on hard drives and disks)
- Plastics (health cards, ATM cards, credit cards) and cash and a.....
- Pack (a pack that brings it all together with clean clothes and shoes)

- Kathleen Oakes  
Community Engagement Officer



# MOUNT WILSON AND MOUNT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Recent Events and Comments

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Our 21st AGM was held on 19th November 2016 in the Mt Wilson Village Hall on a warm pleasant late spring day. Refreshments had been organised for morning tea and the paper work for the meeting was in place. Our guest speaker had arrived Ray Christinson a Heritage Consultant and Archaeologist from Lithgow. Ray has written many books on Lithgow and the Western Coalfields and later provided a fascinating talk called "Lithgow's Strange International Connections".

It was a great pity that so few members attended the meeting. I think there were 8 in total.

Later with the election of a Management Committee it was a great pity that two committee members did not stand again. Des Barrett and Pauline Michell regrettably stood down. Both have done much in the last two years for the Society. Unfortunately neither Des nor Pauline live in Mt Wilson.



Thus the Management Committee is seriously undermanned with four members one of whom is very unwell.

We must not forget that in 2016 the Society valiantly organised two important events. The Max Miller Art Exhibition in the Turkish Bath Museum from 1st October to 16th October. Max Miller won the Wynne Landscape Art Prize twice. It was pleasing to have members of the Wynne Family present. Much of the organising and the opening of that Exhibition were done by Pauline Michell with assistance from Helen and John Cardy and Helen Freeman. Later in October the Sydney Sufi Ensemble performed in the Mt Wilson Village Hall. It provided unusual Persian spiritual music and the food to go with it. Organised by Zaharah and John Braybrooke it was a great pity the local people were not supportive. On the positive side \$600 came to the Society being half the profits.



The Society is at a critical point. The Turkish bath Museum is our main concern and responsibility. We ask our members in the community to help if they possibly can so that the Museum can be opened at least on Sundays from late March until the end of May and from September to November. Sundays particularly in April and May and September, October are important. We open from 12.30p.m. to 3.30 p.m. Preferably it is best if two people are on duty. Contact me if you need further information by email [mary\\_reynolds@internode.on.net](mailto:mary_reynolds@internode.on.net) or by phone 4782 9882.

The Society has been in existence for 21 years and in that time we have published many newsletters and Historical papers, collected the history of both communities, catalogued it, stored it and preserved it in all its forms. Caring for the Turkish bath Museum was a labour of love but built in 1880s it needs constant care and attention. As a founding member of the Society I appeal to you to give serious consideration to our requests. Join our committee or volunteer for one or two Sundays in 2017. The alternative does not bear contemplating.

- Mary B. Reynolds  
Vice President

## TURKISH BATH OPENING DATES

Calling all volunteers! Can you open the museum on any of these dates?

If so please contact Zaharah Braybrooke or Mary Reynolds

Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday March 26<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

.....

### Easter

Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

Monday April 17<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

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Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 12.30 - 3.30pm (Anzac Day)

Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup> 12.30 - 3.30pm

# IN MY GARDEN: Summer at Kirk's Corner

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## Local residents talk about what they are growing this time of the year on the Mounts

Summer comes to Mt Wilson with often searing heat, storms, and mists welling up from the northern valleys. The garden has to be resilient. There are four characteristics of my garden in this season. First, the buddleias tossing their wonderful conical heads in the lightest breeze. Coloured from white through to darkest purple they are a delight for the birds and the bees. I prune them back hard at the end of winter and their new growth is well over a metre. The soil is shallow in parts and the grass dies off to a brittle crunch; sometimes down to bare earth. Without fail, it regenerates as soon as it rains. Most of the hydrangeas are of a basic variety and they form a rough bright-blue wall facing the early morning sun. It is hard to believe that the colour is untouched by any hand except nature's own.

Finally, every year in winter I plant some more lilliums, they are my favourite flower. They come up with a conical stub of leaves that seems both strong and fragile, the rate of growth is always amazing. I leave some to live their short life in the garden but others I bring inside to enjoy their scent, the vivid colour and their sculptural quality.

- Alison Halliday

We are always looking for submissions so if you would like to write a short piece about what you're growing in your garden in autumn your please send us an email - [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com)



# THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

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Walking has always been a popular activity for many people living and visiting Mount Wilson. The village lanes and roads make very easy and interesting walks and are often connected by unmade roads or fire trails, thus making circular walks. They pass through a wide variety of bush and rain forest and a walker can see and enjoy the various properties, with their beautiful gardens, shrubs and trees.

Much of the land on the southern side of the mountain is temperate rain forest, made up of coachwood, sassifras, quintinea, lilly pilly, blackwood and the massive banksia intergrifolia variety 'Mountain', with tree ferns and ground ferns beneath.

On the northern side, sand stone country dominates with its poor sandy soil, interesting caves and rock formations, and a host of wild flowers, mainly in the spring and summer months.

In and before the 1920's, large areas of bush around the village were declared reserves and vested in a local trust, which maintained them until the late

1980s. These reserves are at present under the care of the Blue Mountains City Council and managed by the Mount Wilson Progress Association.

Great foresight was shown by the early settlers on Mount Wilson, who insisted on the creation of these reserves and they are one of the many features of the mountain which make it so unique.

The three main village walks, the Waterfall Walk, the Du Fours Walks and Happy Valley were made in the 1920's, under the direction of the Trustees. Steps, fences and notices were all made in the early 1990's. The Progress Association, with the help of the Blue Mountains Council, upgraded all these walks, putting in many new steps and signs and since then these tracks have been maintained by the progress association as part of the village maintenance of the reserves with the council.

In 1993, the anniversary walk below Wynstay was made to provide safe walking above the road and in 2004 the village walk from Silva Plana along the main avenue and along to Cathedral Reserve was created.

The bush tracks have been made by people walking – the tread of many feet over the years. Forty years ago areas like the Wollangambe, Bell Creek and the Boronia Point were known only to the people of Mount Wilson. Now the Wollangambe area is visited by hundreds of people each summer who love

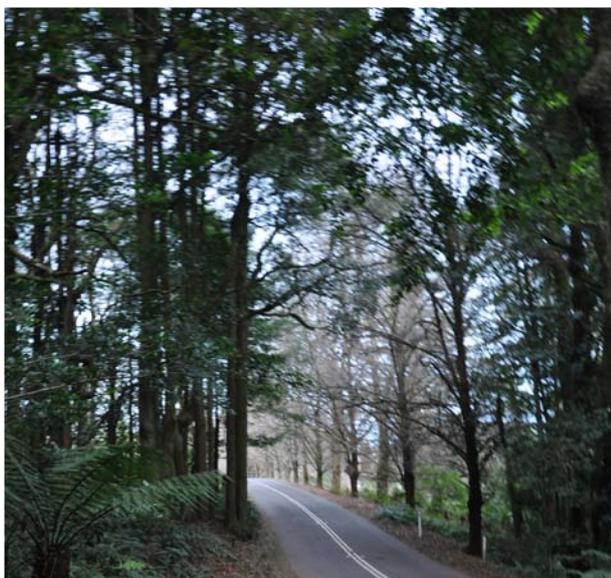
## THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

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to walk down there to LiLo down the magnificent canyons or abseil into some of the beautiful moss-filled narrow canyons. New tracks have been made all through the bush to the various exits along the river.

Now, with the increase of people walking, many of whom do not want the challenging Wollangambe walks, the Committee of the Progress Association is following suggestions from the special meeting which was held in June 2016. This suggestion was to improve and upgrade the walks, especially the signage so people know where the walks are, how long and the degree of difficulty, as well as creating a few more walks which we can all enjoy. Also, the Mount Wilson Walks book first published in 1993 by the Mount Wilson Study Centre have almost all sold, so the book needs to be rewritten and upgraded.

Peter Raines has already put a lot of thought into this project. We intend to start with ten walks. They will be marked with arrows, each walk with a different colour. At each track head (the beginning of the walk) will be a map showing the walk, a very short description, of the walk and the time and gradient of the walk. This will all be linked and formatted to suit the upgraded walks book, the website and a notice board which we will have to build near the fire station, preferably near the canyon information.



The walks we have decided on are:

- The Waterfall Walk – Purple
- The Du Fours Rocks Circuit and Pheasants Cave – Red
- Happy Valley – Orange
- The Village Walk with extension to make a circuit – Green
- The Sunday Walk Spur, Ryans Cutting and the Old Zig Zag Road – Dark Blue
- Esme's Lookout – Pink
- Wynnes Rocks, Mill Road, Daintree Lane Circuit – Yellow
- Boronia Point – Light Blue
- The Runners Track and Picnic Point Circuit – Black
- The Pavements (Mount Irvine) – Maroon

We can always add more at a later date. Work has already started on some of the walks and the observant will have noticed a few arrows around.

On Friday 20 January the Mount Wilson Walking group walked along two tracks which have recently been opened or re-opened. The Throne is an outcrop of rock overlooking the Bowens Creek North and South arms across the folds of the slopes to Mount Tomah, Mount Bell, Mount Hay and Mount Banks. It was an area used a lot by the young during the 1930's and 1940s for a short walk and picnics in the bush. The track had become completely overgrown since the 1994 bushfires, so Beth and I, before the walk, pushed our way through the scrubby bush and opened up a rough track.

To get to The Throne walk down the Mill Road, off the corner of Wynnes Rocks Road, go through Cloe's Gate, which is now open and walk east, keeping on the southern fire trail. Two roads go off to your left

## THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

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and 60 metres past the second road, the track goes off on your right. The rough track leads you winding through the thick scrubby bush to the outcrop of rock. You can clamber up on to The Throne if you walk around the base of the rocks to the right for a little way.

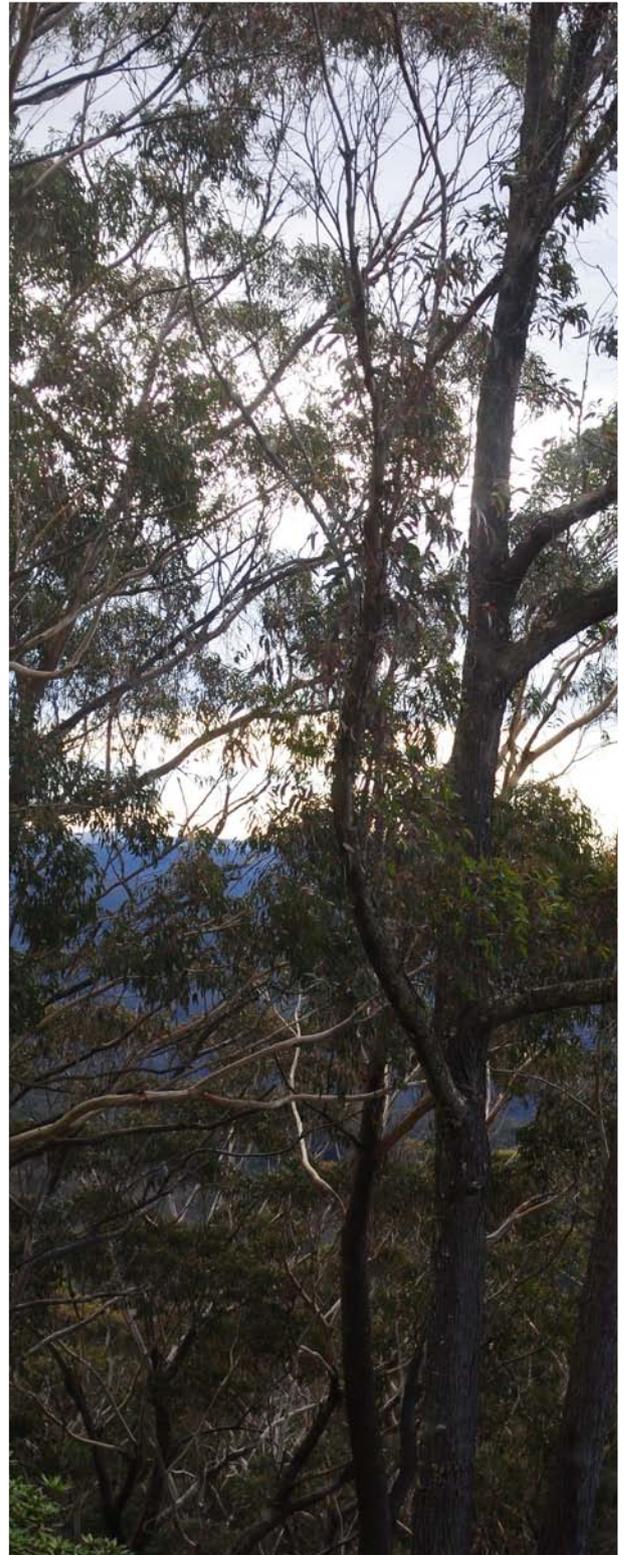
At this time of the year, December, January and February, the Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus Piperita* ssp. *Piperita*) are flowering, so the slopes are alight with their many soft, creamy white flowers, a glorious sight. The view from the Throne is 360° so when one turns around to the north, the rain forest below the eastern Wynnes Rocks Road properties and the southern side of the mountain are aglow with the deep red flowers of the many coachwood (*Ceratopetalum Apetalum*) which grow in the rainforest and flower in December to February.

The second new walk was along a small section of Walk Number 5. Peter Raines and David Gunn spent two days making a track from the top of the zig zag down to the old quarry which is halfway down the top section of the zig zag. The path follows the Breenhold fence above the road and is an easy grade. Once at the old quarry one crosses the road and then you can clamber down the slope and one is on the old road to the mountain (This was the first road on to the mountain and used by horses and carriages as well as oxen, but when the motorcar was introduced it proved to be too steep for the cars so the road was remade and extended to the present hair pin bend to lessen the grade).

The old road is quite visible, cut into the bank on the top side and it is a gentle walk through the rain forest to behind the Mount Wilson sign. When this Number 5 walk (Sunday Walk Spur and Firetrail, Ryan's Cutting and the old zig zag) is complete it will be suggested that the walk be done in that direction as the grade up on to the mountain is much less than walking up Sunday Walk Spur Fire Trail and the up section will mostly be in the cool of the rain forest (Hence the arrows going in that direction!)

At the moment it is a very pleasant down and up again walk in the rainforest with a surprisingly easy grade. Do try these two walks, the secret to keeping the tracks open is to use them frequently!

- Libby Raines





# SUMMER HEAT, STORMS AND STRIKES

## How to keep you machines and data safe with high temps and stormy weather looming

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As February crawls on and temperatures hit the high 30s and low 40s, and the humidity plunges, it is not just us that will be suffering in the heat: Our PCs and other devices are set to swelter as well, but there are things we can do to help our machines along and increase their chances of surviving the summer. We'll also look at that other weather phenomenon that has caused grief on the Mounts this summer: Storms.

As our PCs, mobiles and other electronic devices become more powerful, a hidden side effect of this is that they use more power, and along with this increased power consumption is often an increase in the heat they generate. To compound the issue, a consumer push for everything to be smaller, slimmer, lighter, thinner means all of this power and heat is being crammed into smaller and smaller areas, making them harder to keep cool. So what can we do to help our PC's along? As it turns out, there are a few things we can do!

First of all, the easiest thing to do is to turn your machines off. This may seem like an obvious thing, but if you are not using your machine, powering it down in the heat of the day can save your machine a whole lot of stress. Making sure your machine is clean and free of dust (see [Cleaning your PC](#)), with clear airflow around it is the next best thing. We've all been guilty of cramming our PC's into cupboards

and under desks because it looks neater, but you won't be doing your PC any favours by limiting its access to clean air. A subtler tool is to tweak your machine's power settings, allowing it to sleep when it is not being used, turning off hard drives and monitors while it is inactive, and throttling down your CPU during times of light load will also go a long way to reducing the amount of heat your machine generates. Taking your machine to a local PC shop for a service is also a good idea, as they will be able to help you with cleaning it, and undertaking more advanced work such as replacing the thermal grease that sits between your CPU and its cooling fan/heatsink, adding in extra fans, tidying up your internal cabling for better airflow and tweaking your power settings for you.

If you have a laptop, these tips all apply, and are of even more importance, as laptops have even less airflow, and sub-optimal air intake locations, meaning they are prone to heat-related issues on a much larger scale. Another important note when using laptops, is to make sure you don't use them on soft surfaces where the air intake and fan outlets could be blocked, such as on beds and couches, as this is a sure-fire way to cook your machine (or burn down your house!)

## TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

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Over Spring and Summer, the Mounts are often witness to spectacular storms, and while the majestic lightning shows that accompany these are visually breathtaking, they can also wreak havoc on local infrastructure and our own electrical systems. Of course, the best way to avoid damage is to simply unplug anything you cannot afford to lose. And powering your equipment down and/or turning it off at the wall is not enough: With your average ground strike having a potential of around 100 million volts (that is not a misprint!), the small air gap of a switch will be no barrier. And don't forget that your house, ignoring a direct hit, often has two points of entry: Power and telephone, and to unplug them both. In addition to this, it is not uncommon for a lightning-induced surge to travel from one piece of equipment to the next via other cables, such as a HDMI cable between your TV and amplifier, for example, so make sure you unplug everything from the wall, or you may not be protected. In addition to this, we are being sold somewhat of a lie when it comes to surge protectors. While these do work well in filtering out small, transient surges from the supply, they will do next to nothing when it comes to larger spikes like those that occur during lightning storms. In addition to this, these devices have a finite amount of energy that they can safely shunt before they become useless. Each smaller surge that they deal with essentially erodes their ability to deal with larger surges, and as such, should be treated almost as a consumable and replaced regularly. Finally, Uninterruptable Power Supplies, or UPS's, will offer very little in the way of lightning protection, and in some cases, may actually make systems more vulnerable to damage. These are also known as battery backups.

Of course, the other way to protect yourself and at least your information is with a solid backup routine. This is harder than it sounds, but the acid test is that if you can afford to lose everything on your PC right now (that is not stored either on the cloud or on an external drive somewhere that is), then you are backing up enough. If not, it is never too late to

review your plan and adjust, if necessary. In context of inclement weather, we must also remember to disconnect our backup drives, and unplug them when we are done. This protects them from wear and tear, heat related issues, lightning damage and other hazards like virus and malware infections.

All of this information is well and good, but sometimes these things cannot be avoided: Living on the Mounts means that often we are hours away from our houses. Wouldn't it be nice if we could at least have a little warning? Well that is exactly what Imaginarium IT is aiming to do. A new Weather Warning system is currently in early testing, giving residents of the Mounts and surrounding areas advanced warning of weather that could impact their IT and computing setups. Starting off with storms, hopefully it will eventually cover heat/fire conditions, windy weather and more. While still in the testing phase, it has already proven an invaluable system to a few early-adopting locals. If you would like to join in on the beta/testing phase, get in touch with Ash Phillips at Imaginarium IT at [ash@imaginarium-it.com.au](mailto:ash@imaginarium-it.com.au) or on 1300 765 573 and I can add your address to the list. It's free too!

- Ash Phillips  
*Imaginarium IT*

## Cleaning your PC

The best thing to clean out dusty fans and PC cases is compressed air, however you must be sure to get an ESD-safe version (ESD stands for ElectroStatic Discharge). These products are specifically designed for this job. Regular air-dusting cans may use propellants that can cause damage to sensitive electronics, and they often contain a relatively high level of moisture, which can also cause damage. Vacuums might seem like a viable alternative, but never use a vacuum. As a vacuum sucks in dust and other particles, a surprisingly large amount of static electricity can be generated, and this can cause major damage to your PC.



## HORTICULTURE

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# BASALT SOILS OF MOUNT WILSON AND MOUNT IRVINE

With some of the best soils in the world for growing ornamental gardens, it's hard not to have a successful gardening experience

It's fair to say that most people, both residents and visitors, are in awe of the lush green growth that is associated with Mount Wilson/Irvine. This is particularly noticeable after driving along the Five Miler, with its open woodland growing on soils formed from tertiary Narrabeen group-quartz sandstone. The vegetation along the road is limited

in height and somewhat olive green. Approaching the bottom of the Zig-Zag, there is a marked change. Suddenly there are different genus and species of plants and they grow much larger with deeper greens and more luxurious growth. There are several causes that influence this growth such as water, light and nutrient availability etc.



### Krasnozems

One of the major factors is the basalt soil that we have been blessed with, however, some property owners are more blessed than others! The basalt regolith can be patchy in places. The Mount Wilson/Irvine basalt cap is considered a Residual soil. Residual soil landscapes are dominated by sites where deep soils have formed from in situ weathering of parent materials and taken place over long periods where the rates of soil formation has been greater than the rates of erosion.

Soils arise from tertiary materials, in this case fine-grained tertiary basalts that attain a maximum depth of 100 meters below 'Wynstay' and the top of Church Lane. Technically we know these soils as Krasnozems. They are defined as deep, red, strongly structured clay soils with clay content gradually increasing with depth and weak horizon differentiation.

They are also noted for their levels of free iron oxides (higher than 5%, hence the red colour), generally acidic (5.5-6.5pH) and have a high cation exchange capacity (CEC).

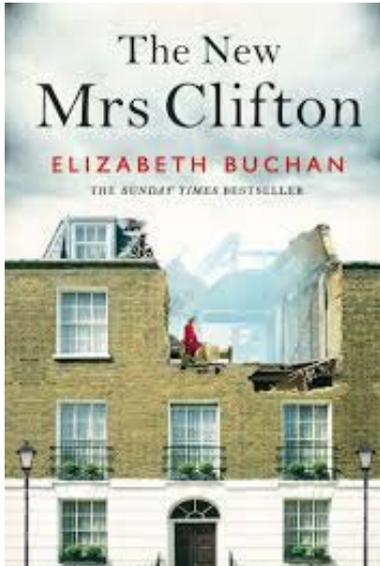
CEC relates to the ability of the soil to 'hold' onto nutrients. Clay based soils have a higher capacity to lock nutrients in and be available to a plant as opposed to sandy type soils, hence the ordinary growth along the Five Miler. This ability is crucial when combined with high rainfall areas. To put this in perspective, Mount Wilson has an average mean rainfall of 1245mm P/A, where as London, UK has 594mm P/A, half of what we get.

Krasnozems are also noted for their moderate to high permeability. This is also an important factor as nutrients are transferred to the plant in solution form.

Excessive use of synthetic (Shirleys No17, banana special etc) fertilisers can lower the pH (power of Hydrogen) in basalt soils to the point that it affects the CEC ability to release macro and micro nutrients to the plants. If, for example you are fertilising your turf and not seeing much improvement, buy a pH test kit and check your soil, it will likely be acidic (pH 5.5 or lower).

In summary, Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine have some of the best soils in the world for growing ornamental gardens. When combined with high rainfall and nutrients, it's hard not to have a successful gardening experience.

- Scott Leonard  
Teacher of Horticulture



Cover: *The New Mrs. Clifton*  
by Elizabeth Buchan

**“Everybody has to adapt  
and change and for  
some this is far harder  
than they expected”**

## THE NEW MRS. CLIFTON by Elizabeth Buchan

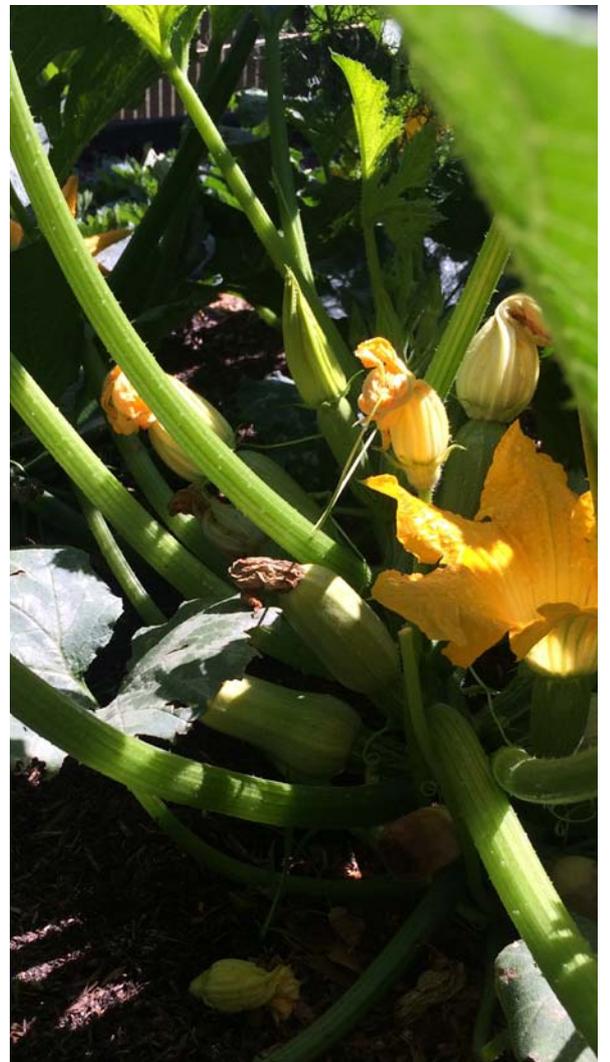
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It begins dramatically: a body is discovered buried under an old tree while making a new garden bed. *The New Mrs. Clifton* by Elizabeth Buchan traces the events that lead to this discovery. The Cliftons, a brother and two sisters, are a family struggling to cope with the privations of life during and after WWII. During the war Gus worked in a section of intelligence and his sisters lived in the family home in suburban London.

Their lives are thrown into chaos when, at the end of the war, Gus returns home with a new bride from Germany. There is a mystery between Gus and Krista but both are determined to make a new post-war life for themselves. They seem to have forgotten that Gus's fiancé Nella has loyally waited for him to return. The tight world of family and friendship centered on Gus and his sisters is broken.

Everybody has to adapt and change and for some this is far harder than they expected. Everyone has also suffered loss and privation and which cannot be forgotten, the memories of the war tainting any future happiness. It sounds all a bit like a soap opera but Buchan has a sharp touch and her exposure of vulnerabilities, desperation and a desire for peace at any price make these characters credible and their behaviour understandable. People surprise themselves, and others, with what they discover about themselves, their desires and ambitions. Families in post war London are like the bombed suburban landscape; things that should be private are forced into public view and houses may be officially condemned or re-built; so too the lives of people. The attempts to rebuild Europe and the early days of the cold war create an uncertain background to actions and feelings that expose people to present danger and to the past that everyone wanted to forget.

- Alison Haliday



# THE PATCH

## Zucchini Fritters w. Mint Yoghurt Dressing

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Summer is always an exciting time in our veggie patch, we certainly reap the rewards of the work put in over the winter and early spring months.

One vegetable which provides us with an excellent crop every summer is zucchini, we've grown a number of varieties over the years and by simply planting them in a sundrenched position and giving them the occasional SeasoI we average more than 3-4kg of fruit per plant.

This year we grew traditional green (aka Black) and grey (aka Magda). The grey provided us with more fruit however it was more prone to blossom end rot during wet weather and the foliage susceptible to powdery mildew. However, this was easily treated by spraying the plant's foliage with milk.

One recipe which I've cooked frequently this summer is Zucchini and Feta fritters with mint yoghurt dressing. This easy recipe is great for using up any excess or large zucchini which may prove uninspiring or bland otherwise. Paired with the yoghurt dressing and a salad it makes a tasty light lunch or dinner.

- Jess Delbridge

Growing a patch full of your own produce on the Mounts or have a great seasonal recipe you'd like to share? Please send us an email with your tips, the recipe and any photos you would like included - [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com)

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 large zucchini, coarsely grated
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 3 green shallots thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped fresh continental parsley
- 200g feta crumbled
- 50g plain flour (or gluten free flour)
- 25g corn flour
- 3 eggs whisked
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- juice of a lemon
- 5 tablespoons greek yoghurt
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- bunch of mint finely chopped

Combine zucchini and salt in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soak. Use your hands to squeeze excess liquid from the zucchini.

Combine the zucchini, shallots, parsley, feta, flours and egg in a bowl and season with pepper.

Heat oil in a frying pan over med / high heat. Drop 4 large spoonfuls of the zucchini mixture around edge of pan and flatten slightly. Cook for 2-3 mins each side or until golden brown and cooked through. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel to drain. Repeat with the remaining zucchini mixture, reheating oil between batches.

Meanwhile combine mint, cumin and juice in a bowl. Stir the mix before adding the yoghurt, mixing to combine and seasoning to taste.

Serve the fritters with a green salad and the yoghurt dressing on the side.



ATN\*

## The column formerly known as “Ask the Neighbours”

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It came to me the other night as I was on stake out in the fruit and veg house. There I was - sitting on my camp chair drinking a thermos of Swiss hot chocolate from my bone china mug (the one with the old fashioned roses pattern) and nibbling delicately at Scottish Shortbread. Why was I doing that you ask?

Well Jess, I thought that would be obvious - petrol station coffee and stale donuts have no place in the genteel world we inhabit. If you're going to be out in the garden at two in the morning trying to work out how some little blighters are getting to the fruit and veg through all that mesh and reinforcing, you may as well do it in style. And so it was that it came to me - along with the troop of possums lining up for the all- you- can- eat tomato buffet.

Jess, I know you'll find this hard to believe being new to the “dog eat dog” (or “the possum eat tomato”) world of journalism at altitude, but – brace yourself - the Lifestyle media genre is so last year. What we need is something new and fresh, innovative and ground breaking, a new era in the epic saga of the community newsletter – Murderous Mounts : ATN (cue the dramatic theme music - something of a cross between Midsomer Murders and Law And Order - but not so close that we'll expose ourselves to legal action). As I gathered the evidence of the latest assault on the tomato crop, it all just fell into place. Freaky really.

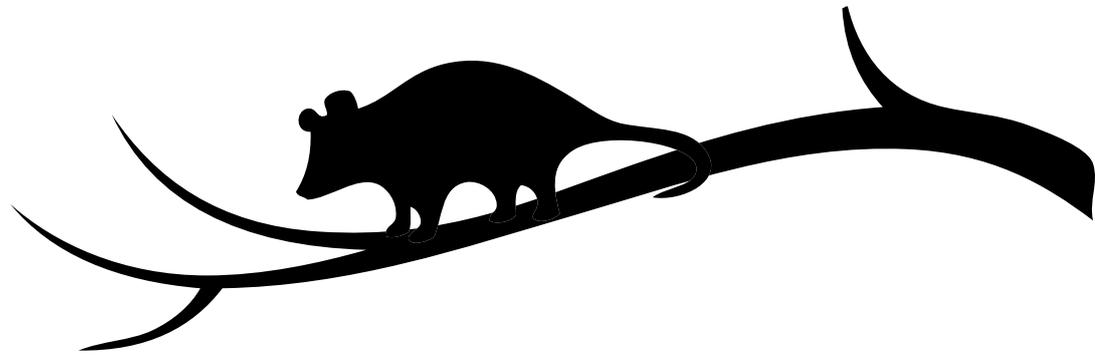


Each edition we'll recount in bone-chilling detail (especially in the Winter editions), tales of crime and mystery on the Mounts. And all of these will come under the jurisdiction of that new stereotype breaking team of devoted, complex and photogenic crimefighters – the ATN Squad. Forget those boring lab scenes where weird looking science nerds tap away at their computers whilst jiving to rap music, cross checking mulch samples and running millions of tyre tracks through their vast databases to reveal the name, address and last music download of the villain.

The ATN Squad will explore real life dramas like – who took the ute out last Friday and forgot to fill it up? Was it an accident? Or, is there a fuel thief in town? In another episode, we'll explore whose been cheating in the book club by only reading the first and last chapters of last month's book. Then there's the high political drama of "The Bridge That Was at Bowens Creek". That one could run to a two-parter. There's so much local material we could go on for five seasons before someone jumps the shark or successfully sues for defamation.

And, in the age of interactive media where the audience is a player, our heroes of the ATN Squad - those guys, gals and assorted cast members reflective of our community demographics - will Ask the Neighbours to help them solve the crime. Picture this, Jess:

Scene One: It was a dark and stormy night.



What's that Jess? It's a cliched start? Well, yes. Aren't they always? Keep up, Jess.

To continue: Lightning flashes reveal an isolated shed – the door is open and swinging in the breeze. Creak. Creak. Suddenly, there's a scream. "Oh no! It's Trevor in the wool crush. Call the ATN Squad"

Roll the opening credits – you know how it goes. Individual shots of the ATN Squad smiling wistfully to camera whilst ensuring that their better sides and perfect teeth are on display. They're peering into microscopes. They're dusting for prints (now, there's a product placement opportunity, Jess. I'm sure we can get Mr Sheen on board for that) In short, they are showing us quite clearly that they are "bad bottomed" crimefighters with attitooooood.

What's that, Jess? What are "bad bottomed" crime fighters? This is a family program, Jess. So, despite the mutilated bodies, blood and gore we'll be seeing all season, we can't use the other word usually associated with "bad" in this context. So, "bad bottomed" they are. Can we move along, please?

Scene Two: The ATN Squad races along the tree fern lined road in their specially outfitted crime busting ute – twin cab with the classic tradie metal tool box on the tray. They exchange glances as their plucky and intensely attractive Captain tosses her golden locks and says "This is going to be a tough one, guys. Was it murder or suicide? We all know that Trevor's been a bit depressed lately but using the wool crush? I never pictured him as a woolly jumper."

Scene Three: The ATN Squad are questioning a suspect – Trevor's neighbour and one time best friend, Mick. The scriptwriters are still working on the dialogue, Jess, but you get the drift – good cop, bad cop, angry questioning from an ATN Squad member with a secret link to Trevor and Mick; the table is thumped (another product placement opportunity- this time for Selleys wood glue). Mick breaks down: denying he'd ever hurt Trevor – a tear glistening in his eye. He turns to the Squad member with the secret ( actually, they all have secrets but in this episode, it's the Squad member with the secret about Trevor and Mick he's looking at) and.....

And that's where we'll leave this episode of Murderous Mounts : ATN – with these burning questions for the Neighbours: Did Trevor really shrink his chances for a future with a dip in the wool wash? Or, was he lured into the wool crush with the false promise of getting the best spin (cycle) of his life?

What do you mean Jess? You just can't see a place for Murderous Mounts : ATN in the new look Mounts? Ohh. Didn't I tell you about the extraordinarily attractive newspaper Editor who features in every episode? Who solves the crime in every episode? And who gets top billing in the credits? And her own trailer. And a fresh fruit basket every day with spring water flown in from The Himalayas.....

- Elizabeth M

"Real Crime" Editor

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