



# the MOUNTS

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE

Dec  
2017





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The column formerly known as "Ask the Neighbours"

This month's cover photo was taken by Carol Carrigan of her rose garden at her home Jules Park. If you would like to send in a cover photo for the next edition please send it through to us at [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com)



### DECEMBER 2017

You can always tell when it is getting towards the end of the year when the storms begin to hit the Mounts, the temperature picks up and sometimes, if we are lucky, you get to see fireflies floating about the garden in the evening like free roaming Christmas lights.

It has been a busy and exciting year, and I'm sure I speak for everyone as someone who is looking forward to some respite and some gardening over the Christmas season. Let's hope that it is one without too much wild weather (no bushfires or wild storms please)

I'd like to say a huge thank you to all our regular contributors (Alison, Elizabeth, Mary, Robbie, Libby, Carol, Peter, Kathleen) and to all those have volunteered (or been coerced) into writing for us this year. It is your contributions that allow this newsletter to exist and be enjoyed by the community. I've enjoyed working on the publication very much and am looking forward to the New Year.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

See you in 2018

*Jess Delbridge*

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*Photos: Storms to the  
North of the mountain and  
'Peace' roses in our garden*

## AROUND THE MOUNTS

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
-----	Friday 12th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Wynne Reserve	Sat 3rd - Sun 4th Historical Society Workshop (Archive sorting) Village Hall
Fri 15th Bushwalk 09:00 Knight Brown Fire Trail, Ramparts, Kookootonga Fire Trail, 12.30 Xmas Lunch Village Hall	Sunday 14th Church Service St Georges 3:00pm	Friday 9th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Wynne Reserve
Saturday 23rd Carols by Candlelight 7.30pm St Georges followed by supper in the Village Hall	Friday 19th Bushwalk Esme's Lookout, Bogey Holes Fire Trail, Old Zig Zag Road	Sunday 11th Church Service St Georges 3:00pm Followed by Vestry Meeting
-----	Sat 27th Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Website Introduction Mt Wilson Village Hall 10:00 - 1:00	Friday 16th Bushwalk (yet to be decided)
-----	Mon 29th Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Website Introduction Mt Wilson Village Hall 10:00 - 1:00	-----

### BIN CALENDAR

21 <sup>ST</sup> DEC
28 <sup>TH</sup> DEC
4 <sup>TH</sup> JAN
11 <sup>TH</sup> JAN
18 <sup>TH</sup> JAN
25 <sup>TH</sup> JAN
1 <sup>ST</sup> FEB
8 <sup>TH</sup> FEB
15 <sup>TH</sup> FEB

### WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to send our congratulations to Janet McDonald (owner of Farcry, Church Lane) and Dr Andrew Mitchell, who were married at St George's Church on Saturday 16 December followed by a reception at Dennarque.

Wishing you the best on your wedding day and a lifetime of happiness together!



### MARGARET VICTORIA FROMEL [NEE GREGSON] 1927—2017

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On Saturday 14th October 2017 at Umina near Killcare Meg Fromel, a long time resident of Mt Wilson passed away.

Very few of the present property owners and /or residents would have known Meg or met Meg . She belonged to an era long past in Mt Wilson but an era that was very special and valued by those who were fortunate enough to be a participant in it. She was the daughter of Edward Jesse Gregson and Margaret Gregson who built the original 'Wyndham' in Wyndham Avenue Mt Wilson in 1920s. Sadly that 'Wyndham' was burnt in a house fire in 2004.

Edward was the second son of Jesse Gregson who founded 'Yengo' in 1878-1880. Jesse and his wife Katie loved Mt Wilson and with their four children delighted in spending every summer in Mt Wilson. Jesse planted many European trees on the mountain and became very knowledgeable about the indigenous flora, an interest continued by his children and grandchildren. His collection is kept in the National Herbarium. Meg and her two sisters Helen and Troath grew up in Mt Wilson in 1930s and 1940s. It was a time of primitive living, simplicity and strong friendships. A close friend, Dr Peter Valder described it as 'A Golden Age'. There was no electricity, only kerosene lamps and wood for fuel; chip heaters which could explode without provocation; Cows to be milked; the making of bread and butter and even soap; no cars but horses that could be ridden and raced and bullocks for heavy transport. Picnics in the bush! And a love of the Bush. Farming was hard work, clearing the land using the plough and myrtle the draught horse the only machinery available. Picking apples and other fruit and worse still packing them in the Apple shed later to become 'Applecot'.

From the Eulogy given at her funeral in Killcare;  
" Meg was one of life's true free spirits. A free thinker

and a non-conformist. She was a woman ahead of her time in many ways, living her life simply and making the most of whatever life presented.

Growing up in Mt Wilson, her father, Edward a botanist and naturalist introduced Meg to the wonders of nature, learning about the bush, birds and the fauna---the mountain was her playground a vast untainted landscape where she and her sisters could explore untethered."

Meg became a conservationist along with Helen, her older sister who wrote the delightful book 'A Mountain Childhood' in 1990. Meg illustrated it. The Society has copies for sale. Meg attended the small public School at Mt Wilson. Later with her sisters they were enrolled at MLC Burwood. After school Meg's interest in Art developed and working as a filing clerk she was able to finance her attendance at East Sydney Technical College. Here she enjoyed the company of many artists who today are household names. Her mother, Margaret died in 1943 and left all three girls grieving and losing her influence in music and culture.

Nevertheless Meg travelled to London to spend time with Helen there and they both travelled and worked.

Later she returned to Australia where she met her future husband Chris Fromel at the All Nations Club at Rushcutters Bay. They married in 1958. After years of travelling they eventually found their way back to Mt Wilson, building 'Rimon Cottage' in Waterfall Road and playing an active role in the community. Meg continued to pursue her art. Sadly Chris passed away in 1980s and Meg sold 'Rimon Cottage', moving to 'Applecot' in Wyndham Ave. It was at that time that I caught up with Meg as Ellis and I had retired to live at Mt Wilson. She was a wonderful source of history along with her art skills especially with lino cuts. The society has these in our archives. It is very appreciative of the



## AROUND THE MOUNTS

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### MARGARET VICTORIA FROMEL cont.

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work Nancy Fox devoted to preserving them. Meg generously donated them to The Society of which she was a long term member. Later she moved to Killcare to be close to Helen who had married and was living there. She continued an active life bushwalking, supporting conservation groups and her art and music.

With her passing it is, as Dr Peter Valder who was a good friend of Meg's said to me recently It is the End of An Era for Mt Wilson.

- Mary B. Reynolds



## BOWENS CREEK EMERGENCY VEHICLES ACCESS ROUTE UPDATE

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THIS IS AN UPDATE BY ELIZABETH MONTANO ON BEHALF OF THE MT WILSON/ MT IRVINE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE AS LEAD COMMUNITY ORGANISATION ON THIS ISSUE.

In our October 2017 update we reported that Hawkesbury City Council (As lead council as agreed with Blue Mountains City Council earlier this year) had lodged an application to the Federal Government to access the feasibility study fund of \$100,000 promised by the Federal Government at the July 2016 Election.

Since then, we have sought advice from both HCC and Blue Mountains City Council on several occasions on the status of the application. As at the date of writing this piece, no responses have been received from either Council.

Given our community's role in bringing, and keeping, this issue on the radar of Local, State and Federal representatives - and that it was through our efforts that the funding promise for the feasibility study was made- this is disappointing.

We are, of course, undeterred and we will keep bringing to the attention of all relevant authorities the ongoing significant risk to our community and our thousands of visitors caused by the lack of a viable alternate emergency vehicles access route for use when Mt Wilson Rd is unavailable and other means of receiving emergency services are not feasible. And we'll keep pushing to be closely involved in the feasibility study process to ensure that it has the benefit of our unique perspective.

You can play a part in this continuing message – write or ,if you see them, go up and talk to our Ward One Councillors Don McGregor, Kerry Brown and Kevin Schreiber, our State MP Trish Doyle and our Federal MP Susan Templeman about our local needs.

- Elizabeth Montano

Executive Committee Member  
Mt Wilson/ Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade

## AROUND THE MOUNTS

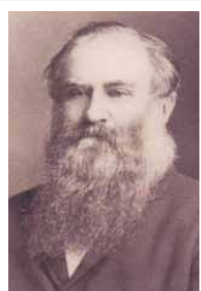
### THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SURVEYING OF MT WILSON IN 1868 IN 2018

Many may not be aware that 2018 is 150th Anniversary of the Surveying of Mt Wilson in 1868. In 1993 a highly organised event took place in Mt Wilson for the 125th Anniversary of that same event. A record of 1993 is kept in the Historical Society's archives. 17th March 1868 is the day when Mt Wilson was named after John Bowie Wilson, the Secretary of Lands in the NSW Government. The Surveyor general of NSW Phillip Francis Adams met the Surveyor Edward Sandham Wyndham at his camp, known as Nutman's camp on Waterfall Creek. There declared the name Mt Wilson. Strangely an indigenous name for Mt Wilson has never emerged. The indigenous people of these northern mountains have recently been identified as the 'Darkinung' [ Dr G Ford's thesis 2010] as distinct from the Darhug people of the coast. Below is a glimpse of the vegetation of Mt Wilson which faced the surveyor as he endeavoured to survey 62 portions.

Our local archives are available for the local community to use in discussion with the Historical Society on a suitable project for the Anniversary.

The above provides evidence of the story behind the surveying of Mt Wilson in 1868.

- M. B. Reynolds



## SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

The Service of Lessons & Carols by Candlelight will be held on Sat 23rd Dec at 7.30pm.

Supper will be provided in the Village Hall afterwards. We do hope you will be able to join us.

## SEARCH, SELL AND SHARE

Kookootonga is looking for staff to assist on weekends during March/April when our farm is open for pick your own walnuts and chestnuts.

Duties would include directing visitors throughout the orchard. Answering queries. Assisting with sales. Lots of other general duties!

The person(s) would need their own transport and be willing to work every weekend from mid March until late April, that would include every day of the Easter holidays. For more information contact Mark and Robyn at [kookootonga247@bigpond.com](mailto:kookootonga247@bigpond.com). [www.kookootonga.com.au](http://www.kookootonga.com.au)

- Mark and Robyn Scriviner

EMC Club Car 4 seat LWB golf buggy. Near-new battery set, flashing beacon and comes with charger. Substantial discount at \$1950.

Please let me know if you need anything more. I do have the original printed ad pre-purchase if useable. The unit is at Hillcrest Lane.

- Bill Ryan

### THE POWER OF LIGHTNING

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Lightning strikes are quite common in Mt Wilson. But sometimes you need to be reminded just how powerful these can be. On Thursday 16 November there was a dry lightning strike on the front gate on Monteagle, Wynnes Rocks Road. Builders were on the roof and there was no sign of rain or a storm. The site foreman had his hand on the verandah balustrade when he heard an almighty crack of lightning. He felt a tingle in his hands and the builders on the roof also felt a slight tingle and got down from the roof in record time. Luckily they were wearing rubber shoes.

Lightning hit the light on the top of the gate post and travelled down the electrical wire inside the gate post and basically blew the gatepost apart from the inside. Just after we finished rendering and painting! As the lightning strike was within the housing circuit it also blew a few lights and transformers.

Now to the next project. How to protect against future strikes. A circuit breaker on the switchboard will not necessarily protect against this scenario.

- Robbie Feyder

*Photos: Gate post that was not struck, with image of where we think the lightning struck*





## AROUND THE MOUNTS

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### FUR AND FEATHER RESIDENTS OF THE MOUNTS : DASH THE WONDER DOG GOES ON HOLIDAYS!

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You may recall Joe described how his newly acquired mature dog was terrified of other dogs when he was walked around the village.

Mindful of this problem when Joe and Diana left him with us while they tripped the light fantastic around Scotland and nearby islands, we need not have been concerned. Dash raced after Tom as he mowed a path through the daisies in the paddock down to the waterhole. He soon learnt to shelter under the shade of a bush where he could oversee the two of us working in the garden.

The grandchildren adored him and brushed and cuddled him and he slept beside their bed at night. Returning them to the seaside, Dash sat between their baby car seats just being one of the kids. Time came to walk along the esplanade to Shelley Beach. How would he manage the other dogs? One look at the high tide splashing on the wall made him bark with joy! Noticing the other dogs all parading on their leads, he picked up his short stubby legs under his long kelpie body and PRANCED his version of a high step!

In the afternoon he barked to remind us to collect the children from daycare.

So what a wonder dog we had come to stay who just never in a previous life experienced socialising with other dogs

- Tom and Suzanne Bassett

## WHAT'S ON DEC / JAN 2017

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### SIPS AND SOUNDS - LEWERS GALLERY

Join us for sundowners in the gallery garden. Music, art, food and drinks in a twilight garden.

Friday evenings 5 – 8pm

1 December 2017 – 26 January 2018

Kicking off the Sips & Sounds season on 1 December is Jazz Daiquiri, bringing you smooth grooves to wind down the week.

Location: Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, 86 River Road, Emu Plains



### THE LEURA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2018

Sat 13 Jan - Sun 28 Jan 2018

Everglades Garden Theatre, Everglades Garden, Leura

A riotously, raucous 9th Summer Festival about service, appetites and balancing acts - spanning the full reach of comedy - from Shakespeare's dark satirical masterpiece Measure For Measure to Goldoni's Italian dish of laughs The Servant of Two Masters.

More info and tickets at:

[www.sportforjove.com.au/theatre-festival/the-leura-shakespeare-festival](http://www.sportforjove.com.au/theatre-festival/the-leura-shakespeare-festival)

# MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

## Committee News

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The combined Christmas party (RFS and progress associations from Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine) was held in late November. It was a happy evening with much delicious food and drink, to prepare us for the festive season, plus carols and a surprise quiz. The successful answers were rewarded with a chocolate.

We had a very satisfactory meeting with Dan Long when he came to the last committee meeting. Dan is a real friend of Mt Wilson and is always happy to advise and assist us in navigating the ever-changing systems in the BMCC. Summer camping has started and we will be getting some extra toilet facilities in the camp ground. We hope to talk soon to Nick Rigby who was unable to attend.

The year has seen the excellent maintenance of the mountain continue under the work and guidance of Peter Raines and we thank him wholeheartedly. Most notable are the four improved tracks – so go for a walk in the cool of a summer's day and enjoy our beautiful mountain. Coloured guides to these walks may be obtained from Alison for a gold coin donation.

All the committee are happy to talk about, and listen to, your comments on any and all matters to do with the mountain; just contact one of us. I would like to thank all members of the committee for devoting so much careful attention and time

to caring for Mt Wilson, so thank you to Sue, Libby, Robbie, Nancy and Ted. And to Jess who has done a great year's work in giving us a very smart local newsletter, The Mounts.

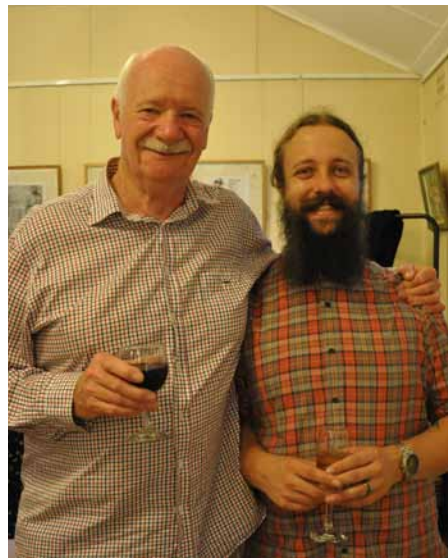
Wishing all of you a happy Christmas and a peaceful, and bushfire free, 2018.

- Alison Halliday



*Photos this page and next taken by Jess Delbridge*







# RFS NEWS:

## All the latest news from the brigade

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### HISTORY OF THE MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE RFS

Alison Halliday has been working on a history of our wonderful Mount Wilson/Mount Irvine Rural Fire Brigade since its official inception. She's almost 'there' but desperately needs photos - e.g. I told her about the army finally turning up to help us in the '94 fires and driving round the back of the village hall ... straight into the sceptic tank from which they had to be towed out! I don't have a photo of this. Does anyone? Any other interesting stories or photos would be fantastic. As it's a history, the older the better! Any photos of the equipment/fire trucks way back then compared with what we have now? Any photos of our wonderful 'locals' fighting fires way back then?

Also any photos or input re the other stuff our amazing RFB does today - e.g. helping save lost 'visitors' to the wilderness around us, clearing fallen trees after extreme storms, attending accidents on BLOR, and their involvement as first responders. Anything please? Please send it through to: [alisonhalliday@gmail.com](mailto:alisonhalliday@gmail.com)

- Susie Hope

### SPRING BLOSSOM FESTIVAL SUCCESS

The 2017 Spring Blossom Festival raised just over \$30,000 for the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Brigade. I think is a tremendous effort and a very successful result, and I want to thank everyone who gave their time and effort to make it such a success.

The money will be added to the sum already set aside for the RFS station extension at Mt Wilson and a new station for Mt Irvine. As the arithmetic currently works, the Brigade will contribute \$240,000 towards the Mt Wilson shed, and RFS will add the remaining \$310,000. For the Mt Irvine shed, the Brigade has put aside \$120,000 and the remainder will have to come from fund raising or the RFS. I believe that the more money we can contribute to these expansion projects the more control of the project we maintain, the greater influence we have on the outcome, and the better prepared we will be for the next fire when it comes.

With these compelling mathematics, the Executive of the Brigade feels strongly that we should try to run a Spring Blossom Festival next year.



However, the Festival takes lots of work to put on:

- Firstly, organising sponsors, prizes, artists, design and printing, food, gardens, bookings, advertising, publicity, social media, the opening night and logistics, starting in February;
- Leading up to the weekend we have to find staff to man/woman the gates of some of the gardens, to work at the restaurant and barbecue, and to provide traffic control; and
- Then on the weekend we need the locals to bring baked goods to sell and most importantly come and enjoy the festival and support the fund raising efforts.

Without detracting from the magnificent efforts of the entire team who made the 2017 Festival such a success we all feel that without much more volunteering assistance from the locals that we can't do it again next year.

So this is a call-out for people to volunteer for work at next year's Festival. Please contact me (4756-2091 or [howelldj@ozemail.com.au](mailto:howelldj@ozemail.com.au)) to discuss what you can do for next year's Festival.

The Brigade Executive committee has decided to make a decision in February 2018 about whether to run the Festival next Spring depending on the level of interest and willingness to be involved from the community.

So please get in touch now and let us know if we can embark on this important fund-raising event.

- David Howell



MT WILSON MT IRVINE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# MOUNT WILSON AND MOUNT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Recent Events and Comments

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Saturday 18th November 2017 was not a good day for the AGM of our Society. Regrettably the weather decided to vent its weight on Mt Wilson by producing torrential rain. In spite of the inclement weather we had three or four kind visitors who came to give support. Professor Ian Jack from Sydney University and his talented wife, Jan, Patsy Moppit, President of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural & Heritage Organisations and the Secretary, Jan Kopenberg plus Suzanne Smith from the Kurrajong Comleroy Historical Society. Very few local members ventured out but we were pleased to welcome John and Helen Cardy and Helen Freeman who very kindly organised morning tea. Also in attendance were Zaharah and John Braybrooke, Robert Chesney, Dr Peter Rickwood Libby Raines plus my son Malcolm and myself. There were 41 apologies; many from members who live some distance from Mt Wilson.

Much of the formal meeting which included the president's report but not a Treasurer's report [Milba Kirk is on the sick list sadly] was taken up

Please note that Historical Society will be having a **ARCHIVE SORTING WORKSHOP** on **Sat 3rd - Sun 4th Feb** in the Village Hall. Hope to see you there!

with concern for our Archival Collection stored in the vestibule of the Study Centre. We were very appreciative of Professor Jack's contribution. He gave a telling and direct outline of the value of the collection after 20 years of sustained work and the concern of BMACHO to safeguard our Collection at all cost. While the termite infestation is being dealt with by the Study Centre Council, the future repairs and restoration of the Study Centre still have to be resolved hopefully by way of a heritage grant. The building and cottage are owned by the NSW Dep. of Education which should be taking responsibility for its restoration and safety.

As there were no nominations at the AGM the Society has only an Interim Management Committee at present. Zaharah and John Braybrooke have step down as President and Secretary. The Interim Management Committee consists of Des Barrett, Milba Kirk, Malcolm Reynolds, Mary Reynolds. Zaharah and John have agreed to assist the Committee. It should be acknowledged that Zaharah and John and Milba have kept the Society afloat over the last 3 years with support from Pauline Michell and Des Barrett.

The Turkish Bath Museum and the Archival collection remain the Society's and its current members' responsibility. Regrettably over 30 members have failed to renew their membership while newer residents who have been approached have not responded.

If you are able to explain possible reasons for this downturn in the Society's fortunes we would welcome your comments.

- Mary B. Reynolds  
Vice President

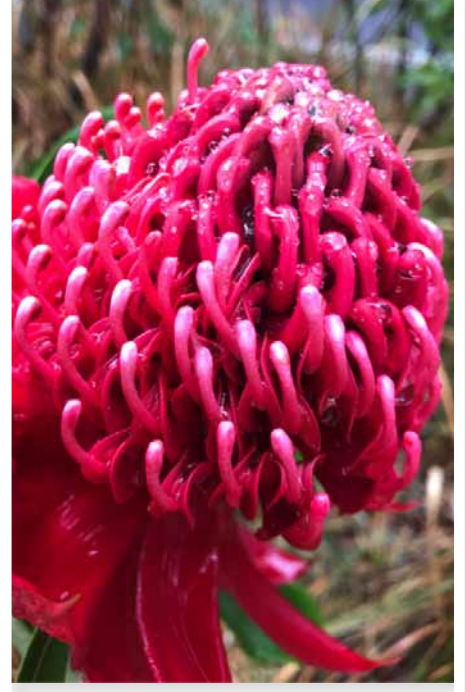




# HAILSTORM IN UPPER MOUNTAINS

## Darling Causeway / Bells Line

*Photos by Linda Raines and Jess Delbridge of a massive hailstorm on the 17th of November, coating the ground as if it had been snowing!*



# THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

## Village Walk

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The Village Walk can be done in either direction and the notes below are based on walking in a clockwise direction from the firestation. This walk can be combined with a picnic and there are numerous spots along the walk that facilitate this. This can also be combined with a visit to some gardens and you can explore side tracks along the way.

*Photo this page: Looking along Mount Irvine Road and Waratah above Mt Irvine Road*

*Photos next page: Village Walk Map and Gnarled Wonga Vine along Ferny Bend*

### Village Walk

Walk Signage Colour: Light Green

Length: 5.9 km circuit

Elevation Change: 100 m

Time: 2 hours

Grade: Easy

### Starting point:

Corner of Du Faur's Rocks Road and The Avenue, opposite the Rural Fire Station.

### Walking conditions:

- Well formed track.

### Highlights:

- Village Circuit
- Can start and end at any point, including Cathedral Reserve.
- Can include a garden visit as part of the walk
- Shortcuts to reduce circuit



## THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

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From the firestation keep on the left hand side of the road and follow the footpath past the old School and War Memorial. The footpath then rises above the road through Ferny corner where there is a huge twisted and gnarled Wonga vine that forms a gateway over the path. Continue on the verge on the left hand side of the road until you reach the Church at the corner of Church lane and the Avenue. This is a lovely spot for contemplation.

Continue along the verge on the left hand side of the avenue and pass through founders corner where there are stairs leading to a crossing of Mount Irvine Road. Follow the path along Mount Irvine Road on the Right Hand Side of the Road. The Turkish Baths Museum is on your right. During spring this path is festooned with Waratahs.

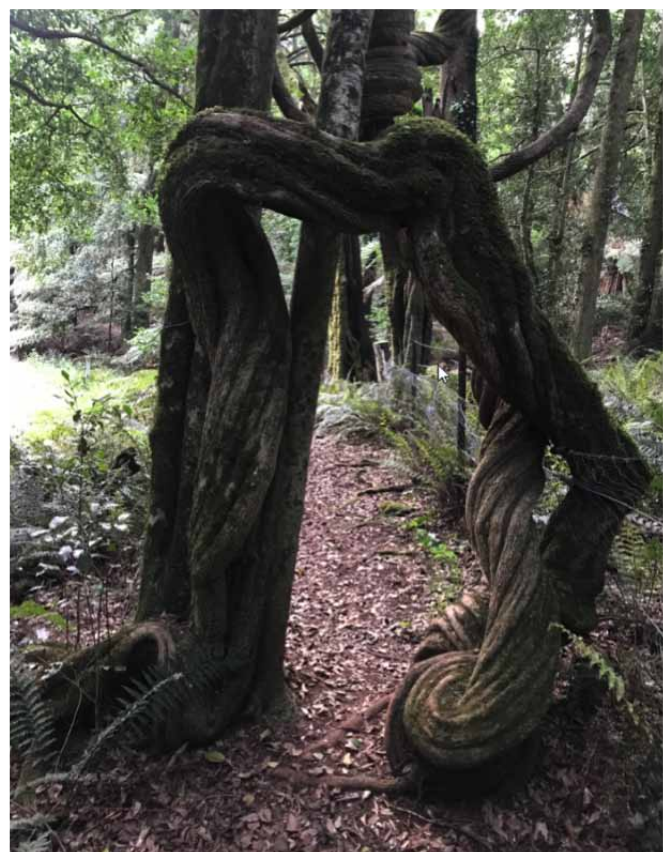
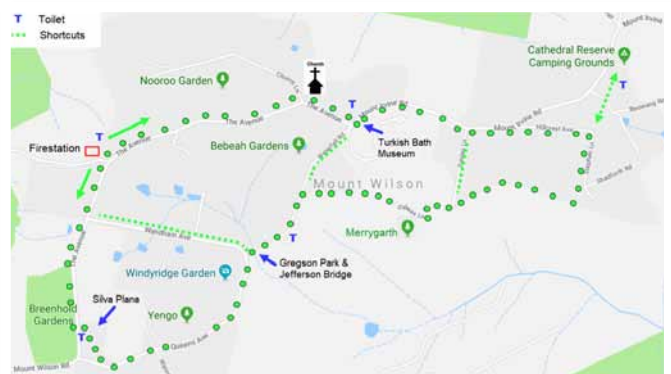
Continue along the verge on the right hand side of Mount Irvine Road past Davies Lane. Then keep going straight into Hillcrest Avenue as Mount Irvine Road veers to the left. Cathedral Reserve can be accessed by following the path under the powerlines on the corner of Hillcrest Avenue and Stephen Lane.

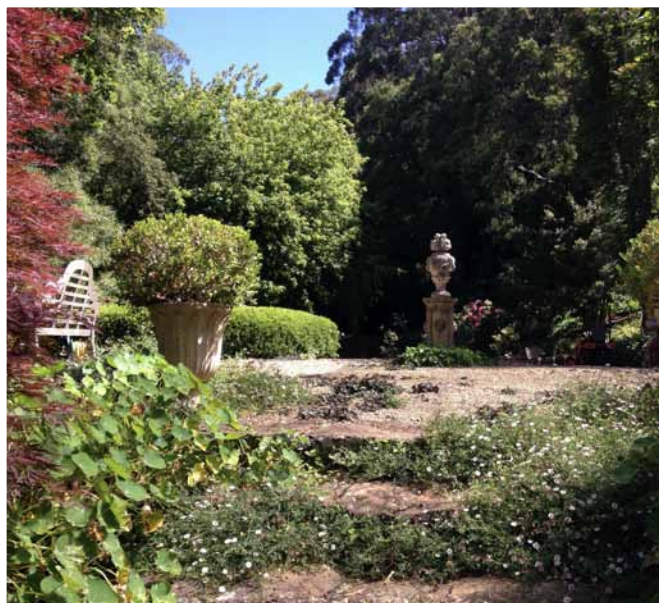
Continue straight down Stephen Lane and then follow the trail that is an extension to Stephen Lane. This trail then turns to the Right past the fence around New Bywood. Follow the path through some lovely rainforest. Some stairs bring you onto Davies Lane. Turn left into Davies Lane and follow the road down Galwey Lane. Continue past the end of Galwey Lane along the path that runs below Withycombe. Often cows can be seen grazing in this paddock. Continue along this path until you reach Waterfall Road.

Turn left down Waterfall Road. Continue straight along the path at the end of Waterfall Road just past Chimney Cottage. This path then heads down to the right and crosses over Jefferson Bridge. Just past Jefferson Bridge keep to the left and follow the path as it heads up to Queens Avenue. This is a bit of a steep section as you head up Queens Avenue.

Queens Avenue is one of the more photographed spots in Mount Wilson and it is very pretty in both Autumn and Spring. Continue along Queens Avenue and before you get to the junction of The Avenue turn to the right and head through a large open field "Silva Plana". From Silva Plana now cross over The Avenue below Breenhold Gardens and turn right onto the Avenue. Keep to the verge on the left hand side of the road as you head back to the firestation.

- Robbie Feyder





## IN MY GARDEN: Jules Park Mt Irvine - Finding Monet

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Each morning at Jules Park I start the day with a cup of tea and a plan. The plan may or may not be implemented depending on the many diversions that life can throw at us including the weather however, on most days, I plan to spend the day working in the garden.

No 'glamour girl' as I pull on my old gardening gear, socks, boots, broad brimmed hat and gloves. No Chanel No 5 today (my favourite .... an oldie but a goodie) but aeroguard sprayed liberally on clothes and any exposed skin to stop the biting/stinging flies and keep the leaches away. Just one more cuppa and out the door, water bottle in hand, secateurs, shovel and rake in the other, ready for anything that nature may have in store BUT ..... 'oh no, not again..... those lyre birds! ..... why don't they pick on someone else's garden? ..... it's just not fair..... my poor plants.....Oh well, I suppose it was their land for thousands of years before I came along..... OK, get over it and move on. Lots to be done today!'

Beautiful gardens are essentially created from a partnership between gardener and nature. The creation of a harmonious relationship delicately balanced and respectful. In the words of the great gardener Gertrude Jekyll,

'A garden is a grand teacher, it teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust.'

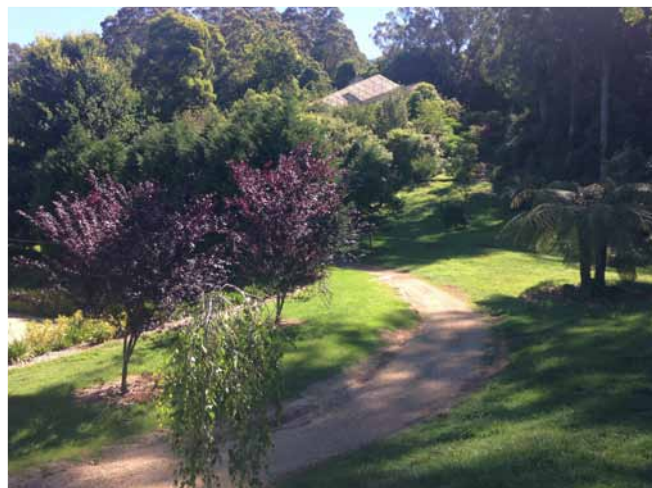
Brian and I came to live at Jules Park just over 10 years ago. The previous owners had done a great deal of work on the garden structure using stone mined from the property to construct walls and garden beds. Their planting consisted mainly of camellias, maples, birches, rhododendrons, hydrangeas, lavender, wisteria, waratahs, flax and agapanthus lining the drive.

The property is approximately 12.6 hectares and the garden section accounts for some 2 hectares around the house. The remainder of the land consists of a walnut tree paddock with about 100 trees, a pasture



## IN MY GARDEN

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paddock often inhabited by neighbours' cattle, endangered and protected rainforest and a large front paddock with tree lined driveway leading to Mt Irvine Rd. Six friendly Alpacas live in the paddock and rush to greet us when we arrive. In earlier times, Jules Park was a major producer of kiwi fruit in NSW with remnants of these vines still producing fruit today.

The real treasure trove of the property is the rich basalt soil. There's no doubt that a garden is only as good as its soil and we have solid gold!! So much so that everything grows at a fast rate especially the weeds and lawns. Due to the mountainous topography, following rain we can expect a new weed crop from seeds washed down from the paddocks at the top of the mountain. We are working towards eradicating the worst of these weeds.

The house and garden are situated on the downward, north eastern facing slope viewing across the mountains to the Sydney skyline. On a clear day, the harbour bridge arch and office buildings come into view. This aspect provides protection from the westerlies and extreme temperatures.

Over the past ten years we have focussed on mass planting taking into account what pre-existed and thrived. We needed more colour in the Autumn so we added maples of many different sizes and variety. We planted weeping cherries, stands of birch, about 60 camellias, thousands of iris, dahlia, hydrangea, salvia, rhododendron, lavender and

roses. Over 10,000 bulbs have been planted mainly under the birch trees. Flowering ground covers including violets, seaside daisies, trailing nasturtium, California poppy and alyssum flourish and provide seed for the following year. Hellebores bring 'winter roses' and provide an abundance of seedlings to fill empty spaces. Recently we have planted yellow and orange clivia to bring colour to shady spaces.

We are delighted by the regeneration of hundreds of tree ferns spreading across the garden like big green shade umbrellas. Hundreds of red and white waratahs burst into life in September/October and fill the vases in the house. The small orchard provides an abundance of lemons, limes, oranges, mandarins and kumquats for bottling and jams.

We love to watch the many birds and bees visiting and sharing the garden with us ..... we watch in fascination as a bower bird gathers twigs and builds his Sydney Opera house like nest structure, decorates it with a plethora of blue objects and flowers from the garden..... then anxiously waits for his lady to arrive. The chorus of lyrebirds echoing from the rainforest with their remarkable talent for mimicking just about every other bird, is a wonder of nature.

Claude Monet is quoted as saying; 'My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece.' Perhaps there is just a little piece of Monet to be found in every garden.

- Carol Carrigan



# THE PATCH

## Roast Garlic and Spinach Pesto

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We've grown herbs and bits and pieces in our garden at Mt Wilson for a long time. Easy – pop out the front door for a sprig or two of sage, some rosemary or a tablespoon of thyme leaves. Then came some chestnut trees, a fruit tree or two and before we knew it we were hooked.

The biggest development in the kitchen garden came about because we wanted to grow garlic. We prepared a plot for it, edged it with timber and planted rosemary around it in a homage to those kitchen gardens which look too good to be true and certainly too good to eat. Having carefully prepared the soil, we planted the garlic (sourced from an organic supplier, of course) and waited for it to grow. And it did – lovely green shoots which we tenderly cared for. All was right in the world and we'd have fresh garlic in the summer.

But then along came the lyrebirds – no doubt seeking revenge for my literary (but entirely fictional) war on them and their brutish friends. They dug up the garlic: we'd replant and cover it with mesh; they'd dig up the garlic; we'd replant and cover it with mesh and strategically placed rocks; they'd dig up the garlic... it was a game the lyrebirds were bound to win.

What to do? We'd seen, admired and coveted several friends' wire meshed fruit and vegetable greenhouse-type structures. That was the solution. Not only would it stop the lyrebirds from digging up the garlic but we could put small fruit trees in it and lots of other things which would otherwise have been at the mercy of assorted restless natives.

We've been using our (glassless but meshed) greenhouse for a variety of crops for a few years now. When I say "crops" we're not talking about supplying to Woolworths here – just enough for us and friends. Some crops are very successful, especially the tomatoes, the rhubarb, leeks, blueberries, lettuces and, of course, the garlic. The greenhouse has three very long and deep-ish planter boxes which allow us to garden at waist height and to refresh the soil every couple of years.

We recently moved our small fruit trees outside because, despite our (obviously poor) attempts to keep them small, they started to take over the paths between the beds. So, it will be back to meshing them when they fruit.

More vegetable beds outside the greenhouse are the latest addition where we're trialling pumpkins, cucumbers, asparagus, celeriac and assorted other bits and pieces. To deter the lyrebirds and their mates we've fenced the area. It looks good but the lyrebirds have been undeterred, displaying their contempt for our measly fencing by rearranging some of the newer crops. We've replanted and then meshed the new plantings and so far, they've all survived. If anyone sees lyrebirds with wire-cutters in our vicinity, I'd be grateful if you could let me know.

- Elizabeth Montano

## THE PATCH

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### INGREDIENTS

- 1 garlic bulb
- 1/2 cup (185ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 bunch English spinach, chopped, plus extra spinach leaves to serve
- 1/2 cup (40g) grated pecorino or parmesan
- 1 tbs white wine vinegar

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 220°C. Place the garlic on a piece of foil, drizzle with 1 tbs oil and wrap to enclose. Place on a baking tray and roast for 30 minutes or until very soft.
2. Squeeze the garlic from cloves into a food processor (discard garlic skins), with the spinach, pecorino, vinegar and 1/2 cup (125ml) oil. Season, then whiz until smooth.

### NOTES

This pesto is versatile and tasty, and works well tossed through pasta or gnocchi and served with crumbled ricotta or spread on toasted bread with sliced tomato and mozzarella as a bruschetta.

It will keep for a few days in the fridge and won't lose its lush green colour if you pour a thin layer of olive oil over the top.

- Jess Delbridge



# A DOUBLE BOOK REVIEW

## for the holiday season

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Two very different books for your reading package at the end of 2017, and I hope that either or both may be useful in this giving-and-getting time of year.

## ANAESTHESIA

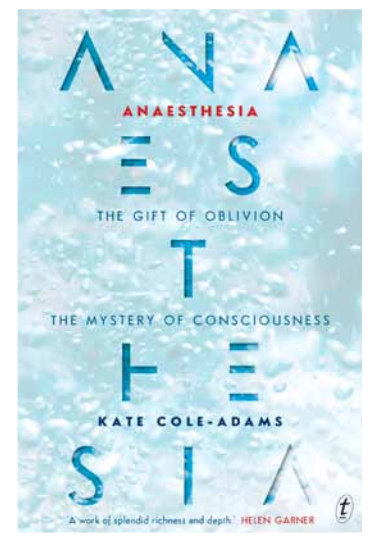
### by Kate Cole-Adams

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Anaesthesia by Kate Cole-Adams is a rich exploration of the nature of the conscious and unconscious mind. She weaves her own personal experience with that of many others, both patients and doctors, to try to determine just what happens when an anaesthetic is given. She considers what makes a good experience of anaesthesia and what may contribute to an unhappy or disturbing experience. Much of the book is concerned with memory: why can some people recall events from when they are meant to be unconscious, why is memory both faulty and persistent, how can memory be shaped by experiences both before and after the actual operation? The basic question is how can a patient be technically unconscious and yet have some recall of what happens, from being acutely aware (and terrified) to those who seem to respond to voices or commands that are 'heard' during an operation.

It seems to be a black and white problem but her teasing through the scientific evidence and many anecdotes from patients show just how grey, and uncertain, is the knowledge of what really is the unconscious mind. Connected to this is the link to what happens when we die, and thus, what constitutes knowing and un-knowing, being and non-being.

The narrator also examines the problems inherent in writing about what is both intensely personal and a subject of dispute among professionals. We all are aware of the blessing of a pain-free operation but for some it comes at a real cost.





# CHILDREN OF EARTH AND SKY

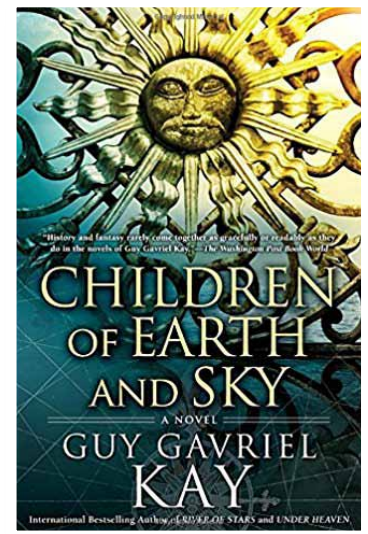
## by Guy Gavriel Kay

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Children of Earth and Sky is another book full of imagined experiences, but here we are in the hands of one of the best known writers of fantasy. Guy Gavriel Kay is a master of the genre and a delight to his millions of readers. This book is the first in a new series, one that closely parallels the medieval history of the intersection of Islam countries with those of the Mediterranean. The novel combines events that echo past reality with vivid and compelling stories of a cluster of characters who come together, and part. There is both coincidence and determined connection as we trace the stories of, amongst others, the rich and rather bored Marin Djivo with a skill for trading into foreign lands, the very talented Danica who is on a quest for vengeance, the young artist Pero who is given an assignment he cannot refuse and Leonora Valeri who discovers an ability to survive in very unexpected ways.

The writer handles his large cast of characters with control and ease, as each grows and learns about themselves and their place in a dangerous and rapidly changing world. Many of them see that safety and happiness are only illusions as they learn about themselves, and their place in the world; a world of complex politics, intransigent beliefs and a continual struggle to survive.

- Alison Halliday



ATN\*

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

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The world can be such a fickle place, Jess. There we were just about to sign with that big streaming service for Murderous Mounts:ATN to go international – I had the location worked out and everything (no thanks to our Dear Readers who have, again, let the side down, Jess).

Then, as the Mont Blanc pen was poised, the (real) champagne ready to pop and a wild afternoon of media hedonism all planned, we got the call.

We were pipped at the post by some johnny-come-lately show – “Heinous Hollywood Hills”: I would have thought that the first word was superfluous but nevertheless, their pitch allegedly based on real events (yeah right; property and media hound gets elected President of the Hollywood Hills Golf Club and proceeds to tweet the Club into nuclear war), was just too inviting for the streaming-service-whose-name-shall-never-pass-my-lips-again. That is, until my anonymous twitter account gets enough followers to really blast them into space.

SPACE! That's it. I'm a genius, Jess. That's where we should have staged the new look “Murderous Mounts:ATN”. IN SPACE. Just think of it, Jess. A whole new world(s) of plot and character possibilities.

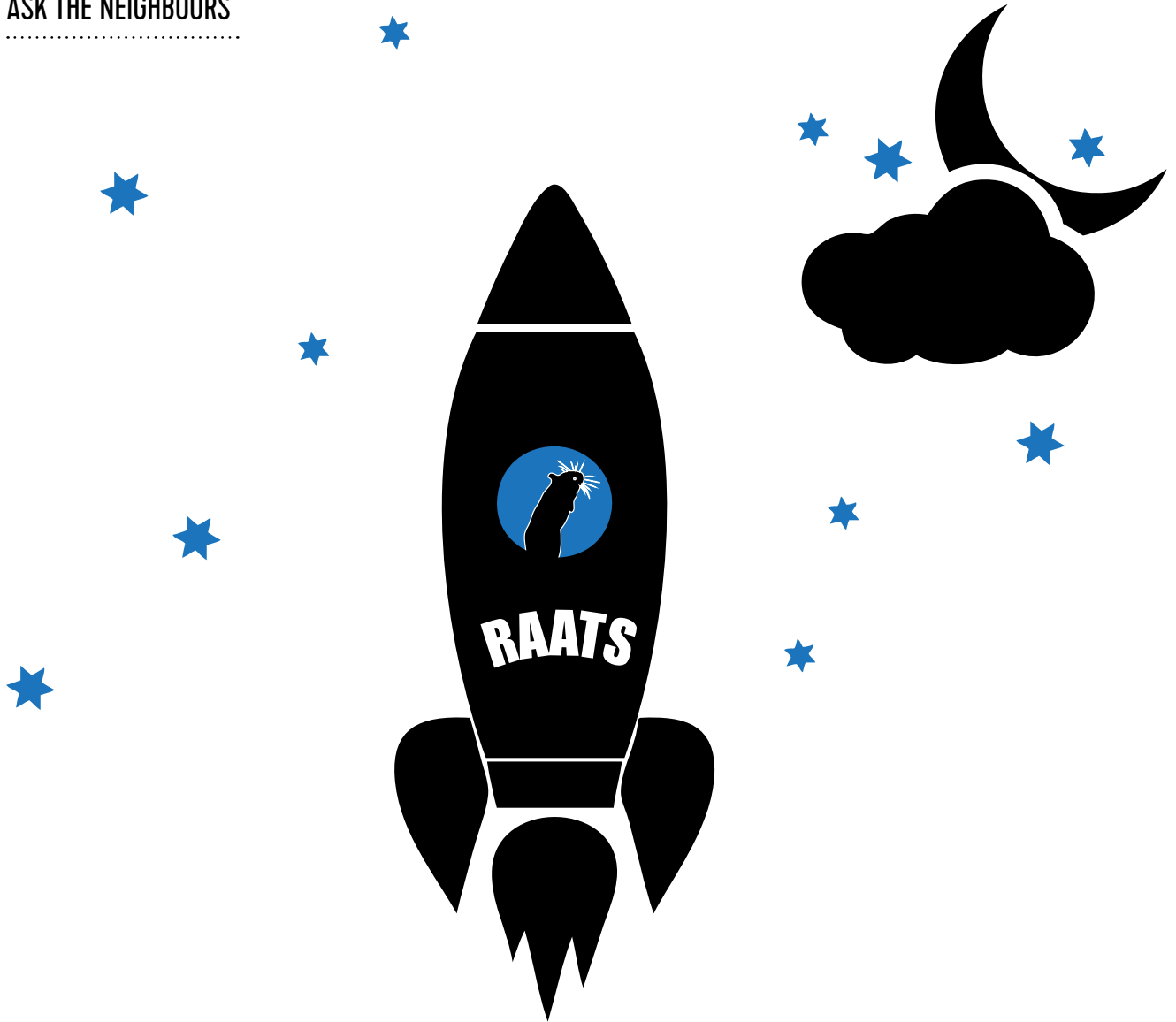
I can see it now: The third moon of Jupiter (whatever it's called) comes up in an otherwise dark, dark universe. Into camera shot, comes a tiny battered spaceship. There's the plucky wisecracking pilot working the control panel whilst singing along, adoringly off key, to a 1980s disco hit. The Captain - crusty but deeply devoted to his crew – climbs up the ladder...

Why do they always use ladders in space, Jess? Why not stairs? Marble stairs? With scroll work metal ballustrades. I'll get onto the set designer immediately.

We're going to re-invent “Murderous Mounts: ATN”, Jess. New cast, new plots, new galaxy. With those marble stairs, it's going to be all class. Think Moulin Rouge meets Alien. And when that streaming-service-whose-name-shall-never-pass-my-lips-again calls, I'll be ready, Jess.

So, despite their appalling record for non-participation, we're offering our dear Readers





another opportunity to make history – space history, Jess - with a question to be pondered, debated and generally fought over during our Summer break: What do you think our clapped out, yet deeply homely, spaceship should be called?

And, as an added incentive, our lucky winner will get a cameo role in the pilot episode. Who knows: you could be immortalised in space drama? Although, I'm not promising it will end well for your character. Spaceship airlocks are, after all, there to be used.

- Elizabeth M "Real SPACE Crime" Editor

\* ATN Productions, still a Subsidiary of Bread and Circuses (Cayman Islands) Limited.