

the
MOUNTS

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE

Feb
2018



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The column formerly known as "Ask the Neighbours"

This months cover photo was taken by David Howell at dawn over Bowen's Creek. If you would like to send in a cover photo for the next Edition please send it through to us at themounts2786@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2018



Welcome back everyone after what I hope was a restful and enjoyable Christmas break.

The new year is in full swing and already it feels as though Easter and the Autumn season are just over the horizon.

In stark contrast to last year it has been incredibly dry, it would be wonderful to have some rain to fill the tanks and have the gardens looking their best for the influx of visitors in a few short weeks!

The Village Hall AGM and the Mount Wilson Progress Association GM are both coming upon the 17th of March and are great opportunities to get involved and ask questions about what is planned for the hall and the MWPA for 2018.

Speaking of community engagement, I would like to wish Kathleen Oakes and Pete Dempsey all the best on their move to Tasmania. It was wonderful to catch up with everyone and hear the lovely speeches that were made at the farewell dinner that was held at the RFS shed last Friday. It is events like these that remind me of how special this area and community are.

We welcome submissions from everyone in the community, if you would like to contribute to the Mounts please send us an email at themounts2786@gmail.com



Roses in the garden at Westring and a rainbow over Lamb's Hill one afternoon in February

Jess Delbridge

AROUND THE MOUNTS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Sat 3rd - Sun 4th Historical Society Workshop (Archive sorting) Village Hall	Friday 9th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Mereweather Lane	Sunday 1st Easter Sunday Church Service 3:00pm St Georges
Friday 9th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Wynne Reserve	Sunday 11th Church Service 3:00pm St Georges	Sunday 8th Church Service 3:00pm St Georges
Sunday 11th Church Service St Georges 3:00pm Followed by Vestry Meeting	Friday 16th Bushwalk Glow Worm Tunnel	Friday 13th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Hay Lane
Friday 16th Bushwalk Nature Track Wentworth Falls	Saturday 17th Village Hall AGM + MWPA GM Village Hall from 5.30pm	Friday 20th Bushwalk

BIN CALENDAR

15 TH FEBRUARY
22 ND FEBRUARY
1 ST MARCH
8 TH MARCH
15 TH MARCH
22 ND MARCH
29 TH MARCH
5 TH APRIL
12 TH APRIL

Recycling
 Green Waste

A POST SCRIPT FILM COMPANY AND THE TURKISH BATH MUSEUM



Recently we have been contacted by the Location Manager of Lingo Pictures on behalf of Foxtel. For the Society this is a bright chapter. They wish to use the Turkish bath in a film they are producing for a 4 part TV series. Filming will take place later in the year in May to June probably over a few days. The story centres around a group of Nuns in a remote part of Australia. For us it is something rather different and intriguing and involves a financial benefit.

- Mary Reynolds

IN MEMORIAM: VALE BRUCE JAMES WRIGHT

My companion, mentor and caring partner of 24 years and the Project Officer liaising with Design5 for the Turkish Bath Conservation died in Perth on 18th January.

Arthur Delbridge, Ellis Reynolds and Bruce seemed to be Three Wise Elders who guided the Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Historical Society from early days in 1995 - 6 till increasing frailty made it difficult to continue in active roles.

Without them we would not have achieved so much at such a high standard in a mere score of years.

The main focus of the many exhibitions, jazz concerts, art shows, Wynstay Open Gardens was to raise funds to supplement grants to conserve the Turkish Bath Museum building and its precinct, restore the Wynstay stables and support the work of our Historian Extraordinaire Mary Reynolds.

Bruce was always welcome to stay mostly with Mary and Ellis or Arthur and Florence particularly after he retired. As an educator, archeologist, Pilbara Rock Art Specialist and indigenous rights supporter he had much wisdom based on experience and continuing research.

A quiet, deep thinker, slow to speak and a gentle caring man he was truly missed when increasing short term memory loss meant a return to Perth and his family including great grand children seemed best.

I no longer had my bushwalking partner, my editor in chief for the healthcare policies I had learnt to write under his guidance. No longer a dinner time discussion over a glass of wine, someone always ready to paint, repair, mow and trim, sharing music,



art and books at my Blaxland home and in it's bush garden. So much to miss but so many memories and continuing friends in the Mounts.

So many came for an 80th and a 65th birthday tea in our garden. Bruce was almost 90 and until the last year or two reasonably well.

I promised myself I would live there and so I did for a year or two when I too finally retired, thanks to Peter and Linda on Gowan Ross.

We both owe The Mounts a debt of deep gratitude for making us both so welcome in their small but close communities.

Always loved in memory living and recorded Vale Bruce James Wright.

- Pauline Michell

AROUND THE MOUNTS

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF MT. WILSON

A celebration will be held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Surveying and Naming of Mt Wilson hosted by the Mt Wilson Progress Association. The date is tentatively set for Saturday, November 24, 2018. Details to follow.

This will be in lieu of the annual Christmas drinks.

Any suggestions for the festivities, please contact Nancy Fox on 0411 251 743

WHEN THE MT IRVINE HALL BECAME AN NSP (NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACE).

On Wednesday 24th of January, a group of gentlemen armed with brush cutters and chainsaws arrived and proceeded to assault the understory of the Dept of Lands Reserve below the Mt.Irvine Hall, within two days of hard manual work the area appeared more park like than bush.

On Monday the 5th of February three companies contracted to clear the hall grounds of trees arrived armed with a multiplicity of aggressive looking machines. During the ensuing week almost all of the trees disappeared into the ravenous maw of a giant chipper appropriately named THE BEAST.

- Ray Harrington



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 17th March at 4.30pm

The agenda of the meeting will report to the community about the activity of the committee during 2017 and the plans for 2018. There will also be an opportunity for questions and discussion about our Hall.

This is not an election year.

Everyone Welcome! Please join us after the meeting for afternoon tea before the Mt Wilson Progress GM at 5.30pm

- Judy Tribe
Chair, Mt Wilson Village Hall Management Committee

MW PROGRESS ASSOC. GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING
The General Meeting of the Mount Wilson Progress Association inc will be held in the Mount Wilson Village Hall on Saturday 17 March 2018 at 5.30 pm *ALL WELCOME*

BOWENS CREEK FIRE TRAIL UPDATE

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

In my last update I reported the disappointing news that, despite various efforts to find out the status of the feasibility study for the restoration of this route, we were unaware of its current status.

I am pleased to report that, following further requests for information, I have recently been advised by Hawkesbury City Council (as lead council) that the formal application to the Federal Government to access the feasibility study fund of \$100,000 (promised by the Federal Government at the July 2016 Election) has been successful. Although it was an Election promise, it still had to go through the necessary approval process to access the funds through the Federal Government's Community Development Grants Programme.

BMCC has helpfully provided additional advice that Hawkesbury City Council will go to the market in coming weeks through a Request for Quote (RFQ) process "for the engagement of a suitably qualified consultancy to complete the feasibility study into Bowens Creek Fire Trail. It is anticipated that the consultant would be engaged by the end of February and work commencing in March 2018."

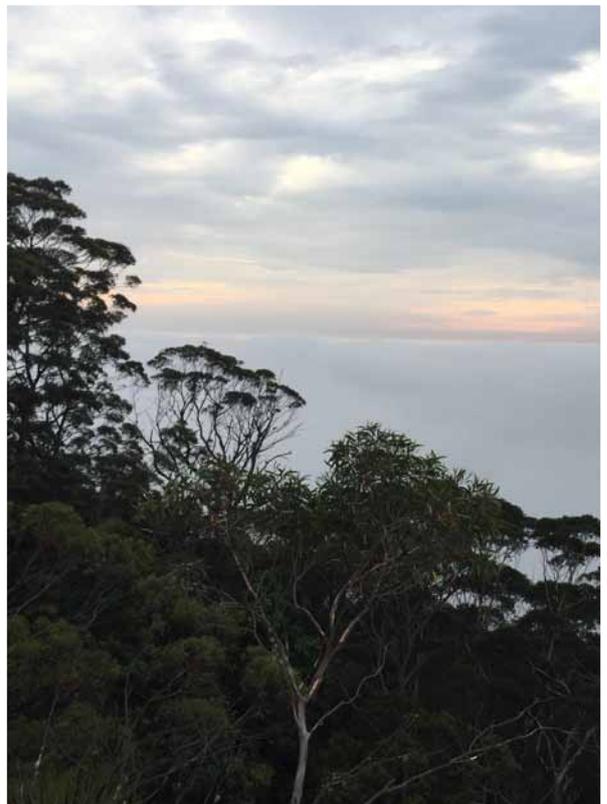
That's all good news. In the same advice which told us that the funding application has been successful, HCC advised that it will be working with the "NSW RFS" as things progress. That's good news too but we need to make sure that the study also properly considers our local community's perspective. While this is a "fire trail" (which the HCC has emphasized in its correspondence), it is also a means of access for other emergency vehicles such as NSW Police Rescue and NSW Ambulance.

This was only too starkly shown to be the fact recently, when NSW Police Rescue (assisted by our RF Brigade) had to access the BMCC side of the route in a search and rescue mission on New year's Eve.

As I've often reported, while the Brigade is making formal representations on behalf of all of us, you can play a part in making sure that our BMCC representatives (Ward One Councillors Don McGregor, Kerry Brown and Kevin Schreiber), our State MP Trish Doyle and our Federal MP Susan Templeman understand how seriously we take this issue. Let's keep in their minds the significance of this emergency vehicles access route to us and the thousands of visitors who come to our beautiful part of the Mountains.

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

Photo: David Howell



DEAR FRIENDS

Thank you for all the kind words, cards and messages that we have received since we announced our Tasmanian adventure. We are a little overwhelmed by the compliments but I guess we should not be too surprised given the wonderful moments we have shared with so many over our years here. We know how generous you all are.

Many of you have promised to visit us in Tasmania, so many in fact that we are reconsidering our plan to buy a small house and now think that perhaps a motel would suit better. On the other hand, we have just booked 2 nights 'glamping' on a foodie Backroads Trail on the Murray. If we survive that we may have an idea for developing an alternative Tasmanian adventure for our visitors. It should not be too challenging for our national resilience award winning community friends.

'Resilience' is definitely the buzz word in emergency management these days with much public funding around the world going into defining it and understanding how it can be created. The main ingredient seems to be the 'connectedness' of a community. Did you know you can now receive grant money to fund a 'meet the neighbours' event? Obviously, those sorts of community picnics must include a bit more than 'bring a plate'. Personally, we think we could save a lot of tax payers' money if only they implemented the 7 Step Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Plan for Effective Community Resilience. If only they had spoken to us they would know that all you have to do is:

1. Close all cafes, supermarkets, pubs, petrol stations and any business offering entertainment in any form
2. Only provide Council services if there is a full complement of staff and no one member is away on sick leave, rec leave, family leave, study leave

or rostered day off.... or in a meeting. Important Council notices relating to the community will only be published in the Blue Mountains Gazette especially if it is not delivered to said community

3. Ensure natural disasters respect district boundaries. Emergency Services will respond only when it is remembered where Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are and as long as there is nothing more interesting happening closer to the Office. Requests will only be noted and actioned if the computer is working.

4. Only deliver mail on days when all golf courses are closed. Mail does not have to be delivered to the actual address but it is desirable, but not compulsory, that it is delivered to the right street. For WHS reasons items weighing more than 5 grams will have to be collected from the post office in a neighbouring LGA which are open when they open irrespective of what it says about 'Hours of Opening' on the parcel notification form

5. Only provide telephone/internet connection after multiple lengthy, heated and deeply emotional calls to Telstra on a mobile phone some distance from the problem phone or computer. Connection will be intermittent

6. Provide extensive bureaucratic procedures for ensuring residents understand the importance of saving wildlife habitat before saving human habitat. Provide green bins large enough for 2 hours gardening activity but only collected fortnightly

7. Introduce a rewards program whereby for every DA complying with Council regulations residents will receive a free wombat; for every truckload of mulch they will receive a free brush turkey; for every \$20 spent on vegetable seedlings they will receive a free wallaby and for every \$50 spent on bulbs and seedlings they will receive a free lyrebird

AROUND THE MOUNTS

DEAR FRIENDS ... cont

Street parties are all very well but we think our plan creates a more sustainable resilience in the community.

Oh dear, we are going to miss our life in the Mounts. It will be very dull in Tasmania if our new community knows nothing of mountain resilience. I think we had best accept the suggestion that we create 'twin' cities with wherever we settle in Tasmania and Mt Wilson. Of course, this will require multiple government funded feasibility study trips to ensure reciprocal arrangements are implemented appropriately. Kathleen is thrilled that the skills she developed in grant funding applications after the 2013 fires can again be used for such a good cause.

Seriously, though, we will miss our life in Mt Wilson even with all its challenges, and will especially miss meeting with our many Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine friends at community and social (is there a difference?) events. We deeply admire your constant and cheerful contributions to and efforts for the community and thank you for your friendship and many kindnesses over the years we have spent at Mt Wilson. All the best for the future.

- Kathleen Oakes and Peter Dempsey

WHATS ON MARCH / APRIL

BMAN LOWER MOUNTAINS ARTS TRAIL 2018

The 2018 arts trail is coming!

Meet leading local artists in their studios during the 2018 Blue Mountains Arts Trail on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 April.

For full event details, map and information about each artist and studio and regular updates, visit our website via the Visit Website link below; or go to the Blue Mountains Artists Network Facebook page, and look out for Stage 2 of the Arts Trail, Woodford to Mount Victoria, coming in June.

Location: Lapstone to Linden!

Enquiries via email please on info@bman.org.au

IRONFEST LITHGOW 2018

Ironfest 2018 Wild West will be held at the Lithgow Showground Sat April 21 & Sun 22 (with a pre-view Fri April 20)

An arts festival that explores the relationship between humans, metal and identity. It brings together artists, designer-makers, blacksmiths, performers of all kind, musicians, steampunkers, historical re-enactors, machine enthusiasts & hobbyists from all over Australia.

The 'Wild West' theme is huge, among others think: stage coaches, bush-rangers, gold-rushes, windmills, gunslingers, caballeros, wheel-wrights, sheep, cattle, farriers, rebels, outlaws, convicts...



AROUND THE MOUNTS

A SUMMER WEDDING IN MOUNT WILSON

The day just could not have been better. The weather was glorious and although a late afternoon storm was forecast, it never eventuated. Mt Wilson looked absolutely stunning.

The bridal party got ready at Farcry, with makeup done by Paul Bedggood of Katoomba and then walked to the St George's Church at 12.20pm for a 12.30pm ceremony. The Blue Mountains String Trio-Quartet, led by Lucy Cooper played before and during the service, and again at Dennarque Estate during pre-lunch drinks. Photos were taken at the Church, Church Lane, Farcry and at Dennarque. The MC was the previous owner of Farcry, Justice Michael Lee. The caterer was Art Kitchen of Pymble, with many compliments being received for the amazing salted caramel wedding cake. The entertainment was provided by "Okra" a band comprising Janet's 16 year old daughter, Ellen, and four of her school mates, with the dancing continuing well after the sun set.

Ivana Pokorna (Piggot) and Kate Mitakos of Boston Management, which manages weddings at Dennarque, did a terrific job with Dennarque looking an absolute picture on the day. Andrew and Janet wish to pass on their sincere thanks to everyone at Mt Wilson who helped the day be a success. Particular thanks go to Libby Raines, for her assistance in making the Church available and to Robert Nichol and Peter Anderson of Sefton Hall, who supplied the flower for the bouquets. Thanks also go to all the many people who provided accommodation for our friends and family, with a special mention going to Rosemary Walsh and "The Loft", surely the most perfect location for a wedding night ever!

- Janet McDonald

Photos by Evan, from Wedding Gallery
www.weddinggallery.net.au



ADDED HISTORY - SOME BACKGROUND TO THE NAMING OF MT WILSON AND THE SURVEY OF 1868

It would be an interesting event to hold a simple ceremony on the Zig Zag Mt Wilson naming the original track surveyed by Wyndham. I believe it has been cleared by Peter Raines who carries out so much work keeping the Village so attractive.

William Romaine Govett [1807—1841] surveyor and explorer was the first European to set foot on this mountain.c. 1833. In a survey north of what we now know as Bells Line of Road he described: "a high mass of range of the richest soil and covered with the most impenetrable scrub."

Later in 1879 the chief Draughtsman of the NSW Lands Dep. Eccleston Du Faur confirmed this when writing in the NSW Railway Guide. It was the western end of this mountain. Curiously the high mass of range was ignored by Europeans for the next 30 years. Yet driving regularly occurred along the track from the west to east following the trail made by Archibald Bell in 1823 and later surveyed by Robert Hoddle. In 1867 the son of George M.C.Bowen of 'Bulgamatta' on the north side of Mt Tomah ventured across the very rugged country beyond Bowens Creek bounding Mt Wilson on its eastern side: the Wollangambe bounding it on the north and western sides. Both creeks flow into the Colo River.

George Bowen was excited by his observations of the richness of the soil and the forest. His father informed the Deputy Surveyor Phillip Frances Adams of NSW whose curiosity was aroused sufficiently to send Surveyor Edward Sandford Wyndham to investigate. Wyndham, although not highly experienced, soon realised that access to these discoveries on the eastern side could not be achieved, the country was far too rugged. Wisely he referred back to the work of earlier explorers and surveyors such as Archibald Bell and Robert Hoddle and Hume who named the Darling Causeway in 1827. An easier path could be followed along the ridges to the "high mass of range". The Great Western Railway was being constructed reaching Mt Victoria or 'One Tree Hill' in 1868 and was an added advantage. Wyndham's Survey took him up the mountain; there his original track is a heritage item recommended for the State Heritage Inventory.

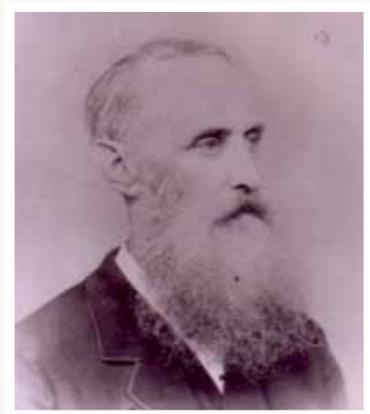
- Mary Reynolds



Edward Sandford Wyndham 1866. This photo was donated in 1968 by members of Wyndham's Family on the occasion of the Centenary of Mt Wilson and hung in the Village Hall for many years.



William Romaine Govett



Eccleston Du Faur [Du Faur's Rocks]

PARISH OF IRVINE AND THE CEMETERY ON DANES WAY

This is an old map of the "Parish of Irvine" which details the original extent of the cemetery on Danes Way. You will see that originally areas were allocated to specific religious groupings whereas now BMCC terms the area as being available for Interdenominational use.

My magnifying glass shows the religious groupings as:

Top left : Unallotted

Top right : Wesleyan

Lower right : Presbyterian

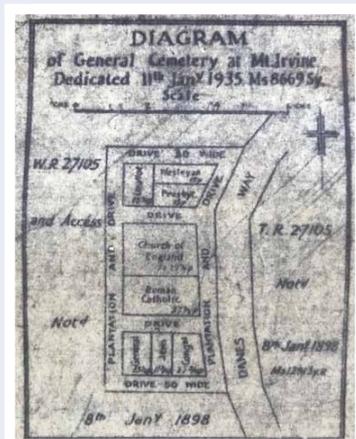
Mid area.

Top : Church of England

Lower: Roman Catholic

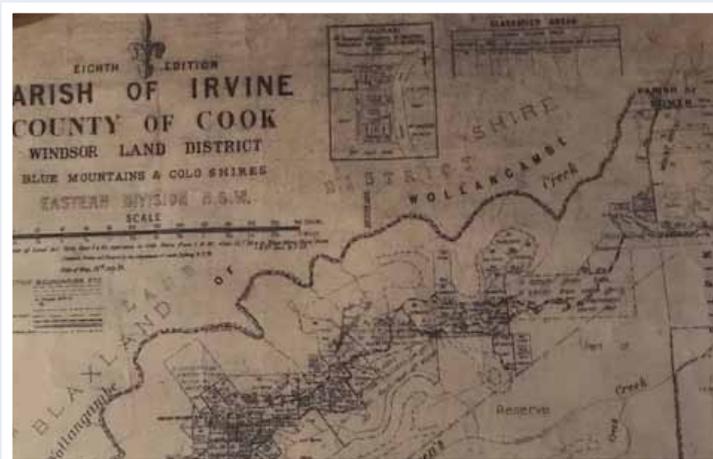
Lower area. Left : General

Centre : Jewish Right : Congregational



A major point of interest with this old map is that it shows both Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine as being in the Parish of Irvine, County of Cook. I guess that proves that Mount Wilsonites form a small part of the Parish of Irvine ... and as a Mount Irvinian I can now relax in the knowledge that Mt Wilsonites are part of us ... not the reverse! Incontrovertible proof!

- John Lee



SEARCH, SELL AND SHARE

Yamaha 6Kva generator 4 stroke.
Was working well when last used
5 years ago. It is old, heavy and
noisy. Free.

- Martin Barge 'The Cabin'. 0439 827305

I would like to find out if anyone
in the community would be
interested in exploring the
possibility of starting a Latin
American dance club?

Please feel free to email me so we
could ascertain interest.

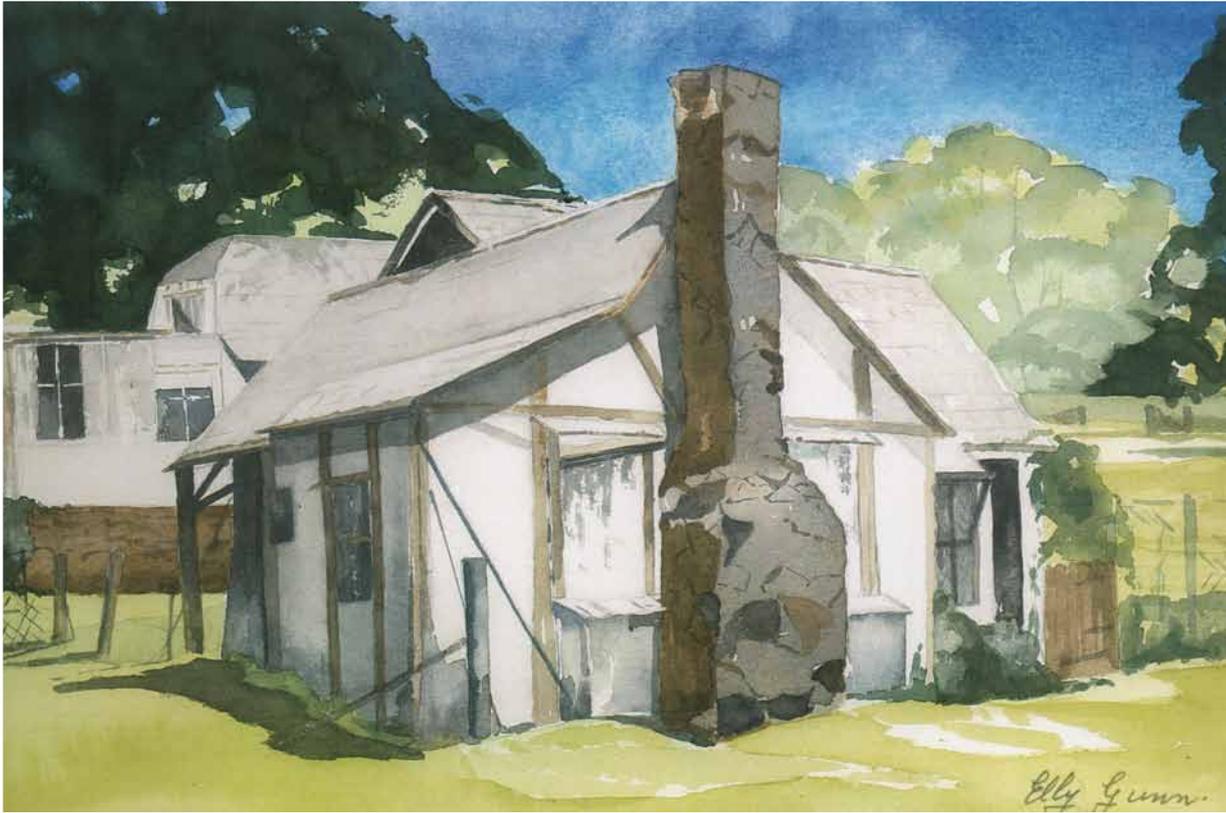
- Rosie Taylor rosietaylor@gmail.com

With so many locals growing their
own fruit and vege on the mounts
we wanted to find out if there was
any interest in the community in
starting a produce co-op where
residents can swap / sell their
produce with other residents.

This is useful way for residents to
reduce waste when they have a
glut and allows them to swap with
somebody else is a similar position
with a different crop.

This could be run once a month
or through a mailing list. If you are
interested or have any thoughts as
how this could run please send us
an email

- Jess Delbridge / Rosie Walsh
themounts2786@gmail.com



THE FAIRCLOUGH FAMILY

A story from Elly Gunn by Connie Fairclough

I have had this story for at least 15 years, or maybe even more. The person who wrote it was Connie Fairclough. When I worked at the Lithgow Co-op., Connie was one of my favourite customers. That was in the late 1950's.

One day not long after I was married and moved to Mount Irvine, I saw Connie and she wanted to know where I was living. When I told her Mount Irvine, she was so excited as she lived there as a young girl. And from here the story of her young life at Mount Irvine begins. (the cottage the Fairclough family lived in is "Little Shore" right next door to "Willow Bank" where I lived for 50 years). Small world.

Above is one of my watercolour paintings of the chimney the young boy was stuck in. The chimney I believe is still there. Cottage burned down in the 2013 fires.

- Elly Gunn



Photo this page: Children from Mount Irvine School Top Row Mr Jolly, Dick Fairclough, Ron Clarke, Pat Knight Brown, Betty Clarke, Noel Knight Brown. Second Row: Ruth Scrivener, Mavis Scrivener, Connie Fairclough, Betty Fairclough, Fred Morley, Willy Jolly, Albert Jolly. Bottom Row: Gwen Scrivener, Ken Jolly, Reg Fairclough, Kathryn Morley.

" We lived at 88 Cunningham Road, Shepherds Bush in the heart of London. There were five children, my father was a traffic policeman. We would go and watch him at work.

He was in the First World War for 4 years, a year after that in France. In 1925 he decided to immigrate to Australia. He left England first, for 12 months and was working for the Scriveners at Mount Irvine when he sent for Mother with the children: Dick, Connie, Betty, Reg and Peter. We went down to Southampton and caught the S.S. "Baradine".

After saying farewell to relatives we had a very rough sea trip especially in the Bay of Biscay. It took 6 weeks to arrive first in Fremantle and other ports to Sydney. Our father was there to meet us coming down by train from Mount Irvine and Bell. That night we stayed

in one big room at the Peoples Palace in Pitt Street.

Next morning we caught the train to Bell. We had never seen the mountains before or rivers. We were all very excited at the views and the train trip. After we arrived at Bell the mailman was there, Eric Gurney, so we all got in to the truck, kids on the back. We were terrified at the deep gullies and rocks and cliffs, but arrived safely at our house dad was in. The first thing I remember was a huge pantry of preserves and fruits he had done for us.

In those days there was no bread delivered, so the first thing mum had to learn was to make bread. Mrs Scrivener gave her the first big yeast bottle and she was a wonderful bread maker on the old fuel stove.

After a year brother Ken was born at Mrs Clarke's

FEATURE ARTICLE

.....

home, a fine healthy baby. Then 2 years later Tom was born in Sydney as there were complications.

My memory of mum coming home was the old horse "Shock" dragging the sledge along with the rain pouring and mum nursing the new baby. That was number 7. Five years later Joan was born at Mrs Clarke's, all was well with number 8. Two years after Jenny was born in Sydney, number 9. So that was 4 children born whilst at Mount Irvine.

Our little school had one teacher, a Mr Cruickshank, we were all in the same room, older ones at the back. He was a good teacher, as brother Dick won a bursary. Some years later, the school closed: not enough pupils so we had correspondence for a while.

When we first went to the school we all wore shoes and socks, but other kids tormented us so much, we soon had no shoes and no socks the same as them.

One incident happened with Dick. He loved roaming around the mountain. On this particular day he went up to the top of the mountain. He was missing for hours, everyone was looking for him. He had gone up to Mick's house and decided to climb on to the roof.

He was looking down the chimney (Still standing today) and his hat fell down, so he tried to reach it with his legs and fell into the chimney, he was stuck. After a few hours, someone heard his faint cries and managed to pull him out. I remember him coming home on the back of a dray, badly bruised and cut. He survived the day.

We used to watch the Harbour Bridge being built through the powerful field glasses we had. I went down to the opening with my girl friend and were on the first train crossing the bridge to the suburb of Turramurra.

After a few years we decided to move to Mount Victoria. We were all sad to leave, but the four younger ones had to go to school at Mount Victoria and Katoomba High School.

One nice day we all walked down to Bowen's Creek, carrying all the food and the youngest ones (we had a pusher which was very rough to push). But we always had a great day, coming home with lots of crayfish.

I always remember one night I slept on our verandah in those days. I was awake listening to the strange noises for a long while. Then suddenly the whole of the saw mill went up in flames. It was very frightening.

The culprit was never found.

In 1928 we had a great friend in Viv Kirk. who used to let us go up the mountain to watch his bullock team drag the huge logs down. One bullock always copped the abuse, Baldy by name. It was where my brothers learned to swear from a good teacher.

Once a year we would go to the Mount Wilson to the fete at Colonel Wynn's. A real treat for all the folk from Mount Irvine."

- Story from Connie Fairclough told by Elly Gunn

MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Committee News



The new year has come in with a blast of heat, and very little rain. Thunderstorms have created some anxiety but have not impacted on our immediate surrounds. The committee has made progress in deciding how we are going to celebrate the 150 years of settlement, and I hope you will all be able to come along in November of this year. As decisions are made by the sub-committee we will keep you informed. We have already decided that this celebration should be enjoyed by all so we are not using you as volunteers!

I attended the website information session, given by Ash and found it most useful. There is a lot of material only available once you are logged in so make sure you know your user name and password so you can see all the material not available to the general public.

Canyoning has continued to be very popular and it seems inevitable that there have been those in need of rescuing and assistance. Please tell anyone you know who is planning to visit the Wollamgambe River to plan sensibly, to check the conditions and make use of the information on the web site.

This year will also see a change in the care and maintenance of the mountain. We have not yet

heard from BMCC exactly how this is to play out but essentially the MWPA will no longer be paying Peter Raines and other contractors direct; this will be done by the Council. We hope that the change will not significantly impact on the beauty of our mountain. The change was part of a number of issues that the committee discussed with Dan Long towards the end of 2017. As always Dan was interested and gave useful advice.

Australia day was celebrated at the RFS maintenance Friday dinner. It was, as Sarah said, quintessentially Australian as we enjoyed roast lamb and pavlova in the fire shed. It was great to imagine people all over the country doing a similar thing...

If you are not a member of the MWPA please join, it gives you a say in the issues that concern us all. I wish you all a happy 2018.

- Alison Halliday



MT IRVINE PUBLIC HALL UPGRADE

New grants allow for further upgrades to community hall

A public school opened in Mt Irvine in 1926 in a weatherboard building and operated until 1931. The school closed down due to falling student enrolments and became a community hall with tennis court until 1957, when it was destroyed by fire. The building was replaced by the present hall.

The architectural style of the Mt Irvine Public Hall is an example of what is known as the Mid - Century Modernist Movement. The architect was Mr W. E. (Bill) Lucas (1924-2001) who lived and had a practice at Castlecrag in Sydney. He was a part-time lecturer for ten years (1965 - 1975) at the School of Architecture, UNSW and was instrumental in establishing the Paddington Society. A photo of Mr Lucas' original plans dated March, 1961 for the Mount Irvine Hall accompanies this article.

Attributes that denote Modernist Mid-Century architecture that are evident in the Mt Irvine hall include;

- Rectilinear shapes and horizontal lines
- Floor to ceiling windows.
- Specific attention to the site and the building's placement within the block eg: the front does not have to face the street.
- Lack of decorative and ornate styling.
- The use of new materials including large glass panels, low or flat roof pitch, and concrete.
- Internally, bold signature colours including yellow, orange and aqua.

The Mt Irvine Public Hall Trust was successful in obtaining a grant from the NSW Department of Industry - Lands, to paint the hall inside and outside. This is a very welcome grant as not only does it provide the opportunity to update the appearance of the hall, it is essential for the maintenance and longevity of the materials of which the hall was constructed in the early 1960's.

MOUNT IRVINE PUBLIC HALL TRUST NEWS



Glenn Murcutt, in his 2002 Pritzker Architectural Prize Laureate Acceptance speech notes;

"..... I also worked in offices full time with people like Neville Gruzman and Bill and Ruth Lucas who were very good architects in the modern movement in Australia. I was fortunate enough to be working when Lucas designed one of the lightest lightweight houses that Sydney had ever seen, one of the most extraordinary works still...."

In order to respect and enhance the architectural integrity and rural setting of our hall in the selection of paint colours, Louise Nettleton local property owner and architect was consulted. Louise had previously been very generous with providing advice and plans for works on the hall including the design and colours for the new kitchen and ceiling.

The paintwork is now finished and the Trust is delighted with the result. Thank you Louise once again! And thank you to Bill Lucas for designing for us a 'little gem' of early Australian modernist architecture.

- Carol Carrigan
Trustee - Grants
Mt Irvine Public Hall Trust





RFS NEWS

RFS NEWS: Q and A with RFS Captain Beth Raines



People who live here do so for the love nature and the beauty that surrounds them. However, there is the constant threat of storms and bushfire and it is these threats that bring the community closer together in a common goal to protect what we have.

The local Rural Fire Brigade are our guardian angels and we have one of the highest volunteer participant rates per head of population in Australia.

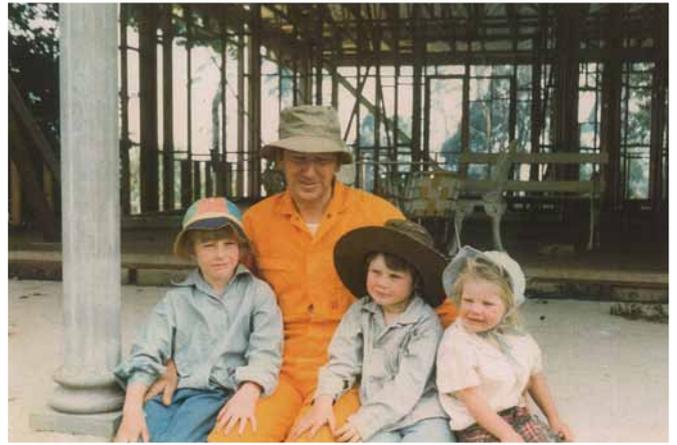
Our Brigade Captain is Beth Raines and we thought it would be nice to ask Beth a little about herself and her background and how she copes with her heavy schedule.

RFS NEWS

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Beth, your family has long association with the area – what appeals to you most about this unique place?

I love the peace & quiet, the varied landscape, the rainforest and escarpment country, expansive views and secret gullies all so close. Being able to participate in functions and groups if you like or hide away behind your fence if you want. Having family nearby is the best and so many fabulous friends & neighbours.



When did you first become involved with the RFS – you must have been very committed to do what is necessary to become Brigade Captain – how many female Brigade Captains are there in NSW?

If you live in one of the most fire prone areas in the world then it is a bit of a no brainer that you equip yourself with the knowledge and practical tools to deal with those events. The picture of me with Pete & Rob as children at Merry Garth ready for the fire speaks of a family ready and prepared. The 1994 fires were a massive event, my brothers (aged 18 & 19) were out on trucks and I helped out in the hall (girls were definitely not encouraged to go on trucks!) During the mid 1990's there was an influx of new people and one of the positives was that both partners would become members of the Brigade and complete basic training and so I also did my basic training in 1999 and then Advanced and Village Firefighting in 2003 and Crew Leader in 2005. In 2008 I became Captain, only the second female captain in the history of the Blue Mountains RFS (and still only the second). It takes up a considerable amount of time, hundreds of emails, executive meetings, community meetings, District Office meetings, working groups and workshops as well as ongoing maintenance and training. Reports and constant badgering to get things done and being ultimately responsible for the Brigade all takes energy that is sometimes hard to find. I often question the role the Brigade undertakes



and the support from agencies especially the BMCC and RFS – none of us are getting paid to do what we do yet the support from above is at times lacking.

I have no idea how many female captains there are – not enough! I still attend meeting where current Captains say that the guys are on the trucks and the 'ladies' are in the kitchen - AGHH!!

My theory is quite simple – if you own property here you should equip yourself with the skills to be able to protect your own property – everyone should have a basic understanding of bushfires and ideally be able to start a pump and get hoses out. No one likes feeling helpless so having basic firefighting training is a really important skill to have regardless of if you want to be 'on trucks' or not (and by the way – it is not as scary as it may seem!)

The Brigade has a very committed medical first responder group which you are part of – this also required specialized training – how demanding is this activity?

We have First Responder training every month which is split into online theory and a practical component. The theory part can take anywhere between half an hour for simple subjects to several hours for complex units. Subjects include trauma, seizures, mental health, the unconscious patient, acute coronary syndrome and patient health care records to name a few. Paramedics from Lithgow come up to conduct face to face practical training which means that we are familiar with them and vice versa when we need to see a reassuring face at an incident. Feedback from the Ambos is that they are also glad to see a familiar face when they make it out here too! We spend a bit of time each month catching up on the jobs that have come through – can we do things differently, if the patient presented this way what would we do instead – we are always learning.

The effort that we put in, the training and the learning are all worth it when we do a difficult job well and see the patient safely off in the Ambulance.

All your experience with the RFS must help you in your job with National Parks-what sort of work do you do there?

Everything related to Bushfire Management! I am in charge of a team of four that complete all the preparation work for hazard reductions and maintain APZ's (asset protection zones) throughout the Upper Mountains and Kanangra areas. One of the biggest jobs I completed was cutting a 1.5km hand tool line from under the Three Sisters into Kedumba River with a chainsaw, brushcutter and backpack blower (& there were only two of us!) This time of the year I spend most of my time on remote fires where crews are inserted by helicopter. Once on the ground, we set up radio communications and then in crews of 3 or 4 walk the fire edge looking for burning trees, stumps and ash beds that can restart a fire. We will only be inserted if the fire behaviour is low (ie flame height less than one metre) and we have helicopter support which will knock the fire edge down with buckets of water. Most of these fires are started by lightning strikes and are in incredibly remote and steep terrain. One of the perks of my job is being able to fly over some of the most spectacular country in the State – something I will never tire of – The Gardens of Stone National Park is just amazing from the air. As I write this NPWS Blue Mountains Branch has just had a very intense firefighting response – we have dealt with 78 fires in the last week (Jan 25-31) – our saving grace was that there was very little wind as thunderstorms every day saw new fires pop up all the time. On Australia Day I was winched in to three separate fires – Myrtle Creek, Capertee River (both south Wollemi fires) and Station Street, Mt Boyce with all fires successfully put out with three people & helicopter support.



Like all things the art of limiting and fighting bushfires will evolve in the future – what do you think will be the most significant changes in the future?

This year has seen much more use of retardants and gels dropped by planes as well as the use of the large planes (LAT & VLAT). I think drones will become much more common place on firegrounds especially with reconnaissance, imaging, aerial incendiary and night time work. We use line scans and infra red to see burning trees, stumps and hot spots which could be done with a drone when helicopters are not nearby.



With all this commitment to protecting life and property do you manage to have any spare time to relax and work on the house you purchased recently?

No – too busy writing this up – haha!



How lucky we are to have people like Beth in our community who volunteer so much of their time to enhance and protect our lifestyle. It is above all this spirit of commitment to the community that really makes Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine the unique and wonderful place it is

- Questions by Peter Laving, Community Engagement Officer and answers by Beth Raines, Brigade Captain

This interview with Beth will be part of the history of the RFS, to be published by the end of 2018



MOUNT WILSON AND MOUNT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Recent Events and Comments

Weekend Workshop was held in the Mt Wilson Village Hall on 3rd -4th February 2018 from 10.30 a.m. – to 4.00p.m. to deal with the Archive collection stored in the vestibule of the Study centre. The aim being to reduce the size of the archives where that was practical and to sort any items requiring accessioning and cataloguing, particularly photos. We were most fortunate in having the assistance of people like John and Helen Cardy who have had a long history with the archives along with Jan Koperberg secretary of BMCHAO, Suzanne Smith from Kurrajong Comleroy Hist.Society, Fiona Burn from the Blue Mts. Historical Society archivist, Peter Rickwood plus Des Barrett, Helen Freeman, Malcolm Reynolds members of the Society. Our gratitude to those people for sacrificing their precious time to come to Mt Wilson and applying their expert knowledge to the demanding tasks. Added to that was the task of carrying the material from the Study Centre to the Village Hall. We are grateful to the Blue Mts City Council for allowing us to use the Village Hall rent free for that weekend.

Thank you to Helen Cardy, Helen Freeman and Suzanne Smith for providing morning tea & lunch .

It was felt that at the end of the weekend that much had been achieved. Magazines from the past and other items were discarded to be recycled very kindly by Peter Rickwood and Des Barrett. The photo collection was dealt with very efficiently by John and Helen Cardy. Indeed they have taken some of that onerous work home with them to complete. Costs are a big factor with photos and it was decided to limit costs where possible. Meanwhile documents of every kind were sorted and labelled ready to be filed and /or accessioned. Jan ,Fiona, Suzanne, Helen and Malcolm dealing with those matters.

During the Saturday we heard from Alison Halliday and Des Barrett about the possibilities for the future of the Study Centre following a meeting held earlier in the day.



The Turkish Bath Museum:

The Turkish Bath Museum is in need of care and attention. The gutters require cleaning; the grass and garden also. If you know of any one who could undertake these tasks, please contact us via the website or Tel; 4782 9882.

It is hoped we will be able to open the Turkish Bath Museum from the end of February 2018: It will be dependent on the help we can receive from our volunteer members to man the Museum from 12.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. on the Sundays we open. Below are the possible dates:

Sunday 25th February 2018; March 25th ; Easter Saturday 31st March; Sunday 1st April; 8th April; 15th April; 22nd April; 29th April. Sundays in May.

If a volunteer would prefer a Saturday just contact us on 4782 9882 or email: mary_reynolds@internode.on.net

- Mary Reynolds
(on behalf of the Interim Committee of the Society)

TURKISH BATH OPENING DATES

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

If so please contact Mary Reynolds

Sunday Feb 25th 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday March 25th 12.30 - 3.30pm

Easter

Saturday March 31st 12.30 - 3.30pm

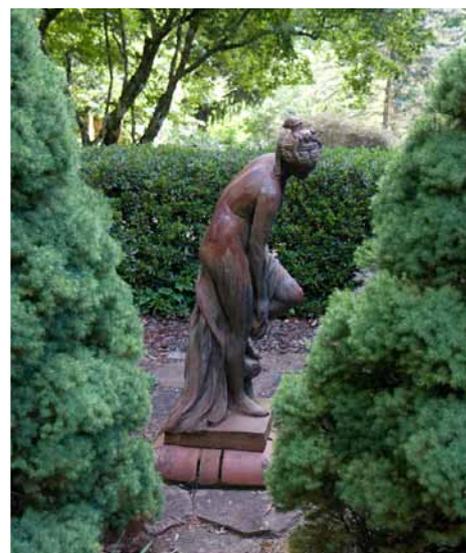
Sunday April 1st 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 8th 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 15th 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 22nd 12.30 - 3.30pm

Sunday April 29th 12.30 - 3.30pm



IN MY GARDEN: The garden at Withycombe

Photos this page (L-R): Looking up the paddock from the amphitheatre (the sundial was custom-made for Barbara's 40th birthday) , the Bathing lady

Withycombe has a chequered history of ownership: George Henry Cox, Marcus Clarke, Ernest Brown, the parents of Patrick White – Mrs White changed the property name from Beowang to Withycombe and seems to have been the one responsible for having all the tree ferns removed. She sold the property to the Archbishop of Sydney for ten shillings; the church sold it to Charles Mayo in 1941; he sold it to Minnie and Robert Newman after WWII and in 1965 the Newmans sold to Max Collard, an architect. In 1981 it was purchased by Gary and Helen Ghent and in 2002 by Merrick and Barbara Howes. Since then Barbara's parents, Joe and Diana Landsberg, have been the resident managers.

There is very little record of who did what, and when, in the grounds, although there was clearly a lot of work done, in the early years, to construct an English-style garden. Most of the native trees were removed and a great many exotics were planted: oak and ash, maple and elm, dogwoods and various conifers. There are over 70 species of trees on Withycombe,

many of them superb, mature specimens. The only part of the garden relatively unchanged from the time the main residence was built in the late 1870s is the formal front lawn and old tennis court below it. The lawn is dominated by an enormous Spanish oak tree and the old tennis court is overhung by other oaks. There is a large Douglas fir in one corner.

The main job in the garden during our first few years here was clearing. It was very overgrown with massive, spreading rhododendrons, too many trees and shrubs and old azaleas, so it was chainsaw gardening backed by an industrial-scale chipper. There were extensive renovations to the house, a new garage to replace the old apple packing shed, a Lodge, new pavings at the side and in front of the house and at the back of the cottage. There is a new tennis court on the north-west side of the property, and a boule court below it.

To bring back some of the tree ferns originally on Withycombe a new fernery, planted with Dicksonia

IN MY GARDEN

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Antarctica, cyathea australis, doodia and blechnum, has been established below the old tennis court. We built the fernery, path and steps up to the old tennis court in 2007. A rockery with two small pools runs along the eastern flank of the front lawn. In one of the pools is the 'Snail Catcher', a bronze sculpture by Oxford-based sculptor David Goode.

Barbara's masterplan (she is in the garden design business) for the garden has been steadily implemented: we have extensive new plantings, a Formal garden in an area bounded by a wall that was filled with old azaleas, a Memorial garden with a bench with a plaque commemorating Joe's mother. Shrub borders and plantings around the new tennis and the boule court are a mix of escallonia, box, flax, cordyline, viburnum, juniper. The intention is to provide year-round 'screening' of the tennis court and boule/lawn area from Church Lane and, with this, to create an area of the garden with a 'personality' indicating its modern origin yet maintaining the characteristics of the old garden. A north-facing wall of rough basalt below the courts provides what seems to be a very favourable site for roses, which grow rampant and need a great deal of pruning.

There isn't space to describe all parts of Withycombe's garden, and the photos are just illustrative of bits and pieces, but hopefully it all provides a flavour of the place. Development is now complete, with a beautiful stone-walled circular feature just west of the Lodge, but that doesn't mean the garden will now be static. Gardens are living entities; they change with the seasons and evolve.

- Joe Landsberg

Photos this page: The Seasonal Garden—a place of flowers in season and a place to sit. It was overgrown with old rhododendrons when we came here

The Goblin circle and view to the tennis courts

The sun doesn't always shine. Snow fall - July 2016



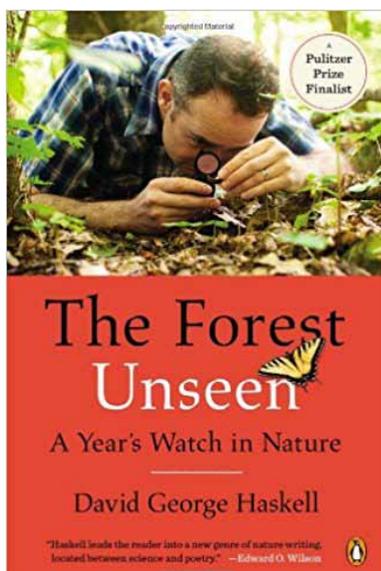


SNAPSHOTS AROUND THE AREA

Photos taken by residents

Photos: Clearing the fuel; Eucalyptus Pulverulenta; and Depths of the Gorge by Ray Harrington, Rainbow over Lambs Hill by Ash Phillips and Mt Banks by Elizabeth Montano

THE FOREST UNSEEN – a year's watch in nature by David G. Haskell



One of the pleasures of gardening is the opportunity to note the, sometimes tiny, day to day and season to season changes. A rose fades from pale pink to dusty white, the grass dies in summer over the sandstone bedrock and then miraculously reappears after rain, wombats and ants are equally stubborn in their invasion tactics – all this through looking.

David Haskell reminds the reader of the power of simple observation in *The Forest Unseen* where he examines a square metre of land, calling it a mandala, over the course of a year. The forest, in Tennessee, has been protected from logging and is full of mature timber, and fauna from tiny insects to the occasional coyote pack.

The title is of course a misnomer for what Haskell does so well is to reveal the almost invisible, to show the extraordinary activity among everything in the forest, and how the great web of living nature is so mutually interdependent. Sometimes he just sits on a nearby boulder, sometimes he gently disturbs the top layer of the ground and often he uses a small eyeglass so as to clearly see what is going on in front of him and the details of the smallest creatures. Sometimes he does something really odd, such as stripping off all his clothes in below freezing weather to compare how his body copes with the survival techniques of a small bird.

He reveals a deep understanding and appreciation of life. From the sex life of algae to the migratory patterns of birds, from cycles of 100s of years in the deer population to the ephemeral early spring bulbs, from the war of mating snails to molecular characteristics of botanical medicines – all are fascinating and discussed with verve, a sense of irony at his own precarious position, and a deep understanding of biological processes.

He comments: 'Part of what we discover by observing ourselves is an affinity for the world around us. The desire to name, understand, and enjoy the rest of the community of life is part of our humanity. Quiet observation of living mandalas offers one way to rediscover and develop this inheritance.'

This book came as a Christmas present from an old friend, but treat yourself and get a copy; and then test some of his techniques in your own special patch of land.

- Alison Halliday



THE PATCH

The Slow Food Movement (and Blueberry pancakes)

Well I thought I knew what slow food meant 10 years ago, after all my French/Maltese grandmother cooked lovingly slow food on her little kero stove she bought out from Europe. There was no sparing any eatable parts, rabbit in red wine and garlic, coq au vin, beef in Moroccan spices, duck with quince and even chestnuts with mandarin and chocolate sauce. Also nothing was wasted, fat was rendered down, stock was made and pates and terrines were always on hand unfortunately for me so were snails!!!. Most vegetables were grown and any vegetable waste after pickling and preserving went to the compost.

So after hearing early on a few foodies talk about slow food I thought that was what they were totally talking about.

So on one of our pilgrimages to Europe of course we had to go to the grand city of Turin where we heard the movement of slow food was created and find the wonderful restaurants that would have "slow food" thinking it was more than what my grandma had been doing - but to our utter amazement we could find no restaurants serving "slow food", that's because after-all Europe has a very long history of eating local produce and what is in season. One maitre d'hotel was confused with what we were looking for so directed us to a small office in one of those grand empire buildings.

THE PATCH

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Unfortunately the office wasn't open but we read the poster on the door.

OK, now we get it, certainly more to it than we thought.

For those who don't know the terminology of slow food ,Wikipedia describes it as:-" Slow Food is an organisation that promotes local food and traditional cooking. It was founded by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986 and has since spread worldwide. Promoted as an alternative to fast food, it strives to preserve traditional and regional cuisine and encourages farming of plants, seeds, and livestock characteristic of the local ecosystem. It was the first established part of the broader slow movement. Its goals of sustainable foods and promotion of local small businesses are paralleled by a political agenda directed against globalization of agricultural products."

The movement also encourages food diversity, helps distribute (and redistribute) food on a more equitable basis, educates to keep our food clean and reduce food waste.

By eating local and what is in season also reduces mileage and time food gets to you.

Last weekend Robbie and Alice called to come and pick some blueberries from our orchard, we chatted at the gate as they were carting off their couple of kilos just picked unsprayed blueberries when Alice piped up and said" we have so many raspberries would you like some?" I then commented on Nancy's bread, yuzus and corquettes and how wonderfully tasteful it all was, Annie Pigott's pine mushrooms are sublime in Autumn, The Bassett's potatoes yum yum and James Stein's duck eggs for the lightest sponge on earth, the list goes on and of course there are the chestnuts and walnuts people travel miles for. Earlier on in the week I had picked 20 globe artichokes - Stephen's favourite , masses of garlic and a basket full of apples.

So there we were at the gate feeling good about all our produce and what we could share, trade or sell - all local, fresh, tasty food.

Where does this go in this village I don't know but its food for thought.

- Rosie Walsh

We have been discussing starting a fresh produce co-op which could meet once a month or operate online for locals who want to trade their excess produce with others to reduce waste and get the most out of their garden - please email themounts2786@gmail.com to register your interest

After trading some of our veges for masses of delicious blueberries from Rosie and Steven I decided one morning to make blueberry pancakes with the left overs we had. The rest were so good we ate them straight out of the fridge by the handful!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup self raising flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 egg
- butter to fry

Combine flour, egg, milk and sugar in a bowl, whisk to combine. Heat butter in a fry pan over medium heat, pour in batter into centre of pan and dot with blueberries.

Once pancake surface begins to bubble flip over to cook the other side. Keep warm in low temp oven until ready to serve, best with honey and fresh ricotta for a decadent treat!

- Jess Delbridge



ATN*

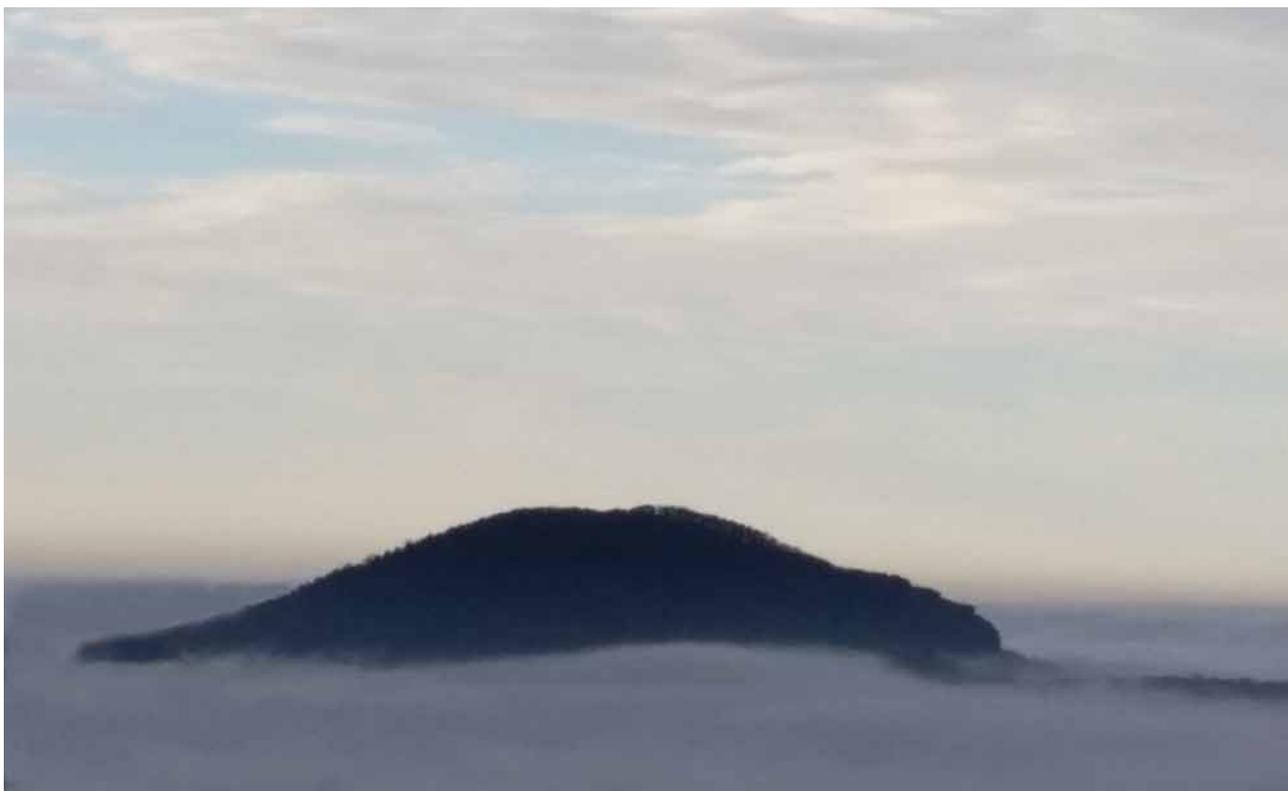
The column formerly known as “Ask the Neighbours”

Not much time for the column this edition, Jess. Busy busy busy. I've been location scouting for the out of this world “Murderous Mounts:ATN – A Space Epic”.

Like the new title, Jess? It's traditional, yet modern. It's homely, yet edgy. It's ... let's face it, Jess with the audiences of today you can't afford to lose those 30 second attention span opportunities by wasting precious seconds on distractions like new Show titles. That's why there are so many “2s” or, if they're classy, “lls” in movie titles these days. You need your audiences to be comfy about what they're getting. Who wants to have to THINK about a movie or show when there's foodstuffs of questionable nutritional value to shove in your mouth?

But I digress. Back to those location scouting expeditions. I've found a number of interesting possibilities. Some of them going really cheap. There's this one I visited in the Nevada desert – the guy trying to sell it to me said it was used in some Moon landing hoax years ago. Huh! But, I told him we needed some new fresh space shots. We're not going where anyone else has been. No dodgy old footsteps on craters; no weird flag which won't fly without wire attached.

And then I found the perfect location for the opening scene of our first episode: the secret research lab on the third Moon of the planet Murikone in the Heroditus Galaxy. See? Isn't it spooky? Isn't it out of this world?



What's that, Jess? You think it looks like Mt Banks at 7am on a foggy morning viewed from the deck of a property along the South side of Mt Wilson? That's preposterous, Jess. I'm hurt and alarmed. I'm alarmed and hurt that you should question my cinematographical and storytelling credibility in that outrageous fashion. I'm... busted. Do you know how much shooting a show on a real Space location costs? Even with a cheap New Zealand satellite to get us into space I couldn't make the numbers work.

And while I'm on budgets – do you know how much it costs to get a marble staircase into a space ship and then get that doozy of a payload out into space? But, that's enough crass money talk. I'll leave that to the Producers. When I find them.

It's puzzling but so far I haven't had any takers for the question put to our Dear Readers last edition. Seems that no-one wants that cameo role on "Murderous Mounts:ATN – A Space Epic". You remember? The role I'm writing especially for whoever comes up with the best name for our intrepid little space ship.

Do you think they've been turned off by the fact that they're destined – like every good extra on a suspense thriller – to be killed off in dramatic fashion? I could sweeten the deal, Jess.

OK- in the spirit of community engagement – I'm relaunching (boom fish) the spaceship naming competition. Whoever comes up with the best name for our brave little spaceship complete with marble staircase and ballroom (hang the expense, Jess. We'll find the dosh somewhere), will get a three episode run on the Show complete with bittersweet love interest angle with the Show's main lead character - gender to be of the winner's choosing - before falling mortally ill and dying in a nail-biting feature length episode. And I solemnly promise: no malfunctioning airlocks will be used for their dignified departure from the Show.

- Elizabeth M

"Real SPACE Crime" Editor

* ATN Productions, still a Subsidiary of Bread and Circuses (Cayman Islands) Limited – although we might have to do a "phoenix " soon.