



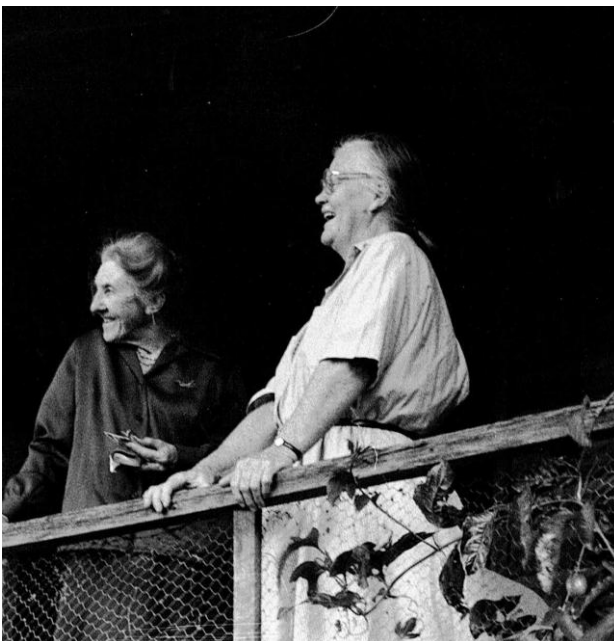
# Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society

Newsletter N° 22

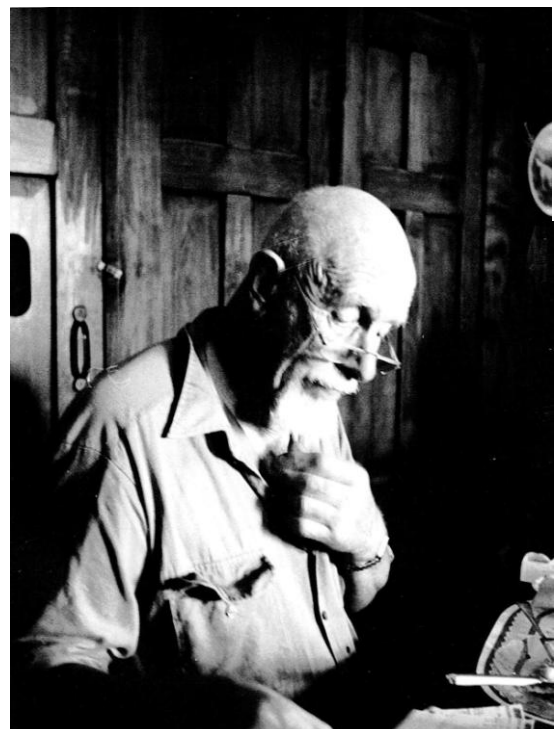
September 2010



Ron, Rose, Dad, Mum, Bill & Dick—the Smarts at *Carisbrook* in the early 1940s



Nell Knight Brown & Susannah Gailley



Ed Artlett at *Taihoa*

IMAGES FROM THEN

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the Society's September Newsletter.

The Society's mid-year General Meeting was held in the Mt Wilson Village Hall on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July. It was a cold and sunny day and there was a good attendance. The business side of the meeting received reports on recent committee work on the Society's collection policy, as well as financial and research reports. Our guest speaker was Prof Ian Jack, who presented an illustrated talk on the origins and development of the Kurrajong Heights property *Fernmount*. This was once the home of the Reverend William Scott (1825–1917), the first Government/Colonial Astronomer to be appointed at Sydney Observatory in 1856. Ian's talk will be published separately in the coming months.

During the first half of this year the Management Committee reviewed the Society's current collection policy and we agreed to adopt a number of changes with the aim of making the acquisition, storage, display and de-accessioning of material more manageable given our limited financial resources and storage facilities.

In general the Society's collection policy is a guide to how the Society acquires, rejects and disposes of material that is on offer to, or held by, the Society. The collection policy is our chief tool for making decisions about our current and potential collections. The Society holds a superb collection of material including drawings, letters, maps, manuscripts and photographs. This archival material forms the bulk of the collection, there being very little in the way of three-dimensional artefacts.

As we do not have proper storage facilities, the Committee agreed that the Society would concentrate on archival material and not actively collect the larger, three-dimensional items. The Committee also agreed that it would purchase material of outstanding significance to the communities of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine, but only consider such items if the Society's financial status warranted the purchase.

By now you may be wondering how the Society acquires material for its collection. In fact the Management Committee is also the Society's Acquisitions Committee. Items for acquisition are considered by the Committee and a decision to acquire or reject material is made at a committee meeting. The best way to have a potential item considered for acquisition is to contact a member(s) of the Management Committee.

Another important policy decision was made in regard to the awarding of Honorary Life Memberships. As many of you would know, Honorary Life Membership (as opposed to Life Membership) is the highest award bestowed by the Society upon an individual who is deemed to have attained an outstanding record of achievement in their work on behalf of the Society. The Committee considered: the steps required for nominating an individual for the award; determining an award; and the production of and times available for presenting the certificate. I'm pleased to say that the new procedures for Honorary Life Membership were recently put into practice when the outstanding contributions of Arthur Delbridge and Bruce Wright were recognised by their admission to Honorary Life Membership at the mid-year meeting.

Our Community Market Weekend, which is our major fundraising activity for the year, was held at the Village Hall precinct over the weekend of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April. Our gross income was \$4,524.85, with expenses of \$591.68. We rented out 23 tables, with food sales and other income about even. The Society is keen to plan for an even larger event for next year as Easter and Anzac Day occur at the same time.

We have already had 250 visitors to the Turkish Bath Museum this year and the Sydney Restoration Company is currently installing its new galvanised iron roof (details mentioned in a previous Newsletter).

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2010 AT  
MT WILSON VILLAGE HALL

*PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARIES*

The Society maintains a healthy financial status. The main points, as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010, are:

Operating account: \$28,900  
Term deposit: \$21,334  
Fundraising account: \$1,918  
TOTAL: \$52,118

Turkish Bath Museum roof replacement (our share):  
\$16,000

BALANCE: \$36,000

Thank you to all the volunteers who put in time during the Market Weekend and at the Turkish Bath Museum, and to the Management Committee

who have worked hard on various projects for the benefit of us all. It has been another successful half year for our Society and I note that there is much for you to enjoy in this Newsletter.

- Des Barrett, President

## AUTUMN MARKET WEEKEND

As Des has mentioned, the annual community market held in April was again a successful and enjoyable event. Visitors stream to Mt Wilson at this time of year to see the autumn foliage. All the open gardens are supported by the marketing strategies we use and serving food-on-the-run at the Village hall complements the more leisurely service available at Chimney Cottage Heritage Café.

The planning committee will be meeting in September to consider putting on a similar event in 2011. The prospect of Easter and Anzac Day both falling on the same weekend in April is rather daunting! Although this will be a peak time for visitors, many of our volunteer helpers may be involved with family events. Should we change the dates? We welcome comments on any aspect of this important fundraising event.

Julia with Helen's ever popular scones



## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Arthur Delbridge and Bruce Wright were honoured at the recent General Meeting with Honorary Life Memberships. Darrel Conybeare was on hand to present Arthur with his handsome framed certificate and read the following citation:

The Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc.  
confers  
Honorary Life Membership  
upon  
Arthur Delbridge

In recognition and appreciation of his  
many years of dedicated support for the founding  
and continued development of the Society.

His leadership and direction over several years set  
the Society's standing in the community, ensured the  
preservation of significant heritage sites and  
established regular avenues for wide distribution of  
important historical information.

Bruce Wright was unfortunately not able to be at the  
meeting to receive his award as he is now living in  
Western Australia. However, Mary Reynolds spoke warmly of his many contributions to the  
development of the Society and the Turkish Bath Museum over the first 10 years and then read the  
citation from Bruce's award:

The Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine  
Historical Society Inc.  
confers  
Honorary Life Membership  
upon  
Bruce Wright

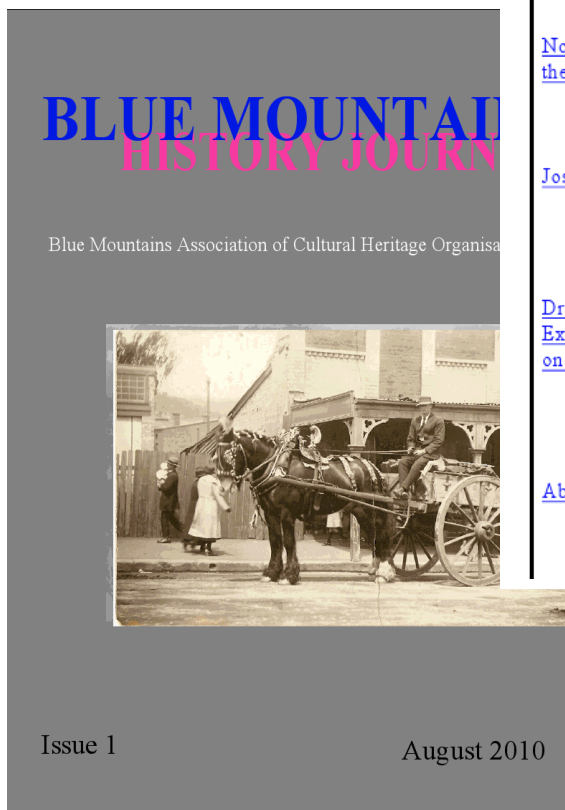
In recognition and  
appreciation of his many  
years of dedicated support  
for the restoration and  
establishment of the Turkish  
Bath Museum.

His professional skill and  
commitment to  
archaeological research and  
development at the Turkish  
Bath building and precinct  
and to the administration of  
the Society in its early years  
were invaluable.



Des Barrett, Arthur Delbridge & Darrel Conybeare

## A BRAND NEW JOURNAL

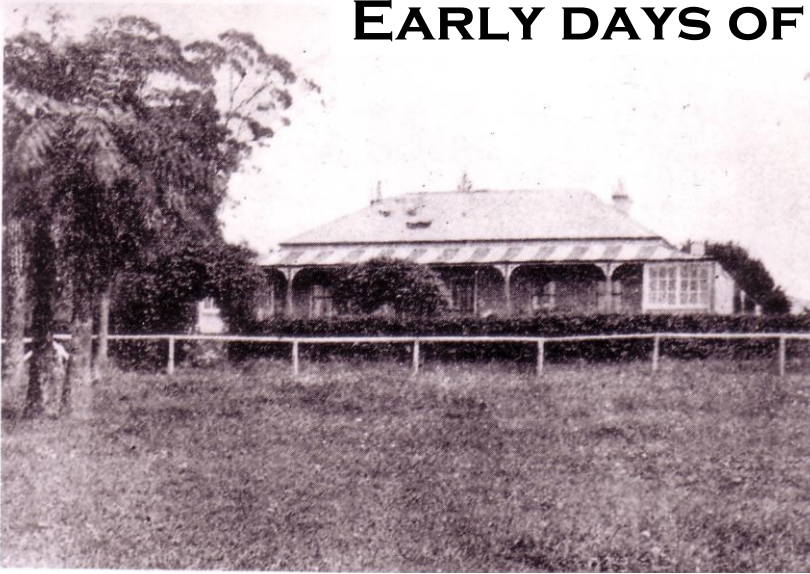


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**BLUE MOUNTAINS**  
HISTORY JOURNAL  
<http://www.bluemountainsheritage.com.au/journal>

## EARLY DAYS OF *CAMPANELLA*



Matthew Henry Stephen (1828–1920), known as Sinny by his family, was born in Tasmania and attended school in Hobart and then at Sydney College (later named Sydney Grammar School). To follow his studies in law he went to England and then returned to Australia in 1853.<sup>1</sup>

Matthew was the third son of Sir Alfred Stephen, the Chief Justice of NSW (1802–1894), and his first wife, Virginia. Sir Alfred's sister, Marianne, was married to

Henry Shadforth of Ravenswood, Mulgoa. Their daughter, Caroline, was attracted to Matthew but uncertain of marrying a cousin.<sup>2</sup> She eventually overcame her concerns and they wed in 1854.

Matthew (below) had been admitted to the Bar in 1850. He was described as a 'courteous, accurate and painstaking lawyer'.<sup>3</sup> In time he became entitled to the suffixes QC and KC. In 1887 he was appointed to the bench of the Supreme Court by Sir Henry Parkes and from June 1902 to February 1904 he was Acting Chief Justice of NSW. In the NSW Parliament he represented Mudgee in the NSW Legislative Assembly from 1869 to 1871.<sup>4</sup> A sad note in Matthew and Caroline's life was the loss of their children with only one, Lina, surviving.<sup>5</sup>



Although Matthew had a home at Sutton Forest (NSW) as well as Glen Ayr on Glenmore Road in Sydney, he along with his father and two brothers, Septimus Alfred and Ernest Farish, purchased portions in Mt Wilson following the construction of the Mt Wilson Platform in May 1875.<sup>6</sup> The arrival of the railway from Mt Victoria down to Bowenfels and Lithgow played a major role in influencing interest in land at Mt Wilson once the Mt Wilson Platform was built. This occurred very much at the urging of ES Wyndham, the surveyor of Mt Wilson, to John Whitton, chief engineer and designer of the zig zag to Lithgow.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Alfred, Septimus and Ernest purchased Portions 26, 34, 43, 45, 47 and 53 and Matthew purchased Lot 40. Matthew was the only Stephen to build in Mt Wilson. Sir Alfred was offered land between Faulconbridge and Linden by Sir James Martin, the then Premier of NSW. He found this location more readily reachable by train and built his country home, *Alphington*,<sup>8</sup> here. He sold his portion (34) in Mt Wilson as did Ernest and Septimus.

<sup>1</sup> Ruth Bedford, 1954, *Think of Stephen: A family chronicle*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> E Rich & Co., 1906, *The Quarterly Magazine*, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> 2006, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, Canberra.

<sup>5</sup> Ruth Bedford, 1954, *Think of Stephen*.

<sup>6</sup> CH Currey, 1968, *Mt Wilson, New South Wales: Its location, settlement and development*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> 1897, *The railway guide of NSW*.

Portion 40, consisting of over 10 acres, was signed by the Governor of NSW and purchased on 17 June 1875 by Matthew for 21 pounds 7 shillings and 9 pence.<sup>9</sup> Its location is at the corner of Davies Lane and Mt Irvine Rd, opposite Wynstay paddocks. Jesse Gregson records in his diary<sup>10</sup> that Judge Stephen was a resident of Mt Wilson in 1878. This suggests that *Campanella* was built soon after Lot 40 was purchased.

Over the years the name *Campanella* has intrigued people. Luigi Strano claimed that there was a connection with *Tommaso Campanella*, a Dominican priest and philosopher of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Another possibility is a musical connection with Franz Listz who wrote *La Campanella* (the little bell) in 1838; a piano etude borrowed from the final movement of Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 2 in B Minor. Reading the records of the Stephen family in Ruth Bedford's *Think of Stephen* one is struck by what a significant role music played in their lives.

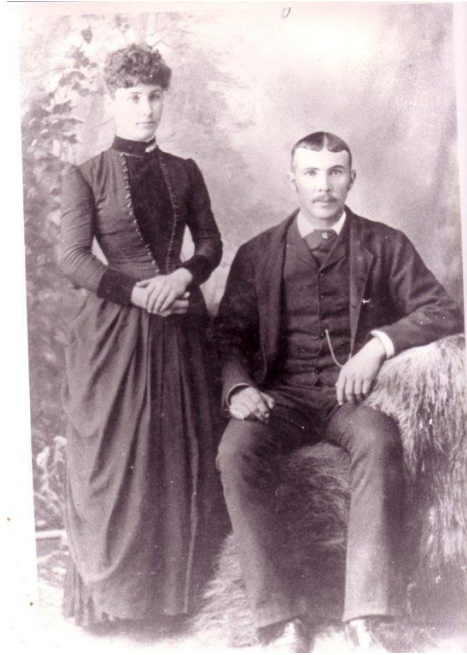
*Campanella* was described as one of the larger residences of Mt Wilson.<sup>11</sup> It was a single storey timber house with a low-pitched spreading roof and symmetrical chimneys. The back section overlooked the gardens to the south. A veranda occupied two sides and rooms were added to the corners. It has been recorded that:

*The roof of the main part of the house was resolved by inserting a box gutter between two smaller pitches off the main pitch of the front part of the house. This method had been used in the earliest colonial architecture where methods of spanning larger spaces did not go beyond the reasonable lengths of timbers available. From this arrangement, a second, lower ridge line (with the roof at the same slope as the main roof) indicated a narrowing of the wing that was thus covered. This wing on the west side of the house was probably the kitchen and servants' quarters as a 1890 photograph indicates a sturdy brick flue from a position aligned with the west wall and approximately half-way down its length.*<sup>12</sup>

*Campanella* was built on the highest point of the Lot and approached by a flight of masonry steps without handrails.<sup>13</sup> Lot 40 was sloping with an outlook towards Mt Tomah, Mt Bell and Mt Hay to the south. Matthew Stephen constructed terraced gardens and rolling lawns with the occasional tree ferns, pines and rhododendrons. It has also been written that:

*The house followed closely the accepted pattern of floor plans of the day. With few restrictions on how one was to build on the Mount, it would have been easy to employ a builder with a general knowledge of planning requirements and have him construct the house. Most likely Campanella was completed this way.*<sup>14</sup>

It seems that visitors to *Campanella* were warmly welcomed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Matthew Stephen entertained his friends under the shade of the veranda in the enclosed yard with its outlook to the mountain<sup>15</sup> and 'Masters and Mistresses mingled with their employees in ye olde English fashion'.<sup>16</sup> It is very



Mary Marceau & Sydney Kirk on their wedding day in 1887

<sup>9</sup> Land title, Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society archives.

<sup>10</sup> Copy in Society's archives, original in Mitchell Library.

<sup>11</sup> CH Currey, 1968, *Mt Wilson, New South Wales*.

<sup>12</sup> E Gregson & G Hughes, 1955, *The Story of Mount Wilson in the Blue Mountains of NSW (1<sup>st</sup> edn)*.

<sup>13</sup> H Fraser, B James and A Mack, 1969, *The settlement of Mount Wilson*, BArch thesis, University of NSW. The Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society received a copy of this thesis from WH Smart. As it was in a fragile state the main text was typed up by Leith Conybeare. The Society was able to have the photos copied in the late 1990s.

<sup>14</sup> H Fraser, B James & A Mack, 1969, *The settlement of Mount Wilson*, p. 42.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> CH Currey, 1968, *Mount Wilson, New South Wales*, p. 54.

likely that one of the employees would have been Mary Marceau who was to marry Sydney Kirk in 1887 in Mt Victoria (image on opposite page<sup>17</sup>). Probably Sydney himself attended these social occasions held traditionally in the summer.

Those who built in Mt Wilson between about 1878 and 1882 usually arrived in November and departed in early April. Mt Wilson was a part of a custom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by which those with wealth moved in the summer to cooler mountain areas or Hill Stations—a name inherited from Anglo Indians who had moved to Australia in the middle to late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> The completion of a railway across the Blue Mountains in the 1860s allowed these people access to such places, even the more remote Mt Wilson.

In the land title documents for Portion 40, the Hon. Judge MH Stephen gave power of attorney to Edward G Dawes, a Sydney solicitor, in 1895. A detailed article by the late Harold B Morley of Mt Irvine recently came to the Society through his daughter Helen Naylor. It contains references to *Campanella*. Harold Morley mentions that in 1897 the Rev. Howell Price described the existence of ‘extremely rich rainforest or giant brush country’ but would not reveal the locality. At the time, the Rev. Price was leasing *Campanella* from Matthew with the option to purchase.<sup>19</sup>

In 1898 Matthew sold *Campanella* to John Joshua, a ‘gentleman’ from Sydney. Harold Morley speaks of Mr Joshua kindly allowing him and BK Brown to put their gear in the sheds of *Campanella* after getting to Mt Wilson from the railway before reaching Mt Irvine by pack horse.<sup>20</sup> I imagine the year would have been 1898. John Joshua receives further attention in a 1912 article in the *Lithgow Mercury* when a tourist records a visit to Mt Wilson:

*On leaving “Yarrowa Lodge” [Wynstay], the visitor proceeded along the Mount Irvine road for about half-a-mile, when the white entrance gates to “Campanella”, Mr Joshua’s pretty homestead came in view. This was formerly the property of Judge Stephens, and came into possession of the present proprietor some fourteen years ago. About that time Mr Joshua was looking for a property in this district and had an admiring eye on Eskroy Park, Marrangaroo, then the residence of Mr William Sandford. However circumstances occurred which altered his plans and Mount Wilson was the choice. The site of the villa is an ideal one, situated on the crown of the ridge. The front of the house has a south-easterly aspect, and from the broad verandah, which is nicely elevated maybe traced the railway line practically from Bell to beyond Springwood. On dark nights the reflections of Sydney lights are plainly visible. Between this ridge and the one along which the railway passes are numerous prominent crags and bluffs, while verdant Mount Tomah stands out in the east. Away south as far as the eye can reach, may be seen a mountain range said to be in the vicinity of Bowral, some 70 or 80 miles distant. Such a panorama about which columns could easily be written, must be seen to be appreciated. A pathway leading to the rear portion of the premises brings the visitor to a natural look-out, which opens to the vision a majestic landscape far to the north. In this direction too, the scene finds its horizon in a mountain range near Mudgee, not a hill obstructing the view for quite 80 miles.*

*For those who admire the sublime and romantic in nature, it would be difficult to find a better coign of vantage. The interior of Mr Joshua’s villa is quite in keeping with the artistic grounds. From its walls hang several rare and valuable paintings, the exclusive points of which the owner takes pride in showing the visitor. Hospitality is a pronounced feature at “Campanella” while conversation with a much-traveled and experienced man of affairs such as Mr Joshua, was responsible for the quick flight of a pleasant hour or two. Little Eva - so gentle, unselfish and graceful - acted as hostess in a manner that betokened an exceptionally generous nature.<sup>21</sup>*

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<sup>17</sup> Image donated to the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society by Sue and Mark Austin.

<sup>18</sup> Andrea Scott Inglis, 2007, *Summer in the Hills: The nineteenth-century mountain resort in Australia*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne.

<sup>19</sup> HB Morley, 1950, The story of Irvineholme, unpublished.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Anonymous, 1 January 1912, Impressions of Mount Wilson. *Lithgow Mercury*, No. 3.

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Annie Joshua's initial letter to the State War Council in Sydney

Copy.

"Keston,"

STRATHFIELD,

To the Secretary,  
State War Council,  
MARTIN PLACE.

Dear Sir,

I wish to enquire the pension allowed to a returned wounded soldier. Should we be able to place him and his wife in charge of a small post office now at Mt. Wilson. The said soldier would receive from the Postal Department the sum of about £30 - Thirty Pounds - per annum. Provided the Postal Department are favourable and will remove post office to my Cottage  $\frac{1}{2}$  (half) mile from the present site, I shall give to the Postal Dept. a 4 roomed cottage for the said soldier's use. I start him in the in the way of a living by giving him a good cow and some poultry which he can sell to the people on Mount Wilson.

To make the arrangements secure for the Postal Dept. I am prepared to give to them a lease of say 30 years (thirty years) at a pepper corn rental. I know the people of Mt. Wilson will give preference to a returned man in every way.

Trusting you will oblige by giving me fullest particulars,

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

Annie E. Joshua.

August 15th 1916.

Address -

Mt. Wilson.

This description returns us to a time when the views from Mt Wilson were more extensive in certain areas than they are today on account of the growth of exotic trees and the re-growth of native vegetation since then. The somewhat florid language reflects the times and the nature of life in the early decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Before we venture into the years after World War I, the name of John Joshua's son—John Michael James Joshua—appears on what was called the Mt Wilson, Mt Irvine and Bell Soldiers' Memorial which was built at Mt Wilson in 1919 through community dedication and effort. John Joshua's wife, Annie Joshua, came to some prominence during the years of World War I when she endeavoured to have the post office and telephone exchange moved closer to *Campanella*.<sup>22</sup>

Mrs Joshua's proposal of 1916 offers her four-room cottage as the post office for a returned wounded soldier and his wife along with a pension and some poultry 'which he can sell to the people of Mt Wilson'. At the time the District Inspector at Bathurst describes Mt Wilson 'as a plateau and the whole locality is owned by about 7 or 8 residents, most of whom are city merchants'. Mrs Joshua's plan appeared to be investigated quite closely including the cost of poles and wiring. The Inspector concludes with these comments:

*Mrs Joshua's residence is fully half a mile from the present Post Office and would not be as central. Mrs Joshua has no particular soldier in mind. There is no building that could be used for postal services. The cost of transfer would be considerable.*

At the time there were five subscribers on the exchange and the cost of transfer for a metallic circuit in each case would be between 50 and 70 pounds. Nevertheless the matter dragged on for some months. Towards the end of 1916 a final report was produced revealing some interesting features about Mt Wilson:

*There are 9 householders only on Mt Wilson Plateau with a normal population of 25 persons over 15 years of age. It was unlikely a soldier could survive on his pension and the Postal allowance of 32 pounds. The cow and poultry promised would only help the soldier's family; it would not earn extra income. There is practically no sale for vegetables, fruit or eggs in Mt Wilson, as each has his or her own garden, cow and poultry. Mrs Joshua's residence is not central to the small population hence there could be a drop in revenue while the cost of removal to the site would be 52 pounds.*<sup>23</sup>

Mrs Joshua's scheme was unsuccessful. The post office remained at *Beowang* with a new post master. *Campanella* remained with the Joshua family through the years of World War I. Yet towards the end of the war and immediately afterward its status was to change.

Miss Bessie Knight Brown was a very capable person who ran *Painui*, a successful Mt Irvine guest house, under rather difficult conditions with poor roads and transport. Nancy Holden, an aunt of Julia Reynolds (née Knight Brown), describes Bess as:

*... an outstanding person - tall and fair; She must have been about 30 when I first knew her. She was not only a wonderful cook and organizer, with adoring paying guests, but also helped with the outside work.*<sup>24</sup>

Tragically Bess lost her fiancée, Vernon Harris, in World War I. She decided she would have to leave Mt Irvine and find a more convenient guest house. She came to *Campanella* bringing her father and mother with her from *Painui*.<sup>25</sup> It was a great loss to Mt Irvine as she was active in everything and always bright and optimistic.<sup>26</sup> (continued on pg. 13)

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<sup>22</sup> Anonymous, 1 January 1912, Impressions of Mount Wilson. *Lithgow Mercury*, No. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Nancy Holden, August 2008, Back to the wagonette days of Mt Irvine, *Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Newsletter*, No. 18.

<sup>25</sup> HB Morley, 1950, The story of Irvineholme, unpublished.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

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# IMAGES FROM THEN

Most of these photographs were taken by Kathleen Howard Smith. Kathleen was a skilled photographer and the Society is very grateful indeed to have received quite a number of her images which record the life and times of Mt Irvine over the last few decades.



Clockwise from top left: Alice Kirk at Yurunga; Betty Clarke at Manytrees; Gwen Artlett (Scrivener) of Taihoa; Bill Scrivener of Kookootonga.



Clockwise from top left: Ruth Scrivener with Sam at *Kookootonga*; Nell Knight Brown of *Bowen Lea*; Cecil Kirk of *Yurunga*; Dorothy Fountain of *La Folia*.



Clockwise from top left: Hugh Smart in the garden at *Carisbrook*; Dorothy Scrivener of *Taihoa*; Florence Smart (Marnie) with grandchildren Richard, Susan & Julia Knight Brown at *Painui* c.1943; collecting specimens for the Australian Museum c.1943.



## EARLY DAYS OF *CAMPANELLA* (continued from pg. 9)

Bess's move, however, began a new era for Mt Wilson of guest houses and tearooms along with a social change as some property owners became permanent residents determined to make a living. There must have been some kind of lease agreement with John Joshua. Many of the guests at *Campanella*, according to those who have been able to recall, were naturalists and teachers.

John Joshua leased or rented out *Campanella* in 1923–4 to auctioneer William Hanlon of Parkes. There is evidence that the property was subdivided into smaller lots to be sold. However in June 1924 Lease No. A978189 was cancelled. In that same year *Campanella* was transferred to John Joshua's wife, Annie Elizabeth Joshua.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1924 and 1938 it remained with Mrs Joshua as the owner. However it seems that it continued to be a guesthouse at times and a tearoom although Miss Bess Knight Brown eventually moved to Blackheath to a guest house she called *Brooklands*.

In c.1930 Charles Jefferson, the grandfather of Helen, Meg and Troath Gregson, arrived in Mt Wilson from the US with his house keeper, Emma Ashdown. They stayed with the Gregsons at

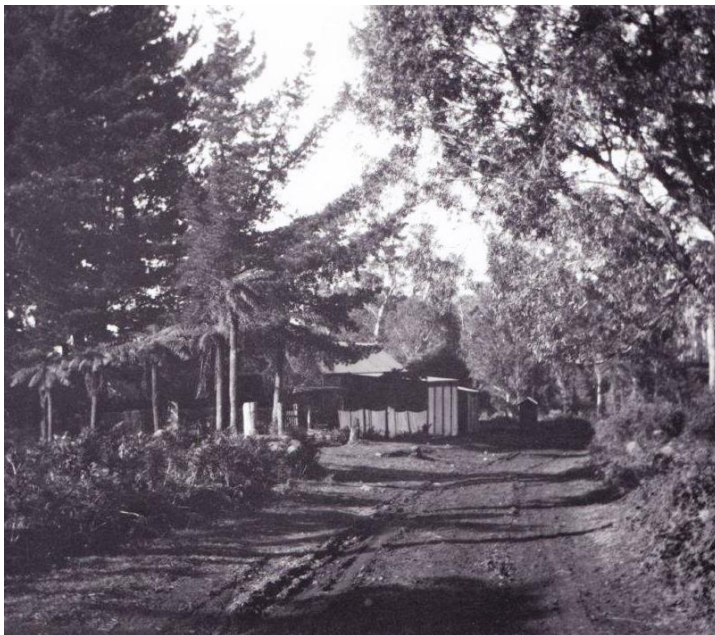
*Wyndham* for about a year but then moved to *Campanella*. Helen describes the house:

*We children found Campanella a great adventure: there were lots of nooks and crannies to explore, a long veranda to run up and down on, and an enormous pine tree in the paddock at the front of the house where we played and had picnics. But the house was spooky at night.*<sup>28</sup>



*Campanella* c.1930

c.1919 photo taken by the caretakers at *Beowang* of the building where *Sylvan Close* now stands. Note the state of the road.



In the archives of the Society is a letter dated 22 July 1932 with the letterhead of the Truth Centre and Metaphysical College and telephone number 11, Mt Wilson. The letter is directed to the Shire Clerk of the Blue Mountains Shire of Lawson requesting information about the owners of property *The Retreat* in Mt Victoria hoping it may be available for renting. It is signed by the principal, the Rev. Sister Veni Cooper–Mathieson. At what stage did this organisation occupy *Campanella*? Or did it occupy the building we now know as *Sylvan Close*? Both of these properties were owned by Mrs Joshua.

<sup>27</sup> Land title for Portion 40, Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society archives.

<sup>28</sup> Helen Warliker, 1990, *A Mount Wilson Childhood*, p. 15.

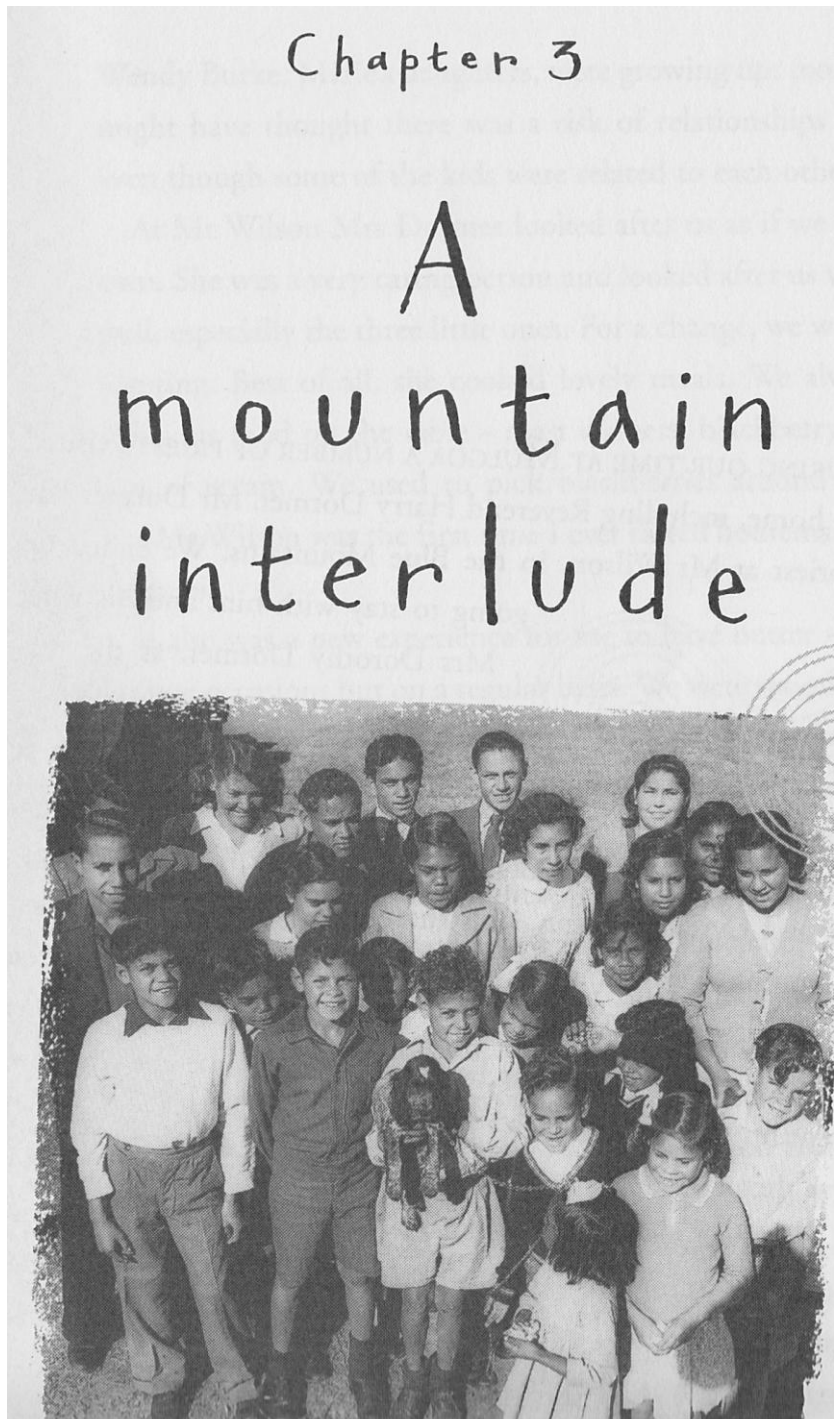
In an earlier letter, dated 1919 and directed to the Blue Mountains Shire Council at Lawson, Sister Cooper-Mathieson reveals that her organisation cared for war orphans in Bethlehem Children's Home Little Hartley (also known as Bethlehem Babies) at *Nioka*, Bathurst Rd, Little Hartley.

In the 1932 letter, Sister Mathieson notes that their income has been almost halved since coming to Mt Wilson. The telephone number 11 suggests that she occupied what could be the building we now know as *Sylvan Close*.<sup>29</sup> Tom Kirk recalled that 'Sister Cooper-Mathieson rented *Campanella* for some years but no one from Mt Wilson visited her. Her patients came from other districts to experience "faith healing". One of her followers was Mary Edwards, the artist, from Wildflower Hall'.<sup>30</sup> Officially the Truth Centre was the Centre for the New Thought Movement in Australia. Its official publication was *the Revealer*.

Not long afterwards, disaster struck and a house fire consumed the original *Campanella*, though exactly when that fire occurred is difficult to determine. It certainly happened while Annie Joshua still owned the property. Dr Peter Valder recalls that:

*The fire was in the middle of the night and certainly before the Dormers purchased it. I remember going round there in the morning after and Mrs Joshua was there in a dressing gown with a Pekinese under one arm and, if my fading memory can be relied on, saying that the water in the tank boiled.*<sup>31</sup>

Peter also suggested it might have occurred in either 1934 or 1935 as he felt it was before George V died (beginning of 1936), the Edward VIII saga that followed and the coronation



John Moriarty stands in the front row holding the puppy.

<sup>29</sup> Letter to the Blue Mountains Shire Council, 22 July 1932.

<sup>30</sup> Personal communication with Tom Kirk, 1993-4.

<sup>31</sup> Email from Dr Peter Valder, 12 June 2010.

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of George VI (12 May 1937). All these events were major discussion items in 'Mount Wilson's anglo-centric days'.<sup>32</sup>

There are other anecdotal memories, including those of Tom Kirk to Anthony Mayne. Both these men have passed on but George Mayne (now the owner of *Campanella Cottage*) recalls that Tom told his father, Anthony, about the fire and mentioned that guests were staying in *Campanella* at the time. These guests had obviously taken all of their luggage out with them as it was lined up on the lawn. Luckily no lives were lost.

There was no decision to re-build by Annie or John Joshua. In 1938 Annie sold the property to Mr Harry Clement Cottrell Dormer of Penrith along with the property across the road which was part of Portion 65 and consisted of 17 acres 17 perches. This land had been bought by Matthew Henry Stephen in 1879, sold to John Joshua in 1898 and transferred to Annie Joshua in 1924.

Around the time of the arrival to Mt Wilson of the Rev. H Cottrell Dormer, his wife Dorothy and a group of Indigenous children (who would become known as part of the stolen generation), *Campanella* temporarily ceased to be and did not return until Anthony Mayne and Valerie Mayne purchased Portion 40 early in 1951 from the Reverend Dormer. According to George Mayne, Anthony's son, Tom Kirk undertook to build a house on the old foundations of *Campanella*. It stands today and has been joined by *Campanella Cottage* in Davies Lane built by Jane and George Mayne on Portion 40.

One wonders what use was made of Portion 40 while it was owned by the Reverend Cottrell Dormer. Where did the children live? John Moriarty, one of those Indigenous children, recalls life in Mt Wilson in his biography *Saltwater Fella*. In chapter three, entitled 'A mountain interlude', he describes being taken to Mt Wilson by the Reverend Dormer and his wife and staying at the rectory. But what was the rectory? It certainly was not *Campanella*.

John speaks positively of his time in Mt Wilson and of the care he, as one of the three younger boys, received from Mrs Dormer: 'For a change we were never wanting. We always had delicious food on the table'.<sup>33</sup> He writes with enthusiasm of the pursuits and activities of that year to eighteen months he spent in Mt Wilson. Of attending the school, visiting the Valder Family and learning the ways of the bush. We know he was at the school in 1945 as his name appears in the register<sup>34</sup>, but he had to leave the school on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1945 at which time he reluctantly returned to Mulgoa.

The mystery of the rectory remains. The most plausible explanation is that the dwelling which today is known as *Sylvan Close* housed these boys as this land was also owned by the Reverend Dormer.

Dormer sub-divided before selling in 1951.<sup>35</sup> While Portion 40 (*Campanella*) remained intact, Portion 65 was split into two lots. Lot A consisted of 5 acres 1 rood 33 perches and it is now *Pine Lodge*. Lot B was the residue, consisting of 11 acres 3 roods 6 perches.

In 1951 Betty W Anderson of Willoughby became the owner of Lot B. Another subdivision followed in 1955 and Lot 1, just over two acres, was sold to Philip Taylor. Today it is *Brambil*. Betty Anderson retained Lot 2A but not for long. It consisted of 2 acres 2 roods 7 141/2 perches. It was sold in 1958 and is now *Sage Cottage*.

Lot 2B, now known as *Sylvan Close* consisting of approximately 6 acres 1 rood and 16 perches, was sold to Dorothy and Roland Thorp between 1956 and 1958. The name *Sylvan Close* became associated with the Thorps as a tearoom was established there during their ownership and lasted until 1973.

– Mary Reynolds, Research Officer

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> John Moriarty, 2000, *Saltwater Fella*, Viking, Sydney, p. 51.

<sup>34</sup> Register of Admission, Public School of Mt Wilson, 4 June 1945.

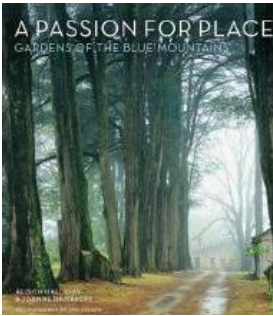
<sup>35</sup> Land title for Portion 65, Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society archives.

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## NEW BOOKS

*A Passion for Place. Gardens of the Blue Mountains*—by Alison Halliday & Jo Hambrett

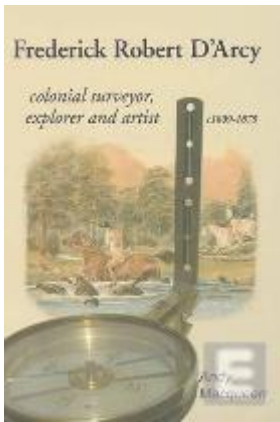


This much awaited book will be published in October 2010 by Bloomings Books.

Alison and Jo are both members of our Society and share a sustained love of this area and its gardens. Their book follows the historical development of the gardens of our mountains and contains many outstanding photographs by Ian Brown. Alison and Jo have put over five years of passion, intellect and dedicated effort in to this production.

*A Passion for Place* will be launched on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2010 in the Mt Wilson Village Hall.

*Frederick Robert D'Arcy, Surveyor, Explorer and Artist 1809-1875*—by Andy Macqueen



Andy Macqueen has already had three books published on explorers of the Blue Mountains, all of which are fascinating and well researched. On 1<sup>st</sup> August Ellis and I, along with Helen and John Cardy, were among the invited guests to the launch of this book held in the special Hartley Court House and sponsored by the National Parks & Wild Life Service. The Court House was chosen for the launch as Frederick D'Arcy had been a *controversial* clerk in the Court House from 1849-1852. More significantly, Frederick was the great great grandfather of Andy Macqueen. The book was launched by Robert O'Neill, Professor Emeritus of the History of War University of Oxford. Andy's response bubbled with an enthusiasm that carried his audience with him.

Frederick D'Arcy was a man of remarkable strength and resilience which his chief, Sir Thomas Mitchell, failed often to appreciate. Anyone who undertook the surveying of the Colo River and its tributaries in 1830s would require these qualities in abundance and more. During his life D'Arcy had disagreements with others, not least Thomas Brown—'the Future Father of Lithgow'—and these adversely affected his surveying career. In other ways, however, he was a fine horseman and artist. The book follows his very turbulent career in Port Phillip, Van Diemen's Land, the outback, as the clerk of the court at Hartley and later at Rylstone and in Queensland. An added layer is that Andy Macqueen is an experienced bushwalker in the Wollemi and elsewhere and therefore knows the country his great great grandfather surveyed.

Price \$45.00 RRP from select bookshops and mail order. Available post free within Australia. Contact [andymacqueen@gmail.com](mailto:andymacqueen@gmail.com)

— Mary Reynolds

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## THE STORY OF IRVINEHOLME

In 1897 three young friends, Harold Morley, Charles Scrivener and Basil Knight-Brown—all fellow students at Hawkesbury Agricultural College—became the first settlers at Mt Irvine. On 1st July that year they applied successfully to the Government Land Board for approximately 1000 acres on Mt Irvine. Over the years until 1950 Harold Morley wrote a number of very entertaining and informative accounts of these early settlers' experiences clearing their land, starting farming and building houses for themselves and their families. This is the first in a series of extracts from 'The Story of Irvineholme' written at Mt Irvine during the winter of 1950. The three young men are starting to build the road from Mt Irvine to Mt Wilson, which has been settled only 22 years earlier.

*Clearing the dense jungle of brush timberland with huge eucalypts was a very formidable job for young boys but in addition we had to clear the road line, in all about 8 miles, to make a bridle track to Mt Wilson through heavy timber and rugged hillsides. At first we had to carry our stores on our backs. We then improved the*

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*track for a pack horse, and later for a slide, which hurdled 480 logs besides the ones we cut off. As time went on we cleared and formed a road to take a rough wagon with sections of logs bound by bands of iron for wheels and wooden axles which used a prodigious amount of grease.*

*We managed these improvements by making a set month every year for road works, as well as odd days, and time removing fallen trees on the road. The work meant laying out level sections of road, half of which we formed ourselves, and asked the Government to do the other half. Eventually the road would take bullock wagons and heavy horse wagonettes, and then later a chain driven I.H.C. high wheeled lorry with two opposed cylinders, which did wonderful work through deep mud and terrible tracks. Gradual improvements in widening, metalling, etc., of the road made it fit for later models of motor lorries and cars.*

*The first bullock wagon load of fruit I sent away contained my whole year's crop; the road collapsed on the Pass with lorry and all. The wagon became hung up on a tree, and the bullocks were hanging in their yokes, but were all saved. I saved a few cases of apples which were wet through by the rain. Two bullocks were left for dead, but in the morning were busy eating the apples which were spread over the precipice and slopes down to the creek. This was just before I was married, so was all the more serious.*

to be continued...

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## **HISTORICAL RESEARCH REPORT**

### **9 DEC TO 31 JULY 2010**

*This report was presented in full at the Special General Meeting of the Society held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010 in the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Below are some items from the report that may be of interest to members and friends.*

#### **THE SOCIETY'S FIRST COMPUTER**

The Society recently purchased a Dell Studio XPS 16 laptop, a flat screen monitor and a Canon MP 640 printer to be used for research and historical work. The total cost was \$2866.20 and I am pleased to say that this was covered by two grants from the Federal Government totalling \$3000.00.

#### **ARCHIVAL MATERIAL, CATALOGUING AND IMAGE COLLECTION**

Due to the hard work of our archivist, Kathleen Oakes, many of our records are now on a database. Although cataloguing the image collection tends to be a slower process, we hope to deal with the majority of it during the next 12 months.

#### **THE MEREWETHER DIARIES**

In February Ian Jack provided valuable assistance concerning these diaries with the following quotes and their sources:

*9<sup>th</sup> January 1880 E.C. Merewether wrote from Mt Wilson to his relative Robert Scott who was his agent: Dennarque is the name we have given this place - it is the Black's [sic] name for one of the varieties of tree ferns that are found here in the gullies—Yarrawa is one but Wynne bagged that—Dennarque another and Beowang the third. I state this on the authority of a paragraph I saw some time ago in the herald which gave Sir William Macarthur as their authority.*

The sources are in the Merewether Estate archives of the Newcastle Public Library Local History Section Box A/A 1876–1880 bundle. Ian added that the *Sydney Morning Herald* has been digitised up to 1900 and it would be worth tracking down the imprecise reference to the newspaper article which cited Sir William Macarthur.

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This research arose from a query from Blue Mountains historian Jim Smith and is still being followed up. We have recently been contacted by a PhD student in Newcastle whose subject is Edward C Merewether who built *Dennarque* in Mt Wilson. We expect to see the student when the weather's a little warmer.

## RESEARCH

From late February 2010 this aspect of our work has kept me fully occupied. The Canowindra Historical Society was interested to know more about the Sloan family who owned *Bebeah* from 1901 to 1984. They were planning a celebration of the (now closed) railway from Cowra to Canowindra 1910 to 2010, which had been partly built on land owned by Ivie Sloan who came from Cowra to Mt Wilson in 1901–2. Ivie and Helen Sloan's daughter, Marjorie, spent most of her years in Mt Wilson. Sloan Reserve is a constant memorial to her.

## REG BAUMGARTEN

Reg Baumgarten died on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010. He was not a member of the Society but I knew him as a close friend and companion of Gwen Silvey who wrote books on the history of the Blue Mountains and who did much to guide me in the early days of history research. Gwen died in 2004.



Ivie and Helen Sloan with their 3 daughters, Ivy, Daisy (standing) and Marjorie (seated)

Reg was a farmer and lived at *Touri* in Mt Irvine in during the 1950s. The records of the admission register for Mt Wilson Public School show that his son Michael was enrolled there in 1955. I spoke with various people about Reg but unfortunately no-one had met him during those years he was here. I am grateful to Reg because, due to his careful research through the Mt Victoria Historical Society, he was able to locate and send us copies of valuable documents such as the obituary to Richard Wynne published in the *Lithgow Mercury* in 1895 and a report on a cricket match held in Mt Wilson in the 1880s.

## MT WILSON HERITAGE SITES

Our secretary was contacted in May by Felicity Blaxland, Senior Planner from the Blue Mountains City Council, asking for identification of certain sites listed in the heritage review carried out by Ian Jack and his colleagues in 2003–4. What was encouraging about this approach was that, for the first time for years, the BMCC was taking a practical interest in heritage in Mt Wilson. These sites were checked and photographed as accurately as possible. Errors were found in the maps provided by the Council. Felicity and her assistant visited Mt Wilson and checked the sites with us. These sites were:

1. The blazed stump in Farrer Road West on the boundary of *Goonong* (the Morgan property).
2. The War Memorial in the Avenue and the small obelisk close by.
3. The early quarry MW40 on the north side of Mt Wilson Road above the present zig zag.
4. Surveyor Wyndham's zig zag approximately 200 metres east of the present zig zag (recommended to be considered of state significance).
5. The site of Robert Kirk's camp was not so easily identified. It is approximately 50 metres north of the boundary of the property *Killaloo*, which is on the left before you drive up the zig zag today. Tood Kirk, the widow of Tom Kirk who built *Killaloo*, recently told me: 'When Tom and I first began working down at *Killaloo*, Tom showed me a slab which he said was the foundation on which the house chimney was built... On a later attempt Tom was unable to locate the slab'.



Wynndham's zig zag

### **RESEARCH ASSOCIATED WITH THE KIRK FAMILY**

Tanya Kirk, who lives at Faulconbridge, is a direct descendant of Bob Kirk. Bob Kirk was the brother of Sydney Kirk, the father of the seven Kirk brothers of Mt Wilson. Bob worked at Mt Wilson for Colonel Wynne and, earlier, was the mail contractor in the 1890s. He was affectionately known as Uncle Bob or Old Bob. Bob also occupied the camp site near *Killaloo*. Tanya Kirk recently visited Mt Wilson and we were able to exchange useful information relating to birth, marriage and death certificates for Bob's generation. Tanya was able to learn more about Bob's life here and look at some photos and documents.

### **TOM KIRK'S SAW IN THE POWER HOUSE MUSEUM**

Mrs Tood Kirk, the widow of Tom Kirk, would appreciate it if the saw which was featured in our No. 17 Newsletter (February 2008) was referred to as a cross cut saw not a pit saw. It was made in Sweden and used by Tom when he won the singlehanded sawing championship at Sydney Royal Easter Show in 1957, 1958 and 1959.

### **WILDFLOWER HALL**

Mrs Prudence Finlay (Teece) rightly drew our attention to an error in the *Wildflower Hall* article which appeared in Newsletter No. 20 (August 2009). Her father, Dr Lennox G Teece, bought *Dennarque* in 1934 and not Angus Teece, who was in fact her brother.

### **RESEARCH FOR ALISON HALLIDAY AND JO HAMBRETT**

Elsewhere we have referred to the book written by Alison and Jo called *A Passion for Place*. The research for this work has taken place over a number of years and has involved the answering of many questions, checking sources and providing images. Alison and Jo have expressed their appreciation for this assistance. It is pleasing that, after some disappointments, the book will be published very soon by the same company which produced Michael Pembroke's successful *Trees of History and Romance*.

### **THE TURKISH TEXTILE COMPANY**

In February 2010 the director of the Turkish Textile Company, a wholesaler of fine Turkish textile products, visited the Turkish Bath Museum. Volunteers Anne Mellady and Victor Zukhov were so friendly and persuasive that these visitors sent us samples of traditional Turkish towels, called *peshtemals*. So began a correspondence with Gulay Pelin, the creative director, and an offer to place our Turkish bath on their website as well as other helpful support.

– Mary Reynolds, Research Officer

## Please Help

Over the years, as the Society has grown, the number of hours needed to cover all the jobs that crop up has increased. The management committee has just had a wake-up call with the resignation of our treasurer, Kathy Harrington, due to ongoing health problems. As a result we are urgently seeking a volunteer with bookkeeping skills to carry on Kathy's good work. The accounts are in very good order and our accountant/auditor in Lithgow oversees the legal requirements, but we do need a new treasurer for the day-to-day financial affairs.

We also would welcome help with smaller but ongoing tasks such as membership (records and reminders), publicity, the Newsletter (gathering and organising material for the editor) and of course we welcome new people who can offer three hours once or twice a year as guides at the Turkish Bath Museum.

Please contact Florence Smart on (02) 4756 2063 or [westring@bigpond.com](mailto:westring@bigpond.com) for more info if you can help.

### Objectives of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc

*Membership is open to all who accept and support these objectives.*

1. To make a substantial contribution to the account of Australian history by promoting the study of aspects of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine districts and their communities, especially in terms of their:
  - cultural history
  - exploration history
  - settlement history
  - Aboriginal history
  - industrial history including agriculture, horticulture, the timber industry, mining and tourism.
2. To conserve, preserve and protect the heritage and heritage values of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine.
3. To set up and maintain a museum in the Turkish Bath building to house the collection and to serve as a centre for its public display and for the Society's educational programs and research.
4. To maintain close links with other societies and associations in the local communities and beyond by way of meetings, functions, newsletters and occasional historical papers.
5. To lend support to like-minded societies or associations, where possible.

**For all information and bookings contact Mary Reynolds ('Donna Buang', Church Lane, Mt Wilson, NSW, 2786) on ph (02) 4756 2006, fax (02) 4756 2176 or email [mary\\_reynolds@internode.on.net](mailto:mary_reynolds@internode.on.net)**

### A Word from the Editor

Putting together this issue of the Newsletter has given me the overwhelming sense that I've finally met up with some long lost relatives from whom I've been geographically separated since infancy. Kathleen Howard Smith's images have introduced me to people who were only, when I first began editing the Newsletter over a decade ago, no more to me than a bunch of names. Over the years I've inadvertently been part of a conscious process by the Society to share these people's stories. Who they were. How they lived. Who they loved. Who they lost. Where life took them. Why they lived in the mountains. How they felt about the place they lived in. What they did for fun. What they created. What they cared about. These portraits have merged with all these anecdotes and interwoven histories so that finally these individuals have, for me, sprung to life.

– Elspeth Callender