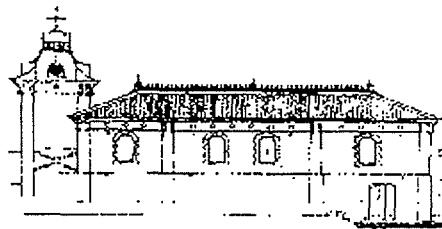


# Mt Wilson Historical Society



## Archiving and Our Collection

This aspect of the Society's work receives little publicity although it has been an ongoing and integral part of activities since the Mt Wilson Community History Group, the forerunner of the Society, was formed in 1994.

### What are Archives?

*Archives are those records of social and organisational activity preserved because of their continuing value... Archives by their very nature have value and currency far beyond the lifetime of their custodians, creators and donors. In managing archives we accept that we have long-term legal and moral obligations to the holdings, the donors, the parent organisation and the researchers... personal enthusiasm, although commendable, obviously cannot sustain an archival program in perpetuity. The collection and care of archives need to be undertaken in a responsible, responsive, thoughtful and committed way.*

*Keeping Archives by Judith Ellis, p.25 (The Australian Society of Archivists).*

### How did and does our Society endeavour to practise these principles?

As early as 1994/1995, as untrained volunteers of a newly formed historical society, we made contact with professional organisations to obtain guidance and direct instruction in the management of archival material. We became, at first, interim members of Museums Australia Inc, the national organisation for museums, then full members as we established our credentials (continued on page 7)

## Autumn as it Absolutely Oughta'

Why is this woman standing outside a church on a Saturday, smiling and holding an extension cord? What events led to this bizarre and seemingly unfathomable behaviour? All is revealed on page 3.



## from the President

All the work of our Society is done by volunteers, and the demands we make on them are indeed heavy. So when one of them has to give up, whatever the reason, we are sorry to lose what they have been giving but warmly grateful for their past contributions.

All of this, as you might guess, heralds my announcement of one volunteer's relinquishment of her role, one which will be hard to fill. Elspeth Callender has now edited and produced all the Society's newsletters you have so far received, and the first of our historical papers series. She designed the now familiar layout, solicited many of the contributions, edited the text, took care of the illustrations and photographic reproductions, even took some of the photographs herself (including all in this issue), and got the whole thing printed and distributed. Now she is resigning.

Elspeth is one of our younger members, just in her mid-twenties. So she's decided to take off and see the world, not for the first time but her first as a solo adventure. No date set for a return, but "3 years or so"! She goes with our warmest thanks and our best wishes. Go for it, Elspeth, and bon voyage from all of us.

As her last contribution Elspeth has written an eye-witness account of our 2001 jazz concert, given on the tenth of March. But before that day there had been a lead-up period of some months that severely taxed the energies if not the health of our volunteering members and supporters.

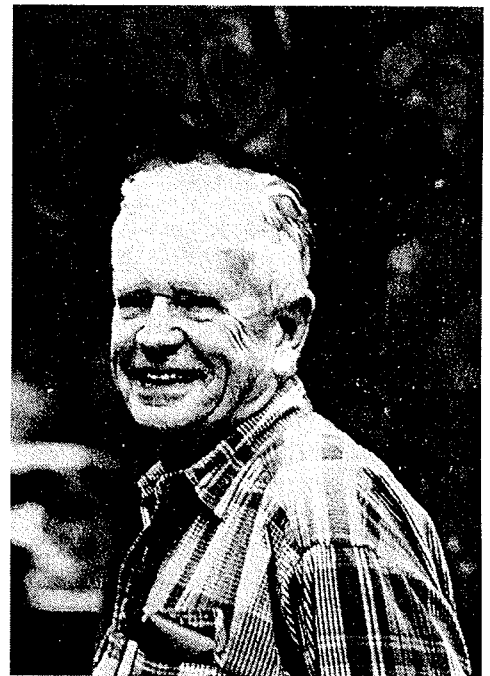
The plan had been to have the concert again in the beautiful precinct of the Turkish Bath. But our effort there last year, though both enjoyable and successful, had left us with some improvements still to be made to our facilities for open-air performance. The stage we had built was a bit small. Our roadway in eventually couldn't stand up to the onslaught of all that rain we've had. The innovative but temporary stairway up to the Bath House, made from the sawn rounds of a great fallen Wynstay pine tree, with its handrail of painted plastic piping held up by some good country star pickets, was by some thought to be unaesthetic. So we had to do something about at least some of these things. The first series of working bees in February had nearly twenty volunteers attending, plus tools, tractor and truck. Day after day from then on work continued, right up to the day before the concert. Against all predictions, "y'll never finish it mate", Bruce Wright our Project Director did far more than direct. With his own tools and great expertise he challenged the doubters. And just days before the concert there it was – completed: a greatly enlarged stone and earth stage securely covered with a smooth wooden platform, all ready to receive a much bigger marquee to protect the seven musicians and all their instruments and gear from the rain that was destined to fall on the concert day.

And of course it did! The big marquee that had gone up on Thursday had to be pulled down in the rain on Saturday morning, and the whole box and dice moved to the Wynne Reserve, close by St George's Church. Elspeth tells the rest.

As this Newsletter goes to press, our members are being asked to vote on a constitutional amendment to alter the name of the Society. It is well known that the villages of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are quite close together, on a spur of the Bell's Line of Road. Close not only in distance, but also in history. Quite a few current members of the Society live in Mt Irvine and contribute to its programs of activities. Many parts of the historic past are shared by the two villages. So the proposal is that the name be changed to The Mount Wilson and Mr Irvine Historical Society. This is after a good deal of discussion in committee and at a general meeting, and also in a meeting of the Mt Irvine Progress Association, all of it positive.

We look forward to announcing the result of the poll in our next Newsletter.

Arthur Delbridge



## Autumn as it Absolutely Oughta' (continued from page 1)

Advertised on the flier as *Sackbutts to Saxophones*, the Society's fifth annual jazz concert turned out to be something more like *Sacraments to Sousaphones* by the time the unobliging weather conditions pushed the event from its originally planned spot in the Turkish Bath precinct into St George's Church – just up The Avenue from the bath house.

Due to a badly scheduled haircut, the paparazzi (ie moi) arrived at the new venue a little after 2:00pm. Although the venue relocation, which included moving the marquee, had occurred that morning, the Society members were like children who'd cleaned up after a party the night before their parents arrived home from holidays.

They were calmly running the ticket collection, sausage barbecuing, food distribution and crowd control with even the tiniest signs of the morning panic remaining undetectable. Not a palpitation in sight. Well, not outside the church anyway.

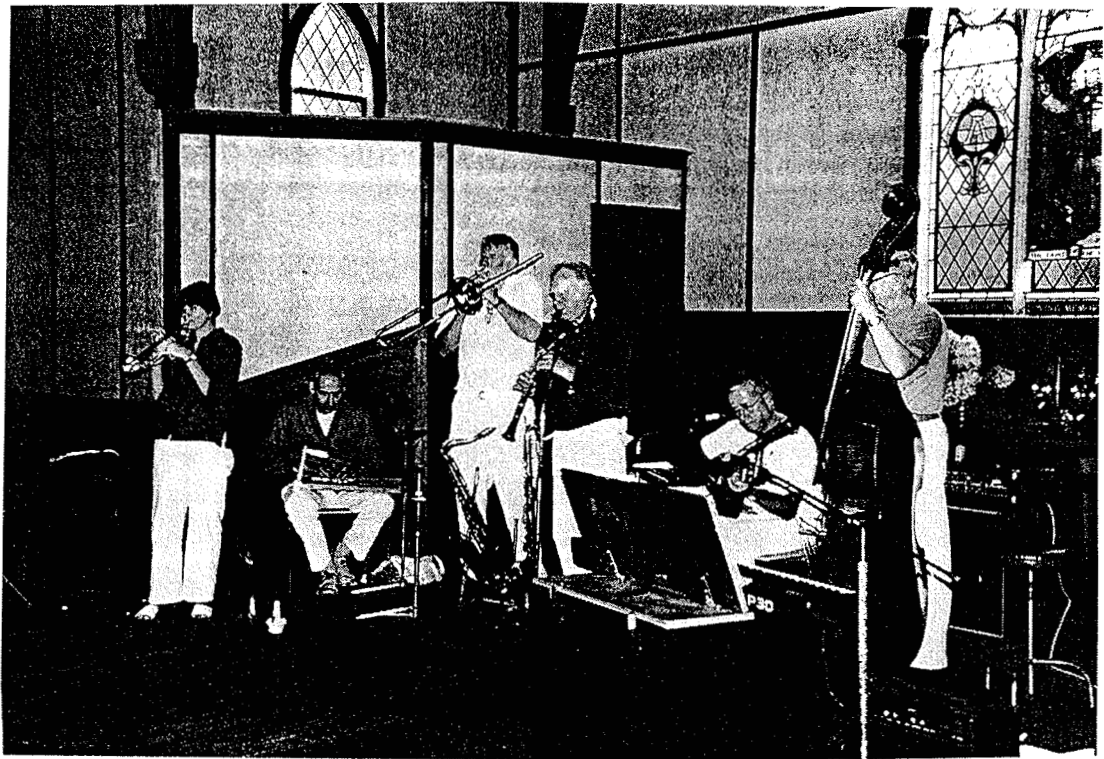


When I entered St George's with my film crew my heart rate rapidly escalated to join the elevated beat of the jazz that was being produced within its unaccustomed walls. Jeannie Hope (above, with Peter Clagton and Bill Boldiston)

was bravely back again for her second year, on trumpet and vocals; and the ever present ever reliable Murray Child (right) also joined the Bloways on keyboard.

And then I saw it – the greatest quick-change act of history... Bill Boldiston was in a church ... up the front.











Furthermore, Bill, along with Cliff Francis, Peter Clayton, Terry Barrett and Ron Horne (as seen on page 4 in order from left to right) were playing a tune called *So do I*, during which the 'congregation' were encouraged to join in by yelling these words "So do I" back to the band in unison. In the setting of a church, this seemingly modern variation on 'I do', a proclamation traditionally reserved for a couples who had just recited their wedding vows and planned a life together, seemed rather unorthodox to me. Unfortunately many of the audience, from the looks of pure joy on the faces, were taken in by Bill's concessional attempt to be pious by playing songs like *The Preacher* and several negro spirituals. The final song of the set in which I arrived ended with *Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home*, which included a splendid washboard solo by Cliff Francis, giving everyone a chance to tap along to an instrument that certainly hasn't gone down the plughole, at least I don't sink it has.

About half way through the program Bill educated and entertained us with a talk entitled *The History of Jazz*. Bill had very kindly offered to give this talk, which also involved the demonstration of successive styles by the band. Bill's offer came after the Society was notified that the second act booked for the day, Venetian Brass, were unable to come. A little more music was resumed after *The History of Jazz* and the show ended with Benny Goodman's *Lady Be Good*.

Florence Smart (featured in the foreground of the photograph on page 1) wound up the day with one of her great speeches thanking the musicians for again volunteering their time, energy and fantastic mood-modifying music to assist in the Society's fundraising. As Florence so rightly pointed out: "We woke up this morning and thought... *wet grass and leeches*... and look what we've got...!". Well... wet grass, leeches and jazz of course!

Incidentally, the low-down from the Bloways is that St George's church has the best acoustics they have ever played in, and would be fantastic to record in.

To everyone involved thank you  
   thank you  
   thank you!

Elspeth  
 Editor

## **Archiving and Our Collection** (continued from page 1)

The NSW Branch of Museums Australia was instrumental in arranging workshops and sending professional museum officers to meet with us to demonstrate and guide us in the principles of management collection. Initially we received their newsletter *Museum Matters*, their Quarterly magazine, *Museum National*, and *Museum Methods*. All these publications are produced by professionals in museums and are all invaluable sources of information as to the way archival material should be managed.

### **Workshops and Outreach Help Received by the Society.**

#### **In 1996 we received:**

- visits from the Historic Houses Trust, the National Trust and the Director of the Heritage Office of NSW;
- a grant from the Royal Australian Historical Society of \$750 to help set up our Image Collection by copying photographs lent to us by descendants of the original founding families in Mt Wilson.

#### **During 1997:**

- with the completion of the first stage of the conservation work on the Turkish Bath, a Conservation Outreach Officer from Museums Australia, Kate Chidlow, visited us and set us on the track of developing a strategic plan;
- we attended our first workshop on the theme of volunteering, at the Small Arms Museum, Lithgow. The Society joined the Macquarie Chapter of Museums which covered an area from Penrith to Glen Davis.

#### **In 1998:**

- we set up our first exhibition in the Turkish Bath under the guidance of a professional from Museums Australia (NSW branch) receiving a grant from that organisation to assist us;
- we applied for and received another grant of \$500 from the Royal Australian Historical Society to finance our attendance at a series of four workshops at the State Library. These one-day workshops covered the following topics, which were applicable directly to caring for our archives:

##### **Preserving photographic collections**

This included identifying and dating types of photographs; causes and symptoms of deterioration of historic photographs; practical techniques in cleaning and flattening; minimal repairs, tape removal & removal from album pages; storage of photographic collections, options and materials; practical techniques, framing & display and suppliers;

##### **Preserving your family history collections**

This included 'what is a collection?' tour of the State Library NSW collection; deterioration (inherent and environmental), storage & handling; practical techniques in cleaning books and documents; repairs to photographs or documents; storage solutions and suppliers.

##### **Defending documents**

This included materials used: inks, papers, duplication processes; practical techniques; testing inks and other media, cleaning, relaxing and flattening, adhesive tape removal; materials and pastes for repairing, 'wet' repairs using Japanese papers, when to call a conservator; storage of paper collections: options and materials, archival quality enclosures, encapsulation versus lamination; construction of 4 flap folder, framing & display.

##### **Battered books made better**

This included book construction, factors affecting book permanence, issues involved in selecting a method of repair, issues affecting choice of box style; basic skills for book repair and preservation eg cleaning a book, removing creases from pages, removing sticky tape, repairing torn pages, basic cover repair - corners, spine, hinges, making a book support.

The cost of each of these workshops was \$160 per person per day. It can be appreciated that the grant we received from the Royal Australian Historical Society's small grants scheme was very welcome although it had to be matched by the Society dollar for dollar.

The detail dealt with in each workshop was considerable and a challenge to the participants trying to absorb information which was part of a four year course for graduates;

- members of the Society were able to experience a 'hands on' approach when The Historic Houses Trust generously organised for eight trained curators to visit Mt Wilson to demonstrate the techniques of cleaning and storing material which was kept in 'Yarrawa' (Old Wynstay). The late Bill Smart, the owner, very kindly encouraged and supported this workshop which not only provided valuable training experience for our members but gave protection to vital archival material belonging to the Smart and Wynne families;
- Museums Australia (NSW branch) conducted a workshop centred on the theme of Exhibitions, which four of our members attended. In November of that year two experienced officers of Museums Australia visited us at

the Turkish Bath to discuss in depth the particular needs we had and how they could assist us. An example of the topics we received detailed advice on were the development of policies such as an 'acquisition policy', management of our collection and oral history.

**And into 1999:**

- these firmly established practices were continued. In February the Royal Australian Historical Society conducted two workshops: *A Typical Day in the Archives*, run by two professional Archivists, and *What to Do With Those Photographs*. Two members attended these workshops and found them invaluable as they concerned small collections like ours.
- the Society was represented at a workshop entitled *Managing Our Collection* conducted by the Macquarie Chapter, at which the Society acquired a set of guide lines called *re Collections Caring For Collections Across Australia* issued by the Heritage Collection Council and established by the government organisation Cultural Ministers Council. In the year 2000 the Society received the Index for these books and a guide to dealing with a disaster plan. This set of books provides detailed information on every aspect of care and contact information for finding help.

In summary, it would be reasonable to say that the Society is now well informed about and has expertise in the care of its archival resources. To reinforce this image, in 2000 the Society received a grant of \$500 from the Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW specifically for the purchase of archival storage material such as photographic albums, document storage folders, envelopes, suitable plastic holders and archival boxes. The Museums & Galleries Foundation of NSW, a fairly new organisation established in 1999, is funded by the State Government.

#### **How is the Turkish Bath Museum placed to store the Society's archives?**

Today, a small room in the Turkish Bath which functioned as a pantry from the 1920s to 1950 has been carefully conserved to house archival material. Its walls, facing, ceiling and shelves have been repaired, sealed and made entirely dust free. In December 2000 the Society received a direct grant of \$4,500 from the NSW Ministry for the Arts to purchase dehumidifiers and heaters. The purchase of these items will mean a major advance in creating ideal conditions for the storage of archival material, including our small but impressive image collection.

It should also be noted that in 2000 the Blue Mountains City Council gave the Society \$300 in the form of a community grant to be put towards a display cabinet. This cabinet is to be totally dust proof and environmentally protective and will be used to highlight special documents or books from the collection. These display cabinets are costly items. However the \$300 will be a substantial down payment towards the purchase of one.

Some in the community may not be aware of the advances that have been made over the last four years and may have a misconception of the Turkish Bath Museum. Our Society is, in fact, respected among museum organisations at local, state and national levels. The funding and support it has received surely reflects this.

Marg Reynolds (on behalf of the Society's Management Committee)  
February 2001

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## **Volunteer Initiated Museums Grant Program for the Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW**

### **The Program and its Aims**

The Mt Wilson Historical Society aims to purchase storage materials including archival boxes, polypropylene sleeves and at least five photo albums (archival) plus sleeves, negative files, acid-free inserts and two photographic pencils. The Turkish Bath has a small but very suitable room to serve as archive storage space with adequate shelving, dust proofing and humidity control. Materials for archival storage will initially be catalogued and prepared by volunteers at the home of the committee member who is the leader of that particular group.

### **Date of Project Commencement and Expected Date of Completion of Project**

June 2000 and January 2001 (respectively)

### **How does this project fit in with the Society's long-term or strategic plan?**

One of our Society's objectives is to act as custodians of historical documentary material which has been put in our care for the district of Mt Wilson, and to ensure they have adequate conservation. We do not at the moment have these materials in appropriate archival conditions.

### **Who will manage the project ?**



The leader of the group will be Mary Reynolds (retired librarian with some recent training in conservation practices) and Bruce Wright, retired archaeologist.

**Who will be working on the project ?** Volunteers, some of whom have attended seminars on practical work in conservation techniques.

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### Budget for Archival Storage in the Turkish Bath Museum (S & M Supply Co)

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| • 8 reinforced document cases at \$12.44 each (including sales tax)                      | \$ 99.52        |
| • 5 ARC storage cartons at \$11.59 each (including sales tax)                            | \$ 57.95        |
| • 5 archival photographic albums at \$12.00 each   | \$ 60.00        |
| • 2 packs of slip-in polypropylene album pages (100/pk) for 6"x4" photos at \$32.00 each | \$ 64.00        |
| • 50 slip-in polypropylene pages for 8"x12" photos with inserts at \$0.35 each           | \$ 17.50        |
| • Negative pages (100/pk) for 35mm   | \$ 35.00        |
| • 10 packs (50/pk) of A4 sized polypropylene bags at \$4.50 each                         | \$ 45.00        |
| • 6 packs (50/pk) of foolscap sized polypropylene bags at \$5.50 each                    | \$ 22.00        |
| • 4 packs (50/pk) of A3 sized polypropylene bags at \$6.00 each                          | \$ 24.00        |
| • 10 packs (50/pk) of A4 sized acid free paper at \$2.00 each                            | \$ 20.00        |
| • 2 photographic pencils   | \$ 6.00         |
| • 5 packs (50/pk) of Mylar negative files at \$10.00 each                                | \$ 50.00        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$500.97</b> |

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### Exhibitions in Museums - Professor Barrie Reynolds

[Professor Barrie Reynolds - anthropologist and museologist - was guest speaker at the Mt Wilson Historical Society Annual General Meeting on 4 November 2000, accompanied by his wife Ena. Barrie has had a long career in the museums field, particularly in Africa, Canada and Australia. From 1975 until his retirement in 1997, he directed museums research and training programs at James Cook University in Queensland. He now lives in Wentworth Falls and continues to work as a museum and heritage consultant. Barrie's talk was entitled *Exhibitions in Museums*.]

Using slides of exhibitions from various museums around the world, Barrie traced the changes that have occurred in museum exhibitions from the emergence of public museums in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the modern exhibitions of the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The talk focused mainly on anthropology museums but also included historical museum displays.

Throughout his talk Barrie used slides to explain some of the basic principles of exhibition technique: the use of light, size, colour etc to attract the eye of the visitor; the importance of allowing adequate space for traffic flow in a gallery; the need to keep labels short and informative and to make things interesting for the visitor. These principles will be useful in our own curatorial work at the Turkish Bath.

Barrie began with the Pitt Rivers Museum in the University of Oxford. This is a gem of a museum that, because of a condition in the original deed of gift, still displays its collections as it did in the 1880s when it was founded. The collections are among the most valuable anthropology collections in the world and Barrie urged anybody visiting England to make a point of going to see this little known museum.

Barrie then traced the changes that have occurred over the decades, especially the shift from the stiff Victorian attitude that museums are places for serious education and proper reverential behaviour, to the interpretative and visitor-friendly approach that we enjoy today. The speaker drew on illustrations from the Museum of Peter the Great, the Museum of Ethnography in St Petersburg, the Kremlin in Moscow (with its elegant and precious objects from the Court of the Tsars), the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, the Western Australian Museum in Perth, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Barrie did this in order to show the different treatments that have been given to displays, and also some of the mistakes that have been made.

Particularly interesting was the reconstruction, within the Milwaukee Public Museum, of a section of the city as it was at the turn of the century; and the sensitive treatment given to the display of Indian material in the Royal British Columbia Provincial Museum, Victoria, Canada. These examples illustrated the difference between the 'glass box' mentality evident in so many museums, and the value in using the whole gallery to interest the visitor.

Barrie commented that the BC Provincial Museum was his favourite museum and well worth a visit. So too, he said, was the Museum of Anthropology in the University of British Columbia in nearby Vancouver. The talk ended with slides on the French Chateau d'Usse on the Loire.

The Society and all those present at the AGM were extremely grateful to Barrie for his excellent and highly relevant talk.

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## Project Director's Report (to the AGM of 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2000)

### 1. The Turkish Bath

The initial major project of the Society has been the repair and conservation of the Turkish Bath on the Wynstay estate so that it can serve as the Society's meeting premise, archival storage area, museum and exhibition facility. The Society has a fifty year lease on the Turkish bath building and the surrounding precinct.

Much work has been completed on the building since 1997, and in the past year the ceiling cavity has been insulated, the 1920s plaster ceiling and frieze has been repaired and conserved, and the 1920s pantry has been converted for use as the archival storage area.

Work planned for the future, when funds become available, includes:

- the improvement of exhibition and display facilities within the building;
- the provision at the western end of the building of a safe staircase in the basement area;
- the conservation of the basement room into a refreshment preparation area;
- paving of the terrace on the northern margin to create an area for chairs and tables for visitors; and
- the provision of an underground rain-water tank and supply.

### 2. The Precinct

During the past year much has been accomplished by Society members in the upgrading of this area over the course of three major, very well-supported working bees. We have now achieved:

- vehicle and visitor access from Mt Irvine Road;
- a pine stairway up to the Turkish Bath from the vehicle track;
- a stage for out-door performances, such as the very enjoyable annual Jazz Concerts; and
- the clearing of a great quantity of fallen timber and other debris from the precinct.

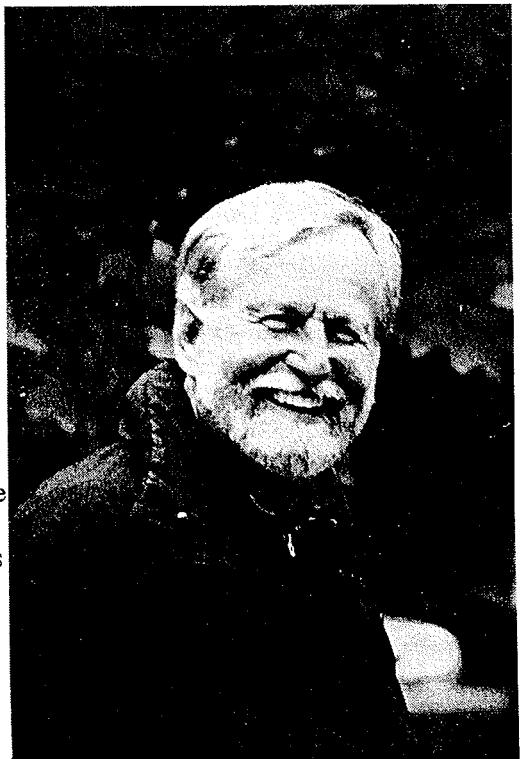
The Society is very grateful indeed to everyone who participated so long and so energetically in the mundane tasks during these events. Particular thanks also goes to Darrel Conybeare with his mountain-moving equipment, and Peter Raines who cleared and disposed of a huge pile of fallen timber.

The Council's assistance has been sought with several minor tasks but so far no assistance has been received from that quarter.

### 3. Funding

An application for funding for the further development work on the building and precinct was submitted to the Commonwealth Dept of Environment and Heritage in January 2000. The Project was deemed to be 'ineligible', as the Turkish Bath is not listed on either a State or Commonwealth Heritage List. The Committee had been led to believe that this had been attended to several years ago. Since this application rejection was announced in July strong representations have been made to both the State and Commonwealth bodies to have the building listed as soon as possible.

It is likely that applications for a further round of grants will be made by the Commonwealth in the next few weeks and it is sincerely hoped that negotiations to have the Turkish Bath included on one or other of these lists will have been concluded before the closing date.



P.S. This has now been achieved: we are on a list and a new application has been lodged.

Bruec J Wright - Projzet Dirzetur (14/11/00)

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### from the Mountains to the Sea

Our art exhibition and sale was an enormous success. The art and hand crafts exhibited were of a very high standard and a special thanks must go to John and Marcia Moulton who contributed art works from their collection, as well as time and energy throughout the exhibition.

We were pleased to have Kerry Bartlet, member for Macquarie, to officially open the exhibition on the Friday night at St George's Church. A champagne reception followed in the Posthouse Café and was attended by ninety people. The guests walked across the church yard between a row of candles and fairy lights which lit up the tree ferns and gave a magic image to the evening.

A special thanks to the Reverend David White for the use of the church which, with its high ceilings and stained glass windows, enhanced the whole exhibition. Colleen's generous donation of the use of the Posthouse Café was also greatly appreciated.

There were many people who contributed so much to the success of this function – thank you to all for your loyalty and dedication.

Over the weekend of the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October, our gross sales amounted to \$24,594.00 and our actual profit was \$5,144.95. There is a further sale pending which will add substantially to our final bottom line.

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### Hawkesbury Pioneer Register – Volume 2

The Hawkesbury Family History Group is collecting information for the long awaited *Hawkesbury Pioneer Register Volume 2*. The *Hawkesbury Pioneer Register Volume 1*, originally published in 1994, has been a huge success. The first volume had over 1,000 entries from 450 family history researchers, from all over Australia. The Group is now gathering information about families that lived in the Hawkesbury area and were not included in the first volume. Forms are available from the following places:

- By request from Hawkesbury Family History Group c/- Hawkesbury City Library, Dight Street, Windsor 2756 NSW
- Check the web at [http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov/library/family\\_history\\_group.htm](http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov/library/family_history_group.htm) and print out forms
- By email at [hpr2001@hotmail.com](mailto:hpr2001@hotmail.com)
- Telephone (02) 4560-4466

The closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> April 2001. The expected publication date is September 2001.

Updates and correction for *Hawkesbury Pioneer Register Volume 1* are also being accepted. Information can be sent by photocopying the relevant information from *Volume 1* with clearly marked corrections. Do not forget to add your name and address plus details of sources. Updates and corrections can also be sent on the current forms being distributed. You do not have to be a descendant to submit a form. Forms can be completed for a person or family that you have compiled information on whilst undertaking research. Many of the Hawkesbury's well-known identities are unfortunately not included. If you are interested in compiling information on some of the "left out" families, please contact Michelle Nichols on (02) 4560-4466.

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### Contacts and Correspondence

This letter from the Society's President, Arthur Delbridge, was addressed to Mt Wilson resident and member Ern Morgan:

Dear Ern,

*Graham Whale has handed over to me the copies of your survey maps CL407-1507 (1868) and DP217027 (1963) to be in the keeping of the Mt Wilson Historical Society.*

*I have been in touch with Mr Peter-John Grosfeld, of the Lithgow survey company Craven Elliston and Hayes, who kindly consulted the company records to find the 1963 survey, in response to my questions*

about the blazed stump you showed me on the boundary of your property last month. Mr Noel Frederick Craven, who as you know made that survey, is still a senior partner of the company.

Mr Grosfeld was delighted to know of your continuing interest in the blazed stump and the possibility of conserving it. He said that this particular survey map has a lot of interesting features, and that the identification of such features was of survey importance at the time, though these days they are usually replaced with other marks, as necessary. He was interested to hear of your attempts to conserve your blazed stump over the years, saying that it has notable surveying interest, as a line mark, though perhaps not as much as it would if it had been a corner mark. I also told him about the 1868 survey, though he, of course, does not have a copy of that map, which you have marked with the position of the blazed stump.

The Historical Society is grateful for the gift of these survey maps. They will be kept in the Society's archives and duly recorded in our catalogues. We look forward to exhibiting them whenever suitable occasion arises. You will, of course, be recorded as the donor.

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## ***Impressions of Mt Wilson – from the Lithgow Mercury***

[The following newspaper articles were sent to the Society in 1999 by one of our members, Jim Smith, who has published quite extensively and is an expert in the local history of the Blue Mountains, including the environment and bushland. They are two of a series of four articles which appeared in the Lithgow Mercury in December 1911 and January 1912. They reveal a great deal about Mt Wilson in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as raising all sorts of questions in relation to this period. The Society is very grateful to Jim for providing these primary sources.]

### **Part 1, Lithgow Mercury, December 13, 1911**

A Lithgowite who recently visited Mount Wilson for the first time gives it as his opinion that no one has really seen the gem beauty spot of the Blue Mountains until this beautiful and picturesque position has been invaded. Mount Wilson post office is just ten miles from Bell railway station, and in the drive out there is not a monotonous moment, for each bend in the road opens up some new scenic panorama. It is, of course, mostly wild and rugged, but grand in the extreme... After travelling about eight and a half miles, the nature of the country suddenly changes, so that in a distance of fifty yards the tourist finds that he has passed from sandy and comparatively barren stretches into an area very much resembling the far-famed Bulli Pass. This resemblance is maintained even to the short bend in the road half-way up the mountain, by creepers, ferns and general foliage. One at once begins to think that the beauties of this place have been by no means exaggerated. Then, when the top is reached, and the coach proceeds along the right-hand road, which leads to **Yengo**, the beautiful residence of Mr J. Gregson, the visitor begins to behold in reality the wonderful tree-fern groves of which so much has been said and written. **Yengo** is under the care of Mr Sydney Kirk, and in the well kept lawns and flower-beds there is ample evidence that the place is in good hands. Crossing a lovely gully by a side road, the main thoroughfare is again struck, and having passed the old school-house which is now only used for divine service on occasions – the historic avenues of chestnut trees on one side and walnut on the other, is entered. This avenue is about as near to an English scene as any that it is possible to find in Australia. It is about three quarters of a mile long, and is an object of admiration and delight, to all visitors. About half-way along the avenue is a gateway bearing the name **Narrangarra**. This is the property of Mr H.M. Clark, of Sydney, who is now having a handsome mountain residence built upon the brow of the hill which affords an uninterrupted view for a great number of miles in every direction. Mr Clark intends to make it an ideal home, and with this end in view, Mr H.E. Tanner who has charge of the job, has received instructions to carry out the work perfect in every detail. On the summit of the hill, and close by the new residence, an iron-frame look-out has been erected to the height of 70 or 80 feet. The ascent is made by iron ladders, which connect with a platform at short stages. In the very centre of the iron frame work stands a gigantic gum tree, quite the height of the look-out. Extending upwards from the top of this straight tree a flag-staff forty feet in length will be erected, and at the head of the flag-staff will be fixed a large electric light. An engine and dynamo for the purpose of supplying light through the house, operating fans etc. are expected to arrive any day.

A quarter of a mile further along the avenue on the opposite side of the roadway, the name **Beheah** appears on a neatly designed iron gate. This is the home of Mr I.J. Sloane, a Cowra country station owner. Here Mr William Connors is the man in charge, and he is never more pleased than when he has

an opportunity of showing a visitor over the pretty grounds, which surround the commodious and newly renovated homestead. The grounds represent a botanical garden on a small scale, for there must be hundreds of trees of various species thriving under the care of friend Connors. The landscape garden, which looks the acme of good taste and horticultural skill, appears to carry flowers of every variety, while delphinia quite 8 feet or 9 feet high are at present in bloom. Mr Connors claims that **Bebeah** is the garden 'gem' of Mt Wilson, and it is certainly a credit alike to the proprietor and the man whose skill is responsible for the beautiful effect in the front garden, as well as the vegetable garden in the rear of the house.

## Part 2, Lithgow Mercury, December 27<sup>th</sup> 1911

In concluding his last contribution on the above subject, which appeared a fortnight ago, the writer left off just outside the front gate of **Bebeah**, the residence of Mr I.J. Sloan. He then continued his walk along the avenue parallel with which on the south side runs a well-kept hawthorn hedge. This fronts the grounds of **Bebeah**, and continues for a distance of three to four hundred yards at which point the property is divided from **Yarrawa**, once the residence of the late Richard Wynne, by a road which leads to the rear of the latter premises. Here the main road to Mt Irvine takes a short turn to the left and the traveller now proceeds for a considerable distance under the shade of stately mountain giants, beneath which thrive luxuriant undergrowth. In approaching the short turn referred to, a fortress-like wall greets the vision, and then the pretty octagonal lodge and massive main entrance gates of **Yarrawa** come into full view. Through the courtesy of Mr John Hartly, who has had charge of the property for some years, the visitor was afforded an opportunity of going over this magnificent and vast estate, embracing many thousands of acres, within the limits of which is to be found country of varied character. All was bustle on the day of the visit, for Professor McCallum had taken the mansion for the summer term and the family were expected next day. After examination of the house and beautiful grounds the stables were reached. Such stables! One has to look and wonder. Erected nearly 30 years ago, they were built of hewn stone, and fitted out in the most complex manner. Even the spacious boxes bear the names of the favourite steeds that occupied them in the long ago. The cow stalls also have the names of the animals which supplied milk, cream and butter to the Wynne family in the old days. Mr Wynne must have been a kindly disposed gentleman, for a boldly written inscription on the wall reads: "Speak to your cow as you would a lady." The carriage-room, still accommodating a family brougham, is perfection itself, as also are all the other offices associated with this section of the premises. It is said that, when the late Mr Wynne, who was in his day a successful Sydney merchant, chose Mt Wilson as the site for his home and gave orders for the erection of the mansion – the same that was destroyed by fire – the stables, and stone walls, as well as for the laying out of the grounds, his orders were that **Yarrawa** should be a representation in Australia of an English gentleman's residence. So that the objectives might be realised, no expense was to be spared in the work. How far the ideals were realised can only be appreciated by an inspection of the estate. A few minutes walk along the well-kept avenue within the grounds, and the visitor stands before a neat building surmounted by a dome. This is the famous **Turkish-bath house**, which was erected about 20 years ago at a cost of nearly 3,000 pounds and finished in a most elaborate style. Though it is over 15 years since the bath was used, it shows signs of having been well looked after. It is said that the late Mrs Wynne fell into ill health, and her medical advisers ordered a continuous course of Turkish baths. Hence the existence of the establishment. What is known as the outer circular avenue encircles the main residential portion of the property, and is over a mile in circumference. It was while continuing his walk along this picturesque pathway – carriages may also drive thereon – that the visitor, in company with Mr Hartly, met and was introduced to Mr J Joshua and his little daughter, Eva, of **Campanella**, which pretty estate adjoins. Having reached the lodge, the company adjourned inside where Mrs Hartly very kindly supplied afternoon tea.

## Financial Statement from 01/07/2000 to 31/12/2000

| Income   | \$        | Expenditures   | \$        |
|--|-----------|--|-----------|
| October art exhibition (gross)                                 | 24,594.15 | October art exhibition   | 19,941.20 |
| Bank Interest  | 25.14     | Insurance on Turkish Bath                                      | 544.10    |
| Centenary of Federation grant (for community history projects) | 3000.00   | Integral Energy (for electricity supplied to the Turkish bath) | 76.07     |



|  |                  |  |                  |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|
| Membership subscriptions   | 1,640.00         | Phone/fax calls (2010 & 2006)  | 594.01           |
| Donations to Society   | 2,129.30         | Printing of Newsletter No.6  | 130.90           |
| Conducted tours of Turkish b/h   | 498.00           | Printing for Turkish Bath  | 303.73           |
| Australian Tax Office (refund on BAS to 30.09.00)  | 57.00            | Stationary (2 rubber stamps)   | 28.60            |
| Grant from Museums & Galleries Foundation (for purchase of materials for archival storage) | 550.00           | Maintenance on T/B precinct:<br>Signage: 198.00<br>Clearing Gutters: 84.30<br>Mowing: 44.00<br>Paint: 37.00  | 363.30           |
| Bank Credit (error in closing T/Bath restoration account)                                  | 3.00             | Practical Archivist (from \$550 grant shown above)   | 283.50           |
|  |                  | Lesley Wynne (from \$3,000 grant shown above)  | 500.00           |
|  |                  | Norm McFarlane (photographic work for archives)  | 52.00            |
|  |                  | Museum and Galleries Foundation (2 delegates to Bathurst conference – August)  | 130.00           |
|  |                  | Books of yesteryear:<br><i>HV Evatt</i> – 24.00<br><i>The Lyrebird</i> – 45.00<br><i>Bathurst and Western Directory 1886-7</i> – 65.00<br>(Post/Handling of above: 14.30)<br><i>Colonial NSW 1853-94</i> – 31.60<br><i>Then &amp; Now</i> – 30.80<br><i>Australia's Colonial Culture</i> – 40.00 | 250.70           |
|  |                  | Independent Magazine (ad for Turkish Bath opening)   | 88.00            |
|  |                  | Department of Fair Trading (submission for Form 12)  | 35.00            |
|  |                  | State government taxes   | 62.30            |
|  |                  | Bank fees (cheque stopped)   | 15.00            |
|  |                  | Tributes to ill/deceased members   |                  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>32,496.59</b> | <b>Total</b>   | <b>23,398.41</b> |

#### Reconciliation Statement for period 01.07.00 to 31.12.00

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Income for period 01.07.00 to 31.12.00                     | \$32,496.59 |
| Expenditure for period 01.07.00 to 31.12.00                | \$23,398.41 |
| (Credit) Balance   | \$ 9,098.18 |
| Plus balance of accounts as at 30.06.00                    | \$ 4,593.11 |
| Balance of accounts shown in bank statement dated 31.12.00 | \$13,691.29 |

#### Term Deposit

The term deposit of \$5,685.54 invested with the Blackheath branch of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia which fell due on 28.12.2000, was reinvested for six months at 3.9% p.a. and matures on 28.06.2001. With accrued interest it currently amounts to \$5,795.11.

#### Petty Cash

The (credit) balance remains unchanged at \$110.33.

Ellis G Reynolds (Treasurer)

9 January, 2001

## A Word from the Editor

Yes, the rumours are all true, I'm off to see the world, and I won't be back until I have (until I have run out of money that is). I would like to thank all those who have helped with the newsletter by way of contributing written material or just by encouraging me with positive feedback. I give particular thanks to my great-uncle Arthur (Delbridge), who suggested I do this newsletter gig over four years ago, and had enough faith in me to let me run with it. I would also like to thank Wilga Smart, who was fundamental in the development of the newsletter. Wilga gave me a tangible base from which to develop a structured newsletter when I didn't really believe I would be able to. She laboured over and created the lead article for Number One, August 1997 entitled *A Tour of the Turkish Bath*. Thank you Wilga.

I've loved being part of the Historical Society, and have felt privileged to be producer of the newsletter. Being a member of the Society has allowed me to meet some great people, and to enjoy some pretty magical moments in Mt Wilson.



I wish the Society and its members all the best in the noble pursuit of the appreciation and active preservation of local Australian history.

