

THE MOUNTS

Community newsletter of Mt Wilson
and Mt Irvine March 2020 Autumn



On Sunday 2 February, Marlo Tribe (right) and her friend Evie, both nine, held a 'Lemon-Aid' stall and raised a wonderful \$350 for the MWMIRFB.

GOSPERS MOUNTAIN FIRE DECLARED OUT

On 10 February at 8.30am the Gospers Mountain Fire was declared out after burning since 26 October, 108 days.

ABC News 14:10 ^

NSW News

The RFS says the Gospers Mountain 'mega-blaze' has been extinguished by the weekend's torrential rain. It had been burning since October 26

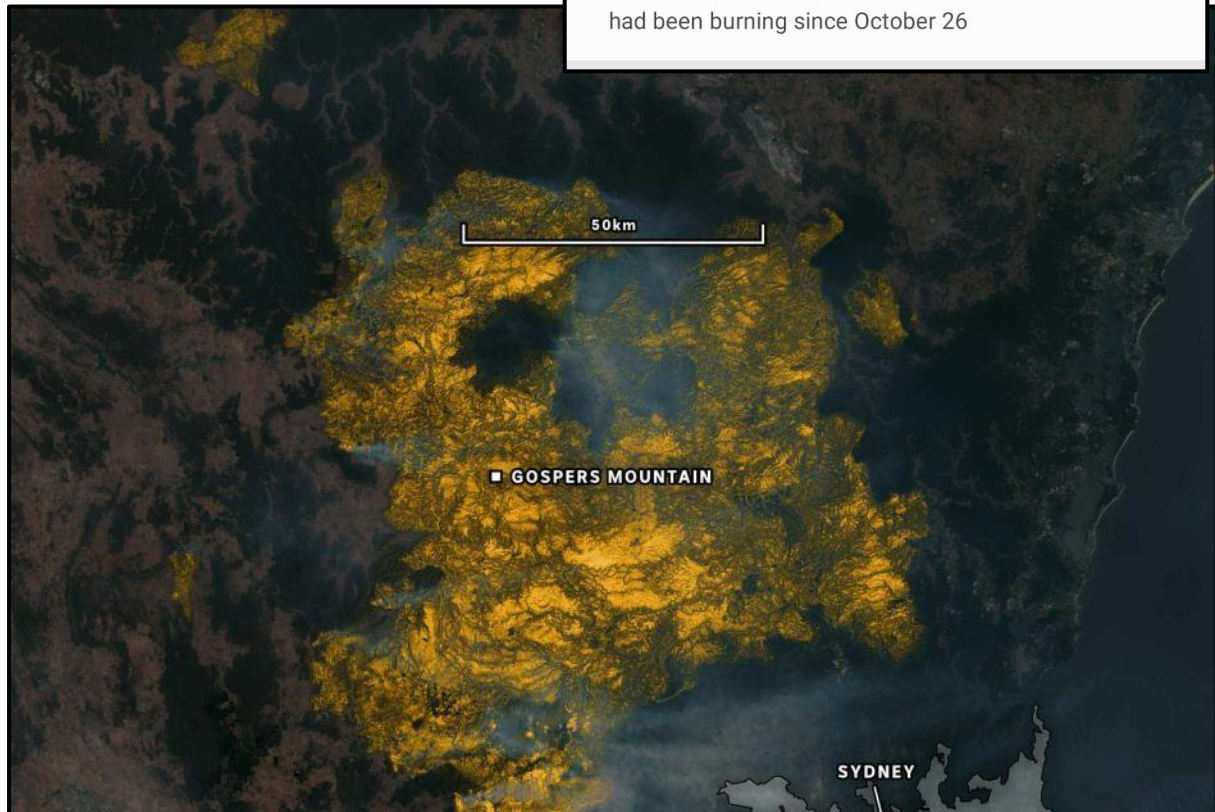


Image from abc.net.au showing extent of area burnt in the Gospers Mountain Fire European Union, Contains Modified Copernicus Sentinel Data 2020, Processed With EO Browser

FIGHTING FIRE BOOK

This history of the MWMIRFB is still available. If you do not have a copy, or would like an extra copy, contact Susie Hope by email to louisard@bigpond.net.au.

THE BUSH LANDSCAPE WILL RECOVER

As many people will have noticed many of the tree ferns have not put out new fronds this year, they recognize how dry it is and that being dry they risk burning. They are waiting for rain before releasing the new fronds. True survivors. The animals have been the same in the weeks before the fires, the wallabies could smell the smoke and used every available moment to feed and fatten up to get through a few tough weeks with not much food, until the new shoots come through. Our green areas are now an important refugee for animals and birds until the burnt areas regrow. The extra light into the rainforest areas will encourage new growth to fill the gaps and the fire smoke will germinate seeds that have been lying dormant in the soil. This is all

part of the normal cycle of the bush. Over the following years the rainforest will work to re establish a full canopy and dominate the competition for light.

The mountain ash areas do not like to be burnt hot, and most areas should not be too bad, but we will have to wait and see the effect in these areas. The hard eucalyptus county has evolved with fire and will come back surprisingly quickly.

Peter Raines.

Many thanks to BMCC and the experts from Mt Tomah for holding a seminar (22 February) on garden and bush recovery. There was much useful information, hints and suggestions.

BUSHCARE

Please join us for bushcare on the second Friday of each month, between 9am and 12 midday.

It is an enjoyable morning, a delicious morning tea is provided, and it is a great way to learn more about the native fauna including beautiful rainforest trees, shrubs and vines. It is also a great opportunity to do some birdwatching and find fascinating fungus.

The dates and locations are below, and can also be found on the Mt Wilson community website calendar.

Mt Wilson Bushcare Schedule - 2020

March	Friday 13th	Meet at Hay Lane
April	Friday 10th	Cancelled due to Good Friday public holiday
May	Friday 8th	Meet at Hay Lane
June	Friday 12th	Meet at Cnr Queens Ave and Wynnes Rock Rd
July	Friday 10th	Meet at Wynne Reserve, next to church
August	Friday 14th	Meet at Silva Plana
September	Friday 11th	Meet at Wynne Reserve, next to church
October	Friday 9th	Meet at Wynne Reserve, next to church
November	Friday 13th	Meet at Queens Avenue, opp Windyridge
December	Friday 11th	Meet at Queens Avenue, opp Windyridge

For residents who are wanting to identify and control weeds in their gardens, the booklet "Bushland Weeds of Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine" can be found in the Bushcare section of the community website. The booklet is also available from the MWPA, if residents would like a free copy please contact Sue Woolfenden on 4756 2046.

Everyone is welcome, we hope you can join us!

Enquiries:

Mt Wilson contact: Alice Simpson (0414 425 511 or 4756 2110)

Council contact: Tracy Abbas (0428 777 141)

Alice Simpson

A MAGICAL BALANCE – THIS SEASON’S BOOK REVIEW

Translation of a literary work not only requires knowledge of two languages but also a sympathy for the time and culture of both writer and the reader. The translator’s work is not just to make one language into another but he needs to capture the background of the writer, the times in which he was living and the essence of the stories. All reading is an act of magic as the reader is transported into another time and place, meeting and caring (or not) for the characters. The translator therefore has to be a reader and a magician, while maintaining a balance between the writer’s intentions and the demands of the new language. In some ways the translated work is a version of the original, it needs to capture the structural elements and the feelings embedded in the original work. Unless one has the capabilities of reading in both languages, we have to take the translated version as ‘the’ version, so there is an implicit contract and act of trust as the translator mediates between the book and the reader.

Vladislav Zhukov (known to most of us as Vic) has translated a collection of short stories by Gabriele D’Annunzio. The stories date from the early 20th century and the collection is titled *Pescara Tales (1902): spirit and flesh, images of Abruzzo*.



Gabriele D’Annunzio (left) was born 12 March 1863, in Pescara, Italy and he died 1 March 1938. He was an Italian poet, novelist, dramatist, short-story writer, journalist, military hero, and political leader, the leading writer of Italy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

D’Annunzio’s colourful career, his scandalous amours, his daring in wartime, his eloquence and political leadership in two national crises, all contributed to make him one of the most striking personalities of his day. D’Annunzio’s literary works are marked by their egocentric perspective, their fluent and melodious style, and an overriding emphasis on the gratification of the senses, whether through the love of women or of nature.

(*Encyclopaedia Britannica*)

The form of the short story seems to force a cutting back of literary extravagance, and these tales are focused on character and often reveal a mordant wit. In ‘The Pieces of Gold’ Passacantando is described as having ‘lips, protuberant, vermillion, and of a certain soft formlessness, seemed perennially to store at the corners a few off-white bubbles of spittle’. We are not surprised at his distaste for the woman who longs for him, nor the action of the pair in deciding to rob her husband. The title itself sets the scene for multiple betrayals.

Death, lust, despair and greed are the driving forces for many of the characters. Some events seem melodramatic or absurd, but D’Annunzio has a keen eye for the foibles of both rich and poor, master, mistress and servant in Italian fin de siècle society. The comical and the cynical sit side by side as in ‘The Hero’ where a crushed hand is offered as a sacrifice to the local saint, or in ‘The Funeral Vigil’

Pescara Tales (1902)

Spirit and Flesh:
Images of Abruzzo



Gabriele D'Annunzio

where the body of the Mayor is being watched over by the priest and his wife. Both recall an earlier time, and their memories and the candlelight promote the realisation of overwhelming mutual desire as 'they smothered each other with caresses.'

The stories were written a hundred years ago but the tone is surprisingly modern. They are to be savoured, with a pause between each, so the full flavour may be appreciated. Zhukov has not only translated these stories but he is also the publisher. The book may be purchased from him at v_v_zhukov@hotmail.com. It will be money well spent.

Alison Halliday

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Our community web site is managed by Jimmy Web (jimmyweb.net). They made a very generous donation to the community during the fires, waiving all costs for December 2019, and renewing the hosting for one year free of charge:

They were thanked for this kind and generous offer in a letter which included:

'Thank you for your thoughtful generosity at this most difficult time. We know that we are only one of many communities suffering from the effects of fire throughout Australia. Your support and practical kindness really does make a difference to our community.'

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF MWPA

As we all know summer was dominated by extreme fires all along the eastern seaboard and extending into the southern and central highlands. Our own monster was the Gospers Mountain Fire which took many weeks to reach us after a single lightning strike in November. With hindsight we know how lucky we were in escaping this fire except for the loss of three buildings, including that of Brigade Captain Beth Raines. Our Brigade did the most marvellous and relentless task in protecting people, houses and land from the effects of this fire. While the Gospers Mountain Fire destroyed almost the whole of the Wollemi wilderness area, over a million acres in the 'old' measurement, so many other villages, places, reserves and National Parks in NSW and other states were not so fortunate. I know we all grieve for the losses suffered by so many people, and of course the loss of thousands and thousands of wildlife. We will be noticing the wider consequences of this fire-summer for years to come.

The committee had plans for various restoration and maintenance jobs but they were put on hold during summer and we now may have a chance to implement some of them.

As I write this it is raining, it is wonderful to hear it on the roof and seeing the burnt and thirsty plants responding. I shall never again complain about the rain. However, many areas in the centre and west of our state are still suffering from the drought to which it seems there is no end.

I hope you all find some peace and respite in the cool of autumn on our lovely Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine.

Alison Halliday

MT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION OGM AND VILLAGE HALL AGM

This combined meeting of the MWPA the Village Hall committee will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 4 April 2020.

This is your chance to catch up with what is happening across the community and enjoy a convivial glass of wine. Save the date, formal notification will be sent out soon.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE WAR MEMORIAL SITE

Last year the MWPA applied for a grant at the suggestion of Susan Templeman, our Federal member, to carry out some repairs on the War Memorial site. We had applied for a community grant but these were hotly contested and she contacted me about this more appropriate possibility. With the help of Matilda, the application was made, never an easy or brief process as many of you would know.



On 25 February I was contacted by Susan Templeman and she said that the MWPA have been awarded a grant of \$4,000 by the Department of Veteran Affairs to re-gild the letters for the names of WWII and the Vietnam War veterans on the War Memorial and to re-build the fence at the back. Lee Blaker (pictured above in 2016), a stone mason from Wallerawang did a minor alteration on the War Memorial a couple of years ago, and he has been asked to do the re-gilding.

We hope that the BMCC will approve a fence to match that in front of the School House precinct, thus providing a visual link between these two significant community areas.

RECOVERY PARTY

On Saturday 25 January the community came together at the Village Hall to give our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all those involved in leading the fight against the Mt Gaspers fire. The following leaders were acknowledged: Lesley Wilson, catering team leader was thanked by Megan Wood; Richard Beattie, acting community engagement officer – responsible for the street co-ordinators as well as so many updates and information about the fire – was thanked by Judy Tribe, herself a street coordinator; Barry Freeman, deputy Captain 1 and Station Officer co-ordinator was thanked in glowing terms by Sue Woolfenden. Robbie Feyder told us of the huge amount of work, on so many fronts, done by Peter Raines, Senior Deputy Captain; and President of the Brigade David Howell thanked Captain Beth Raines for her tireless determination, patience, and knowledge that contributed so much to saving us from the worst of the fire. Without these five people and their combined efforts we would have come to grief.

We also took the opportunity to remember all those who suffered from the fires that burnt so much of our bushland, forests, farms and houses during this terrible summer.

Following the formal part of the evening there were stories told and swapped, support and kindness shown and received, and food and drink enjoyed long into the night.

WATERFALL CREEK LIVES UP TO ITS NAME

After the weekend rains of the 8-9 February, Rosie Walsh took the following photos which illustrate the name of our creek.

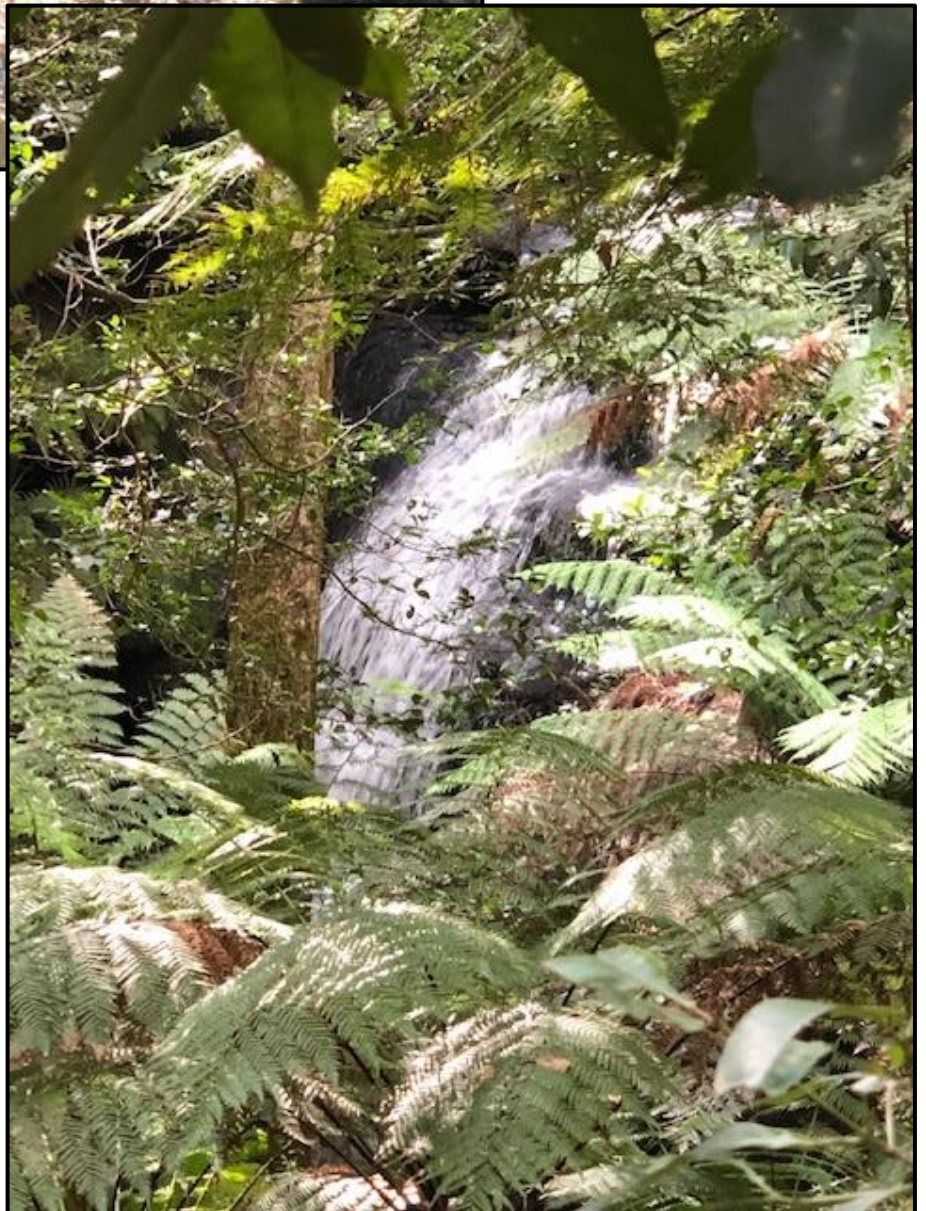
Right: upper waterfall





Left: carp at the bottom of the waterfall. Rosie said: 'this must have overflowed from one of the lakes or dams - hate to think how many others have ended up in Waterfall Creek'.

Right: the lower waterfall



MYSTERY DONATIONS SUPPORTING OUR MT WILSON MT IRVINE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Since the fire in December we've been over-whelmed with donations in recognition of the amazing work our very special Brigade and our community in general did to save our two villages. I've receipted all that I can but I've got a few that I have no details for.

They are:

- T.M. Bank
- Jonno D (who donated with the annotation 'You guys rock!')
- Caroline McHugh
- Chris Franks
- J. Gardner
- B.S. Goldman
- Scott Marsh Pty Ltd
- J. Garske
- "Rutherford"

I'd hate not to recognise the generosity of all our donors so if anyone can help me with details for those listed above that would be great. Please email me:

louisard@bigpond.net.au.

We've got a wish list for things to do to make our villages more resilient fire-wise in future. The donations we've received will go a long way towards us fulfilling this list.

Susie Hope

CLEARING ROAD OF DANGEROUS TREES

Hundreds of trees were damaged by the fire and the precarious nature of these trees along the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine roads was made worse by the recent heavy rains. The trees along the Five Mile were dealt with quickly but the road to Mt Irvine was closed to all but local residents. It was potentially a serious situation as the nut season begins in early March.



Numerous appeals were made to the BMCC and Council representatives and Peter Randell from The Office of Emergency Management were given a tour of the areas badly damaged. Trees were overhanging the road, banks had been undercut by the rain (as shown in the photo on the previous page), dirt had washed across several sections of road and there were still hanging branches.



The existing situation had serious personal and economic costs. The Brigade wrote a submission, including several photos showing exactly how dangerous the trees could be, which went to BMCC and on 25 February the Council passed a resolution to remove the numbered trees and to recover the costs at a later date. The MWPA also wrote to the Mayor and the local Councillors in support of the action.

This is a significant step by BMCC for which we are most grateful. Now we just have to see the work begin. In the meantime, **please drive carefully and slowly and take extreme care where work is being done.**

WANTING TO HELP OUR WILDLIFE?

The bushfires have been devastating to our wildlife and the BMCC says that this fire has been the worst ever to date losing up to 95% of our UNESCO Blue Mountains Heritage National Parks and devastating our native wildlife. Mt Wilson has suffered terribly from the fires and our wildlife is now at critical levels in danger of extinction.

But there is help on the way and two wonderful women have been sacrificing their own time and income to make a real difference working with an organisation called ARC (Animal Rescue Cooperative).

Tamara has put her own work aside to help feed our starving wildlife on private properties that border national parks and Melina an ecologist put her work on hold to help feed wildlife – they are both volunteering for ARC. Both these women are also doing research on the wildlife inhabitants like the greater glider in Mt Wilson and its

surrounds that may have hopefully survived the fires, setting up food stations and night vision cameras paid out of their own pockets.

It is tough work and they have witnessed terrible situations of wallabies and 'roos and every type of wildlife. Many are dead, too weak to find food, or drowned, too weak to escape the recent heavy rainfall.

If you would like to help in their efforts, please contact Heidi Irwin on 0432 414 008.

Heidi Irwin

WILDLIFE WATERING STATIONS

One way to help the wildlife is by providing watering stations, this may be as simple as keeping water filled dishes in your garden. You may have noticed a number of these set up on either side of the Bells Line of Road. Here is a simple watering station you can make, courtesy of Guy Ballard.



- 1) Buy a 10L or 20L bucket with tight fitting lid
- 2) Buy a cat litter tray large enough to fit bucket
- 3) Drill a 15mm hole, 40mm below lid, in the side of the bucket
- 4) Fill bucket with water and fit lid tightly
- 5) Invert bucket in tray

There are other watering station/fountain ideas available on Arid Recovery:

<https://aridrecovery.org.au/how-to-make-a-water-fountain/>.

MT IRVINE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The meeting was held on Sunday 26 January 2020 commencing at 11am in the Mt Irvine Public Hall. It was well attended with more than 50 people present. It was chaired by the President Allen Hyde. He welcomed everyone, with a special mention of those who were new to Mt Irvine and read the apologies.

There was a brief presentation by Carol Carrigan on the role of the traditional owners and the legendary stories of Mt Irvine. The minutes of the previous meeting were passed with a comment about the location of the gate on Bowens Creek Rd.

The treasurer, Bruce Kerridge presented his report and Jim Tzannes gave an update on the Hall Trust, which now has a new board of seven members.

Bruce Kerridge gave a detailed review of the 2019-2020 bushfires and issues arising from them, focusing on the cooperation of the whole community and his report was

extended by comments from some present. He also commented on the importance of help from other brigades. He offered special commendation to Allan Hyde and his family for the continual help over many weeks.

Various people spoke about these and other issues making the following comments:

- Need ongoing protection from fire;
- Perhaps a different mix of crew leaders and crews on trucks;
- Urged people to go to the post fire review the following day;
- Fire trails need to be widened, perhaps using a “tritter” to create a 100-metre wide barrier;
- Further work required to prevent further loss of environment.

Allen Hyde spoke about the need to protect and improve Mt Irvine with special mention of the significant loss of rainforest. He suggested that fighting fire with fire may not necessarily be the best protection. He elaborated on a proposed plan to create a rainforest conservancy which would be a resource, he hoped, beyond the Mt Irvine community. He also pointed out the responsibility of everyone to create or restore rainforest on their own land. This, along with extended and widened fire trails, would help to circle the mountain with a bushfire protection barrier. He thought that working towards the creation of open woodland, as seen near to the Hall, would be a part of this barrier. He thought that what may be done on Mt Irvine could act as a potential model for restoration of the bush to other communities, now and in the future.

Allen suggested creating a website for the Mt Irvine community; and he suggested that communication on Mt Irvine could be more efficient with an alternative system – a mobile phone and private microwave system.

Bruce commented about the need to conserve water, saying that ideally ground water should stay in the ground and people should find alternatives to extending or drilling new bores as this caused a drop in the water table which resulted in local springs and creeks going dry.

The meeting was followed by a convivial BBQ.

This report is based on notes taken by Alison Halliday and approved for inclusion in The Mounts by Allen Hyde.

FEEDBACK AND WINTER EDITION

Your feedback and comments are always welcome, please send to themounts2786@gmail.com.

The closing date for the Winter edition of The Mounts is **Friday 22 May 2020**. Please send submissions in Word format to themounts2786@gmail.com. Images of local events, wildlife and flora are also welcome.

Contributions from members of the community are always welcomed – this is *your* newsletter. The email address for queries and contributions is themounts2786@gmail.com.