

MT WILSON & MT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Minutes of the 11th Special General Meeting of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc. held on Saturday, 27th June 2009, at the Village Hall, Mt Wilson

Welcome

Des Barrett, President of the Society, warmly welcomed members and friends, with a special welcome to guests visiting from Lithgow, Windsor and Wentworth Falls. In total 37 people were in attendance. A record of the names is held in the Society's files.

Apologies

Robert Chesney, Pam Cudlipp, Helen & Barry Freeman, Moira & Ron Green, Deborah & Edward Griffin, Valerie & Frank Holland (Kurrajong & Comleroy Historical Society), Mary Holt, John & Nanette Leary (BMACHO), Bill & Maureen Ryan, Judy & Graham Tribe, Elaine Turnidge, Suzanne Vidler, Paul Weingott.

President's Report

Des Barrett gave an overview of the many roles undertaken by the Society's management committee appointed at the 2008 Annual General Meeting, emphasising the broad range of activities which include: tours; research; publications; public enquiries; archives management; publicity; working bees; financial management, income generation and expenditure; Museum exhibitions; building renovations and refurbishments and much more. Des introduced the other members of the management committee as: Darrel Conybeare (Vice-President); Bruce Wright (Vice President); Florence Smart (General Secretary); Kathy Harrington (Treasurer); Mary Reynolds (Research and Public Officer) [ex-officio]; Anne Mayall; Arthur Delbridge; Helen Cardy and Kathleen Oakes, thanking these committee members for their wide ranging assistance and advice. The President then addressed a number of current and important projects currently before the Society.

Turkish Bath Museum

Des thanked all members who have volunteered as guides over the Autumn season enabling the Museum to be opened regularly for visitors. New exhibits have been installed including the Society's contribution to celebrating 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy: *A Clear Night Sky*; framed photographic portraits of three generations of the Wynne family and a four-panel display depicting the history of the *Bowen's Creek Road*. The Society has been successful in applying for a grant from the NSW Planning Department, Heritage Branch to replace the corrugated roofing on the Turkish Bath, and to restore and repaint the four timber louvers on the tower. The project will cost \$32,000 with the grant covering half on a dollar for dollar basis. Des thanked Florence for preparing the grant application.

The Scrivener Exhibition

Negotiations have been continuing between the Society and both the Canberra and NSW Divisions of the Institution of Surveyors to transfer ownership of the exhibition panels which depict the life and work of Charles Robert Scrivener, 1855 – 1923. It is anticipated that the materials will be included in displays during the lead up to and during centenary celebrations of both the start of the ACT / NSW border survey and the survey of the Canberra site itself. The Society has requested a payment of \$5000 to help offset some of the costs of producing the exhibition in 2001.

Autumn Market Weekend

This major fundraising event was held again in the Mt Wilson Village Hall on 25th and 26th of April. Stalls were hired out, and there were books, plants, clothes, paintings, crafts, household items and food and drinks for sale. Members of the community generously donated goods for the Society's stalls, and many willing helpers both in the kitchen and throughout the hall added to the enjoyment and success of the whole enterprise. The Society's profit for the weekend was \$5,671. Des thanked everyone, on behalf of the Society, for making the weekend a great success.

The President finished his report by thanking members of the Committee and the Society for their support and commitment throughout the year.

Treasurer's Report

Kathy Harrington distributed a copy of her Report for the half year 24/11/2007 – 27/6/2008 detailing the following:

Balance in Society's Cheque Account at CBA Blackheath:	\$14,922.00
Term Deposit at CBA	\$26,440.00
Balance in Fund raising subcommittee Cheque Account	\$1,784.00

	\$43,146.00
Income:	\$10,106.98
Expenses:	\$8,468.56

Ellis Reynolds moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Seconded by Florence Smart. Carried unanimously.

Research and Historical Report

Research and Public Officer Mary Reynolds distributed a comprehensive report and highlighted the following points:

New members on the Committee Kathleen Oakes and Anne Mayall have in different ways made the task of dealing with the archives easier and less overwhelming. Kathleen brings a wealth of experience as a professional archivist while Anne's artistic and creative talents are very helpful in sorting and reallocating our photographs. Kathleen has accessioned material which was received at the end of 2005 from Mrs Tood [Dulcie] Kirk before she

moved to Harden. This material contains the minute books of the Blue Mountains Mt Wilson Sights Reserve Group or Trust going back to 1930 and many other documents related to that Group which functioned until 1989 when the then State Government dissolved these trusts. Kathleen has also entered memorabilia from the Knight-Brown family containing wonderful old books such as May Gibbs' *Bib and Bub* belonging to Nell Knight-Brown. Kathleen has established a computerised database for maintaining these records and is now transferring written material from previous years onto the computer. Meanwhile John Cardy is cataloguing the Trust documents ready for permanent storage at the Study Centre. As always the Society is grateful to Kathleen and John and Helen Cardy for their dedication and work in this area.

Mary commented that the oldest Minute book available from the Mt Wilson Progress association is 1939 even though there is evidence that the Mt Wilson Progress Association existed well before that date. Documents of the Mt Wilson Parents and Citizens Association are also being accessioned. A number of fascinating details have emerged from the documents handed to the Society by Professor Ian Jack last November. Mary circulated extracts from school records to show enrolments and family names from 1936. All this material adds rich detail to Mary's recording of the history of the community at that time.

Other Research:

The Society was approached in May 2009 by Shirley Brown of Leura for information about Bessie Bramsen now deceased. Bessie was the daughter of Anderson who had a timber mill in Mt Irvine. In the early 1990s she wrote about her memories of life as a child at Mt Irvine. As yet this document has not been located but fortunately the BMCC library at Springwood can help as Bessie lived in Springwood.

A recent visitor to the Turkish Bath gave her name to Robert Chesney who passed it onto Mary. This was Mrs Mary Hagan, a grand daughter of Mr Hartley who was the caretaker at 'Yarrawa' (now *Wynstay*) for many years. Mary Hagan's mother lived in the Lodge as a child. Mrs Hagan is following up with her family to gather photos and information for the Society's records.

Mary reported that 220 visitors visited the Museum during April and May, and Mary added her thanks to those members who volunteered for the roster, commenting that it all ran smoothly due to the efficiency of Julia Reynolds, our hard working Co-ordinator and the cooperation of our volunteers. 220 visitors add \$1,100.00 to the Society's funds: a substantial contribution.

Mary expressed the Society's loss this year of three valued members who have died: Luigi Strano, Anne Ross and Kathleen Howard Smith all were generous supporters of the Society over the years. Mary concluded her report by acknowledging the support of the current committee, particularly Des Barrett, Florence Smart and Kathy Harrington.

General Business

Professor Barrie Reynolds gave an update on BMACHO activities, of which he is secretary. With some 30 members made up of organisational representatives and 8 or 10

individuals with expertise in the heritage area, the Association encourages and coordinates growth of the heritage sector within the region.

Members were invited to make submissions to the next newsletter to be published in August 2009.

The AGM has been set down for Saturday, 14th November 2009, at 10.30am in the Mt Wilson Village Hall with guest speaker Dr Peter Rickwood. He will be speaking about his work with geology students from UNSW who visited Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine collecting specimens over two decades until 1997.

Guest Speaker

Florence introduced guest speaker, Michael Pembroke who spoke about his soon to be published book *'Trees of History and Romance, Essays from a Mt Wilson Garden.'* Michael gave a most entertaining account of his attachment to his garden and how he had selected and researched 22 trees from his garden at *Hawthorn*. The presentation described how Michael over the years had developed a passion for gardening, through the development of his Mt Wilson property, and particularly for the trees which have led him to study their history and ultimately to writing the book. Michael with his wife Gillian and family first came to Mt Wilson 1980s. The audience was captivated by Michael's presentation, and high expectations were set for the book and its launch in September. Examples of Libby Raines' original drawings which illustrate the book were displayed and created great interest.

The President expressed the Society's appreciation to Michael for his most engaging talk and discussion continued after the meeting closed at 1.00pm.

A light lunch was served and social time followed.

Confirmed