



Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society

Newsletter N° 25

February 2012

Governor to open Patrick White Exhibition

Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir A.C. CVO Governor of NSW will be the honoured guest at Mt Wilson on Sunday 17th June 2012 to open The Red Admiral: Patrick White at Mount Wilson exhibition at 11am.

You will have read our President's Report in which the development and display of a carefully crafted exhibition paying tribute to Patrick V.M. White, novelist and Nobel Laureate is to be presented at Mt Wilson Village Hall on the centenary of his birth, May 1912.

The Governor was so interested and keen to visit Mt Wilson that she rang me personally on Thursday 12th January to arrange a convenient date. In our invitation the dates we proposed were not suitable for her as she would be overseas. We shared some very pleasant moments on the phone and I felt very touched by her kindness, her enthusiasm and her charm.

Following the opening of the exhibition named The Red Admiral: Patrick White at Mount Wilson, the Governor and Sir Nicholas Shehadie will join us for lunch and later a tour of Withycombe with the kind consent of the owners Merrick and Barbara Howe. Withycombe was Patrick White's parents' holiday home from 1922- 1937.

Historically, the visit of the Governor of NSW to Mt Wilson is of special significance for our small but vibrant community. Last time a Governor of NSW visited Mt Wilson was in 1930s as a guest at Wildflower Hall, then a guest house but now Dennarque. They were Sir Philip and Lady Game. See our *Newsletter* No.21 February 2010. Mary Reynolds

The President's Report

Welcome to the Society's first *Newsletter* for 2012. Our annual general meeting was held in the Village Hall on Saturday 5th November 2011. Roza Sage, the State Member for the Blue Mountains, Lynn Collins, Museums Advisor to Blue Mountains City Council, and Alan Coker, the Director of Design 5 were our special guests for the AGM.

Alan was also our guest speaker for the AGM and he presented a very informative and well illustrated talk on the conservation and restoration work carried out on various buildings at Wynstay recently and the Turkish Bath in the 1990s.

Nominations were received at the AGM for the Society's 2012 Management Committee. No election was required and the following persons will form the Committee for this year: Des Barrett (President); Darrel Conybeare (Vice President); Tim Gow (Treasurer); Florence Smart (*Newsletter* co-ordinator); Zaharah Braybrooke (Museum Curator); John Braybrooke; Fiona Carruthers; Kathleen Oakes; Mary Reynolds (*Ex officio*, Public Officer).

Helen Cardy, a long-term member of the Management Committee, stepped down from the Committee. Helen has been very active in a number of the Society's activities over the years –

including archival work, fund raising, exhibition development, production of displays, presentation of ideas to the Management Committee, and catering for many events held by the Society. On behalf of the Society, I thank Helen for her many valuable contributions to our Society.

Working with Lynn Collins, Museums Advisor to Blue Mountains City Council, some of the internal spaces and displays at the Turkish Bath have been re-configured and this has resulted in a less cluttered look and feel to the Bath. Hopefully, our visitors will welcome these changes to the internal spaces of the Bath and that they will appreciate more fully the architectural detail of the building.

A number of important projects have now been completed. The Meg Fromel linocut prints of scenes of Mt Wilson have been produced and are for sale. Details about the artist, the subject of her prints and how to order them through the Society may be found on the Society's web page (www.mtwilson.com.au). The production and marketing of these beautiful prints was undertaken by Nancy Fox and on the occasion of their launch in the Village Hall on Saturday 22nd October 2011, John Valder presented his engaging talk on his memories of Mt Wilson during the 1930-1950 period, a time when he and his brother Peter, grew up with Meg and her older and younger sisters, Helen and Troath.



Wendy Holland's attractive book, *Fred Mann's Mount Wilson Pottery* was published late last year and is now available through the Society by ordering online. Simply look at our web page for details about the book - its price and how to order one or more copies.

The 28th of May this year marks the 100th year of the birth of novelist, playwright, poet and Nobel Laureate, Patrick Victor Martindale White (1912-1990). Patrick White's parents, Ruth and Dick, owned Withycombe between 1921 and 1938, (previously Beowang and re-named after his mother's maiden name). The Society is currently preparing an exhibition *The Red Admiral: Patrick White at Mt Wilson* for display in the Turkish Bath as a contribution to the varied commemorative events occurring around Australia this year. The display will take the form of a number of attractive framed charts, with text and pictures and a video that will feature a

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number of local residents talking about Mt Wilson during the time that the Whites lived in the village. There will also be an extended, online version of the exhibition that will be placed on the Society's web page at the same time as the opening of the exhibition in late May. This major exhibition is being developed by the Society with impressive assistance provided by a number of Patrick White scholars from Sydney University and elsewhere, the ABC, and a video production company. The exhibition will run for at least one year with the possibility that it may travel to other venues at a future date.

I look forward to another busy year for the Society and I trust there is a much within these pages that is of interest to you.

Des Barrett

Obituary for Margaret Clark

The mountain community lost one of its oldest connections in September 2011 with the death of Margaret Clark. Margaret was the daughter of Roland Cuthbert Clark; her grandfather was Henry Marcus Clark of Sefton Hall. Rol had married Honor Sutton in 1914 and they had three children: Margaret (1916), Anthony (1920) and Frederick (1928). The following comments and quotes are taken from the eulogy given by her daughter, Mary-Jane. Margaret and Bill knew they were destined to marry from when they were only 15, despite great reluctance from Margaret's parents.



Bill was William Anthony Frederick, born in 1916. He was the son of William Frederick Clark (born 1892) who was the son of Theodore Anthony Clark (born 1866) known as Tod. Tod died in 1910 when he fell down a lift-shaft at the Marcus Clark store in Sydney. Tod's younger brother was Henry Marcus. So Bill and Margaret were second cousins. They spent time together from when they were babies because after Tod died, Henry Marcus looked after his brother's family.

Once married it was only the war years that saw them parted. Their main home was in Pymble, and after Bill's death, Margaret moved to Roseville, and then Bowral. The long connection of the Clark family to Mt. Wilson meant that Margaret and her husband Bill eventually built the cottage at Mistwold and it was the setting for many family holidays and gatherings.

They had six children, Ann, Anthony, Michael, Sally, Peter and Mary-Jane, but tragically went on to bury three of them; Ann at three months, Peter aged eight and Michael aged 22. Together Margaret and Bill created a 'home where all were made to feel extremely welcome, because they were – our large and extended family, and all our friends'. While her hospitality was generous even she 'drew the line when vet student friends decided to practice anatomy on the kitchen table, cutting up a dead sheep! Mum said that was going a bit too far and they and the sheep were promptly removed to the back yard.' She loved dogs, especially her black Labrador Misty and was happy for them to visit at Mistwold along with their various owners.

Margaret's friends were very important to her, and her oldest friends, that she met before she started school, remained close friends throughout their life. She is remembered as 'a very loving, kind, gentle, quietly spoken, warm, compassionate lady with tremendous strength of character'. She was forthright, generous to family and friends, a wonderful mother and enjoyed ballet and other cultural pursuits.

Alison Halliday

Open Gardens – Autumn Colour

Three wonderful mountain gardens will be open in April to show their brilliant autumn colour. The gardens are Withycombe, Sylvan Close and Bisley and we are very grateful to their owners (Landsbergs/Howes, Leonards and Thompsons) for being so generous. The purpose is to raise money to off-set the costs of the special Patrick White exhibition which, in this centenary year of his birth, celebrates his years at Mount Wilson. The cost is \$20 for the three gardens, and tickets will be available from the gates at any of the gardens. The dates are Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th April, from 10am – 4pm.



These gardens are rarely open to the public and should be at their autumnal best. In Withcombe you can see the tree where Patrick White carved his initials 90 years ago; the initials are faint but definitely there. The Turkish Bath will also be open on both days (\$5 entrance fee additional to garden entry) where there is an exhibition of Meg Fromel prints. Card and prints are available.

The Village Hall will also be open for delicious food and drinks. Please tell your friends and come along yourself. Volunteers are needed for the day; please contact Tim Gow if you can help in any way and for any time.

Alan Croker – Restoration and Conservation Talk

As mentioned in the President's Report the Society's 15th Annual General Meeting was held on 5th November 2011. Thirty or so members and friends enjoyed a relaxed and informative gathering at the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Annual reports from the chairman Des Barrett, treasurer Tim Gow, public officer and researcher Mary Reynolds looked back on a busy and productive year for the Society. Mary's report is always of great interest and is included in this newsletter, for those members who were unable to be present at the AGM.

Following on from the business meeting those attending were treated to a most interesting and informative illustrated talk by Alan Croker, founder and principal of Design 5 Architects, a Sydney firm specialising in conservation, adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and related new work. Alan spoke about the restoration and conservation works at the Turkish Bath, Wynstay stables and the original 1875 cottage which have taken place over the last five years. He had graphic 'before-and-after' photos illustrating how the buildings have been carefully restored, always with the guiding principles of doing as much as necessary but as little as possible. As supervising architect on these projects Alan has worked closely with the team of builders at the Sydney Restoration Company, who share his passion for adhering to the Burra Charter and re-using materials wherever possible while ensuring that these buildings which date from 1875 - 1890 are good for another century.

Alan also showed images and spoke about a recent conservation project where the homestead at Exeter Farm (at right), at Glenwood in north western Sydney was brought back from ruin. This project won the National Trust 2011 Heritage Award for conservation of Built Heritage under \$1 million.



Alan Croker's presentation rounded out a most enjoyable day, and everyone lingered to share lunch and conversation to celebrate another successful year.

Florence Smart

Launch of Meg Fromel Linocut Prints

A very pleasant function was held at the Mount Wilson Village Hall in the late afternoon of 22nd October 2011 to launch an exhibition of prints taken from the linocuts of Meg Fromel. A continuous slide show of photographs, scanned from the Society's extensive photographic collection, was projected onto the big screen depicting Meg's time at Mount Wilson from her early childhood onwards. A short film, portraying activities in Mount Wilson in the early 1930s, taken by Meg's maternal grandfather Charles Jefferson was also shown. Tim Gow opened proceedings with words of welcome, conveyed apologies from Meg who was unable to attend, and introduced Nancy Fox and John Valder.

Nancy spoke of her collaboration with graphic artist Roslyn Kean who restored the linocuts as necessary and printed the images onto Japanese paper (washi). The results of their efforts were on display: The prints were effectively presented in plain black frames, with unframed prints and cards also on show alongside some of Meg's actual linocuts. There was much discussion about the possible identification of some of the images, but no conclusive answer could be reached. Alex Halliday was delighted to win the raffle, a Meg Fromel linocut print, and chose one of *The Avenue*.



John Valder took us on a journey back to simpler, and perhaps more idyllic, times as he spoke of growing up on the mountain with Meg; of the adventures they shared, the games and tricks that they played, of horse riding, of tennis and picnics in the bush. It was a very entertaining look back to more genteel times for the audience and surely a nostalgic trip down memory lane for John as he watched the photographs and film which featured many images from his own childhood. Meg's sister Helen Warliker, in her publication *A Mount Wilson Childhood*, concludes with the words 'life will never be the same again' – indeed not. John kindly provided a transcript of his talk, also in this issue.

Note cards with envelopes can be purchased at \$3 each or 6 for \$15 and are available at the Turkish Bath or through the website www.mtwilson.com.au. Original prints (about A4 size) are available through Nancy Fox (nancysfox@gmail.com or call 0411 251 743).

John Cardy

2011 AGM Research Report

The President's report has already referred to projects with which I have been connected or, more precisely, have been on the periphery. Inevitably the last two months has seen a severe reduction in what could be achieved on the research front. If I can continue to achieve some results in the area of discovery and knowledge other activities will have to be put aside. These are in the field of accessioning new items coming to the Society. Documents going back to 2009, 10 and 11 await attention, as do photos from 2009 onwards. Sadly there is no prospect that I will be able to tackle these tasks taking in our present circumstances which are unlikely to improve. I am happy to give assistance but we need some to undertake the actual hands on of identifying and filing this material. Already we had a very successful working bee in June, described in detail by John Cardy in our last newsletter, when the many albums of images we already have were indexed and placed on the web site. The cataloguing of these images is the next step. I appeal to you all if you can assist in this necessary work, which is very much part of the responsibility of our Society, to please talk to our new Committee.

Meanwhile, may I thank Kathleen Oakes for the accessioning of The Mt Wilson Ratepayers Association's records. Kathleen has many commitments in this community and her work is

highly valued. John Cardy is transferring this material to the catalogue and a special archival box.

You would be aware of the highly successful launching of the Meg Fromel (nee Gregson) linocuts held on 22nd October where John Valder provided everyone with a warm and personal picture of life in another era in Mt Wilson where he and his brother Peter grew up with Meg and her two sisters. The linocuts, so beautifully presented as prints and as cards and notepaper, are the result of the skill, knowledge and marketing presentation of Nancy Fox and her friends and contacts. We are very fortunate to have so much expertise available to us.

Turkish Bath visitor numbers and tours

Florence has asked me to mention the number of visitors to the Turkish Bath from July 2010 to June 2011. The number of adults visiting on Sundays when we are open between those dates is 240. This does not include children or those who come in organised tours. Our treasurer has a much more impressive figure: \$3048 was raised in the last financial year and from 1st July 2011 to 16th October 2011, \$1300 has been raised from tours.

In April 2011 a group of over 90 from the University of the Third Age descended upon us. This large number required considerable organisation by the Committee but it was most successful. In May on a freezing day we had a group of 40 from Cronulla, the Kulnurra Club. Coming from Cronulla one can imagine the shock of the temperatures in Mt Wilson that day. We provided lunch organised superbly by Helen Cardy and her colleagues. In spite of the chilly winds the group was universally pleased and grateful. In early September, Alison Halliday gathered a group for a tour. On 2nd October a group of 30 from the Weston Creek Garden Club of Canberra led by Helen Newman (she had brought a group here 5 years ago and recalled our wonderful lunches) arrived in very unkind rainy weather. Florence and Tim managed brilliantly with the actual tour, Suzanne Bassett and Anne Mayall were at the Bath while Kim Gow, Alice Simpson and others provided a popular lunch. There was a tour from the mid north coast, the Bowraville Garden Club on 12th October. Thank you to Wendy Holland who guided that tour. On the same day the Association for the Study of Australian Literature, with Tim Gow as leader, was very fortunate to experience a tour of the Turkish Bath and Wynstay, Withycombe and Bebeah. The results from that have untold benefits for the Society as the proposed Patrick White Exhibition is being ably assisted by this Association. Finally, Robert Chesney, one of our founding members, organised a group for a visit to Mt Wilson including the Turkish Bath in mid October, raising over \$80.

It is very heartening and delightful that we have with us in 2011 Alan Crocker of Design 5 Architects who, with Peter Todd, in 1995 provided so much guidance to us in those early days when we were wondering if the Turkish Bath could become the centre piece of our existence as a Society. We must never forget Jane Smart and Bill Smart without whom nothing could have achieved. The Turkish Bath is vital to the Society and should always be seen in that context.

It may be of interest that in the Journal of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural and Heritage Organisations (BMACHO), recently published on its web site, is an article 'The History of Postal and Telephone Communications in Mount Wilson' (apologies to Mt Irvine – in their charming book on Mt Irvine history are references to postal and telephone developments). Much of my time was taken up with this story especially when it came to the editing carried out meticulously by Dr Peter Rickwood. I had a lighter title for this work along the lines of 'Historical Postal Adventures'. However Peter felt that it was not suitable for the Journal's status. I am very grateful to Peter for showing me the techniques required for such a publication. This article is re-published as an 'occasional paper' by the Society. While on the subject of the BMACHO, it is wonderful to record that finally the Blue Mountains City Council has appointed an official Heritage Advisory Committee, this is a milestone. Of equal significance is the appointment of Fiona Carruthers from our Society to that Committee. Fiona with her many talents will play a valuable role.

A note of much importance: Helen Cardy is not standing for the Committee of 2011/2012. She will be a great loss. Her contribution since the 1990s, along with John's, can never be measured

adequately. They are wonderful friends of us all and of Mt Wilson. I thank all the members of the current committee for their sustained commitment and enthusiasm. They are lovely people to work with and have supported me totally when things have gone astray. In 2011 this has happened too frequently.

Mary Reynolds

John Broadley

is pleased to invite members to the launch of his book

Historic Houses of Mudgee

An historical and architectural study of 19 significant Mudgee and district colonial houses and their outbuildings and gardens

Saturday 25th February 2012 at 3pm

at PuttaBucca House, PuttaBucca Road, Mudgee

RSVP by Wednesday 22nd February 2012 to John Broadley:

jb@johnbroadleyheritage.com

Phone 02.6372 3365 or mobile 0429 708 218

A limited edition of 2000 numbered and signed copies \$70

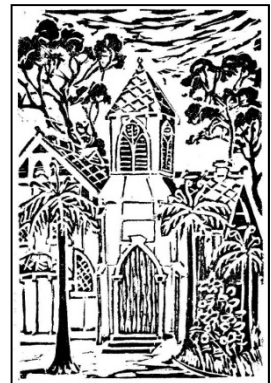
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John Valder's speech from Meg Fromel launch

In the following comments John talks about his childhood days with his brother Peter at Mt Wilson, growing up with the Gregson, Wynne and other families.

As we grew up at Mt Wilson, we spent a lot of our time enjoying the simple pleasures of life – bush walking, picnics, horse riding. We all rode horses with names like Cloudy Flannelfoot, Packer and so on. The Gregsons had a difficult little horse named Trixie whose specialty was pig-rooting.

The most strenuous of the bush walks was in summer to the Wollangambe River where we took a picnic, swam in freezing cold water and caught yabbies. Then followed the tough uphill walk back home in the summer heat. Being the youngest, I always trailed behind the others and the moment I'd catch them up they would immediately move off, leaving me once again trailing behind, exhausted. I slept well those nights. We had picnics at many other places including Mt Irvine and Mt King George (which Mt Banks was then called).



In summer there were periodic bushfires and hail storms that destroyed ours and other people's apple crops which were our annual livelihoods. And there were always quite a lot of snakes about on hot days. But on summer evenings there was (and still is) the magic of fire-flies at the Cathedral of Ferns. And year-round there was the most amazing variety of birds, large and small, from wonderfully coloured parrots and black cockatoos to little wrens, robins and finches.

Our parents grew most of the food we ate, milk and eggs, home-slaughtered chickens and the occasional sheep, fruit and vegetables including, of course, plenty of apples and pears from our orchards. Wonderful blackberries grew wild. It was really only groceries that had to be brought in, mostly by the Lithgow Co-op every Friday.

Entertainment was self made. Television was 20 or 30 years away and radio was only in its infancy. The self-made entertainment included some great parties given by various families and in which we children were usually included. On one famous occasion, Emma Ashdown, the American companion of the Gregsons' grandfather, fell backwards into a large pond at the front of Wynstay to the delight of everyone except Emma. The Wynne family were able to afford quite a few staff including a cook, a butler, gardeners and a governess for the children. So their parties were very elaborate and the food memorable.

So were Fred Mann's at Yengo, which he had renamed Stone Lodge. Fred Mann was a delightful, charming bachelor with a great sense of fun and an accomplished potter. For his parties he would sometimes decorate his house and nearby garden with brightly coloured Chinese lanterns. He enjoyed a drink or two and would wander around singing 'ho-ho, the diddle-oh', much to the delight of everyone. One of his famous stories was about a deaf housekeeper, Lina O'Rourke. He would claim that he sometimes found her busily vacuuming the floors without the power turned on. Maybe she was used to the old carpet sweepers.

There were tennis parties at Wynstay, Nooroo, Stone Lodge and at Bebeah, the Sloan family home where their middle-aged daughter, Marjorie, was famous for her distinctive rhubarb drink. The Sloan family had had various properties in the Cowra and Canowindra district and the mantelpieces at Bebeah almost groaned with pictures of their prize bulls and cows wearing colourful sashes won at various shows.

Our family at Nooroo used to have all-day tennis tournaments in the summer for the young. Each of eight players had to play with and against all of the others. A picnic lunch was had in the shade of the trees – our family often had Christmas lunch in the same cool spot. That was long before my brother Peter converted our tennis court into his now famous wisteria garden.

Another Mt Wilson institution in those days was the church, St Georges, which was built by the then well-known Marcus Clark retail store family who owned Sefton Hall for many years. Church services were held only on the second Sunday of each month at 3pm. They were important, almost social events, at which attendance was just about obligatory. The Wynne, Sloan, Gregson, Valder and other families always occupied the same appointed pews at each service. Matt Davies peddled away hard at a small harmonium, his place occasionally taken by Marjorie Sloan. The Rector was a kind and friendly man, the Rev W.P F. Dorph from Mt Victoria. He would greet and farewell every member of his small congregation, calling the Gregson girls Helly and Meggles and so on. Between the monthly church services Mr Dorph would regularly come from Mt Victoria with the mailman to visit his Mt Wilson parishioners, riding a bicycle and sensibly wearing a grey dustcoat.

Then there was New Year's Eve and New Year's Day which were always big events. On New Year's Eve a group of 10 or 12 of us would roam the village throwing stones on people's roofs and generally making a nuisance of ourselves but enjoying it immensely. One year we were bold enough to remove the notice-board at the front entrance to the church advising when services were held. We, really the older and bigger Wynne boys, carried the rather handsome notice a little distance and placed it in a hole in the front-garden of a good religious woman called Mrs Jackson, who lived alone in a small cottage with her little dog, Biddy. Next morning our family saw Mrs Jackson striding angrily towards our house with Biddy yapping loudly. Our father, always a very calm man, and knowing full well what we'd done, went out and greeted her with 'A happy New Year Mrs Jackson'. Almost choking, she replied, 'Happy New Year, indeed! Do you know what those children have done? They've planted the church notice-board in my front garden!'

But it was New Year's Day that was the really major event on the Mt Wilson calendar. Various people, in particular Mrs Wynne, Mrs Morley and our father, would organise a sports and carnival day at Silva Plana. It would involve all sorts of things from tug-of-wars and egg-and-spoon races to world class wood-chopping, thanks to Tom Kirk and his older brother Peter who

had won many championships at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Mrs Wynne used to drive about in her wonderful car which had a open 'dickie' seat in the back, very popular with all the children. There still exists a remarkable bit of film of the 1932 Silva Plana sports day taken by the Gregson's grandfather, 'Daddo' Jefferson. He had come from America in 1930 to live with his married daughter and the Gregson family. He apparently possessed what would certainly have to have been the very first movie camera ever to come anywhere near Mt. Wilson.



One of the things that made Mr Wilson such an interesting place, apart from its gardens and natural beauty, was the quite extraordinary group of people that were attracted there, both permanent residents and summer visitors. They included academics, writers, politicians, artists, the wealthy, historians, botanists and various others, including even the then Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Archbishop Mowll. Among other things, he and Mrs Mowll had both been missionaries in China.

Archbishop Mowll and Mrs Mowll were regular summer visitors at Withycombe and at Woodstock where Matt and Flo Davies, who had both worked at Wynstay, ran a small guesthouse. There was an annual ritual whereby the Mowlls would have afternoon tea with our family at Nooroo. Our father would drive round and pick them up in his very first motor vehicle, a Bedford utility. It was quite a small vehicle with room only for one passenger in the front seat and Archbishop Mowll was a rather large man. So our father would put a cane chair with arms in the back for Mrs Mowll. They would then make a rather royal drive to our place! Sometimes our mother would join Mrs Mowll in the back in another cane chair.

Then there was Patrick White, son of a wealthy Scone pastoral family. Although he spent relatively little time, even as a child, with his family at Withycombe, he seems to have become the mountain's most famous son. He later settled at Castle Hill and then at Centennial Park where, of course, he wrote prolifically and became Australia's best known author.

There was also Dennis Hake, headmaster of King's School and father of Libby Raines, who herself has contributed so much to Mr Wilson over many years. The Hake family spent their summer holiday in a very modest little house near, or maybe as part of, Wynstay. One year Mr Hake found he needed a holiday 'secretary' to help him with some of his school correspondence. It so happened that at that time I was recuperating at home from a bad fall. I was then about 19 and I had just completed a shorthand and typing course, then required of all *Sydney Morning Herald* cadet journalists, of whom I was one. I had also just become the proud owner a very small typewriter. Mr Hake asked if I could help him with some letters which I gladly did sitting outside under the trees as his 'bush secretary'. The letters were probably far from perfect but better than nothing, I suppose.

Another great character was Dr C H Currey, lecturer and author in both law and Australian history at what was then Sydney's only university. He'd bought some land from our father and had built a small house and developed a nice garden. He had a handsome old car which he usually drove up to Mt Wilson, quite a drive in those days. In the mornings Dr Currey would come over to our nearby cow-bail where the two little Valder boys would, rather improbably, be milking cows. He usually delivered a lecture or two from the end of cow-bail gazing out into the vast distance; but ever ready for a hasty scatter when the cows performed one of their frequent and very messy bowel or urinary movements. Then he would take home a jug of very fresh milk, unpasteurised of course.

Another of Dr Currey's great pleasures was blowing up basalt rocks in a paddock of his on Saturday afternoons, with considerable help of one of the Kirk brothers, Bert. The two of them would plug the rock with dynamite, light the fuse then scramble away like small boys to safety.

There would be a wonderful explosion with bits of basalt flying everywhere. A great time was had by all, including us.

Dr Currey's wife, Linda, a chirpy little woman, had a story of going to Central Station in the war years to get a train to the mountains. She'd got to the station very early in the hope of getting a seat. When the train finally arrived at the platform there was just one woman in front of her at the carriage entrance but, as fortune would have it, that woman fell over in the excitement. By the time she had got back on her feet the whole carriage had been filled up from the other end. So she just had to stand looking at the notice fixed on all war-time trains asking, 'Is your journey really necessary?' It was on those same wartime trains that American sailors and their new-found Sydney girl friends would gather on the small outside platforms at each end of the carriages dancing wildly to songs like 'The stars at night are big and bright, deep in the heart of Texas'.

Another great Mt Wilson figure was 'Daddo' Jefferson, already mentioned, grandfather of the three Gregson girls. In 1930 he had followed his daughter Margaret to Australia, after she had married Edward Gregson. 'Daddo' had a wonderful moustache, wore a panama hat, carried a cane and smoked what were known as cheroots, a type of cigar. He frequently visited us at Nooroo. Occasionally, while enjoying a cup of tea, he'd let a bit of wind escape. Being a bit deaf, he probably thought they were of the silent variety; but they weren't always. This set my brother and I off into fits of giggles, running from the room. Let this be a warning to those of us getting old and deaf and in the habit of letting off a bit of wind here and there!



So these are a few reminiscences about growing up at Mt Wilson in the 1930s and 1940s. Those of us still alive have had the enormous good fortune of living in two vastly different worlds. First growing up in a tiny, quaint, isolated bush world and now, in our old age, overwhelmed by the age of computers, mobile phones, electronic gadgets of every kind, and massive advances in medicine and in almost everything else imaginable.

We have been very lucky...

'Thank you' to Elspeth Callender

You will have noticed on the back page of the last newsletter that Elspeth Callender signed off as editor. Elspeth joined us way back in August 1997, at the time of the Society's very first newsletter. Since then she has edited, assembled, designed and produced almost all of the 24 newsletters that have been published, plus ten Occasional Historical Papers.

Over these 15 years, while Elspeth has advanced her career as a freelance writer and highly skilled professional editor, she has worked for us in an entirely voluntary capacity with diligence and dedication. Along with the Turkish Bath I believe the newsletter is the public face of the Society and, thanks to Elspeth, we enjoy a very positive reputation throughout the heritage sector and among our peer groups. Elspeth has been an absolute delight to work with. Her endless good humour, patience, excellent advice and her support for the Society's objectives have made everything relatively easy for all contributors.

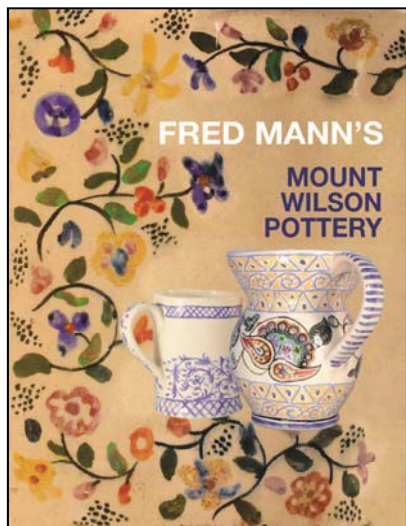
But Elspeth is not going far away. During the coming year she will be editing and pulling together the large body of research and writing which Mary Reynolds and one or two others have deposited into the Society's archive, with the aim of producing a manuscript ready for publication which will present a history of Mt Wilson in an enjoyable, readable (and saleable) form. The Society has received a grant towards this project from the Royal Australian Historical Society, enabling us to retain Elspeth's experience and skill in a professional capacity. Elspeth: a huge thank you from all of us, for everything!

Florence Smart



Fred Mann's Mount Wilson Pottery

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society has overseen the publication of an important new book that celebrates the life and creative output of an outstanding Mt Wilson figure of yesteryear.



Fred Mann's Mount Wilson Pottery was primarily the result of the efforts of two well-known local residents. The book was the brainchild of Wendy Holland who has driven the project with extraordinary passion, energy and vision over the last two and a half years. Roger Howard-Smith shot most of the photographs in the book and most generously covered the initial printing costs. The end result is a fitting tribute to the talents of an extraordinary man. The book, to paraphrase John Valder, 'remains a cherished reminder of a generous, cheerful, friendly man'.

The book is truly local community effort celebrating the pottery that emerged from the white clay from diggings at Yengo. Jess Delbridge, grand-daughter of Arthur Delbridge, is a talented graphic designer who now lives at Mt Wilson. She was responsible for the technical layout of the book and preparation

for printing. Many local or past residents of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine graciously offered their much loved pieces for inclusion in the book. CW Printing at Lithgow ensured the final product was of exceptionally high quality such that it can comfortably grace any bookcase with pride.

The book can be ordered directly from Wendy Holland (02 4756 2094), Florence Smart (02 9416 1957) or Tim Gow (02 4756 2031), or via the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society's section of the www.mtwilson.com.au web site for \$20. All proceeds of the sale of this book go to the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society to underwrite future projects.

The Red Admiral: Patrick White at Mount Wilson

The story of Patrick White and his family at Mt Wilson in the 1920s and 30s (the so-called 'Golden Age' of hill station life in Australia) is rich in historical interest, and yet, remains relatively unknown to most people.

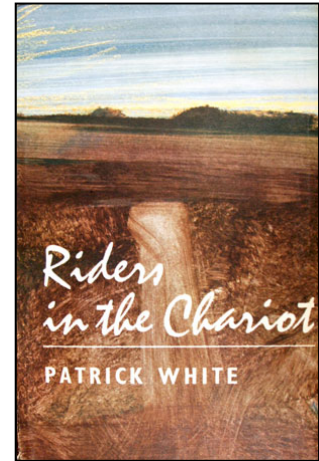
The exhibition aims to heighten awareness of these early years of Patrick White's life in an easily accessible and understood manner. It has been specifically designed not to be an academic treatment of his literature, nor does it require a prior understanding or appreciation of Patrick White, or his works. The goal is to foster a recognition of a vital influence on Patrick White that

has previously been ignored, or misunderstood, for many years, despite the amount of research undertaken on the most famous and renowned Australian author.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the name Patrick White used as a ten-year old for his first published pieces, the Red Admiral was his favourite butterfly. The exhibition will be in the form of a series of posters designed by Jess Delbridge, and a DVD.

A small team is overseeing the project; Des Barrett, Fiona Carruthers, Peter Dempsey, Tim Gow, Alison Halliday, Rachael Kohn and Mary Reynolds. We have been very fortunate in being able to access the time and skills of Bernadette Brennan and Susan Lever from Sydney University and the Association for the Study of Australian Literature. Their expertise and knowledge of Patrick White's literature has been invaluable in establishing links between his work and the Mt Wilson environment, buildings and people.

Work to date is progressing very well; the text content is in its second draft. The next major activity is to select accompanying images for the charts. Fortunately, the Society has an abundance of interesting photographs from which to choose.



The planning for the DVD is also well underway under the very capable coordination of Fiona and Rachael. The filming of the Mt Wilson environs, and the interviewing of Libby Raines, Mary Reynolds and Peter Valder, along with the renowned Patrick White biographer, David Marr, is scheduled for 25th and 26th February.

Tim Gow

Remembrance Day 11 November 2011 presentation

On 20th December 1916 the following letterⁱ was received by Base Records Office, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne (spelling unchanged):

Dear Sir,

In connection with the casualty reported on 14th inst. of this month to his relatives late of Glen Innes New South Wales I am send too (sic) you for as much information as it is possible to secure on behalf of his grieved mother and sisters. The report may have had a mistake in it somewhere as there is (sic) so many lads of the same name and there are enormous lot of little articles which we would very much like if they have not been buried with him. One thing in particular to be sent on two (sic) my own address and we would all very much like you to send a gold ring he wore on his fingers and it was stamped one (sic) the inside with the letters M.T.H. and we would also like two (sic) know what became of his personal effects, and where our loved one fell, and where death occurred, what were his last words, if he left any will, where he has been buried, if he was accorded a military funeral and so much moor (sic) as you may be able. The address I last had from him was as follows

No.4136

Pte William Hall

10th Reinforcements

18th Battalion

5th Brigade

AIF

France

And we will be very thankful to you if you will let us know or forward any of his belongings you may be possible to get or have.

[signed] yours truly C. Hall and M. Hanshaw

When we read the names on The War Memorial one of the things immediately apparent is how many surnames are repeated. Many who enlisted were from the same few families: brothers, cousins, sons and daughters, aunts and fathers. It is a reminder that as well as the trauma for the men and women who served in the armed forces, the families of every one of these people suffered heartache, loss, and fear. They too were irrevocably changed by the experiences of the family members who went to war.

Very occasionally the official war records give glimpses into the lives of those who stayed home, those who had to 'stand and wait'ⁱⁱ. The letter which I read to you at the beginning was written by Clarice Hall, and it concerned her brother William. Today I want to talk first about two members of the Hall family. The Hall family was based in Bell, so these names remind us that this Memorial is officially called The Mount Wilson and Bell War Memorial. Investigating the Hall men was another reminder of the limitations, and surprises, of research. William Hall enlisted in Armidale on 21 October 1915, number 4136. His name is here at Mount Wilson because his parents came originally from Bell, the marriage registered in 1893. His father was Richard, who may have died in 1910. His mother, Rachel Mary, then moved to Glenn Innes in northern New South Wales and later re-married becoming Mary Mahony. William was born in 1893, the birth registered at Lithgow and he had at least one sister, Clarice, born in 1895.

When he enlisted William was just over 22 years old, brown-haired and blue eyed; he was only 5' 8 1/2" but weighed 11 stone so he must have been of solid build. After his training, in January 1916, he joined the 10th reinforcements to the 18th battalion of The Australian Imperial Force, having been originally appointed to the 9th Reinforcements. There are only five entries in his record of service: 10/9/1916 o/seas to France from England; 11/9/1916 marched in to Etaples, 23/9/1916 marched out to unit, 30/9/1916 joined Battalion in 'Field', 18/11/1916 Killed in action, France. Private William Hall saw action for less than three weeks, he died without making a will. The following day a cable of notification was sent. By February 1917 he had been buried in Longueval Cemetery, France, at the corner of Longueval and Maricourt Roads, in the Somme district.ⁱⁱⁱ The village of Longueval had seen fierce fighting in June and July, before William reached the front.

Clarice's letter was acknowledged in January 1917, saying that 'sufficient time had not yet elapsed for either personal effects or further particulars of his death to have reached Australia.'^{iv} She was also told that any effects would be returned to the next of kin, William's mother. On 20th June 1917 William's mother wrote to the Records Office (Melbourne) asking that any personal belongings be sent to her. On the 6th August 1917 she received his effects, they having come to Australia on the 'Themistocles'. They are described as 'disc, belt, metal watch, 50 centime note'^v. The records note that his kitbag had no personal belongings in it. Even coming to her the journey was not straightforward as the package was first sent to the wrong address at Ferguson Street (from where her daughter had written) and she was eventually found in Lambert St.

On 4th November 1920 she was sent details about his place of burial, three photographs of the grave and a description of the site. If she wished she could obtain extra copies of the photos at the cost of three pence each. A year later she received a request that she identify herself as William Hall's next of kin, vouching that there were no nearer relatives such as his father, so his war medals could be sent to her. By this time she was living in North Gosford, and had remarried. She replied: 'I am the nearest blood relation to the same, he was unmarried and his father is dead. I being his mother am entitled to the medal. He was the only son old enough to go to the war'^{vi}.

Another letter from William's mother is dated February 1922. I am not sure what she had been asked for but it says:

I am sending particulars with reference to Pte W. Hall and please do not put me to much expense as I am only a poor woman & cannot afford much as my son William was my sole support. Hoping the particulars I have sent will prove satisfactory.

In March 1923 she signed for receipt of one victory medal. It took over 6 years for the military bureaucracy dealing with a soldier killed in action to be completed. The only further information I have been able to find about his sister Clarice is that she married Walter Wroe^{vii}, and that they did have children.

The other member of the Hall family is Ellis Hall. We know a bit more about Ellis's family. His parents were Dorothy and John Hall^{viii}. John Hall was a quarry man and the first postman for this district^{ix}. His work suggests that he may have been responsible for the building of Holly Lodge, to the east of Bell^x. Many years ago this house had a second storey of wood but it is now just one storey of stone. I think the top storey was lost in a house fire. It is now not owned by the Hall family but they were there for a very long time. I am grateful to Peter Blatt, whose grandmother Irene Hall was born in 1901 at Holly Lodge, and Helen Reiner who is now the owner of Holly Lodge for much of the above information. John and Dorothy had four children, Hannah was the oldest, born in 1868, then Ellis, 1871, George 1873 and Samuel in 1875^{xi}. Samuel, the youngest, was part of the committee who instigated the building of The War Memorial in 1919. I have not been able to find out how William and Ellis were related but it seems most likely that they were. The Halls at one time owned portions 11 and 12^{xii} so the Hall family spanned both communities. John and Dorothy are buried in the Mt Victoria Cemetery, as I discovered by chance only a couple of weeks ago after the last bush walk (in October 2011). Dorothy died in 1898, aged 62 years and John in 1878 aged 72 years. Their children George and Samuel are also buried there, as is a Richard Hall, who died in 1910 aged 48. I think he is William's father.

Ellis enlisted on 22nd September 1915; he was 44 years old and already married^{xiii}. His wife was Beatrice Victoria Barton and they married in 1900^{xiv}. They were living at Bell and he was working as a labourer. He joined the 5th Squadron, 2nd Remount Unit. Ellis had previously served for 11 months in the Mounted Rifles and was discharged due to sickness. He was 5' 7" tall, blue eyed and grey haired, and he weighed a bit over 10 stone. Ironically there is less official information about Ellis, he survived the war to return home on 'Vestulia' in December 1916 on the disbandment of the unit. He left for home from Egypt.^{xv}

Ellis disappears from official view after the war. All I can find is that he had at least one child, his son Henry who died in 1975. He may well have had other children but I have been unable to trace them. Ellis died in 1942, in Sydney, he was 72^{xvi}.

Where we know so little about the Hall men, we know a great deal about the family of Henry Marcus Clark. The Clark family has grown into a vast tree, spread across many generations and all well documented due to family and business histories, family trees and, it seems, a liking for photography. Like the Halls, there are two Clarks on the War Memorial. In 2006 Arthur Delbridge talked about Les Clark, and I now wish to briefly look at Roland Cuthbert Clark, who was known as 'Rol'.

The Clark family honoured their ancestors by repeated use of certain names. The family tree is further complicated (to an outsider) by the use of nicknames for almost everyone. The earliest use of Cuthbert dates from the late 18th century^{xvii}, reappearing at least once in every subsequent generation while Roland seems to be a first. Born in 1889 Roland was the third child of Henry Marcus Clark and his first wife Martha Annie Day known as Pattie. Roland was only three when his mother died. His father remarried the following year, to Pattie's sister May^{xviii}. Rol grew up in Sydney with repeated visits to Sefton Hall which was built by his father, and later became the home of his younger brother Les. Roland was educated at Sydney Grammar School as were his brothers. He was a real scholar, often coming top of his class and winning many academic prizes. He remained devoted to literature and to books all his life, his library included collections on subjects that specially interested him such as eastern religions. He was destined for a role in the family business, the department stores bearing the family name, Marcus Clark.

He left school in 1908, aged 18, and joined the family company.^{xix} Rol (aged 19) went to England in March 1909 to gain experience, and worked with D & W Murray, Swan and Edgar, Millars,

and finally at Seven Kings in Essex. While in England he joined King Edward's Horse (The King's Oversea Dominions Regiment) serving in it for nearly 2 years^{xx}. Rol returned home, back to the company which continued to grow in Sydney, NSW country towns and in Victoria until the depression in the early 1930s. Then, for the first time, it made a loss and was unable to pay a dividend. Reg, who had been Chairman and Managing Director since his father's death in 1913, died on 13th July 1953, aged 69. Rol, aged 64, was appointed Chairman of Directors, only the third in its history. In 1962 Rol Clark retired as chairman after 54 years with the company.^{xxi}



Rol had married Honor Sutton in 1914 and they had three children: Margaret (1916), Anthony (1920) and Frederick (1928). Their (or perhaps her's, during the war) address when first married was 'Wealwandangee', Victoria Street, Strathfield, New South Wales^{xxii}; after the war they moved to Clifton Gardens. Rol's niece Jan Hurrey (daughter of Rol's brother Les) remembers being very impressed that Rol had a key to a special gate that led through the grounds of next door Taronga Park Zoo which gave him a short cut down the hill to the ferry. But he got the bus back up the steep hill at the end of the working day. She thinks he was involved with the establishment of the Zoo. She says that he was a wonderful uncle, quite prepared to play games with the children. She also commented that during her school years whenever she went home to Dubbo for the school holidays (on the Bourke mail) her uncle Rol would turn up at Central Station with one of the 'Log Cabin' chocolates made by California Chocolates. She said he was 'gorgeous'^{xxiii}. Christopher Clark remembers his mother, Marcia^{xxiv} saying never ask Rol to do something for you unless you are really sure, because if you change your mind it will already be done.

But to return to his war years, Rol and Les (his younger brother who had settled on the land at Dubbo in 1912) served together, with Harry Collins (an employee of the company who served there until his retirement in the early 1960s)^{xxv}. Rol enlisted in June 1917, given the number 16137, and described himself as a 'merchant'^{xxvi}. A photograph^{xxvii} of him taken in uniform shows him to be a tall, slender and extremely good looking young man, officially described as having fair hair, blue eyes and 6'1" tall; he was 27 years old. The official war record notes that he had a distinctive scar along both his index fingers. Private Roland Clark, together with his brother Les, was placed in The Mechanical Transport Section; after training Rol went to the 4th Motor Transport Company, and Les to the 2nd. They left from Sydney on HMAT 'Runic' in March 1918. They travelled to England and in August 1918 Rol was sent to France where, for a short time only, he was a driver 'in the field'. Rol was not wounded and did not fall ill during his time of service but he did have some dental work done after enlisting.

At the end of the war Rol returned home via America, arriving in April 1919 on SS 'Sonoma', having been granted 6 months leave without pay^{xxviii}. It seems that his wife was a little upset at not being advised of his arrival as a rather terse letter^{xxix} from Base Headquarters indicates that they did not know which ship he was on either. Rol resumed his career at Marcus Clark, as I

outlined earlier. Christopher noted that many employees became shareholders of the company, and asked one of them why she invested in the company. Her response: 'If you can't trust Mr Rol and Mr George, who can you trust?'^{xxx} Roland retired in 1962 and died in 1973, aged 84.^{xxxi} His grandson Anthony, (and I am delighted that members of the Clark family have joined us here today) recalled walking around Mt Wilson with Rol and noting that he treated everyone with the same courtesy and politeness. He is remembered as a 'natural gentleman'^{xxxii}. Alison Halliday

9bXbchVg'

ⁱFound in W.Hall's official record of service

ⁱⁱMilton's sonnet: 'on his Blindness'

ⁱⁱⁱAustralian War Graves Commission

^{iv}Found in W.Hall's official record of service

^vAs above

^{vi}As above

^{vii}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{viii}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{ix}Mary Reynolds

^xNow owned by Helen Rainer

^{xi}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{xii}Mt Wilson Historical Soc., from Dept. of Lands NSW

^{xiii}Official war record of E.Hall

^{xiv}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{xv}Official war record of E.Hall

^{xvi}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{xvii}Family tree created by Marcia Clark for her family history 'Born to Rise'

^{xviii}NSW registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

^{xix}from History by C Clark and R Gole, p5.

^{xx}As above

^{xxi}As above

^{xxii}note Rol's given address on his application to enlist was 57 Redweyte (sic) Rd, Strathfield

^{xxiii}interview by phone on 4/11/2011 with Jan Hurrey

^{xxiv}Henry Marcus Clark's 9th child, born 1913

^{xxv}Christopher Clark's history 'The Firm that Kept Faith'

^{xxvi}Official war record of RC Clark

^{xxvii}In the possession of Christopher Clark, left to him by his mother Marcia.

^{xxviii}Les' only son John Byron Marcus Clark (serving with the AIF 2/15th Field Regiment) died as a prisoner of war on the infamous Burma railway in 1943. Reg's only son Theodore Marcus Clark (Marc) died in action (serving with the Royal Australian Air Force) in 1942, days before the birth of his son Phillip Marcus Clark. The company maintained an Honour Roll of employees who served for their country. See also article by Arthur Delbridge in Hist. Society journal for 11/11/2006

^{xxix}Official war record of RC Clark

^{xxx}Notes on email from Christopher Clark concerning war record

^{xxxi}History by Marcia Clark, and by Christopher Clark

^{xxxii}Recollection of his grandson, Antony. (8/11/2011)

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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.

www.mtwilson.com.au

For further information contact Mary Reynolds

postal address: 'Donna Buang', Church Lane, Mt Wilson, NSW, 2786

phone: 02 4756 2006 email: mary_reynolds@internode.on.net

Prints of Meg Fromel's linocuts are shown through out this newsletter.
This newsletter was edited by Alison Halliday; layout by Matilda Halliday.
Feedback is always welcome, alisonhalliday@gmail.com