



The Mounts

The Community Newsletter of Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine



August 2012

Welcome

This edition of The Mounts contains the terribly disappointing news of the cancellation of the 2012 Willy to Billy Run. A well known and much loved fixture on the running and community calendar for 17 years, this news seems to be a triumph of bureaucratic meddling over established precedent and goodwill. Whilst the safety of runners, spectators and volunteers must be paramount, it is hard to imagine that runners—some of whom weigh almost 70 kilograms—could be at risk crossing the Bowens Creek Bridge. Barry Freeman has submitted an open letter expressing strong views about a situation that surely could have been avoided: readers are urged to submit their response to Hawkesbury City Council.

In the meantime, the potholes in the local roads around the villages are getting deeper and wider, and the yellow paint that was so carefully applied several months ago to clearly define the edges of the chasm is fading with old age.

On the other hand, it is not necessarily all gloom and doom on the public infrastructure front: the Mt Wilson post box was successfully moved with a minimum of fuss, and with unheard-of speed and efficiency, twenty-two metres to the east of its former position outside the old Post Office. This surely demonstrates the art of the possible.

Tim Gow Tel. 4756 2032 or 0412 133 559

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Community Calendar

August	Fri 10th 9.00—12.00 Bush Care— Wynne Reserve	Sun 12th 3.00pm Mt Wilson Church Service	Fri 17th Bushwalking Group— Sassafrass Gully, Springwood	Mon 20th Working Bee, St Georges Church
September	Sun 2nd 9.00am RFS Training Mt Wilson Shed	Sun 9th 3.00pm Mt Wilson Church Service	Fri 14th 9.00—12.00 Bush Care— Farrer Road	Fri 21st Bushwalking Group— Medlow Bath
Sat 22nd 5.30pm MWPA AGM, Mt Wilson Village Hall				
October	Sun 7th 9.00am RFS Training Mt Wilson Shed	Fri 12th 9.00—12.00 Bush Care— Silva Plana	Sun 14th 3.00pm Mt Wilson Church Service	Fri 19th Bushwalking Group— Dunns Swamp

Village Hall Jottings

Our annual Yulefest dinner was held on 2nd July and although attendance was down from last year we all had a most enjoyable night. Thanks to all the Village Hall committee for making the night such a success, Tim, Ted, Ron, Helen, Beth and Mib. Thanks also to Moira for her help and to Duncan Peppercorn & Bruce Arnold for getting us all singing the carols. Thank you to those who donated towards the raffle and came along to share the fun of the night. We raised \$1,800 towards the kitchen upgrade project.

A lot has been happening at the Village Hall in the past few months, thanks to BMCC. Fortunately we had some fine weather so the work could be organised by Council for our new roof. Along with the roof installation some repairs were made to the roof structure and new insulation laid down.

Our new pergola looks splendid and fits in with the character of the hall. The translucent roofing will allow more light into the hall and the design will stop water leaking into the hall. The plans for Stage 2 renovations have been lodged for Development Application by Margi Fallon of Integrated Design Architects, who has been contracted by Council to oversee this work. If you would like to see them there is a copy in the Village Hall, which is open on Saturday morning from 10am to 11am.

The funds BMCC have allocated for the project will not cover its cost so the committee's priority will now be to seek grants from various Government authorities to match BMCC's funding.

Terry Cameron, our Council contact for all the issues related to running our Village Hall (and all other halls in the Blue Mountains area) has decided to retire. Terry has always been wonderful to work with, helpful, professional and polite and we will really miss her friendly presence in Council dealing with all our questions and requests. Many of you may have met Terry and her husband Jim at the Yulefest. We wish her all the best in the years ahead.

Judy Tribe



The new pergola on the Village Hall: the old galvanised pipe structure, and the wisteria, has been retained in part but it is now entirely separate from the main building. This will enable the wisteria to still provide valuable shade in the summer without causing deterioration or discolouration of either the building or the translucent veranda roofing.

MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE NEWS

Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Saturday, 22nd September. Nomination forms for the Committee for 2012/13 have been sent out. Please consider nomination. Fresh faces on the Committee are always a great asset.

Post Box

You may have noticed a shiny new red letter box has replaced the old one and has moved a little further down The Avenue to the notice board.

Village Maintenance Issues

There are a number of maintenance issues under discussion with Blue Mountains City Council and are on its schedule of works. These include works relating to the restoration after the Bazmark filming. We are waiting for action! Meanwhile, the bollards have been returned to the verge outside *Bebeah*.

Wanted, New Members

If you are a property owner or reside in Mount Wilson you are eligible to be a member of the Association. If you are not a member and wish to join please contact me. Membership fees make an important contribution to the work of maintaining our village and providing contact with residents through the production of such things as newsletters, the phone book and the website. The more members there are, the more we can do for you.

Mount Wilson Leisure Library

The library is open every Saturday morning from 10.00 to 11.00 unless the hall is booked for a function, so do drop in for a browse through the bookshelves. If you wish to come at another time or have books delivered, please contact me on 4756 2162 and this can be arranged. If anyone would like to assist in looking after the library for one hour a month on a Saturday morning please contact me, we would appreciate your help.

Moira Green (Secretary)

Monkey Creek Cafe

Sadly, there is no longer a cafe at Mt Wilson or Mt Irvine. However, at least there is a nearby facility for both residents and tourists alike.

Mark O'Carrigan, well known to many local residents for his building and engineering skills, has recently opened a cafe on Chifley Road at Bell. Monkey Creek Cafe is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10am to sunset. Featuring stunning views both of the Hartley Valley and east to Mt Wilson and the Wollangambe from the upper deck of an innovative building designed and built by Mark, the cafe offers quick snacks and meals. In addition, as well as serving tea, coffee and some wonderful cakes, the cafe is also licenced to sell beer and wine. The full menu is published on www.monkeycreek.com.au The cafe can be booked for private group functions at any time.



The cafe is located at 227 Chifley Road, Bell, phone 0402 255 777. It deserves our full support.

Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade

RED TAPE STRANGLES WILLY TO BILLY

For the first time in 17 years, the Mt Wilson to Bilpin Bush Run will not be held in 2012. Organisers have been forced to cancel the annual fundraiser due to new conditions set by Hawkesbury Council.

Bilpin RFS applied to Hawkesbury Council in February of this year, following guidelines set down by the council, providing them with the same information lodged for the past 17 years. However, in May the Design Engineer advised that consent for the event had been refused, on the grounds that the 6.5 km section of road from Bowens Creek Bridge to Bells Line of Road is a 'closed road' and that the Bowens Creek Bridge is 'unsafe and cannot be traversed'.

After extensive negotiations involving the Mayor Kim Ford and Hawkesbury Council's Local Traffic Committee, 'conditional initial approval' to run the event was granted on 18 June, provided a long list of conditions was fulfilled. The conditions included obtaining written permission from the Office of Environment and Heritage for the runners to cross (swim) the creek since they were not permitted to use the bridge.

Bilpin and Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine RFS Brigades reluctantly took the decision to cancel the event set down for 25 August, because it simply was not possible in the short time allowed to comply with the new conditions, despite Council having had the application for over four months.

The Willy to Billy is the major annual fundraising event for both Bilpin and Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Brigades with all race fees going directly to the RFS. Around \$5,000 each year goes to the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Brigade which is vital funding for equipment updates. It is a much loved community event involving huge numbers of locals from both villages helping out with the famous scone breakfast, traffic management, and drinks stations. Around 350 runners each year train for and plan to come to Mt Wilson to run the demanding 35.1 kms to Bilpin largely on fire trails and through private properties. RFS personnel regard it as a valuable training exercise in communications, while local businesses in Bilpin and B&Bs in the Mounts benefit from the influx of runners.

Hawkesbury Council's decision highlights the poor condition of Bowens Creek Bridge and the road on the Hawkesbury side, and adds urgency to the need for Councils to upgrade both the bridge and the road as an access route for emergency vehicles serving Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine residents.

If you wish to offer any comment to Hawkesbury City Council in relation to their decision, their email address is council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au or PO Box 146, Windsor, 2756, Att: The Lord Mayor.

Negotiations continue and the organizers are confident that the 2013 Willy to Billy will proceed as usual. In the meantime, bureaucracy has robbed Bilpin and Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine of a valued community event.

PREPARATION FOR BUSH FIRE SEASON

The tragic Victorian bushfires of 2009 resulted in a Royal Commission whose recommendations led to the formation of a Community Protection Plan. Under this plan, individual communities are urged to understand their own bush fire risk and source information that will assist in the preparation of personal Bush Fire Survival Plans.

Mt Wilson has been selected as one of five pilot sites in NSW after being identified as being in the highest risk category due to our position surrounded by National Park, and our limited road access.

The aim of the project is to:

- Identify, assess and depict contingency options available during a bush fire (e.g. leave early options, stay and defend, back up options and "plan B's" for when circumstances change)
- Identify, assess and depict the range and timing of mitigation treatments on public and private land
- Identify and assess vulnerable facilities and vulnerable residents within the community
- Gather and depict key information that will increase the preparedness of fire fighters for bush fires and assist in operations.

A successful CPP Information Day was held in Mt Wilson on Saturday 28 July attended by 30 local residents. The day was convened by Cameron Lownds, Community Protection Planning Officer, Rural Fire Service based at Glendenning, and John Norris, Community Safety Officer, Rural Fire Service - Blue Mountains District Office.

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

So what are you doing and what more can you do?

Prepare

Create and maintain an Asset Protection Zone (APZ):

- slash or mow ground vegetation
- prune exotic trees and shrubs
- remove overhanging branches
- remove vegetation from around the house
- selective removal (with the relevant approvals) of trees
- clear leaf litter from gutters, valleys and around the house
- enclose under-floor areas
- check condition of fire fighting pumps and hoses
- install metal flyscreens on the outside of windows and doors
- complete your bushfire survival plan

Act

- Keep informed during periods of high fire danger. Listen to media for updates and information
- Update your bushfire survival plan as your personal circumstances change. Practise your plan
- Have enough ready fuel (safely stored) for fire fighting pumps and generators
- Make sure pets and stock are kept close during periods of high fire danger
- Watch for signs of fire, especially smoke or the smell of smoke

Survive

If your plan is to leave then you must **leave early**. A 'wait and see' approach could have deadly consequences for you and your family

Be prepared to put your bushfire survival plan into action with little or no warning

What if something goes wrong?

What will you do if you have no time to leave?

What if local roads are closed?

What happens if only one partner is home?

YOU NEED TO HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN!

The Editor,
Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Newsletter
August 7th, 2012

I am moved to write my first open letter to the community following the cancellation of the Willy to Billy Bush Run, the main fund raiser for the local Brigade of the RFS.

I am disgusted at the way in which this community are being obstructed by bureaucracy and red tape, but more so by the way Hawkesbury Council sat on the application to run the event for many months, before responding to the application within 2 months of the event, with requirements that could not be addressed within the time available. Was this by design?

After many years of protracted discussions with Hawkesbury Council, the RFS, BMCC, local, State and Federal politicians, to keep the Bowens Creek Road open, or at least maintained to Fire Trail status, we are no further advanced.

The Blue Mountains RFS have done an amazing job, and just presented their findings from their Risk Assessment of Mt Wilson's Bush Fire Survival, when a major Bushfire incident next occurs. This assessment was conducted in light of the Victorian Bushfire disaster, and utilised the findings of the Royal Commission.

The facts are that Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are prime examples of a community at extreme risk in a major fire. Only one way in and one way out, extreme Urban/Bush interface, no safe refuge areas, and yet Hawkesbury Council refuse to maintain Bowens Creek Road, even to Fire Trail Standard, and the politicians are not motivated to do the right thing.

It is all well and good to expect and even demand that residents **Prepare, Act, Survive** (and I do support all that that entails), but even if a residents Fire Plan is to evacuate early, a fire from the West, South West, or North West could see us not able to evacuate, because Bowens Creek Road is not open and we have no safe refuge.

All the facts are available to Councils, RFS and the Politicians that demand Bowens Creek Road be kept open to at least Fire Trail standard. Failure to act is therefore **NEGLIGENT**.

I personally will hold both Councils, the RFS, the State Government and their respective officers, individually and collectively, accountable for any death that occurs as a result of this negligence. The Royal Commission into the Victorian Fires has set the Standard for preventative action, and I call on all authorities to act now, and all residents to prepare now.

It is not good enough for Hawkesbury Council to sit on their hands, and wait till the last minute, hoping it will go away. Budget is no excuse for putting lives at risk. **You are putting our lives at risk, and I will hold you accountable.**

Any resident who feels the same should take a stand now!

Make your thoughts and feelings known. Enough is enough!

Barry Freeman, Resident of Mt Wilson

New Phone book on the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Community Website

New Online Phone Book

A new online community telephone book is now on the website. To find it, login and go to **Community Information > Local Telephone Book**. It is not available to casual visitors to the website so residents need to login to access the phone book.

The new website phone book is generated from the database behind the website and each time you click on the menu a small program runs to produce the local telephone book. So it is right up to date with the database information, but there is a few seconds delay while the program produces the page.

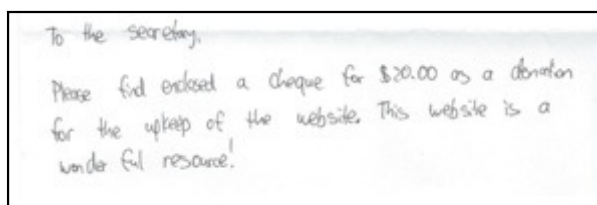
Local Telephone Book				
Surname	First Name	Address	Phone/ Mobile	Off Mounts Phones & Email
Abrahams	Brian	Cyathea, 9 Hay Lane Mt Wilson NSW 2786	4756 2119	Off Mounts: 4787 8231 cyathea@aonet.com.au ✉
Alvarez	Miguel	Bebeah, 64 The Avenue Mt Wilson NSW 2786	4756-2014	malvarez@yahoo.com ✉
Anderson	Peter	Sefton Hall, 17 Church Lane Mt Wilson NSW 2786	4756-2103 0427 169 716	anderson.sefton@bigpond.com ✉
Armitage	Elsa	Coolangatta, 1 Wynnes Rocks Road Mt Wilson NSW 2786	4756-2025	Off Mounts: 9436-2886
Arnold	Bruce	Wedgewood, 9 Smiths Road Mt Wilson NSW 2786	4756 2106 0412 365 247	Off Mounts: 9960 2969 Work/Other: 9210 3856 bruce.robert.arnold@gmail.com ✉

One change is it lists residents as individuals rather than by household. This has two advantages, individual contact details such as mobile numbers and email addresses are more obvious. In addition people who live in the same house but have different surnames are more easily found.

Please have a look at the phone book and check we have your details correct. These change over time and for all resident's convenience we like to have your latest phone numbers and email addresses. If you would like to have some details added or changed, contact Graham Tribe (gtribe@bigpond.com) or Moira Green (rm.green@bigpond.com).

Compliment from Victorian resident

We had a wonderful compliment paid to us recently by a person living in Victoria, including a small donation: "Please find a cheque enclosed for \$20 as a donation for the upkeep of the website. This website is a wonderful resource!"



Graham Tribe

Mt Wilson inspired a literary giant

Story: MARY WILSON

THE Mt Wilson Village Hall was filled to capacity to welcome NSW Governor Marie Bashir to a vice regal event which was certainly one of the true highlights of the village calendar.

The occasion was the launch of an exhibition organised by the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society honouring the 100th anniversary of the birth of acclaimed novelist Patrick White and his family connection with Mt Wilson.

The gathering included members of the historical society, visitors including David Marr, writer and biographer of Patrick White, Barbara Mobbs (Patrick's literary executor), Bernadette Brennan and Susan Lever (Sydney University lecturers in English and experts on Patrick White's writings) and many others.

By a miracle the weather chose to provide some rare sunshine and that warmth was reflected in the atmosphere in the hall.

Des Barrett, chairman of the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society, welcomed Her Excellency and all present for the launch of the exhibition.

He explained how the society had been aware that in its archives was material which could be used to tell an interesting story, about the time during 1920s and 1930s when Patrick's parents owned the house known as 'Withycombe' and more broadly what Mt Wilson meant to Patrick White and how the place figured in his life and literary work.

The centenary of his birth on May 28 2012 provided the society with an opportunity to tell a story of White's formative years, and the making of a novelist and playwright.

Mr Barrett continued to explain the complexities of life even in Mt Wilson remote as it was in those days and the impact they had on Patrick White's writings.

The exhibition is presented as a series of charts and the making of a film.

It was felt this was the best medium for the limited space in the Turkish Bath Museum where the display is placed early.

Mr Barrett thanked those involved including Bernadette Brennan, Fiona Carruthers, Peter Dempsey, Tim Gow, Alison Halliday, Susan Lever and Mary Reynolds.

He invited The Governor to open the exhibition.

Professor Bashir provided a wonderfully gracious presence in which she expressed it was a great pleasure and an unforgettable occasion to share the historic commemoration inspired by the centenary of the birth of the great Australian writer and Nobel Laureate, Patrick White.

She emphasised how the Blue Mountains environment surely



GOVERNOR WAS A POPULAR VISITOR: It was standing room only in the Village Hall for the Governor's visit.

lm070212marie1

must inspire all present to reflect upon the influence of Mt Wilson on the young 'Red Admiral'.

The opening of the exhibition was received with enthusiasm and much warmth.

Fiona Carruthers, a journalist from The Financial Review and Mt Irvine gave a humorous and charming account of the making of the film which was produced very professionally and contains interviews by Rachel Kohn of Radio National with David Marr, Peter Valder a past resident of Mt Wilson, and local resident Libby Raines, and Bernadette Brennan, Susan Lever and readings of Patrick White's by Huw Evans, a resident of Mt Irvine and ABC personality.

The film was another highlight; in a charming gentle manner it really covered, in a short time, not just Patrick's association with Mt Wilson, but everything about him was one comment.

Treasurer Tim Gow and organiser for the society delivered a whimsical but realistic view of the villages of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine as they function today.

Despite our small population and splendid isolation, we believe it is a proud, strong, vibrant and diverse community.

Mr Barrett announced that the society will make available an award of \$5000 for the purpose of study at the post graduate level at an Australian university on a topic concerned with the literary work of Patrick White.

Dr Bernadette Brennan of Sydney University announced two students who would receive the award.

After a light lunch the Governor



A VICE-REGAL MEETING: Governor Marie Bashir chatted with Mt Wilson-Mt Irvine Historical Society chairman Des Barrett. Research Officer Mary Reynolds is on the left.

lm070212marie2

and various guests were taken for a tour of the Turkish Bath Museum and then to 'Withycombe' where the present owners Barbara and Merrick Howes and Joe and Diana Landsberg welcomed her most warmly.

Mr Gow presented the Governor with a collection of Mt Wilson artefacts, produced or created by Mt Wilson people, about Mt Wilson.

- Mary Wilson is the Research Officer for the Mt Wilson-Mt Irvine Historical Society

From Lithgow Mercury, June 2012.

The named author, Mary Wilson, was an unexplained typographical error; the correct name of course is Mary Reynolds.

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine 2012 Photography and Art Exhibition

Planning for the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Photography and Art Exhibition is well underway. The exhibition will be held at the Mt Wilson Village Hall on Saturday 27th October (10am—6.30pm) and Sunday 28th October (10am— 4.00pm). All works must depict aspects of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine.

Current indications are that there will be about 30 exhibitors—quite a few are from the Mounts (Ray Harrington's art group features prominently), some are from Sydney and surrounds, some are from interstate; we even have one international exhibitor.

Most of the works on display will be offered for sale. 25% of the sale price will be donated to the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade.

Entry to the exhibition will be by gold coin donation.

Additionally, the RFS will be selling food and drink throughout the weekend from the Village Hall; all proceeds will go to the Brigade.

Throughout the weekend, there will be guest speakers talking about their work. A schedule will be published closer to the event.

On late Saturday afternoon, there will be an informal opening of the exhibition, with nibbles and refreshments on hand. Again, details are currently being finalised and announced closer to the event.

It is not too late to submit works to the exhibition—it is open to all. The works may be either matted, mounted, framed or canvas photographs or paintings; the only proviso is that the subject matter is drawn from, or features, Mt Wilson or Mt Irvine. There is no entry fee for exhibitors. The best contact for exhibition inquiries is Bev Woodman (bevwoodman46@gmail.com) or (home) 0249 46 8491, (mobile) 0438 494 684

The exhibition promises to be an event of astounding range and variety, and which will highlight the talent and enthusiasm of the many amateur and professional photographers and artists who either live in, or regularly visit, the Mounts.



Michael Matthews' capture of an autumnal Queens Avenue



Works by Phillip Johnson, Matthew Tribe and Rosalie Dale

Suggestions, comments or contributions warmly welcomed!