



NEWSLETTER

Working together for a better community

January 2007

EDITOR'S NOTES

Well, the Christmas season has come and gone, with it's good cheer and conviviality, family gatherings and travel back and forth to Sydney and/or various coastal houses. Despite the hand-wringing about the commercialisation of the season, and the crassness of some of the Santa Claus carry-on, there's a lot to be said for a time of year when people are stimulated to cheerfully and genuinely celebrate and wish one another well. We thoroughly enjoyed the time with our family: grandchildren all over the place, noisy meals, exasperated mums (and, sometimes, grandparents) battling to inculcate minimum standards of civilised behaviour on the exuberant young. Happily, everyone had a good time: good company, good wine and we all get on well. Nevertheless, there is always a sneaking feeling of relief when they all go home and peace reigns again.

The Grosse Valley fire in November generated some unwanted excitement and, like everyone else, I am full of admiration for the job done by our local brigade, for the unselfish commitment to long hours on the trucks and for Peter Raines' leadership. I am a bit less impressed with the way the thing was managed overall. At times there were a great many crews, some of whom had come long distances, sitting around doing nothing useful. There was lots of very expensive helicopter activity, some of which I am sure was useless; there were considerable delays in reaching – or at least telling people about – back-burning decisions; and communications from the management team in Katoomba to people on the ground were generally poor. Also, I cannot help but wonder why the RFS website was not updated at least daily. However, I'm sure that much of this will be considered in the 'post mortems' – Mt Wilson brigade had a useful debrief session and we understand that (relevant) comments were passed back to RFS management.

It is, of course, easy to be critical, and there are always arguments, after this kind of event, about what should and shouldn't have been done. An example, with which I have little sympathy, is the hysterical nonsense that was generated in the local press about the Blue Gum forest being 'destroyed'. I haven't been down to have a look, but am willing to bet that it suffered no damage of consequence. Eucalypt forests are adapted to fire and, provided it occurs often enough to keep the fuel loads down so the fire intensity isn't too high, most trees – at least the larger ones – will suffer no significant damage. (Fuel loads should be kept down by hazard reduction burns, but these are quite difficult to do nowadays, in the face of the constraints imposed by rampant bureaucracies more concerned, it seems, to avoid ANY risks or adverse reactions by uninformed people than to get the job done.)

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MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE NEWS

Remembrance Day Service, 2006

The Remembrance Day Service held at the War Memorial on 11th November, 2006 was attended by about 50 people. It was led by Reverend Earl Hughes. Bill Childs, a student of Blue Mountains Grammar School, was the bugler, wreaths were laid by Richard Prentice and Jock Lumsden and Milba Mewburn officiated with the flag. For the first time, a choir of Village residents, led by Beverley Thompson, sang during the service. Afterwards in the Hall, Arthur Delbridge once again gave an interesting talk about two families represented on the memorial. Morning tea followed, where it was obvious that people appreciated the occasion and the opportunity to meet together as a community.

Christmas, 2006

Once again the Rural Fire Service, Mount Wilson Progress Association and Mount Irvine Progress Association combined to organize a Christmas party for their members. It proved to be a most enjoyable occasion and the evening was declared a great success. The atmosphere was most convivial and the food enjoyable. The Village Choir provided entertainment by singing Australian Christmas carols. Thank you to all who helped organize the event.

Government Grants

The Progress Association has successfully applied for two Commonwealth Government grants. The first was from the Department of

Veteran Affairs for \$1,320 for the re-gilding of the lettering on the War Memorial. This project will commence very soon. The second grant was from the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs under its Volunteer Small Equipment Grants 2006. The amount approved is \$1,544 as partial payment of the audio-visual equipment for the Village Hall.

Phone Book

Plans are in hand to update the Mount Wilson/ Mount Irvine Phone Book. This is an important communication tool within the community, particularly for the RFS during times of emergency. It is important that current contact details, are included. Please check the current book and pass any alterations or additions to me, Moira Green, on 4756 2162 or email rm.green@bigpond.com. Please note that my email address in the phone book is incorrect. It is particularly helpful to include a phone number, mobile and/or email address as well as a mountain number, if you have them, so contact can be made if you are off the mountains.

New Members

Welcome to Deborah and Ted Griffin, new owners of 'Cooינו', The Avenue. Best wishes to your new endeavors in this beautiful part of the world.

Moira Green

THE 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MT IRVINE PROGRESS ASSOCIATION 4.00 pm SATURDAY JANUARY 27th AT THE MT IRVINE PUBLIC HALL.

Elections of Officers: Nominations of eligible Members of the Mount Irvine Progress Association are invited for all elected positions, that is: President, Secretary and Treasurer. All nominations are to be proposed and seconded by Financial Members, with the approval of the person named, and submitted in writing to:

The Secretary
Mt Irvine Progress Association
c/- 'Chalumeau'
256 Mt Irvine Road
MT IRVINE 2786

to be received fourteen days prior to the meeting, or as soon as you can. In addition, nominations will be taken from the floor of the meeting. Absent members may vote by proxy, if they prefer. Please mark envelope 'Nomination'.

Membership: It must be noted that only paid-up members are entitled to vote, so membership dues should be paid prior to the AGM. Dues can be sent by cheque to *The Treasurer*, at the above address, or paid on the day, before the meeting begins.

MOUNT WILSON VILLAGE HALL JOTTINGS.

Since last writing for the Newsletter much has been achieved for the Hall. As many will know the stable door into the kitchen has been installed at a cost to the Committee of \$3,250. It is proving to be great for the users of the kitchen as it not only allows access to the kitchen without going through the Hall but it allows a welcome breeze to flow through the kitchen in the heat of summer.

In addition to the provision of the concrete water tank to supply the toilet block, Council has replaced the old tank supplying the kitchen with two new ones with increased capacity. We have expressed our appreciation to Council for this upgrade.

Thanks to the work of the Historical Society, the sign of the historical portrayal of the Village has now been manufactured and installed. It looks fabulous and is a great addition to the amenity of the Mountain. We express our appreciation to the Society for this work. It is amazing just how many visitors are attracted to that sign and the one erected by the Progress Association across the road.

Last November a small but energetic work party landscaped the front grounds of the Hall. Alan, Stewart and David Gunn excavated and removed 100mm over the whole area, the top of which had set like concrete. Truckloads of road base were purchased for the driveway and topsoil for the lawn area. The cost to the Committee was a net \$2,273 after taking into account two generous donations from Beverly & Graham Thompson (the proceeds of a film night at Bisley) and Mary & John Holt. This

project is not quite finished as there are to be three mature trees planted in the lawn and the lawn has had to be re-sown as a bad November frost hit the newly germinated seed. Many thanks to those who worked so hard on this project.

There is to be a further pruning working bee next Saturday (20th).

The Audio/Visual system is underway. The boosted antennas have been installed at a cost of \$1,180 and the reception is good on all channels. A contract has been let for just over \$8,000 for the remainder of the system and we hope it will be installed this month. The MWPA has helped us to overcome two difficulties. The first is that whilst Council approved the installation of the system it does not want to own it or be responsible for its operation and upkeep. The second is that we did not have the full purchase price available. The Association has kindly agreed to hold legal ownership of the system on behalf of the people of Mt. Wilson & Mount Irvine and their various organisations and has made it possible to install the complete unit sooner rather than later by providing the balance of the funds required. We really appreciate this help from the Association.

Finally, I would like to express the Committee's profound appreciation to Mary and John Holt who purchased and donated a beautiful oil painting of the Wolgan Valley by Ray Harrington. This is and will remain a lovely attraction in the Hall for years to come.

Ron Green

MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Management Committee 2007

President: Florence Smart

Vice-Presidents: Darrel Conybeare, Louise Weingott, Bruce Wright

Secretary: Patrice Fletcher, Louise Weingott

Members: Des Barrett, Arthur Delbridge

'Funnies' in previous newsletters have been popular so, in a 'quiet news' period, why not entertain ourselves. Graham Tribe contributed the following:

Possibly the best letter ever to come out of the Inland Revenue....Taken from the Guardian, an actual letter sent by the Inland Revenue:

Dear Mr Addison,

I am writing to you to express our thanks for your more than prompt reply to our latest communication, and also to answer some of the points you raise. I will address them, as ever, in order.

Firstly, I must take issue with your description of our last as a "begging letter". It might perhaps more properly be referred to as a "tax demand". This is how we, at the Inland Revenue have always, for reasons of accuracy, traditionally referred to such documents.

Secondly, your frustration at our adding to the "endless stream of crapulent whining and pan-handling vomited daily through the letterbox on to the doormat" has been noted. However, whilst I have naturally not seen the other letters to which you refer I would cautiously suggest that their being from pauper councils, Lombardy pirate banking houses and pissant gas-mongerers" might indicate that your decision to "file them next to the toilet in case of emergencies" is at best a little ill-advised. In common with my own organisation, it is unlikely that the senders of these letters do see you as a "lackwit bumpkin" or, come to that, a "sodding charity". More likely they see you as a citizen of Great Britain, with a responsibility to contribute to the upkeep of the nation as a whole.

Which brings me to my next point. Whilst there may be some spirit of truth in your assertion that the taxes you pay "go to shore up the cancer-blighted toppling folly that is the Public Services", a moment's rudimentary calculation ought to disabuse you of the notion that the government in any way expects you to "stump up for the whole damned party" yourself. The estimates you provide for the Chancellor's disbursement of the funds levied by taxation, whilst colourful, are, in fairness, a little off the mark. Less than you seem to imagine is spent on "junkets for Bunterish lickspittles" and "dancing whores" whilst far more than you have accounted for is allocated to, for example, "that box-ticking façade of a university system."

A couple of technical points arising from direct queries:

1. The reason we don't simply write "Muggins" on the envelope has to do with the vagaries of the postal system;
2. You can rest assured that "sucking the very marrows of those with nothing else to give" has never been considered as a practice because even if the Personal allowance didn't render it irrelevant, the sheer medical logistics involved would make it financially unviable.

I trust this has helped. In the meantime, whilst I would not in any way wish to influence your decision one way or the other, I ought to point out that even if you did choose to "give the whole foul jamboree up and go and live in India " you would still owe us the money. Please send it to us by Friday.

Yours Sincerely,

H J Lee

Customer Relations

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 4 2007

This is an early reminder.

All volunteers will be very welcome.

You will be able to sign up for an hour or two outside the Village Hall. This is a great opportunity to participate in keeping our village clean and beautiful. In 2006 a staggering 700,000 volunteers removed more than 9,000 tons of rubbish at over 7,500 sites during Clean Up Australia day.

Robert Chesney

THE SUMMER GARDEN

Although the gardens at My Wilson are best known for their spring and autumn beauty, summer is a lovely time with deep shade beneath the trees and cool evenings. Here are a few of the many plants which add colour during the summer months.

Many perennials flower during December, January and February. Phlox, which came to Europe from North America in 1770, have clusters of fragrant flowers, in pinks, mauves, purple, blues and white. They stand tall and are great for a border or between shrubs in a sunny position.

Hostas are natives of Japan and China and are wonderful plants for shade or semi-shade. They have large, handsome leaves and that are bluish-green, soft yellow, glossy green or, in many cases, multi-coloured with a mixture of these colours, while the flowers are mauve, purple or white.

Liliums grow very well in our rich, free-draining soil, as do hydrangeas: try some of the species—*Villosa*, *Strigosa* and *Paniculata* 'grandiflora'. You won't be disappointed!

Libby Raines

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH MASON

Elizabeth's friends were saddened to hear of her unexpected death on Christmas Eve.

On moving from their property near Cootamundra to Linden in 1992 Elizabeth and John quickly became part of the life of the village community. They joined the Progress Association and always attended meetings and the working bees we held; they explored the mountains with our bush-walking group and were foundation members of the Bush Care group, always there to help remove the weeds from the reserves and roadsides.

In the Rural Fire Service Elizabeth was the catering officer for a number of years and she took over the cleaning of the church and attended the monthly services and annual working bee.

In 2001 Elizabeth organized a very successful art and craft exhibition in the Turkish bathhouse and she was a keen supporter of the Historical Society, being on the Turkish bathhouse roster and attending working bees.

Linden was beautifully maintained and open to the public to enjoy during the spring and autumn. Elizabeth was well known for the delicious jams she made from the fruit of the berry patch, and the shortbread she sold at the gate.

Elizabeth and John left a big hole in our community life when they left the village and moved to Leura, but they returned to the mountain each month to support St Georges Church and join in the monthly service.

We shall miss Elizabeth's warm and helpful friendship.

Libby Raines

And, for those of us who fly frequently (or did so in the past), the following series strikes a chord:

Fly Qantas!

After every flight, Qantas Airline pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet", which tell mechanics about problems with the aircraft.

The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheet before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour.

P = *Pilots comments.*

S = *Service/maintenance solutions.*

P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P. Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget.

COMMUNITY DIARY

Saturday January 27 **Mt Irvine Progress Association AGM** 4pm. Mt Irvine Hall

Saturday, February 24 **MWPA** Special General Meeting 10.00 a.m. Mt Wilson Village Hall

St Georges Church **Monthly services** on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 3 pm
(February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13)

Bush walks February 16 (Leura Falls, Leura Forest to Katoomba), March 16 (all day)
April 21 (all day) May 19 (all day)

Bushcare February 9, Sloan Reserve; March 9, April 13 (Wynne Reserve);
May 11 (Queens Ave — park outside Yengo's gate, nearest Cherry Cotage)

Jazz at the Turkish Bath Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society **Saturday 24th March 2007.**

Clean Up Australia Day Sunday, 4th March, 2007, at 9.00 a.m.