



# The Mounts

## The Community Newsletter of Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine



**June 2011**

### Welcome

Leeches.

Universally adored, leeches are amazing creatures—they have thirty-two brains, three mouths and millions of teeth that can bite through the hide of both hippopotami and residents of mountain villages. In a new feature, Elizabeth Montano ventures to seek answers to some of the imponderables of our daily existence, such as the ubiquity of leeches in our part of the world. Elizabeth outlines the mechanism whereby all those hitherto unanswered questions can be posed and hopefully resolved by the collective wisdom and experience of our community. Enjoy her contribution and rejoice in the fact that we don't live in southern Chile where the local giant, and improbably named, *Americobdella* leech lunches by swallowing earthworms whole.

At the other end of the spectrum, Robyn Scrivener knocks on the door of one prominent resident for the second of another soon-to-be regular articles exploring the output of the many and varied artistic activities within our villages. There is an active arts and crafts scene within the local area that deserves far greater visibility and recognition—Robyn has taken up this challenge.

On a similar but different theme, Nancy Fox has undertaken a wonderful project to bring Meg Fromel's lino cuts of village icons into greater public awareness. Further details for the future plans of this body of work will be shared to the community at the Yulefest and at the Historical Society's mid-year General Meeting in July.

The Thompsons generously hosted a Porsche Car Club visit as a fund raising activity for Children's Medical Research. Beverley reports on what turned out to be a sublime late autumnal day which showed the village—and *Bisley*—in its best light.

The truly exciting news is the recent appearance of two small white arrows on The Avenue that look suspiciously like an initial Work Instruction for the long-awaited drainage system outside the Village Hall. A small step, to be sure, and without getting hopes unduly high, to paraphrase Mao, an infrastructure project of a thousand communiqués starts with a single spray-painted symbol. I hope the rain doesn't hold up the Council workers.

**Tim Gow** Tel. 4756 2031 or 0412 133 559

e-mail: [seftoncottage@gmail.com](mailto:seftoncottage@gmail.com)

## Community Calendar

June	Fri 17th Bushwalking Group— Hazelbrook Area	July	Sat 2nd 6.30pm 'Yulefest' Mt Wilson Village Hall	Sun 3rd 9.00am RFS Training Mt Wilson Shed
Fri 8th 9.00am Bush Care— Galwey Lane	Sun 10th 3.00pm Mt Wilson Church Service	Fri 15th Bushwalking Group—Coxs Road—Lawson's Long Alley (Mt Victoria)	Sat 16th 10.30am Historical Society General Meeting	August
Sun 7th 9.00am RFS Training Mt Wilson Shed	Fri 12th 9.00am Bush Care— Sloane Reserve	Sun 14th 8.30am RFS Pump exercises Mt Wilson Shed	Sun 14th 3.00pm Mt Wilson Church Service	Fri 19th Bushwalking Group— Kanangra Walls

You are invited to

***The fabulous  
Mount Wilson Yulefest  
at the Village Hall***

**On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011 at 6.30pm**

**RSVP by 26<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Adults - \$40, Children up to 14 - \$10**  
**BYO drinks**

**Tickets available from:**  
**Milba Mewburn 4756 2120 or email: [milbamewburn@bigpond.com](mailto:milbamewburn@bigpond.com)**  
**(please make cheques payable to BMCC)**

**To make a donation of goods for the raffle please call**  
**Ron Green 4756 2162**  
**before 26<sup>th</sup> June**

**This is a fund raising activity of the Village Hall Committee**

## Mt Wilson Progress Association Committee News

### Coming Events

Check all events of the village by looking at the calendar on the website. It is being kept up to date by all organisations. You will be surprised by the number of things that are happening.

### Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine Phone Book

A new edition of the community phonebook will be available by the end of June. Thank you to everyone who responded to my email requesting updates to contact information in the old book. If you have not already done so, please let me know of any changes that need to be made as soon as possible by phoning 4756 2162 or emailing [rm.green@bigpond.com](mailto:rm.green@bigpond.com).

### Mount Wilson Leisure Library

The catalogue for the book collection is now able to be viewed on the Mount Wilson website under the menus for both the Mount Wilson Progress Association and the Village Hall. The library is open every Saturday morning from 10.00 to 11.00 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.

### Join the Mount Wilson Progress Association Inc.

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.

**Moira Green**

Secretary

## Change of date for Historical Society meeting

**The Historical Society mid-year (mid-winter!) General Meeting advertised for Saturday 18 June 2011 has been moved to Saturday 16 July 2011.**

Arrangements for the meeting are now as follows:

**Saturday, 16 July, 2011 at 10.30am  
at the Mt Wilson Village Hall**

### PROGRAM:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 10.30am   | Morning tea   |
| 11.00am   | <b>General meeting</b> with committee reports and an update on the Society's ongoing projects and activities. Come along and let us bring you up to date with the Society's activities.   |
| 12.00noon | <b>Guest speaker</b> Alan Croker, managing architect since 1995 for the Turkish Bath and <i>Wynstay</i> estate. Alan's illustrated talk will show us conservation works undertaken at the Turkish Bath and Wynstay, and also a major conservation project at Exeter Farm, in north west Sydney, which won this year's National Trust Heritage Award for Corporate / Government conservation of built heritage under \$1m. |

**JOIN US FOR A WARMING LUNCH AFTER THE PRESENTATION.**

There will be a gold coin donation at the door to cover costs.

**For Catering purposes, please let us know if you are coming**

**Mary Reynolds: 4756 2006 / Helen Cardy: 9871 3661 / Florence Smart: 9416 1957**

**Email: [westring@bigpond.com](mailto:westring@bigpond.com)**



### Ask the Neighbours

Welcome to this experiment called "Ask the Neighbours". Some months ago, whilst complimenting the Newsletter team on a great read, I somewhat (foolishly) enquired whether the Newsletter could be used to pose questions to the community about aspects of life on the Mounts. Whilst I'm as public spirited as the next person, my motivation was that I had a very vexing question I wanted to ask. Tim Gow suggested I might attempt a column for the newsletter along those lines – so, here it is.

A column in which readers can ask those pesky, amusing, quirky, whimsical and even serious questions about anything to do with life up here.

And the question I wanted to ask of people far smarter than me?

Leeches – how to stop them snacking on me every time I wade into a garden bed or, indeed, cross a lawn during the warmer months at our place here in the most beautiful place in the world (except for the leeches). And a supplementary question: what remedies do the experts suggest for treating the leech bites? For not only am I a leech magnet, I also react very badly to them.

Some initial enquiries around the mountains show that I'm not the only sufferer in this regard. So, perhaps the answers to these questions will be of interest to others.

Now, I know that the Sydney Morning Herald's Column 8 recently ran a number of queries, responses and funny items (not so funny for us sufferers!) about this question.

And the laws of defamation suggest that it would be imprudent of me to allege that my "let's ask people about leeches" idea was somehow borrowed by Column 8 readers from my subconscious.

However, the correspondents of that august publication were not dealing with the Mt Wilson /Mt Irvine sub-population of leeches: we breed 'em tough up here. I've tried the Aerogard approach (two layers – on me and then on my trouser legs) and the tight socks and gumboots combination (who said gardening here isn't stylish?). All to no avail – those ingenious little creatures have still managed to get to my ankles for takeaway (take and stay in their case).

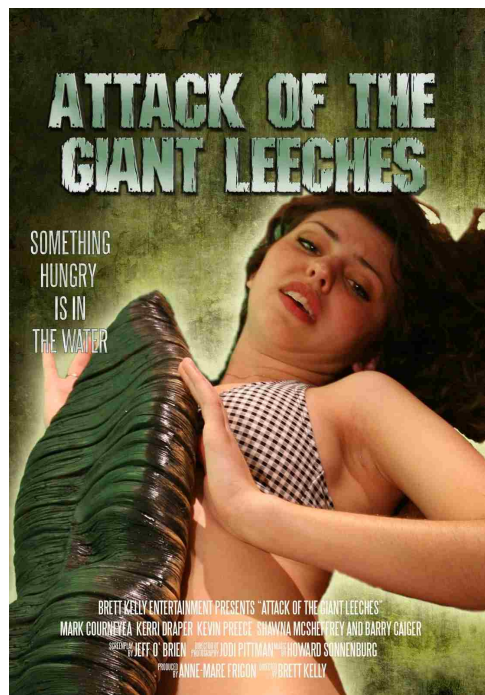
So, there you have it: my own heartfelt plea for the wisdom of Mt Wilsonites and Mt Irvinites alike. In his never ending quest to make the Newsletter the most read publication in the Blue Mountains (good luck with that, Tim) and in response to my disappointment that Column 8 seemed to have beaten me to the punch, Tim suggested a few more questions of a more botanical persuasion. Oh! Alright Tim – if I must.

So, here goes - What are the predictors of a "good autumn"? What determines how much the leaves colour? Do some species respond better to cold wet autumns than others? Conversely, do some like an "Indian summer" which goes on til May and then departs with a really cold snap? And, why do autumn leaves stay on the trees longer in some years than others? (That's one of mine, Tim – see: it isn't all about the leeches)

So, there you have it. The first – and possibly the last - "Ask the neighbours".

Responses, comments (be kind, please) and scientific expositions regarding either of this edition's questions AND new questions to "Ask the neighbours" to the Editor please.

That's it for this edition, happy gardening, good night and don't let the leeches bite (with apologies to the bedbugs). **Elizabeth Montano**



**Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Community Website update**

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Community Website went live on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Since then we have been adding content. We hope to have the secure community area of the website available to all residents in a few months, but in the meantime, content which is of interest to the community is being added.

Progress has been made behind the scenes adding resident's names, assigning user names and passwords to enable people to login to the secure area of the website when it is launched. Many residents will progressively receive emails containing user names and temporary passwords. This is a normal part of the registration procedure. Please retain the login details so you already have them when we launch the secure section of the website.

If you have found a way to login, most of you will encounter a page asking for membership payment and blocking further progress. There is no need for concern, since once the login procedure is complete, you will bypass this page.

- There are the callout statistics for the local brigade at menu item - **Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade > Operations > Call outs.**
- Information about the various reserves is available at menu item - **Mt Wilson Progress Association**
- The list of books which the local Leisure Library has available are on the website at - **Mt Wilson Village Hall > Leisure Library.**
- The Bushcare working schedule is on the website - **Bushcare Group > Bushcare 2011 Schedule.**
- In particular, the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society has been putting their research papers and newsletters on the website, so they are now readily available for all. It is planned that this will continue so there will be a considerable amount on the history of the mounts on the website - **Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Historical Society > Published Papers** and **Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Historical Society > Miscellaneous Articles**
- The Bushwalking Group newsletters are on the website and are a substantial repository of walks and interesting places to visit - **Bushwalking Group > 2010 Newsletters**
- The **Calendar** has all local events, meetings, committee meetings and other activities listed. So it is your reference point if you want to know about an event, and when and where it happens.

We now have a total of eleven people who can edit content and calendar events. We have held two training sessions for these editors and skills are improving. Most of the major organisations have a committee member who can edit their section and add content.

The goal is to keep the website up to date with information, local statistics, minutes, constitutions and committee working papers so they are readily available.

Minutes, constitutions and committee working papers will only be available to local residents with appropriate access rights. There are also some pages in the Community Information section of the menu which are only available to local residents.

Login security profiles have been developed so that local residents and members of organisations will get access to the secure sections of the organisations to which they belong. Committee members will have special areas where working papers can be held. User names and passwords will be distributed to all residents and members of organisations, when we launch this community section.

Since the website went live, the number of visitors to the website and the number of pages visited has grown. The statistics available are very detailed but a summary is in a table on the next page.

The attraction of both the Easter holiday season and the peak autumnal colours is reflected in the

number of visits to the website. There have been many anecdotal reports we have received that the community is gaining benefit from the website. Many visitors to the Turkish Bath, people to pick walnuts and chestnuts, accommodation bookings and visitors to some gardens have commented they came because of the information on the website.

This benefits the community by providing support and added income to local organisations, gardens and businesses.

Month	Unique Visitors	No. of visits	Average No. of visits per day	No. of Pages viewed
<b>Feb 2011</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,360</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18,372</b>
<b>Mar 2011</b>	<b>1,822</b>	<b>2,959</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>20,459</b>
<b>Apr 2011</b>	<b>3,473</b>	<b>5,544</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>40,451</b>
<b>May 211</b>	<b>2,179</b>	<b>3,769</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>24,078</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>13,362</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>103,360</b>

\* Number of unique visitors is recorded each month, but the same individual visitor may visit the website in multiple months.

**Graham Tribe**

### **Congratulations to Lithgow!**

Lithgow has been recently announced as the Overall Winner of the Keep Australia Beautiful, Tidy Towns Awards 2010/2011. The announcement was made at the national awards ceremony held on Saturday 16th April at Beechworth in Victoria, the winner of the prestigious award last year.

As well as winning the overall Australian title, Lithgow also won the Environmental Innovation and Protection award, and received a commendation in the Water Conservation and the Heritage and Culture category awards.

Lithgow's active *Swampwatch* network continues to restore large areas of swampland, monitoring any damage or problems with the swamp system, whilst various water conservation initiatives are also in place throughout the town.

There are a multitude of projects, including replenishment of native vegetation, the collection and reuse of rainwater and a unique pot washing system devised in conjunction with the Lithgow Community Nursery.

Whilst there has been some subsequent discussion and debate since the awards, nonetheless Lithgow is to be commended for its very active restoration efforts. Well done!

### **Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine RFS Pump Operation Exercise and Training**

We have organised a special one day training session on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August at the Mt Wilson Fire Station on pumps and the skills operating them.

This session will be a good refresher for those who have done, or are planning to do, the Advanced Fire Fighter course. Pump operation is an important skill for drivers, and will assist people who have done or are contemplating doing Village Fire fighting.

The session will start at 8.30am and should finish prior to 4.00pm. It will combine theory and practice.

The day's course will be conducted by Andrew Barrington-Smith, supported by Peter Church and others. We will cover pumps and how to manage them on Cat 7, Cat 1 and the pumper. Andrew is a DC from Hazelbrook and is a subject specialist in using pumps.

We plan to have other brigades join us for the day, so it will be a very good day.

Could you please let me know if you can make it so we can plan numbers?

**Graham Tribe**



## Porsche Car Club Visit to *Bisley* May Day at Mount Wilson

We woke on 1<sup>st</sup> May to a beautiful sunny day. How wonderful after many days of drizzle and mist!

We were anxious about the weather as we had organised a special day and wanted *Bisley* to be at its best. Unfortunately we had not been able to mow as the ground was water-logged, but the grass had not grown much and still looked presentable.

Graham put out the balloons to mark the turnoff to *Bisley* and the parking signs; we waited anxiously for our visitors to arrive. The call came at 11.45am that the group were on their way and soon through the field gate came the first of fifty gleaming Porsches.

How beautiful they looked lined up in the field. They ranged from a 1961 model to the very latest on its first long run.

All in all, there were one hundred people who came into the garden carrying picnic baskets. They soon filled the tables on the front lawn, some choosing to sit by the lake enjoying the warm autumn day and catching up with friends.

A tour of the garden followed and many who had not been to Mount Wilson were amazed at the beautiful colours and impressed by our village.

An amount of \$1,000 was raised for Children's Medical Research. Our thanks to Sue and Glen Palfrey, and Gwen and Colin Baxter, from the Porsche Club for organising the day.



## Beverley Thompson

*Bisley*



**Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigades****Call Out Log**

The Brigade was called out seven times during April and May to four road accidents, and three medical emergencies.

Our thanks go to Brigade members who responded (listed by number of calls attended): **Libby Raines (5), Barry Freeman (5), Peter Dempsey (4), Diana Landsberg (3), Stephen Dean (3), Beth Raines (3), Peter Raines (2), Helen Freeman (2), Vic Zhukov (2), Graham Tribe (1).**

**Photo ID Cards**

All NSW RFS members are to be issued with photographic identification cards in recognition of the need for its members to be able to officially identify themselves. This initiative came out of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommendation that all Country Fire Authority volunteers be issued with an identification card or similar to facilitate their passage through roadblocks established during wildfires.

Funding for the cards has been secured and the card design is currently being finalised. All cards will include member name, role, location and photograph. The cards will improve both the operational and overall security of the NSW RFS and its members and provide assurance to the community.

It is anticipated that the issuing of photographic identification cards will commence in the second half of 2011 and will be rolled out progressively.

**Training News**

The training which the Mt Wilson/ Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade undertakes comes from two main sources: training within our brigade and in partnerships with other brigades, and training courses run by the Blue Mountains RFS District Office.

**Regular Brigade Training**

Month	Course	Brigades involved
February	Simulated bushfire exercise	Local Brigade
March	Map reading and navigation exercise	Bell, Mt Tomah and Local Brigade combined exercise
April	Working with helicopters and aircraft	Local Brigade
May	Motor Vehicle Accident s and handling casualties, fires and traffic	Bell, Mt Tomah and Local Brigade combined exercise

**Blue Mountains District Training**

Month	Course	No. People
April	Traffic Control	6
April	Rail emergency training	3
May	Advanced Firefighting	3
May	First Aid	4
May	Community Safety	1



We currently have about 40 active firefighters, 14 of whom live in Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. In addition, about another 40 people provide support for the brigade. Since not everyone is able to respond to an incident, we do depend on a small number of active local firefighters for normal callouts during the week. We do however have depth for longer running incidents once people who live in Sydney respond and join the local teams.

### **Community First Responders Training Exercise**

Beth Raines and Barry Freeman recently attended an all-day simulated emergency scenario for Community First Responders. The exercise was run by the NSW Ambulance Service in Bathurst for the Western Division of that organization – an area which runs roughly from Mt Wilson to Dubbo.

The simulated emergency involved a collision between a car and a bus carrying 40 passengers. The collision caused the bus to roll, injuring most of the passengers. Conducted in real time, personnel were required to enact the response using a series of white boards which represented initial triage, a transition stage, a casualty clearing station, and the handover stage at hospital. During the course, trainees learned how to prioritise injuries quickly in order to preserve the maximum number of lives.

Said Beth: "The day was certainly challenging, but incredibly valuable for remote communities like ours where help can take a long time to arrive".

### **Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade AGM 2011**

The following Field and Administration Officers have been nominated unopposed for 2011/2012

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee Name</b>
*President	David Howell
*Vice President	Henric Nicholas
*Treasurer	Susie Hope
*Secretary	Judy Tribe
*Captain	Beth Raines
*Senior Deputy Captain	Peter Raines
*Deputy Captain (1)	Barry Freeman
Deputy Captain (2)	Stewart Gunn
Deputy Captain (3)	Tim Gow
Deputy Captain (4)	Stuart Donaldson
Deputy Captain (5)	David Howell
Deputy Captain (6)	Ian Docker
Catering	Moir Green
Community Engagement	Kim Gow
Equipment Officer	Stephen Dean
Fire Trails Coordinator	Peter Dempsey & Vic Zhukov
*Training	Graham Tribe

Those elected positions marked with \* will form the executive committee

**Sarah Howell**

**Anne Mayall**

One only needs to imagine 'before and after' images of Anne Mayall's home on Wynnes Rocks Road to know she has an artist's eye. Anne had a very good reason to move to Mount Wilson; she needed somewhere that she could both establish her home and focus on her career as an artist. She has spent the last four years achieving exactly that, transforming a cabin into a charming home with an outlook onto the *Eucalyptus Oreades* which the property is named after. Adjacent to the house is a new studio which houses both a working space and exhibition area for her range of hand crafted jewellery.

Anne has a degree in Silver-smithing and jewellery design, and has worked since the late 1980s in both fine art and jewellery design. She has regularly exhibited in rural NSW and throughout Sydney.

Some of Anne's works can be viewed on her web page <http://annemayall.net/>. The final paragraph on her artist's statement encapsulates her philosophy. "I hope to create designs that are simple, functional and elegant. I design things that I would like to wear, contemporary and enduring".

Since successfully establishing her home and studio in Mount Wilson, Anne has accepted the opportunity to manage the Harrison Galleries in Paddington. Looks like Anne has achieved the best of all worlds, whilst remaining active in the Sydney art world she can retreat to her studio and continue to pursue her art.

Anne's work can be viewed by appointment at *Oreades*; original works can be commissioned.

**Robyn Scrivener**

Alison Halliday continues her occasional review of books written on Mt Wilson. A full listing of such books can be found in the *Information* section of [www.mtwilson.com.au](http://www.mtwilson.com.au)

***Mount Wilson, New South Wales: its location, settlement and development***, written by Dr. C.H. Currey, published in 1968.

This is a substantial history of Mount Wilson. Currey, a professional historian, has made much use of documents in the Mitchell Library Sydney, and later a fellowship was set up in his name, 'to promote the writing of Australian history from the original sources' using the Library's collection. The history of Mount Wilson investigates the early years of the Blue Mountains exploration in some detail, noting the work of the early explorers and settlers, such as the Bowen family, who were the first settlers near what is now Berambing, in the 1830s. Currey also traces the work of the surveyor Govett, who, under instructions from Mitchell, was the first to officially recognise Mount Wilson. Govett is more often remembered today by the lookout that bears his name. The Mount itself was first surveyed by Wyndham, who wrote in 1867, of land of 'good quality and well suited for agriculture [but] densely covered with timber, fallen logs and scrub' (p24). Currey gives some time to the settlement of the Mount and quotes extensively from original sources.

Most of the History is concerned with the 'Founders' of the earliest settlement, their families, their occupations and their houses. He also includes a chapter which investigates the geology, the flora and fauna and the economic activities for those who lived permanently on the Mount. He touches on the development of Mt Irvine and the changes in life at Mount Wilson in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He also includes a short history of the Public School. His history contains some historical photographs, such as the Zig-Zag, the War Memorial and Thompson's shack, as well as local buildings. There is also a very personal collection of garden photographs, and distant views, most of which seem to be taken from *Three Gables*. This book was published in 1968 and has been out of print for some years.

Currey owned the house *Three Gables*, in Church Lane on the eastern side before the hill; and he died there in 1970. His other work reflected his overlapping interests in law, the study of liberty and history.

**Alison Halliday**

### **RFS Community Engagement Property Information**

We have begun the task of entering residents' property details into the secure part of the Mount Wilson Website. This data is intended for use only in a major fire and for the emergency services that are sent out to specified areas.

If you have not filled in a questionnaire as yet, please contact your street coordinator.

### **Street Walks**

This year street meetings and walks have been planned for July. The following Saturday dates have been set aside:

**11.00 am 2<sup>nd</sup> July** Church Lane & Mt Wilson East

**2.00 pm 9<sup>th</sup> July** Wynnes Rocks Road & Queens/Wyndham Ave

**11.00 am 30<sup>th</sup> July** Mt Irvine

**2.00 pm 30<sup>th</sup> July** Farrer Road

The aim is to have a short discussion followed by a visit to a property.

There will be members of the RFS operations team present to answer questions regarding personal safety and property preparation for the fire season.

### **Mount Wilson to Bilpin Fun Run 2011**

This year's date—**Saturday August 27<sup>th</sup> at 10am**—is fast approaching and entries are now open. Some runners are in training for the scenic 35km bush trail run, whilst others are in serious preparation to take out the record for polishing off the most scones before the race.

This is the major fundraiser for the Local RFS brigades for the year, so please put the date in your diaries.

**Kim Gow**



### Mt Wilson Postcards

The Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations (BMACHO) has kindly provided forty historic postcards of Mt Wilson from various eras in electronic format to the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society. Peter Rickwood from BMACHO is in the process of transcribing and documenting the details from the postcards. Discussions are being held as to the best way to present these wonderful images to a wider audience.



A Typical Mountain Pathway.



Cathedral of Ferns  
Mt. Wilson  
N.S.W.



THE ROSE SERIES P. 5242 THE ROAD TO MT. WILSON, BLUE MTS. N.S.W.



MT WILSON



THE ROSE SERIES P. 5244 THE DEVIL'S ELBOW, MT. WILSON, BLUE MTS. N.S.W.

**Suggestions, comments or contributions warmly welcomed!**