



the MOUNTS

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF MT WILSON AND MT IRVINE

July
2018



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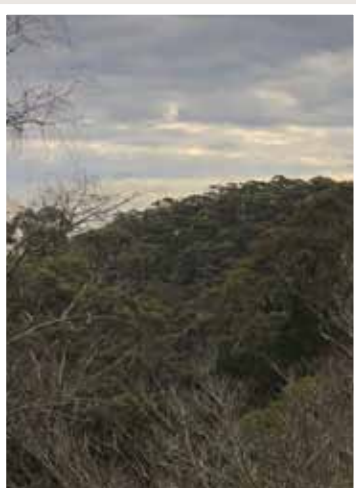
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ATN*

The column formerly known as "Ask the Neighbours"

This months cover photo was supplied by Peter Griffiths of his father-in-law Robert Chesney and Libby Raines doing what they loved best, bushwalking in the Blue Mountains.

JULY 2018



*Bare trees looking towards
Lambs Hill and cloudy
skies with no rain*

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the loss of our wonderful Libby, an amazing woman who was a pillar of our community and truly made the most of every moment. Her involvement and devotion to the village was unparalleled and she seemed to have unbounded energy and enthusiasm. She will be truly missed by all that knew her.

I would also to send my condolences to the Leonard family for the recent loss of John Leonard. The Leonards came to Sylvan Close in 1973 and have a long history of community involvement as well as many friends on the Mounts. We're thinking of you all during this difficult time.

Winter is certainly here, it has been dry and cold. On the weekend of the 14th - 15th of July, Marrangaroo, located 5 minutes outside Lithgow, was the coldest place in Australia with a low of -11. It is fair to say our tanks are certainly missing the rain and the frosts seem to be causing havoc in the garden and on the roads.

There have been only a few people willing to brave the weather for a visit. It is a quiet time around the village, a lull before the spring season kicks off.

Things have been busy for us here at Westring however. Due to demanding work commitments and being increasingly time poor Alison Halliday will be taking over a large part of the editing and correspondence work for the publication allowing me to focus more on the layout.

I'm hoping everyone is keeping warm and well

Jess Delbridge

AROUND THE MOUNTS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Friday 8th Bushcare 9:00-12:00 Sloan Reserve	Sunday 8th Church Service 3:00pm St Georges	Friday 10th Bushcare Gregson Park
Sunday 10th Church Service 3:00pm St Georges	Friday 13th Bushcare	Sunday 11th Church Service 3:00pm St Georges
Friday 15th Bushwalk: Asgard Swamp and Thor Head Mt Victoria	Friday 20th Bushwalk	Friday 17th Bushwalk Asgard Swamp and Thor Head Mt Victoria
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BIN CALENDAR

19 TH JULY
26 TH JULY
2 ND AUG
9 TH AUG
16 TH AUG
23 RD AUG
30 TH AUG
6 TH SEPT
13 TH SEPT

 Recycling
  Green Waste

VALE JOHN LEONARD

With much sadness Robin Leonard has written to inform the communities of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine of the death of her husband John. This is her message.

"I just wanted to let you know that my wonderful husband John Leonard passed away last Thursday 28th June, after so many years of ill health, he was a fighter to the end.

We came to Mt. Wilson in 1973, when my family bought Sylvan Close at Mt Wilson, and we shared so many good times there."

Jay Leonard has asked that the community be informed of a Celebration of John Leonard's life to be held on Monday 16th July at Balmoral Beach Club, The Esplanade, Balmoral, Sydney, starting at 12.00 noon.

If you wish to attend RVSP by calling 0419628627

IN MEMORIAM: LIBBY RAINES

Once upon a time ... This is the story of three little girls marching across the grass to the flagpole and hoisting the family flag, showing a hake fish, and saluting; all the while watched by their father. The middle one of these three girls is Libby.

Libby's father Denys Hake was Headmaster at The Kings School and soon after he and his wife Elizabeth arrived in Australia in the late 1930s it was apparent that they needed a refuge from living full time at the school. They may have met Col. Wynn through Archbishop Mowll, then staying at Withycombe, but if not the end result was that the tiny 4 room workman's cottage was rented for about 26 years, for a minimal amount. Here the family came in the school holidays. They grew potatoes, gooseberries and rhubarb; a thyme lawn was made and Hake scythed the grass. The little girls played in the bush, they made cubbies out of tree fern fronds, climbed along fallen logs and walked all over the mountain, including down to the creek; where they caught yabbies which were brought home in a billy to be cooked and eaten. On the 'lawn' they played quoits and shuttlecock. They virtually lived outside for a table and benches was moved outside whenever the weather permitted and the girls slept in tents. Thank you to Libby's sister Cecily for painting such a vivid picture of these childhood times. These wonderful and idyllic holidays were the start of Libby's life-long passion for the mountain.

Libby and Keith met while walking on the mountain. They contrived to meet 'accidentally' in The Avenue; Libby leaving from Merry Garth and Keith from Coppins. Their courtship took place as they rediscovered and resurrected the old Happy Valley path as a mutual project. After their marriage they lived at Coppins which was then just a glorified garage built by Keith. He added on one room and



later, as the family grew, he took the roof off and added a second storey.

In the meantime the Hake family had bought Merry Garth and the original tiny cottage had an extra room built on to it. Denys Hake died, and in 1978 Libby and Keith moved to Merry Garth where Keith built a family home around the old cottage, embracing the 20 foot square original. The extra room was moved down the slope for Mrs Hake to stay in when she visited.

There she and Keith build a wonderful and beautiful garden. Libby and Keith were entirely self taught gardeners, learning from books and experience. Keith took responsibility for the trees and shrubs while Libby focused on the smaller plants, bulbs and all the special tiny alpine plants that she seemed to grow effortlessly. Don Schofield, who has his own lovely garden at Mt Tomah, and Libby became gardening friends. Don has commented that Libby was both gardener and plants-person. In the garden at Merry Garth we can see the history of at least 40 years of cool climate gardening. He has said that Libby understood the culture in horticulture. Don saw that Libby had a real understanding and knowledge of plants – putting them where they would be happy. She created the nursery, having learnt many of the skills of growing young plants while working for Bill Smart. There was also a vegetable garden – beautiful spinach! The garden reflected many friendships and Keith and Libby made use of natural

IN MEMORIAM: LIBBY RAINES cont.

changes, such as the 2011 windstorm which opened up new areas for planting. Right to the end she was propagating and when she last visited Don she was still asking for a bit of that or a piece of another unusual shrub.

Soon after I joined the Progress Association she gave me some advice – we are only all volunteers and we have to accept that we can only do so much. And then you look at what she did!

The RFS was very important to her. Libby had said that she would never be able to pass even the basic training today – it was just too hard; I am not sure that I believed her. As with so much else she was always quietly there when needed. Helen Freeman remembers July 2002 when a page went out to attend a fire burning on the property of Breenhold. The stockpile of felled timber had been illegally lit by persons unknown. Libby was part of the all-girl crew, along with Helen, Milba and Allison Heap. They all arrived at the station and set about putting their training into action - with considerable success.

Libby, being an earlier riser, went around to the hall during the 2013 fires (and earlier ones) and was making beds and tidying up at the start of every day. And I recall driving up Bells Line of Road on a very misty Friday night and there was Libby on traffic control at Mt Tomah for an accident.

Libby was part of the very first First Responders group which was set up under the combined aegis of the RFS and the ambulance service. Like a number of you I remember her quiet confidence as we waited for the ambulance to come. Libby was of course no saint and one of her hates is the reason for her retiring as a first responder. It required use of technology that she flatly refused to learn. She just about coped with a cordless phone but a mobile,

computer or even an ipad or anything to do with the internet or email was just ignored. She would smile and say she would try and then would resist any further suggestions. She could be very stubborn!

Libby was a member of the MWPA from its beginning. For many years it seemed as though the village was run by her and Bill Smart, and then a more formal committee was set up. She soon became treasurer; a position she occupied until the very end. For everyone who was ever on the Progress Association she was a source of wise advice, understanding the politics of the village and the history behind so many past decisions. For example she and Bill (and others) decided that when the power lines were expanded they were placed along the various unmade roads where they could reach every property be largely out of the way and the trees of The Avenue would be saved from desecration. She knew where all the unmade roads ran. One of her real regrets was the failure to get the power lines either bundled or put underground to save the true shape of golden elms on Mt Irvine Road. It was Libby who helped to negotiated with the BMCC so that we could use local contractors and decide our own priorities about what work to be done when.

Libby was a member of the Historic Society; she had been a member of the CWA and continued to be at lunch for Ladies Day whenever she could. Libby was church warden for St Georges Church where she was a regular monthly worshipper at the Sunday service, on the other Sundays she went to Mt Victoria. She guarded the allocation of the grave sites with determination, as I found out when she allowed a position of a memorial stone for my mother. Libby set up the Bush Care program at Mt Wilson, and recently while working at Sloane Reserve

IN MEMORIAM: LIBBY RAINES cont.

she showed the rest of the group how to wield a shovel. In 2013 Libby was recognised as a bush care volunteer of legendary status and was awarded the 'Golden Trowel' of recognition.

Graham Tribe described her, correctly, as the 'conscience of the mountain community', and you were not very sensible if you did not listen to her. For all her work as mentioned above she was awarded an OAM in 2006 for 'service to the community of Mount Wilson, particularly through a range of environmental, horticultural, civic and church activities'. It was not all work though. For many years Libby ran the New Year's Eve party with Cecil Kirk playing the squeezebox and Elsa Armitage calling the dances – Libby loved to dance.

In the mean time she organised the appropriate trees for the avenues and verges in the village, she counselled and consoled the community, she was part of the choir for the 11 November Remembrance Day, she contributed a wreath for that day and for ANZAC day to put on the Memorial. She made her famous cake for the bush walking group and the Bush Care meetings, delicious egg sandwiches for any meeting or gathering, marmalade for the Hamlin fistula hospital in Ethiopia; and she painted her delicate, precise water colours of the flowers and plants in her garden. Ray Harrington recalled that when she started coming to his studio, for a painting group which evolved into more formal classes, Libby knew very little but over the years she showed 'incredible improvement' working very hard and not distracted until the coffee break and then the finishing time. Painting was something that she seemed to do primarily just for herself, a rare event in her life. And threaded through all of this was her love for her family and her joy in her grandchildren.

Libby's immense local knowledge, gained through

endless walks and a fantastic memory for place, was an essential tool for many of the rescues over many years. Police and ambulance officers respected and called on her knowledge of the gorges, creeks, slopes and cliffs, and access points and tracks. This was partnered by her deep understanding of the natural world. I remember her picking up a long branch and showing us the little furled back pieces of bark all over it – this was where the cicadas had laid their eggs. Similarly she delighted in the birds in her garden, especially the golden oriole which took up residence for a couple of years. All this was, for her, an intrinsic and essential part of living on Mt Wilson.

Libby fitted all this in by getting up very early, writing letters both personal or for one of the organisations with which she was involved – if you wrote a letter to Libby you always got a reply, perhaps doing a bit of painting, then going for a walk through the village – bringing in our garbo bins if she went around our block – then back home for a cup of tea and into the garden; and still finding time for all the meetings and discussions, and for chatting to her friends and the many visitors who came to the garden again and again.

She layered more into her life than 10 people altogether. We are so lucky to have reminders in our own gardens, owning one (or more) of her paintings, having received one of her wonderful chatty letters which always talked about Mt Wilson and the trees and plants of her garden, being reminded of some historic event or a person long gone and being able to collectively hold vivid and personal memories of conversations, shared walks, and her sheer pleasure in our lovely mountain – her refuge, sanctuary and most special place in her heart and imagination.

- Alison Halliday

ODE TO LIBBY

.....

In May nineteen ninety - an idea came to mind
Which Libby and Mary were to push
For walks each month- for those inclined
To don boots - explore the bush

Seventeen gathered - with dogs and a billy
For that initial walk had been slated
Skies were cloudy - the wind was chilly
But they reached the Pavements Tessellated

And so it began - this magnificent obsession
The pattern would hardly vary
Each month saw Libby - lead a happy procession
The event written up by Mary

Libby has led us - through forest and heath
Into canyons as cold as as the fridge
Had us swinging from ropes - lookout beneath!
Through valley, on mountain, along ridge

In Blue Gum Forest - we've seen goannas scowl
Above the Butterbox - watched eagles soar
We've seen swimming snakes - a powerful owl
Heard bellbirds tinkle - wild rivers roar

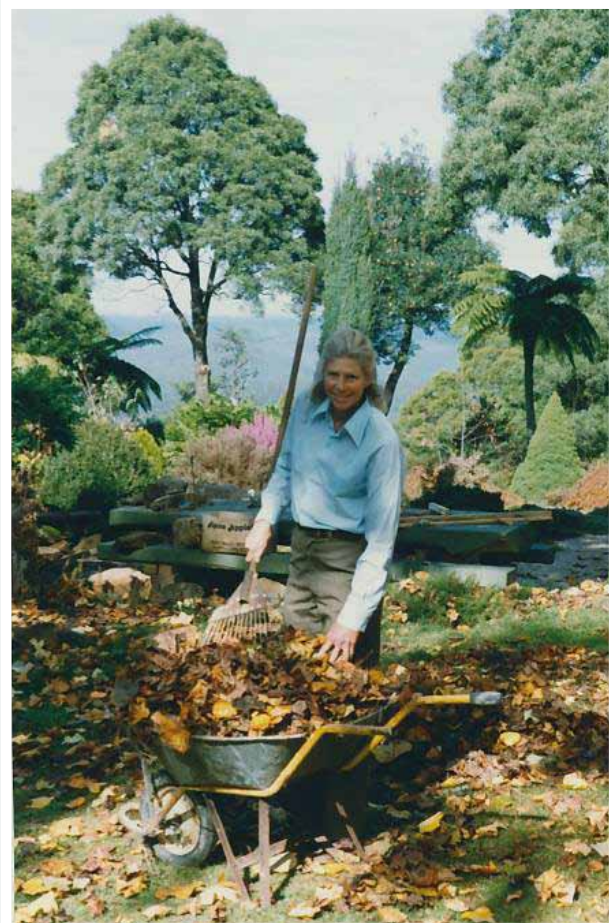
On one winter morn - as we climbed Mount Bindo
Footprints were all that we left
On the pristine expanses - of freshly laid snow
Libby's planning was so very deft

From modest beginnings - the group has grown
Now coming from far - and from near
Over twenty eight years - the seed has been sown
A love of the bush - to endear

Libby has taken us - some wondrous places
Our lives being enriched by so much
We have gained such a lot - met many new faces
She has such a wide reaching touch

MerryGarth - the place where she lived
The name means Blessed Enclosure
For everything that this lady giveth
Blessed are all that knew her

- John Cardy for the Bushwalking Group



AROUND THE MOUNTS

CLEARING AT THE ZIG ZAG

Clearing weed trees that threaten the zig zag earth bank at the end of Mt Wilson Road in May was a team of BMCC weed control workers. With traffic delayed a little, the men abseiled down the embankment both cutting the intruders and finishing them off with a squirt of glyphosate.

- Richard Beattie



BRIGADE STATS

Since our report in the last edition of The Mounts, there have been:

-  **6 Community First Responder calls**
-  **Clean-up of 1 tree across a road**
-  **Investigated of 2 smoke sightings**
-  **Attendance at 1 motor vehicle accident**
-  **Participation in 1 Hazard Reduction at Bulls Camp**
(and several instances where our crews were all ready to go and help out in Hazard Reductions elsewhere which were then called off due to adverse conditions)

So, now you know what the folks in yellow have been doing.

- Elizabeth Montano, on behalf of Mt Wilson/ Mt Irvine RF Brigade

150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE SURVEYING OF MT WILSON – NOV 24

Plans are underway for a cocktail party in the stunning gardens of Dennarque on Saturday, November 24, 2018 to celebrate this milestone in the history of Mt Wilson. Invitations will follow later this year. Please mark the date in your diary!

Contributions of cases of wine and champagne for the celebration are being accepted. Please contact Nancy Fox on 0411-251-743 or 4756-2106 for the selections required.

- Nancy Fox

BOWENS CREEK FIRE TRAIL UPDATE

THIS IS AN UPDATE ON BEHALF OF THE MT WILSON/ MT IRVINE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE AS LEAD COMMUNITY ORGANISATION ON THIS ISSUE.

You will recall from our last update, that favourable Motions in respect of the route have been passed by both BMCC and Hawkesbury City Council, the HCC Motion being passed at its meeting on 8 May.

HCC has now engaged a consultant to undertake the feasibility study. To facilitate consultation with emergency services, we have provided contact details for NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Police Rescue as well as RFS District Office and our Brigade.

We will continue to monitor the consultant's work to ensure that consultation is thorough and receives appropriate and timely input. Having had a very slow start, the study is now expected to be concluded by the end of June.

The study will look at the technical feasibility and engineering requirements to restore the route to fire trail standard. And, importantly, it will provide a general costing.

Once that is done, the next phase of the campaign starts - seeking Federal and State funding for the restoration works themselves. We will be looking for opportunities in the next Federal and State election campaigns.

- This is a project which is all about essential emergency services infrastructure and community safety. We acknowledge the bipartisan support we have received from a number of elected officials - from Susan Templeman, our Member for Macquarie (which Electorate spans all of the route) and before her Louise Markus the former Federal member, Senator Marise Payne (who has informal

responsibility for Western Sydney Matters), BMCC Councillors Don McGregor, Kerry Brown (who sponsored the last BMCC Motion on the subject), Kevin Schreiber and Mayor Mark Greenhill, who has been very responsive. Also, from HCC Councillors Sarah Richards (who moved the recent HCC Motion), Paul Rasmussen (who supported the last Motion put to HCC and has been a consistent supporter), Danielle Wheeler, Peter Reynolds, Nathan Zamprogno and others. In particular, the Mayor of HCC Mary Lyons-Buckett.

- It's also been very good to have the support of District Office. David Jones and I have spoken about this several times and he is supportive of the route being restored. In recent work to classify all fire trails in NSW according to their significance, this route has been classified on the Blue Mountains side as being of "tactical" significance. That's good but David Jones has advised that, if this route is restored providing access between Mt Irvine and Bilpin, he believes it should be reclassified as "strategic", which means it would attract higher priority for ongoing maintenance works.
- This was never going to be an easy campaign or a short one - we are dealing with a route which spans two local government areas, two State Electorates but, luckily, only one Federal electorate> Further, while it has been maintained on the BMCC side it has been the subject of significant neglect on the HCC side for many years.
- We remain optimistic, persistent and focussed.

*- Elizabeth Montano
Executive Committee Member
Mt Wilson/ Mt Irvine RF Brigade*

FUR AND FEATHER RESIDENTS OF THE MOUNTS : WALDO THE GUIDE DOG

We got our first guide dog puppy about ten years ago. We had always had two dogs, getting the younger one when the older was about 5 or 6 years old. Our lovely brown Labrador, Bim, was about that age and rather than get another pup of our own we decided to see how we would go with rearing a guide dog pup. This first one was a cross between a Labrador and a Golden Retriever and he was called Matey. He was a clever and willing pup and is still with his blind owner. He goes swimming with her and has even been caving!

The pup comes already named and arrives to us at about 8 weeks old. They are of course always very appealing but for ten years we have had almost no grass in Sydney and the plants undergo regular pruning and re-planting. We could take on a pup because I had shifted from working away from home to mainly working at home. We have to do most of the basic training that you would do with any dog - teaching them manners and exposing them to lots of new experiences. They learn to sit, stand, lie, stay, go to bed and even urinate on command! It all takes time and little but often is the rule. We meet with a trainer once a week until the pup is four months old and then fortnightly until they leave us at between a year and 14 months. Luckily Labradors are relatively easy to train as they will do anything for food.

However each dog is different, we have had one that was scared of music, another that wanted to chase after joggers, but they all love their older dog companion, and us. In our house they have also had to get used to living with the resident cat, who is always the boss.

Since we started we have had two new dogs of our own, the lovely Joe who sadly died too early and now Curly. In this time we have cared for eight



pups, the present one is called Waldo, that is not so bad as we have had far worse names. With only one exception we have always had male dogs, and they have all been pure bred Labradors. Guide dogs used to come from independent breeders but for the past few years they have had their own breeding programme, hoping to improve their success rate.

People always ask how we can give them up, and we say it is hard but they go on to have a wonderful working life, and when they retire they can lie in the sun. The best Guide Dogs continue to learn throughout their working lives as the needs of their owner may change. One of them had to learn how to negotiate hospitals as his owner got very sick soon after getting him. There are experienced local trainers throughout the state who help both dog and owner to cope with what is required. Guide Dogs are legally allowed to go anywhere but not the pups, they are bound by the same rules as any dog.

Waldo is now five months old, and his feet are continuing to grow - he is going to be a big boy. He is doing well in his training and we are now focusing on him learning to be steady and patient. In the meantime he plays chasing and tugging games with Curly, eats everything from gravel to wombat droppings and snores when he sleeps. We will probably get another puppy when Waldo goes into his serious training, it is a lot of fun!

- Alison Halliday

AROUND THE MOUNTS

SEARCH SELL AND SHARE

ALPACA WOOL TO GIVE AWAY

Jules Park at Mt Irvine is home to six alpacas. Two are white, two are tan and two are black. Each year they are sheared of their woolly coats and we store it in bags in our shed. Are there any spinners, weavers or knitters in the community who could use this wool? If so you are most welcome to contact us and take it away. Remember, it is raw wool that need cleaning prior to use.

Please contact Brian or Carol Carrigan on 0418294968 anytime.

TURN AUTUMN LEAVES INTO BEAUTIFUL GARDEN MULCH with a Granberg Garden Goat

Was \$1,319 now \$320

Mulcher and Briggs & Stratton engine
Manuals come with the Goat

Richard Beattie 4756 2070
landrbeattie@bigpond.com



WHATS ON JUN / JULY

PENRITH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OPERA GALA

Dynamic young soloists Joshua Oxley and Anna McDougall join the PSO for an evening of opera classics and Broadway highlights.

Saturday 28th July 8pm
Joan Sutherland Performing
Arts Centre
597 High Street Penrith

Phone (02) 4723 7600 for
tickets

OBERON COMMUNITY AND FARMERS MARKET

Sat 04 Aug 2018

Monthly on the 1st Saturday

Come out to the markets at the Oberon Showgrounds on the first Saturday of every month and soak up the friendly community atmosphere.

With nearly 50 stalls, the markets offer the perfect opportunity to wander, find, learn and buy local

Oberon Showground, Ross
Street, Oberon

MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Committee News



Autumn eventually arrived, and then almost immediately winter came. Surprisingly the colour was brilliant on many of the usual suspects, including the liquid ambers along the road near the camp ground.

Our whole community has been greatly saddened by the death of Libby Raines. We will all remember her in many different ways. She was, among so many other community involvements, an absolute stalwart of the MWPA. She acted as treasurer for many years but, just as importantly, she was a fund of local knowledge, historical information, understanding of the cycles of mountain seasons, local customs and sheer good common sense. I am sure we can all wander through our own gardens and see growing memorials to her.

We are fortunate to have Robbie Feyder to take over as treasurer, an appointment approved by Libby, and I know he will follow her exacting standards and her deep concerns for all matters to do with the welfare of the mountain and for the people who live here.

Our contact with BMCC has been on leave so there is no further information about the forthcoming

contract for maintenance of the mountain. We have seen and commented on a draft and await the response of the Council.

- Alison Halliday





MOUNT WILSON AND MOUNT IRVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Recent Events and Comments

While I am sure full recognition will be given elsewhere to the loss of Libby Raines from the Mt Wilson Community and beyond, as a close friend of Libby's for many years may I state simply that she was a devoted and generous member of our Society from its foundation in the 1990s. Her depth of knowledge of Mt Wilson and its history was always there to encourage and support the Society in its early days. She gathered around us enthusiasm and delight in the beginnings of the establishment of the Turkish Bath Museum providing much encouragement to Bill and Jane Smart of 'Wynstay' in their dream of a community project centred around the Museum. Her loss to us cannot be ever measured for Libby was always there to advise and chat and bring wisdom to every debate of which there were many over the past 20 years or more.

She will be ever forever remembered as a charming, loving and thoughtful person, a beacon of light in the garden of Merry Garth, along the lanes and Avenues of Mt Wilson and in our Australian Bushland.

Last Sunday our interim committee met at the Turkish Bath Museum a very chilly day. Its purpose was to

discuss how the Society could be affected by the outcome of the heritage Application for the Study Centre due after July 1st 2018 and what would be the future of the Society! The latter a critical issue!

The Archives: The general feeling was that the archives should stay in Mt Wilson if at all possible.

If the grant was successful it was possible that the archives could be moved eventually into a small area in the cottage where there would be a display. Work on the Centre had to be completed by 30th April 2019.

If the grant was not successful, what were the options? Moving the archives to the State Library had its limitations. The Museum Advisor from the BMCC recently informed Des Barrett that only fully catalogued items would be accepted by the Library.

Was it possible to store archives in the basement of the Turkish Bath Museum as an alternative site? Much work would be required to make that option possible.

It was generally agreed that the Society should continue to try to function in spite of the lack of current support.

Strictly speaking the present committee did not satisfy legal conditions as there was no Executive.

Some felt that the committee should approach the Mt Wilson Progress Association to undertake discussions on the future of the Society. Another suggestion was that the committee function as a group of Volunteers for the present.

Turkish Bath Roster had been difficult to operate this Autumn. Apart from those present there were only 3 other members who offered their services in April-May.

Finances: Expenditure: It was noted that Insurance and Electricity cost \$2,500 per annum. The only Income coming from opening the Museum.

Maintenance: The committee was most appreciative of the offer through Wendy Smart for her partner Keith to clean the gutters of the Museum.

Painting of the gutters and windows etc on the northern side of the Museum could cost \$2000.00 unless another quote comes from Bruce Braybrooke.

Finally it was agreed that in Mid July, following the result of the Heritage Application a letter would be sent to all members explaining the present difficulties of the Society and asking members to undertake some responsibility in aiding the Society. Enclosed would be a renewal of membership form for 2019.

The publication of a newsletter this year is uncertain. An approach would be made to the Mt Wilson Progress Association for further discussions.

The Turkish Bath Museum will be closed in June, July, August. Open in September – October: Closed in November- December 2018. Open in Mid-march April- May 2019. Groups to visit are always welcome. See the website.

Finally Malcolm G. Reynolds agreed to be Chairman: John Braybrooke Secretary: Milba Kirk Treasurer: Members of the Committee are Helen Freeman, Des Barrett, Zaharah Braybrooke Mary Reynolds.

- Mary Reynolds on behalf of the Interim Management Committee.

THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON

Happy Valley Track



Once again the walking track notes are from the walks of Mount Wilson booklet written by Libby Raines. The Happy Valley track was an important track to Libby and she and Keith really enjoyed this very special place.

The Happy Valley track was initially put in by the Kirks but by the early 70's had become very overgrown and hard to find. As alluded to at Libby's memorial service Libby and Keith cleared and reopened the track prior to getting married in 1972. Peter Raines cleared the top section of the track and installed new steps and ladder ways / signage as part of an upgrade for the MWPA, on behalf of BMCC in 1997/98.

Walk Signage Colour: Orange

Length: Happy Valley return 2km (Cathedral Creek add 600 m)

Elevation Change: 180 m

Time: 90 minutes

Grade: Medium

Starting point: Happy Valley Picnic Area (and Car Park) 1.2 km after past Cathedral of Ferns heading towards Mt Irvine.

Walking conditions:

- Steep Track to Happy Valley.
- Slippery when wet.
- Easy walk to Cathedral Creek

Highlights:

- Lovely walk into the rainforest.
- Beautiful spots to enjoy at the creek.

THE WALKS OF MOUNT WILSON



Park at the Happy Valley Picnic Area on the left hand side of Mt Irvine Road 1.2 km after Cathedral of Ferns heading to Mt Irvine. Take care when crossing the road to the start of the track.

This is a special place, but it is a very steep track to get there. Opposite the Happy Valley picnic area there is a track leading into the valley. You quickly enter the rainforest where the tall straight trunks of the towering coachwood are a grand sight. After about 5 minutes walk the track divides. The track to the left goes to Happy Valley and the track to the right goes to Cathedral Creek. Walkers should aim to walk both tracks. The Cathedral Creek track is a much easier track for those wanting a less demanding walk.

Happy Valley (left hand track)

This is a well made track, but not much used. It winds down to the Waterfall Creek, passing through some wonderful rainforest and massive moss covered rocks. Although the track is well marked there are places where the route is not that obvious. It gets quite steep at the bottom and quite slippery so care must be taken.

Once near the stream you will see a small waterfall which falls into a pond on your left. One can get down to this by crossing the stream directly above the fall. You will find little foot notches carved into the rock and you can clamber along the rock shelf and jump onto the rocks below. The pool is lovely for a quick cool dip on a hot day. It is a good walk for summer and is a lovely secret place, well worth the effort of getting there.

Cathedral Creek (right hand track)

The right hand track also continues through the beautiful rainforest to the little creek that runs down from Cathedral Reserve and is well worth the additional effort. Although the creek is often dry here, huge tree ferns grow and this is another lovely quiet place.

Cayleys Haycock Fire trail

The Cayleys Haycock fire trail heads from the Happy Valley picnic area. This is a lovely short walk with great views over the escarpment. It also provided access to the Boronia Point walk for those feeling energetic.

- Robbie Feyder



SNAPSHOTS AROUND THE AREA

Photos taken by residents

Photos: Autumn Maples and Weeping Cherries in Jules Park garden by Carol Carrigan, Autumn chestnuts at Hollyridge by Joe Montano and Ice on the lake at Culverden by David Howell

THE PATCH

Spiced Lentil Soup

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Cavolo Nero is a delicious Italian variety of kale. It is also known as 'nero di Toscana' and the English translation of 'black cabbage of Tuscany' or 'Tuscan kale'. It is often hard to find in the shops and can sometimes be a bit expensive compared to regular kale, so generally we find it easier to grow it at home.

We plant our seedlings in the ground in late Feb / early March in a sunny spot in soil rich with organic matter. Most varieties of kale like regular water so it is wise to water them frequently as the leaves can be a bit woody otherwise.

We start to harvest our leaves from mid winter (often being able to harvest through to mid summer) and use this veg in a variety of soups and stews.

The recipe below belongs to my Mum and Dad and is a real favourite of ours during the winter months. You can vary the quantity of the spices to suit your personal taste.

- Jess Delbridge



INGREDIENTS

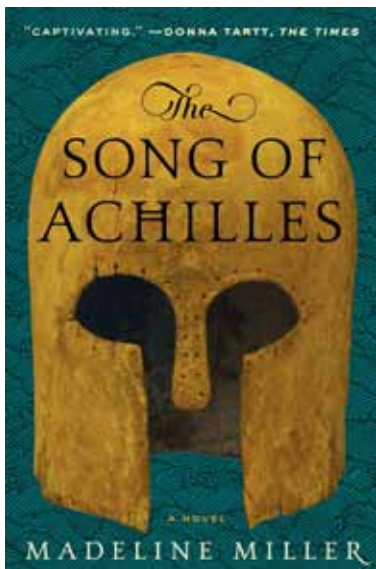
- 2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion diced
- 1 carrot diced
- 1 celery stalk diced
- 4 garlic cloves chopped
- 2 tsp each ground cumin, smoked paprika and ground coriander
- 1.5 tsp fresh turmeric grated
- 1.5 tsp fresh ginger grated
- 2 tbs tomato paste
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 2 x 400g cans lentils, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups veg or chicken stock
- 1/2 bunch cavolo nero or kale stalks removed chopped
- Thick greek yoghurt to serve (optional)

METHOD

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook onion, carrot and celery stirring for 3-4mins until softened. Add garlic, spices and tomato paste and cook, stirring for 2-3mins until fragrant. Add tomato, lentils, stock and 3 cups of water. Bring to a simmer, then cook for 6-8 mins for flavours to infuse. Stir in kale and cook for a further 1-2 minutes until kale is wilted. Remove from heat and divide soup among bowls. Top with yoghurt to serve.

THE SONG OF ACHILLES

by Madeleine Miller



The story of Achilles and the destruction of Troy is a familiar one. With its origin in Homer's epic poem *The Iliad*, the basic story is a saga steeped in blood, destruction and hubris- what happens when someone challenges their god bestowed fate. Achilles is both god and mortal and seems to belong in neither the heavens nor on earth.

Madeleine Miller's novel *The Song of Achilles* is a retelling of this traditional story which takes alternative perspectives on many of the characters. Achilles's mother Thetis is a sea nymph, and Miller makes her full of frustrated ambitions and dramatic power. She yearns for her son to relinquish his mortality and join her under the sea and so avoid his fate to kill Hector and die soon after. Achilles's life long companion is the prince Patroclus who was exiled as a boy after an accidental killing. In Homer we learn little of Patroclus but here he is the primary focus as it is through his eyes and his emotions that we see the inevitable tragedy unfold. Patroclus is not a natural fighter, he is the opposite to Achilles who is recognised by all as the greatest Greek warrior. During the Trojan war Patroclus hones his medical skills and comes to know most of the Greek army; he is kind, generous and non judgemental. Achilles and he share a deep love which began in their shared boyhoods but while Achilles grows in fame and his skill with his weapons, Patroclus is content to play a lesser role.

Miller is equally interested in developing the lives of several of the women, key players in the course of the action but rarely given any personal force. So we see the full reason behind the sacrifice of Iphigenia, we come to understand the ambiguous role of women taken as booty, and there are even brief acknowledgements of the wives left behind.

One of the difficulties of the story is to explain in credible terms the reason why Achilles refuses to fight against the Trojans in the last years of the war. Miller explores the nature of honour and pride and how dangerous it is to try to out think one's ordained fate. Here we see Achilles, cornered by the ruthless and pragmatic brutality of Agamemnon, choosing his own honour over the need to follow the ethical course of action as suggested by Patroclus. Ironically, in so doing we see Achilles become more human, both confused and adamant in his choices. Of course it all ends badly, as it must.

Miller has shaped a gripping retelling, giving definite personalities to many of the very minor players, and she brilliantly evokes the tedium and horror of war.

- Alison Halliday

ATN*

The column formerly known as “Ask the Neighbours”

This creative writing caper is such a drain on one's artistic reserves, Jess. So, I've decided to get a room full of adolescents fuelled by junk food and e-games to write the next episode. They'll giggle, josh about and generally have a ball while capturing the spirit of youthful exuberance required for innovative small screen entertainment.

And, with those secret cameras filming their every creative exchange, they'll also provide all the footage I need for the inevitable spin off show where we cash in on every piece of the production process. I've given it the working title 'Murderous Mounts: ATN – A Space Epic: in the writing room'. Catchy title isn't it? But I'm getting ahead of myself.

By hiring some jobbing writers, I can concentrate on the next piece of the gigantic jigsaw puzzle which is the creation of a hit streaming service science fiction/drama/rom com epic.

Yes, Jess. I've taken personal charge of all the special effects. Picture it: our personality – laden

little spacecraft there in outer space. It's deep in the cold, cold emptiness, the utter silence, the wind whistling past it....What's that Jess? No wind in space? Don't be ridiculous. What do you think kept the US flag flying on the Moon? The wind, of course. Everyone knows that. Although, that reminds me to order more picture wire for the dramatic ending to the next episode.

It's been a few episodes since we started serious character development, Jess, but already we've got characters the critics have labelled 'unbelievable'. Isn't that amazing, Jess?

Well, in this episode the cliff-hanger ending (bound to make the viewers keep binge watching), our brilliant, if rhythmically challenged, Captain undertakes a space walk to repair the outer hull.

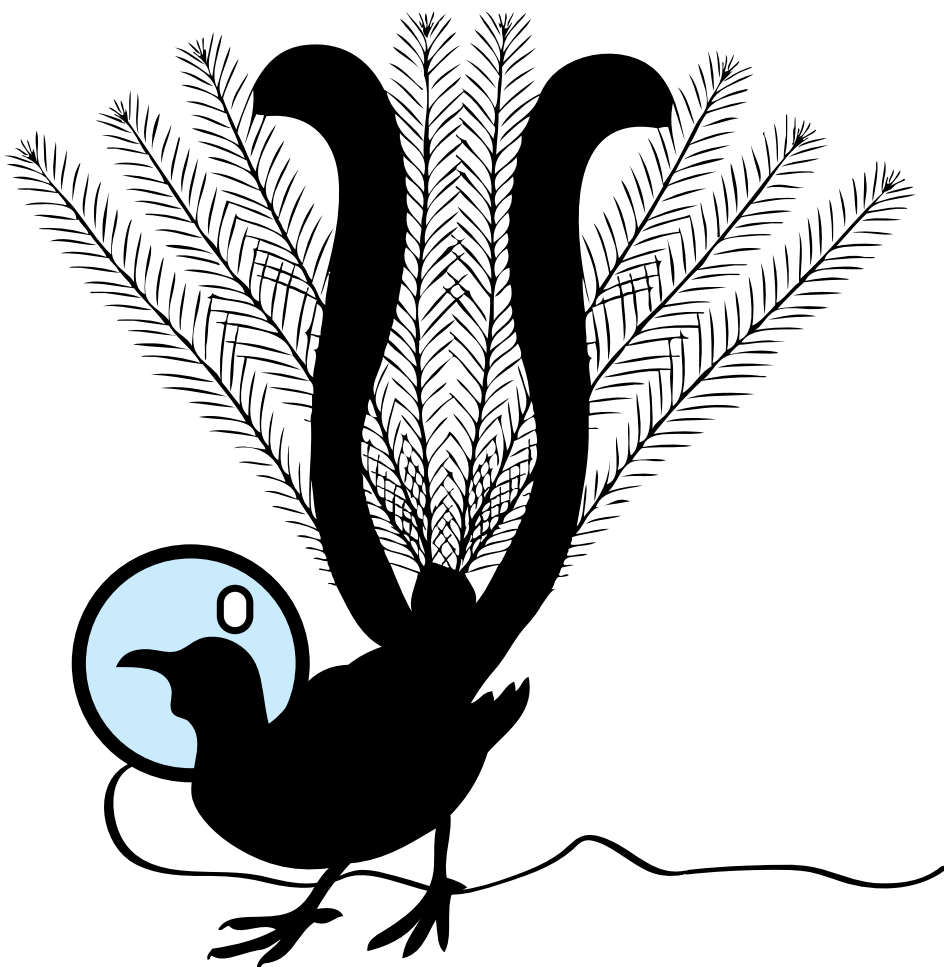
Having been called to rescue the ship from certain destruction while he was in the ballroom having one more Salsa practice before the Dance Comp - but with no time to change - we see him bravely crawling along the ship's sleek and shiny shell: his frilled shirt, bolero top and skin tight dance pants his only protection against the gamma radiation emitted by the giant space leech now menacing the ship.

Well, they're not his only protection – he is encased

in a new experimental bubble suit invented by the highly talented, if socially inept, science officer we introduced in Episode 3. It's a pity really, but I think he'll be meeting a tragic end rather soon. Well, he will if he keeps pinching all the blueberry muffins from the catering van. The cheek of some bit players. They get a good review or two and next thing you know....the muffins are all gone and the green tea is in short supply. But I digress.

The thing is, Jess - CGI costs serious moolah. And well, the budget just won't take it. All those Salsa lessons, frilled shirts and not to mention blowouts in the catering have put a huge dent in the cost projections. So, I've decided to design and build all the props myself. Why not? Did a lack of any cinematographic talent, realistic models or the visible puppet strings stop the Thunderbirds? No they didn't, Jess. And everyone knows - Thunderbirds are Go. So, I'm off to the Shed to finish a life size model of 'The Intergalactic Lyrebird'.

Yes, Jess. You guessed it. We finally have a name for our highly advanced yet homely little spacecraft



which carries the hopes and dreams of humankind (not to mention the biggest gravity defying ballroom in the galaxy) in its lonely journey through the cosmos. After a (not so) near avalanche of suggestions from our Dear Readers, we have a winner. 'The Intergalactic Lyrebird' (or 'that &*&@# bird who keeps on digging up the lawn' as we affectionately call it) has been christened and, like its namesake, is poised to wreak havoc on all before it. It will plunder. It will destroy. And then, miraculously, it will disappear into the great forests of stars at the bottom of the garden, only to reappear in six months' time - after the new lawn seed has taken hold.

- Elizabeth M

"Real SPACE Crime" Editor

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