

# The Mounts Summer 2022/3

## Community Newsletter of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine



Those involved in the Remembrance Day service on 11 November 2022, left to right Celia Kearin (cornet), Ted Griffiths (Flute), Vic Zhukov (former service member), Richard Prentice (former service member and community wreath layer), Tim McIver (Minster), Alex Halliday (flag wrangler) (see article)

### EDITORIAL

Summer drags us into the new year. This year we have almost floated into 2023 with seemingly constant rain. Gardens are either growing enthusiastically or drowning, and sometimes both. Frogs have replaced cicadas and fires seem a long way off. Our thoughts go out to all those who have experienced flood devastation, suffering from loss of stock, crops, homes and business. Many people are discovering what we already know – community is vital to our well-being.

We wish all our readers a safe, happy and restful Christmas and new year. We would especially like to thank those who contribute issue after issue to The Mounts with articles, news and photos. It is wonderful to have so many contributors.

Alison and Matilda Halliday

# MWPA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The MWPA held its AGM in October and I thank you all for your attendance. The current committee ran unopposed, so your members are James Douglas (Vice President), Susan Woolfenden (Secretary), Robbie Feyder (Treasurer), Janet MacDonald, Matt Mason, Peter Raines, Bruce Downton and Nancy Fox as President. If you have any issues or concerns about Mt Wilson, please see any of your committee members.

We have a big weekend planned for December 3rd with the annual MWPA Community Christmas picnic at Silva Plana beginning at 12.30. Please bring your chairs, food and drinks. I hear Santa Claus might even be paying a visit...so remember to RSVP for any children who will be attending.

But the day begins at 11am with our celebration of the Mt Wilson Heritage Tree Planting Project in Honour of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. A British morning tea the Queen would have enjoyed will be held at the Village Hall and we hope to have the official plaque in time to be laid at Marcus Clarke Reserve. Please RSVP to help us manage catering.

The committee continues to advocate for the village to all levels of government. Matt Mason, as our BMCC liaison, has regular meetings with council representatives. A submission was made regarding the draft plan of management for Crown Reserves in Mt Wilson. Members of the committee are attending a Western Sydney Airport stakeholder briefing on the 5th December.

The MWPA will be having a strategy session on December 2nd to plot out our priorities for the next few years. We have a very busy and active team so if you have any suggestions, please pass them on to one of the committee members.

Stay well and enjoy the holiday season.

Nancy Fox



## CONGRATULATIONS TO FIONA CARRUTHERS

In October Fiona was awarded Most Outstanding Consumer Travel Journalist for 2022 at the National Travel Industry Awards in recognition of her coverage of issues faced by travellers and the wider industry over the last two years.

Image © Event Photos Australia

## MT WILSON CHRISTMAS IN YEARS GONE BY

One Christmas in the late 70s or early 80s two flatbed trucks were set up with a piano or organ on the back of one, hay bales to sit on, piled with families from around the village singing Christmas carols driving around the village to various properties. The only snippet I can remember was driving around the driveway at Dennarque. I think Ron Gunn was driving Bill Smart's truck and Alan Gunn driving his truck, as a fundraiser for the church.



Each year mum would take us three kids to sing Christmas carols on Christmas Eve, we would polish and fuel a set of old kerosene lanterns and walk around the village - down Waterfall Road and across the bridge to Queens Avenue, we would visit:

- Fred and Hanny Huber at Windyridge (Fred represented Switzerland in Gymnastics at the Olympics, before immigrating to Australia, Fred came to Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine working on Bowens Creek Road during the great depression, which was a public works project to create employment.);
- Peter and Johnnie Kirk at Milparra (Opposite the War Memorial) - Peter and his younger brother Tom were timber cutters and world championship axemen;
- Miss Marjorie Sloan at Bebeah;
- Mrs Valder at Nooroo; and
- Bill and Jane Smart at Wynstay.

Peter Raines

Peter's recollections inspired a dive into the National Library of Australia's wonderful [Trove site](#) where the below mention was found in the Blue Mountains Echo on 10 January 1919 recalling Christmas 1918.

## MOUNT WILSON.

At Christmas tide, Mrs. E. E. Brown, of "Beowong," presented the school children with a Christmas tree, containing a present for each child, also the parents. The tree was tastefully decorated by Miss Gearin, Mrs. and Miss Nison, Mrs. Bunting, Miss Woods and Mr. J. Joshua. Mr. Knight Brown, of "Campanella," acted as Santa Claus, and presented the presents, aided by Miss M. Gearin (teacher) and Mr. J. Hartley. The presentation was followed by hearty cheers for Mrs. Brown, Santa, and the committee, after which games and refreshments filled in the hours till sunset. In the evening, the adults were entertained at a dance, the day proving a real festive one—a credit to the generous donor and all who assisted.

## **THE WEEK'S MOTTO:**

*"Goodwill to Men."*

## **IDEAL HOLIDAY RESORTS**

### **WHERE GEMS SPEND CHRISTMAS**

#### **At Mount Wilson**

There is not a prettier spot in N.S.W. than Mt. Wilson, which is 10 mile from Bell railway station. A good road takes you through typical mountain scenery to the Zig Zag, and in a little while you are on the summit of Mount Wilson. There are no shops and no crowd of tourists. Just a collection of gentlemen's residences nestling among flower gardens and green lawns. The best flowers and tree-ferns on the mountains grow there, while the now famous English nut tree avenue that shades the road through the settlement is a sight in itself. From Wynne's Lookout a glorious view of miles and miles of green gullies and grey hills may be had, for, from this spot the lights of Sydney can be seen at night. There was a boarding house there last Summer, so if anybody wishes to spend a restful Summer holiday, they will be able to do it on beautiful Mount Wilson.

Card winner: **HARRY THOMAS**, 13 Mount-street, Arncliffe.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY TALK, 2022 – ALEC GEORGE TUSON

Many families claim or assume is that a family member who went to WWI went to Gallipoli, or that they joined the Light Horse. Sometimes this turns into a reality. You may remember Arthur Delbridge talking about Edwin Hatswell in 2006, because he was part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Light Horse and served also at Gallipoli. On the War Memorial you may have noticed several repeats of a name. One of these pairings are those of AG Tuson and H Tuson. Today I want to talk about Alec George Tuson; he too was part of a Light Horse regiment.

The Tuson family lived in Plymouth, England; where the parents and grandparents are listed in the 1901 census. Alexander James (father of Alec) is not there, presumably he was at sea. The census shows that his wife and three children are living with her parents.

Alec George was born at sea in June 1896, perhaps sailing on The Fort George. These are the details of his birth. I wonder if that is where his middle name came from. His birth was registered at Plymouth, where his family was based. Later, Alec is on the passenger list of the ship Buninyong aged 18 which arrived in Sydney from Geelong in 1914. On that short trip he is described as having been 'born at sea'. There are many puzzles and inconsistencies in the story of the Tuson family. It is all made more complicated by the children being born in England, and despite the family name being rare I have run into many dead-ends in this research.

Source of Information	Name of Ship	Name of <del>Discussed</del> <u>Births</u>	Month
1 LB	Forfarshire	Quans	2
1 LB	Fort George	Tuson	6
LB	Toyle	7 Coolies	6
LB	Forth	3 Coolies	8

The family came to Australia on The Persic. It consisted of Alexander James as father, described as 'mariner', aged 49, his mother, Lilian (nee Smith), aged 35, and three children, Alec, 11, his brother Harry, 14, and sister D[ora] aged 10. She was later also known as Dolly. Alec's parents celebrated their silver wedding anniversary in Sydney having got married in Plymouth, UK, in 1895. A notice was put in the Sydney Morning Herald in 1917. Alexander James Tuson died in August 1951.

In 1913 Alec's father was registered on the Mosman electoral Roll, living at 49 Gerard St Mosman and described as a master mariner. Early on in this research I began wondering what Captain Tuson was doing at Mt Wilson. He was more than a casual visitor because he gives Mt Wilson as his address as does Alec George. The name 'Captain Tuson' is on the list of subscribers who raised 102 pounds to fund the construction of the War Memorial, curiously the

mountain home, Bell, Mt Wilson or Mt Irvine, of all 34 subscribers is shown except for that of Captain Tuson. I can find no other record of his time here.

Alec was 21 when he enlisted into the 20<sup>th</sup> reinforcement of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse (see below left) regiment It in turn formed part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Brigade (see below right). Both insignia had kangaroos, but different mottos. The one for the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse came from that of the Duke of Wellington – not an Australian!

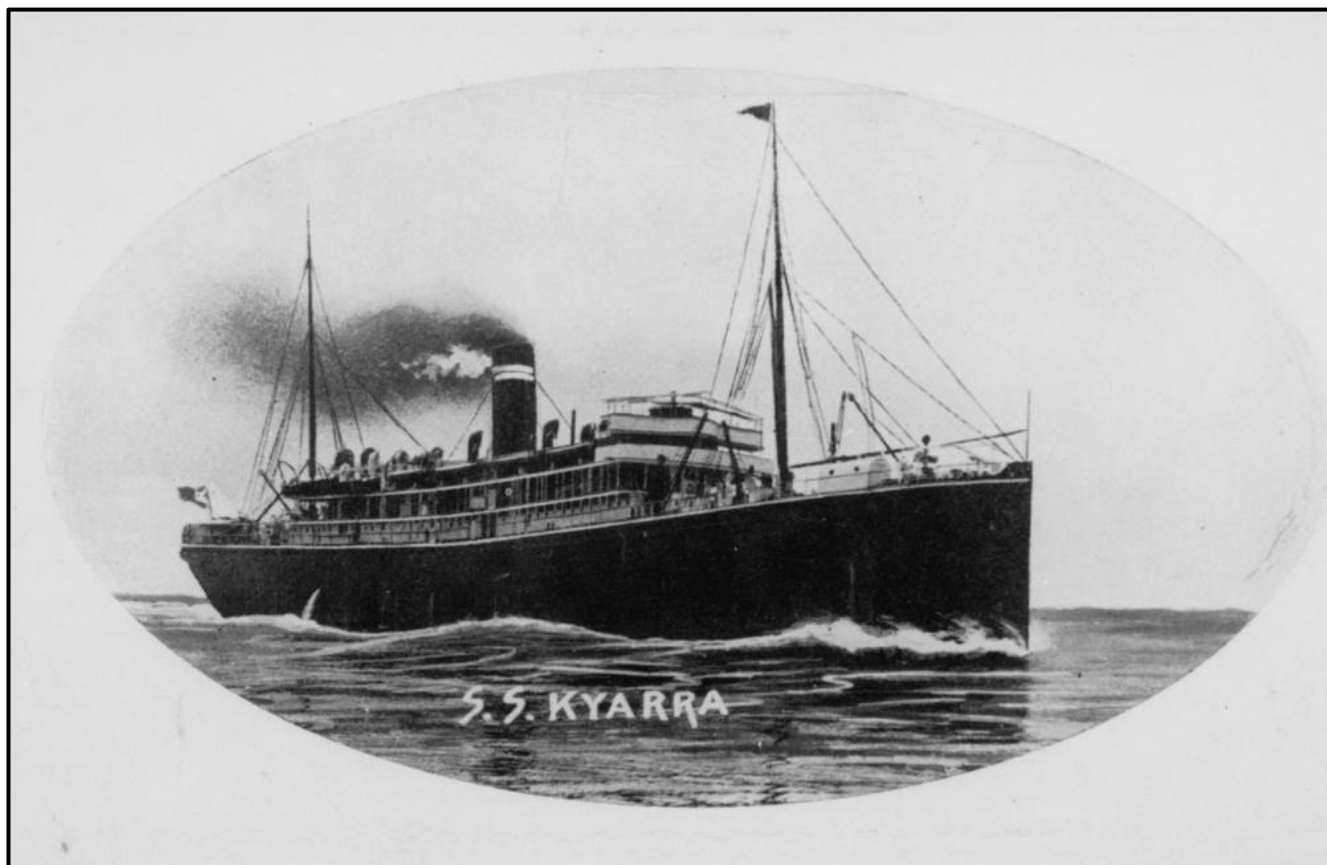


Left, insignia of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse (*Virtus Fortuna Comes* – Fortune is the Companion of Valor), right that of the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse (*Prest D'Accomplir* – Ready to Accomplish)

From his service record we can learn some details about Alec. His next of kin is given as his father, Alexander James Tuson of Mt Wilson via Bell, NSW. Alec was 21 years old, 5 feet 6 inches or 170 centimetres tall, and weighed 134 pounds (9.5 stones), or 60.7 kilos. He was not a big man. He had blue eyes, and light brown hair. He gave Church of England as his religion. His distinctive marks were a scar on his left knee and right elbow and a mole on his chest.

Alec was declared fit for service on 13 April 1917, # 2463 in the Light Horse, and he was allocated to Unit 20 reinforcement in the 12<sup>th</sup> regiment on 23 August 1917. As a new recruit he was given the rank of private, and once given his unit he was a 'trooper' (the Light Horse equivalent rank). He gave his own address as care of YMCA, Pitt St Sydney and on 9 July 1917 he made a will, lodged with his father.

Alec left Sydney on 'Kyarra' (see below) and disembarked in Egypt. The 'Kyarra' had been requisitioned for a hospital ship in November 1914, and painted white with a red cross on her sides, Then in March 1915 she was converted into a troop transport. In May 1918 she was sunk near Swanage, on England's east coast by a German submarine with the loss of six lives.



Alec's service record jumps from December 1917 to June 1919. So, at this stage, I am digressing into the history of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment. I am indebted to the many historians who keep the records of the Light Horse Brigades for the following:

The 12th Light Horse Regiment was raised, as part of the 4th Light Horse Brigade, at Liverpool, New South Wales, on 1 March 1915. It sailed from Australia in two contingents in June 1915. The first contingent put in at Aden on 12 July to reinforce the British garrison there against a predicted enemy attack; they only left their ship for a single route march, and sailed again on 18 July without having seen action.

The regiment was reunited in Egypt on 23 July 1915 and began training as infantry, having been ordered to leave its horses in Australia. The Light Horse were actually mounted soldiers rather than cavalry. A month later it deployed to Gallipoli. The regiment was again split up, to reinforce three light horse regiments already ashore - A Squadron went to the 1st Light Horse Regiment, B Squadron to the 7th, and C Squadron to the 6th. It was not reunited until 22 February 1916, by which time all of the AIF troops from Gallipoli had returned to Egypt.

Returning to its mounted role, the 12th Light Horse joined the forces defending the Suez Canal on 14 May 1916. In ensuing months it conducted patrols and participated in several forays out into the Sinai Desert. In April 1917 the regiment moved into Palestine to join the main British and dominion advance. It joined its first major battle on 19 April when it attacked, dismounted, as part of the ill-fated second battle of Gaza.

With two frontal attacks on Gaza having failed, the next attempt to capture the Turkish bastion was a wide outflanking move via the town of Beersheba, launched on 31 October 1917. A deteriorating tactical situation late on the first day of the operation caused the 12th and its sister regiment, the 4th, to be unleashed on



Beersheba at the gallop - an action which has gone down in military history as the charge of Beersheba.

The famous photo of the charge has an interesting history (copy below). It was first thought to be taken during the charge on Beersheba, probably taken by a Turk whose camera was then captured. Further enquiries revealed that it was probably taken when this brigade was based near Belah, about February 1918, as a representation or re-enactment of the charge for a cinematographer. According to the Australian War Memorial this is now the accepted provenance of the photo. We are probably more used to a still from the film, *Forty Thousand Horsemen* made by Charles Chauvel in 1940.



After Gaza fell on 7 November 1917, Turkish resistance in southern Palestine collapsed. The 12th Light Horse participated in the pursuit that followed, and then spent the first months of 1918 resting and training. (It is possible that it is at this point that Alec, with others of course, would have joined the regiment). It moved into the Jordan Valley in time to participate in the Es Salt raid between 29 April and 4 May. The regiment subsequently manned defences on the west bank of the Jordan.

In August, the regiment was issued with swords and trained in traditional cavalry tactics in preparation for the next offensive against the Turks. This was launched along the Palestine coast on 19 September 1918 - its objective to take Damascus. The mounted forces penetrated deep into the Turkish rear areas severing roads, railways and communications links. The 12th Light Horse was one of the first Australian units to enter Damascus on 2 October 1918. The regiment was soon involved in the next stage of the advance and was on its way to Homs when the Turks surrendered on 30 October.

While awaiting to embark for home, the 12th Light Horse were called back to operational duty to quell the Egyptian revolt that erupted in March 1919; order was restored in little over a month. The regiment sailed for home on 20 July 1919.



During the war, the regiment lost 67 men killed and 401 men wounded. There were also many horses wounded and/ or killed.



On the left, as we look at it, the inscriptions says:

'Erected by the members of the Desert Mounted Corps and their friends to the gallant horses who carried them over Sinai desert into Palestine. 1915-1918.'

On the right it says:

'They suffered wounds, thirst, hunger and weariness almost beyond endurance but never failed. They did not come home. We will never forget them.'

Now to go back to Alec Tuson. After 11 November 1918 he returned to Egypt. On 1 July 1919 it is noted that he was to be employed as an educational instructor. The note in the record is followed by: PB [permanent base] 502990, presumably the number indicates the location.

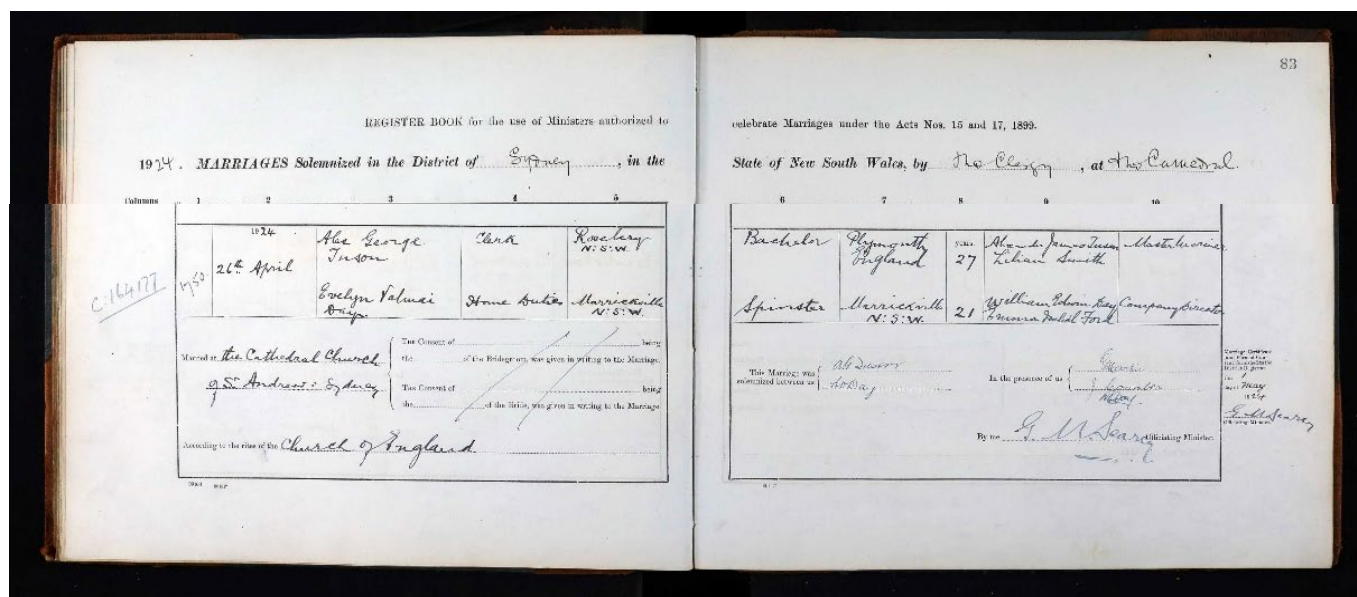
Soon after this he left Egypt 20 July 1919 and disembarked from 'Morvada' 28 August 1919 in Australia, and was discharged one month later on 28 September 1919.

He was awarded the usual service medals: the Star, the British war medal and the Victory medal.

As far as I can find out, he came home and disappeared into life after the war. I can find little about him except in some of the more obvious places. But I will continue to try to find out more.

Alec got married on 26 April 1924 to Evelyn Valmai Day at the Cathedral Church of St Andrews in Sydney, next to the Town Hall (see below copy of register). She was living in Marrickville and

her working role is given as 'home duties'. Alec was working as a clerk and living in Rosebery. Alec was 27 and his new wife was 21. On the wedding certificate his father is described as a 'master mariner', and Evelyn's father is listed as a 'company director'. Alec and Evelyn's son was born on 18 September 1925. At that time, they were living in Lucretia Street Longueville, the house may have been named Valmai. Unfortunately, the birth notice in the SMH does not give the name of their son.



Alec and Evelyn's son was probably called Kenneth George, who was born in 1925, so less than 9 months after the marriage, and this son got married in 1950. If Kenneth is Alec's son he had two children, a son and a daughter. Unfortunately, I have not been able to trace the family and confirm fully that Kenneth is the son of Alec George.

Alec's death is registered in 1980, and Evelyn died in 1981. But as I said before the search continues...come back next year for more on the Tuson family.

There are only a few (six) names on the War Memorial that Arthur Delbridge and I have not talked about. Unfortunately, with two exceptions not listed below, these are people about whom we know nothing – Arthur said to me that he had left me the tricky ones – so if you do know anything about any of them please get in touch. These men could be from Mt Wilson, Bell or Mt Irvine. They are all from WW1.

**J. Geary, J P Mcdonald, F J Nixon, F J Sharp**

Alison Halliday

## BUSHCARE NEWS

The Mt Wilson Bushcare Group spend a few hours together each month helping to reverse the damage done to the environment by invasive weeds in bushland in Mt Wilson. During this time, we carefully remove weeds and encourage native plants to grow, using the principles of bush regeneration to guide our work.

Volunteers will be briefed on following Covid safety protocols. BMCC provides all equipment, including gloves, secateurs, spade, herbicide, kneeling pads etc. Please bring your own morning tea. Those interested should check the calendar on the Mt Wilson Mt Irvine community website to determine the location each month.



Bushcare is held on the second Friday of each month, between 9am and 12 midday. It is an enjoyable morning and a great way to learn more about the native flora including beautiful rainforest trees, shrubs and flowers.

For residents who are wanting to identify and control weeds in their gardens, the booklet "Bushland Weeds of Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine" can be found in the Bushcare section of the community website. The booklet is also available from the MWPA, if residents would like a free copy please contact Sue Woolfenden on 4756 2046.

Everyone is welcome, hope you can join us!

Enquiries:

Mt Wilson contact: Alice Simpson (0414 425 511 or 02 4756 2110)

Council contact: Tracy Abbas (0428 777 141)

Alice Simpson



Waratahs along the five mile, clearly visible post the Gospers Mountain Fire

## **BELL QUARRY WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY SCRAPED!**

Finally, some great news the proposed Bell Quarry waste management facility for Sydney's landfill has been finally rejected!

Back in 2017 was the first time people residing in Bell and surrounding areas in the Blue Mountains heard about the terrible plans to truck and dump more than a million cubic meters of Sydney's garbage and landfill in the Bell Quarry for period of 15 years. It was called the 'rehabilitation of the Bell Quarry' which is a total misnomer as it had already rehabilitated,



currently holding over 750 million litres of water and used by RFS Helicopters in the 2019 bushfires.

We heard of this predicament in Mt Wilson through the amazing Kaye Whitbread, who lives in Bell, who had been exhaustedly seeking help to raise the alarm everywhere. And so understanding this disastrous proposal we immediately set about to stop this with full page newspaper ads (paid for by Peter Pigott), making a short film and requesting help from every person we could think of, including environmental scientists and government bodies.



This proposal would have meant everyone living here or visiting the Blue Mountains contending with up to 148 huge trucks daily going to and from the Bell Quarry. This would have caused more serious road accidents, more pollution, damaged roads, hurting tourism, plus environmental damage to our pristine Wollangambe River; one of only a few wild rivers in

Australia, from the waste runoff, this would have been a complete disaster, which there would be no coming back from.

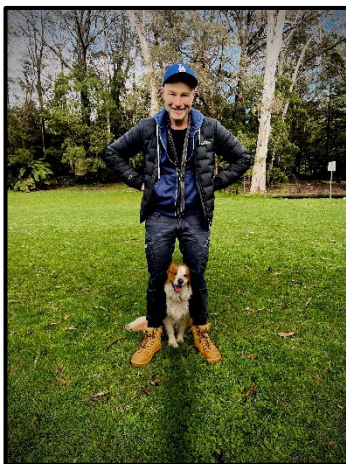
So after nearly five years of battle we now have resolution to deny this dangerous development proposal, and a really big special thanks to everyone involved who has helped along the way!

If you want to read more about [this click here](#).

Heidi Irwin

## DOGGIE PLAYTIME IN MOUNT WILSON

With a plethora of local dog play groups available to us dog lovers when we're in Sydney, I felt the urge to put the word out among fellow mountain dog owners to see if I could muster local community support for an equivalent weekend dog group up here on the mountain. Now that the chilly depths of winter were behind us, it was time to cast aside the thermals and padded jackets and get out into the glorious Mount Wilson sunshine with our canine friends. And so, the Mount Wilson Sunday Doggy Play Group was born. The cast of canine stars has included Obi of Withycombe, Roo of Farcry, Murphy of Donna Buang, Neddy & Daisy of The Post House, Miss India Pearl of Sefton Hall, Hugo & Patch of Pinaroo, and gorgeous little George of Holly Ridge. We are hoping that this Sunday morning activity rolls on as a routine community event and we welcome all fellow residents and their pups to come join in. For further information, please contact Peter Resanceff on 0419 288 823.



Photos with thanks to Anton Smith.



## CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT AT ST GEORGE'S



**COME AND JOIN IN THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT  
EVERYONE WELCOME**

### **CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**

**ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH  
THE AVENUE, MOUNT WILSON NSW  
SATURDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2022  
7.00pm**

***Supper in the Village Hall afterwards  
A small plate towards supper would be appreciated***

***St George's regular monthly service  
3.00pm 11th December 2022***

Anglicare's Toys 'n' Tucker donations are being collected this year, for details please [click here](#).



## YOGA AT THE VILLAGE HALL



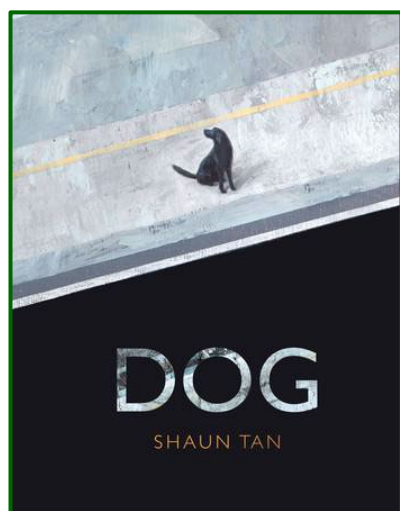
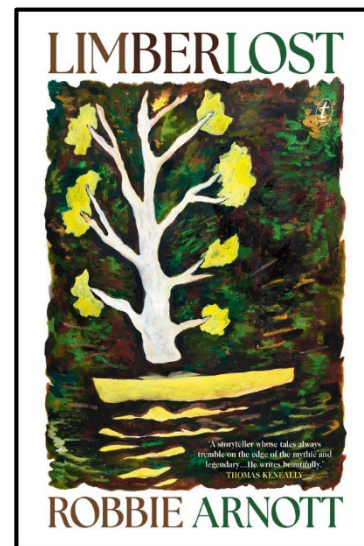
Rosie Walsh advises there is nothing senior about this group except the number of birthdays. Below image with thanks to Maria Johnson.



## BOOK REVIEWS

A teenage boy is left at home with his sister and reticent father. His brothers have gone to war but he is expected to wait and help in their orchard, named Limberlost by his mother. The work is endless and there is little praise. He dreams of a boat and escape onto the river, learning to sail and discovering all the hidden delights away from the farm. The story is a relatively simple one but it is in the telling that this novel by Robby Arnott becomes something special.

The language is careful and succinct as it moves from evoking the natural world, his family struggling with their orchard, and fear for the other young men and Ned's own desire to make a contribution, somehow. The descriptions of his boat, its discovery and restoration and how it enables Ned to learn about his own capabilities is just wonderful. The story seems straightforward, but it is the structure of the novel that makes it so compelling. We move between the daily life of young Ned and what he comes to learn and understand to the adult Ned as he realises what the past has taught him, how it has helped him to be a father and a husband, and what is important to value. The balance between young man and adult, between self and the world, between ignorance and knowledge is beautifully conveyed.



There are also the subtle threads of displaced people, the significance of caring for the land, carrying responsibility, the power of friendship and the importance of love. Arnott was short-listed for the 2021 Miles Franklin award with his previous book *The Rain Heron*, also set in Tasmania. I think *Limberlost* is one of the best books of this year.

As a bonus for all the dog lovers I have just discovered Shaun Tan's *Dog*. Tan is an extraordinary story-teller and illustrator, making books which resonate with both young and adult readers. *Dog* traces the age-old link between humans and dogs, and it is intensely moving and visually beautiful. Give it to yourself, give it to others; it is special.

Alison Halliday

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCE AT THE OLD SCHOOL

The 2022-2023 Artist in Residence program has begun, two artists have so far been welcomed to Mt Wilson.

Our October artists were Belle Bregovic and Eitan Muir, an emerging duo in literary-musical performance. Belle is a poet and classically trained pianist, and Eitan an electric jazz guitarist and composer of acoustic and chamber music.

Terri Jorgensen provided the following description of their community engagement event;

Belle and Eitan produced a powerful performance in the Village Hall which held the audience spellbound. Belle's intense love poetry spoken to piano and Eitan's electric guitar harked back to an imagined, intimate, Gatsby-esque night club.



The artists' art and poetry in the School House, fresh from the printers, spoke of love and their residence in Mt Wilson as a soft, wet, elusive landscape, dripping ferns and low mist.

Our November artist was writer Helen Pitt. Helen is senior culture writer at The Sydney Morning Herald and is the Walkley Award winning author of *The House*, the extraordinary story of the Sydney Opera House and the people who made it.

These very different artists have given their impressions of their time in residence in Mt Wilson. At the time of writing Helen was two weeks into her residency. Belle wrote down her memories and impressions in the artist's journal in the studio.

Below are some first person recollections from these recent artists.

Alice Simpson

### **Belle and Eitan**

To the community thank you for your enduring kindness, vibrant attitudes and incredible efforts in helping to make this experience one of the most special and life-changing we've had the privilege to revel in. You all helped to create a successful-beyond-hopes re-entry into performance and exhibition I otherwise would have long strived for.



We feel cherished, like we've been adopted into a gentle and ever-giving community of secret legends. We've flourished here, unstripped of the burdens of the city, at once feeling we've found our home and our place of return. A place so special we are to model our future around the life of nature, peace and art that is so deliciously irreplaceable. Thank you for offering us the space we needed to breathe, to create, to live, to recover, and with a beautiful studio and picturesque surrounding garden, no less.

I want to lay in the grass and drink tea here forever

The trees as my neighbours and the mountain my nest

The sun adorns constant the darkness abreast

### **Helen Pitt**



So far my time at Mt Wilson has been dreamy. Sunny days and cool nights. And a few huge downpours of rain while the west of the state struggles with floods and no gas for showers and cooking from Lithgow to Forbes. I feel snuggled away in my peaceful piece of paradise on the mountain, enveloped by the bush and hospitality of the locals.

My goal is to visit every garden while I am here. So far I've visited a few gorgeous ones: Bebeah, Yengo, Merrygarth and Windyridge. Still have a few to get to: Nooroo and

Breenhold among others.

I've had morning tea and dinner with locals, attended the heart-warming Remembrance Day ceremony and enjoyed delicious food and company at maintenance Friday.



I feel this time is such a treat - to step off the treadmill of daily journalism and write. I thought perhaps the great Australian novel, but since being here I've participated in a writing conference via Zoom in California. And from some of my favourite writers there including Julia Cameron (author of *The Artist's Way*) and my all-time favourite non-fiction writer Anne Lamott, I learnt about the poetic form called the pantoum. The pantoum is a poem of any length, composed of four-line stanzas in which the second and fourth lines of each stanza serve as the first and third lines of the next stanza. It originated in Malaysia in the fifteenth-century as a short folk poem, typically made up of two rhyming couplets that were recited or sung.

So I've tried my hand at that in between exploring the streets of Mt Wilson and other creative endeavours on the page. I am handwriting as much as I can - I think my thoughts slow down with pen and paper and it seems less like work when I am not in front of a computer. And it feels more like fun!

## UPDATE FROM YOUR RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Hello summer! Well almost.

Summer brings to mind lots of fun things and the potential for some not so fun things, like bushfire.

As we've reported on all year, we've done a lot of preparation for the inevitable next bushfire season – we've trained, we've done courses, we're almost finished with our Mt Wilson Station extension and plans are well underway on our new station at Mt Irvine.

But, there are some things we can't do. We can't get your properties in good shape to fight a fire nor make them easily accessible if we have a Community First Responder call to help you, your loved ones or visitors. That's up to you as property owners.

So, while you're kicking back and enjoying what we hope will be a nice summer on the Mounts, please think about the following:

- Is your house construction going to protect the structure and prevent ember attack?
- Are the under floor and roof spaces closed in to prevent embers entering?
- Have you got a fuel free area around your house and sheds - no garden beds against the house and no plantings under the eaves?
- Have you, fuel reduced the area around your property, raked and removed or burnt fine fuels and leaf litter?
- Have you got a well-maintained fire break around your garden or house block?
- Do you have a fire pump and a water supply?
- Can a fire truck access the water?
- Are you going to stay or go? What is the plan if fire prevents you following your plan.
- Can a fire truck get in your drive? This is becoming an increasing problem - driveways are often over planted and too narrow for an ambulance or fire truck.
- A crew leader wants their crew to be safe – so, is there a safe spot to park the truck?
- Can additional water be accessed from this spot?
- Can one truck defend 2 or 3 houses - close together, gates between properties, set up to defend, can water be shared between properties?
- Can they get the truck into your property or do they need to run hoses from the street and work away from their truck.
- Have they got an escape option? Crew leaders won't take their crews into dangerous situations.
- Is there information available about the property - hazards - gas cylinders, water supply?

In a nutshell, it's thinking about what you can do now to make your place 'attractive to defend'. While you're thinking about all this our Community Engagement Officer, Janet McDonald, has been busy rallying Street Coordinators and preparing for some street specific activities where all these issues can be discussed.

Elizabeth Montano, Member of the Brigade Executive and Safety Officer

## CHRISTMAS IN THE (FAR) NORTH



How it looks in Sweden at the moment, courtesy of Tom Halliday (Alex and Alison's son) who lives in Östergötland, Sweden.

## VOICES RAISED TO SOOTHE THE SOUL

The rafters of St George's Church resounded to the six magnificent voices of the Castalia Vocal Consort on Saturday 29 October as part of the concert series, *Music to Soothe the Soul*.

Made possible by a grant from the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund, Castalia presented a sublime concert of vocal music from across the ages. Titled *Songs of Love and Nocturnal Landscapes*, the program ranged from madrigals from the courts of the Italian Renaissance to the music of contemporary composers Caroline Shaw, David Yardley, and Howard Skempton.

Performing without a conductor or accompaniment, Castalia are led from within the ensemble by artistic team Amy Moore and Stephanie Dillon who were joined by Chloe Lankshear, Christopher Watson, Louis Hurley, and Philip Murray. These artists brought an impressive range of national and international experience to their performance as Castalia Vocal Consort being amongst Australia's most accomplished vocalists, performing regularly with such



ensembles as The Song Company, Pinchgut Opera, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Choir of St James King Street, and Bach Akademie Australia.



As with previous concerts in this series, members of the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine communities warmly welcomed the ensemble members both in the church and at the function provided by the Mt Wilson Progress Association in the Mt Wilson Village Hall afterwards.

The last concert in this series will be presented by former Artists in Residence, Emily Granger and Tristan Coelho on 4 March 2023 in St George's Church, Mt Wilson.

Sarah Howell

## MT WILSON / MT IRVINE BUSHWALKS WITH THE UPPER MOUNTAINS BUSHWALKING CLUB

Fri - 09-Dec-2022

Peter Raines

Andrew Mitchell

3 M - Day Walk

[Mt Wilson - Boronia Point - Zircon Creek - Fields Selection](#)

Mt Wilson - Boronia Point - Zircon Creek - Fields Selection - 9km

Depart Mt Irvine Road on firetrail to Boronia Point, views over Wollangambe Labyrinth. Return to Farrer Road up and over the top into the headwaters of Zircon Creek (off track steep rainforest). We follow the creek down till it crosses Mt Irvine road, then following a pleasant trail out to Fields selection, to a lookout, then a steeper trail to cross Zircon Creek before climbing back to Mt Irvine Road. Mix of Rainforest and Eucalyptus forest.

Map: *Wollangambe*



Fri - 20-Jan-2023  
Peter Raines  
3 M - Day Walk

[Mt Wilson - Softwood Logging Trails Explore - Waterfall Creek - The Throne - Daintree Road](#)

Mt Wilson - Softwood Logging Trails Explore - Waterfall Creek - The Throne - Daintree Road - 6 - 7 km - Starting at Waterfall Reserve, visit the two Waterfalls, then explore old bullock trails deep in the rainforest, used to drag softwood timber to the mill, then out to rocky outcrop called The Throne, good views over Bowens Creek, before exiting via Daintree Road, view over Mill Paddock and the area of steep rainforest on the south of Mt Wilson.

Map: *Mt Wilson*

Fri - 17-Feb-2023  
Peter Raines  
Andrew Mitchell  
3 M - Day Walk

[Wollangambe River Via DuFours Rocks](#)

Bushwalk to the Wollangambe River Via DuFours Rocks 10km - Depart Mt Wilson Fire Station Explore DuFours Rocks and Pheasants Cave before heading off track on a good ridge, explore around Joes Canyon before joining the Wollangambe track to the Horseshoe Bend explore and lunch before heading back to Mt Wilson on the Wollangambe walking track (steep uphill many steps).

Map: *Wollangambe*

The below photos are from the club's 18 November walk to Kanagra Walls.







To join Upper Mountains Bushwalking Club [click here](#). You can then join online via Paypal (debit or credit card), ensure you complete both steps.

Peter Raines

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## FEEDBACK AND AUTUMN EDITION

The Mounts is edited and compiled by Alison Halliday and Matilda Halliday. Your feedback and comments are always welcome, please send to [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com).

The closing date for the Autumn 2023 edition of The Mounts is **Friday 17 February 2023**. Please send submissions in Word format to [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com). Images of local events, wildlife and flora are also welcome.

Contributions from members of the community are always welcomed – this is *your* newsletter. The email address for queries and contributions is [themounts2786@gmail.com](mailto:themounts2786@gmail.com).