



The Red Admiral – An exhibition of Patrick White's years at Mount Wilson

In 2012, the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society will celebrate the centenary of Patrick White's 28 May 1912 birth date by holding a year-long exhibition at the Turkish Bath Museum at Mt Wilson.

Patrick White spent his formative years as a young child at Mt Wilson in the 1920s and 1930s; the exhibition will highlight the impact of both the Australian natural environment and the influence of working class and wealthy society individuals and families that were to strongly shape him for the remainder of his life.

The story of Patrick White and his family at Mt Wilson in the 1920s and 30s (the so-called 'Golden Age' of Hill Station life in Australia) is rich in historical interest, and yet, remains well hidden to most people.

The project aims to heighten awareness of the formative years of White's life in an easily accessible and understood manner. The exhibition has been specifically designed not to be an academic treatment of his literature, nor does it require an understanding or appreciation of White, or his works.

The goal is to foster a recognition of a vital influence on White that has previously been ignored, or misunderstood, for many years, despite the amount of research undertaken on the most famous and renowned Australian author.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the name White used as a ten-year old. His first published pieces were about Mt. Wilson. The 'Red Admiral' was his favourite butterfly.

The exhibition consists of a series of posters that detail the influence of Mt Wilson on Patrick White as an individual and a writer of international acclaim.

Additionally, a 25 minute film of White, and his relationship to Mt Wilson, has been produced and will be shown at the exhibition. The film features interviews with three Mt Wilson residents, Peter Valder, Mary Reynolds and Libby Raines, who all give a unique insight into White as a child.

Dr Bernadette Brennan and Dr Susan Lever, two respected academics from the University of Sydney and the Association for the Study of Australian Literature, and David Marr, White's biographer, are also interviewed in the film and explore Mt Wilson's influence on White's works.

In the film, the well-known Radio National journalist and producer, Rachael Kohn, conducts the interviews and White's first published pieces are read by Huw Evans. Both Rachael and Huw are long time residents of Mt Wilson.

The exhibition is to be formally opened on 11.00am Sunday 17th June 2012 by the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO at the Mt Wilson Village Hall. **This opening session is now fully booked out.**

The exhibition will then be open to the general public at the Mt Wilson Village Hall on:

- Sunday 17th June, 1.00 – 4.00pm,
- Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th June 12.00 – 4.00pm
- Saturday 30th June and Sunday 1st July 12.00 – 4.00pm.

The entry fee to the exhibition is by a gold coin donation to the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society..
Tea and coffee will be available at the Hall.

The exhibition will then move to the Mt Wilson Turkish Bath in September through to May 2013. Details of opening hours during this period will be announced at a later date.

For further information, please contact Tim Gow, historicalsociety@mtwilson.com.au