

The Mounts Summer 2024/25

Community Newsletter of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine



Those involved in the Remembrance Day service on 11 November 2024, left to right Alex Halliday (flag wrangler), Alison Halliday (talk giver), Vic Zhukov (former service member), Richard Prentice (former service member and community wreath layer), Tim McIver (minister), Nathalie Le Barz (trumpeter), Ted Griffiths (flautist) (see article)

EDITORIAL

As the weather warms, the cicadas are *very loud* and the festive season approaches, thoughts turn to a new year and what it might bring. During the 1930s new year's day brought a sporting carnival to Mt Wilson. A fundraiser for the local Country Women's Association it included "jumping, motor and equestrienne events, as well as a number of novelty races and competitions" [Lithgow Mercury 6 January 1937, p4]. The first record of such an event comes in 1931 when over 200 people were in attendance and 17 events were held, including a 16 year old Tom Kirk winning the double-handed sawing contest alongside his brother Peter aged 23. It seems World War II bought the end to such an energetic start to the year as there is no mention of it after 1939.

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.

MWPA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Annual General Meeting which was held on the 12th October was well attended. The committee outlined the various projects we have worked on this year, many of which are ongoing. Key projects are the tree planting and upgrading of Marcus Clark Reserve. We have formed a sub- committee to work on our wellness project which is in the development stages. The new website has been launched with a fresh look. If you have not logged on I encourage you to do so as this is a great resource for the community. There is one more horticultural workshop planned for next year. Keep your eyes out for an email with further details.

The committee for 2024/2025 was elected at the AGM.

President: Nancy Fox

Vice President: James Douglas

Treasurer: Robbie Feyder

Secretary: Sue Woolfenden

Committee Members: Bruce Dowton, Janet McDonald and Peter Raines. We warmly welcome David Howell as a new committee member.

Please do not hesitate to contact the committee about any issue. You can email mwpa@gmail.com.au or secretarymwpa@gmail.com

Roads and potholes are a major issue which we continue to work with BMCC to resolve. You will have received notification through Mailchimp about major investigative works planned for the Zig Zag. We have been informed from BMCC that:

- The works will occur between the 3rd December and the 13th of December, exact dates to be confirmed and will be communicated to the community through our comms team
- Approx. 2 day-shifts with one lane closure to allow traffic contraflow
- At least 5 night-shifts with full road closure.

When we receive more details, we will forward them through Mailchimp.

Don't forget about the Community Christmas Celebration which is organised by the MWPA, MIPA and the RFS. This will be a Christmas Picnic and Carols by Candlelight on Saturday 7 December 5 pm – 8 pm at Dennarque. Please RSVP to secretarymwpa@gmail.com if you are bringing children under 12 years old to this event. Santa's helpers really appreciate knowing who is coming!

The committee wishes you a wonderful Christmas and summer season.

Nancy Fox and Sue Woolfenden

WELCOMING OUR NEW ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

Between this September and June next year, the Artist in Residence Program will proudly welcome another six talented artists to the Old School precinct in Mt Wilson. This time you will be able to hear from and see works by several musicians, a writer and some very different visual artists. So please come to as many of the community events as you can.

Our first musician is Alex Ranieri who works both locally and internationally as a piano recitalist, concerto soloist, chamber musician, composer and more. He is staying in February 2025 and was planning to bring his own grand piano until he heard of the recent arrival in the Church!

Watch for Alexi's community engagement activity in late February – a piano recital at St Georges Church.

Our next musician is Ronan Apcar, who will be in residence in May 2025. He is a pianist and composer with a reputation in many different circles of music. Ronan is interested in undertaking field recordings during his stay.

Margaret Beasley from Blackheath is the only writer this intake and she will be here in January. She is planning to write about another Blue Mountains resident, Dr Eric Dark, husband of Eleanor Dark AO, a well-known Australian writer.

Melissa Read-Devine and Julie Simmons are our arrivals in June next year. They are both established, Sydney-based artists whose vibrant and engaging works are collected worldwide.

Sydney-based artist Matt Bromhead describes his works as quips and one liners - heralding both their playfulness and deceptive simplicity with their multi layered texture. He will be here in March.

During 2024

Our first artist in residence was Julie Bradley, a professional artist working in Canberra and exploring connectedness and emotional responses. She feels differently in every place she walks and translates this emotional response into colour, shape and line using stencilling, collage and drawing. Julie came in September and delighted us with a description of how she works and then invited everyone to experiment with collage. Sorry there are no photos we all became so absorbed we forgot to take any.

August was also the first time for an intensive workshop. Peter McLean (on his second visit) tutored an enthusiastic group over the weekend of 24/25 August in the art of woodblock printing. Our Enjay printing press was put to good use. Lots of fun as well as a new appreciation for the art of woodblock printing.

Watch out for all our community events and become part of the Old School artistic experience.

After five years of working magic with the artists at the Old School, some of our key volunteers have decided to move on. At our AGM in May, we farewelled two people who have been key to the program's success - Sarah Howell, who has been our Secretary as well as managing the Teacher's Cottage for all our tenants; and Alice Simpson, who has been on the Old School Committee since its inception as well as persuading, educating and supporting all those who volunteer to be artist hosts. Our heartfelt thanks to them both for their awesome contributions.

Sarah has had to be replaced by three wonderful people - Geoff Hull and Terri Jorgenson for Cottage maintenance and rentals, and Sean Irwin has taken over as Secretary. Narelle Gordon is taking over from Alice as our new host manager. Thank you to everyone involved for their contribution to this important program.

Judy Tribe and Anne De Salis

FREDERICK ECCELSTON DU FAUR (1832-1915)

Visitors to one of our most spectacular viewpoints have often asked locals about the origin of its name, Du Faur's Rocks. It is, as we know, named in honour of one of the village's earliest European settlers and landholders – Eccelston Du Faur. In this edition of The Mounts we re-visit an historical narrative written by former President of the Historical Society, Mary Reynolds, which was originally published in the Society's newsletter in 1997. So, make yourself a cuppa, bring the biscuit tin in close, and reacquaint yourself with the life story of the man whose influence stretched beyond the village of Mt Wilson and into the realm of Australian fine art and the establishment of one of Sydney's most significant national parks.

Du Faur's Rocks Road and Du Faur's Rocks

Eccelston Du Faur's name is closely linked with the Blue Mountains, in the 1870s, through his involvement with the 1874 Transit of Venus observations at Woodford, and 'The Blue Mountains Craze' - a venture which led to the collection of materials such as photographs and sketches, for the Philadelphia Exhibition at that time. However, he became closely associated with Mt Wilson and its early settlement in a rather different and quite curious way. The Hume Expedition had been set up by Eccelston Du Faur at his own expense to search for relics of the explorer, Leichhardt. The lone survivor of that expedition was Lewis Thompson.



Above: Lewis Thompson, Du Faur Grose Valley Expedition Member, reclining beside waterfall, 1875. Picture: Blue Mountains City Council Library Local Studies Collection.
Right: Shack built by E Du Faur for Lewis Thompson.



Thompson became the first full-time caretaker at Mt Wilson, occupying a shack built by Du Faur on land purchased by Du Faur in 1875 [Lot 63]. At that time, Du Faur was the Chief Draughtsman in the NSW Lands Department, a position he obtained in 1863 after his return to NSW from England. He had first arrived in Australia in 1853 and travelled mainly in Victoria for five years before returning to England to attend to family affairs after the death of his father. Eccelston Du Faur was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society for his contribution to the Hume Expedition.

Thompson spent two years from 1875-1877 as a storeman, caretaker, supplier of goods and general worker for the new settlers at Mt Wilson providing an extremely important element of

support for the first landholders, who contributed to his wages in return. Not only did he bring in supplies but he acted as a ranger, and maintained fences and roads. In addition to these activities he kept quite detailed records. Thompson was recognised for his part in the settlement of the mount with the trail running from Du Faur's Rocks (south) along the western side of Mt Wilson being named Thompson Road. Lewis Thompson also assisted Du Faur with the organisation of expeditions into the Grose Valley. The photographer, Joseph Philip Bischoff (1832-1903), and the artist, William Charles Piquenit (1836-1914), were entertained in the shack and both contributed material for the Philadelphia Exhibition.

Art and Eccelston Du Faur

Eccelston Du Faur was the president of the National Art Gallery of New South Wales from 1892 up until his death in 1915. However, before that he had participated in the foundation of the NSW Academy of Art in 1871 and was its Honorary Secretary and Treasurer until 1881. In 1876 he was one of the Board of five Trustees appointed to the National Art Gallery of New South Wales and apparently took an interest in the work of great artists and was considered one of the best judges in the state.

It seems not to be stretching probabilities too far that when Richard Wynne, founder of Wynstay at Mt Wilson, left a bequest of £1,000 in his will in 1895 to the National Art Gallery of New South Wales for the Wynne Prize for Landscape Painting and Sculpture, Du Faur could have exercised some influence in the offering of that bequest. Both Richard Wynne and Eccelston Du Faur were holding land in Mt Wilson from 1875, the year Lewis Thompson's shack was built, and the year the original cottage was built on the Wynstay estate, which still stands. Both men possessed great vision and creativity.

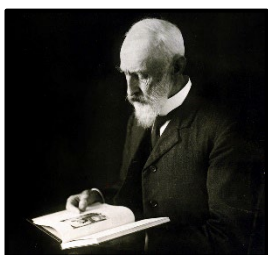
Ku-ring-gai Chase

After moving to Eastern Road around 1888 Du Faur spent many hours walking in the bushland and saw the need to save this rough but extraordinary country and proceeded to pressure the NSW Government on this issue. When the decision was made to create the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park in May 1894, Du Faur was appointed the Managing Trustee and was almost solely responsible for the day-to-day care and supervision of work in those years to 1904.



Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park Trustees on Cowan Creek 1899 (Du Faur steering boat).
Photo: Mitchell Library

Du Faur died in Turramurra on 24 April 1915, aged 82, and was buried in the Anglican churchyard at Gordon



Eccelston Du Faur c1910. Photo: Mitchell Library

Historian H. Macleod Morgan wrote in the journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society in 1957 of Eccelston Du Faur, "and we of a subsequent generation should be proud to partake of the benefits which have flowed from his endeavours as we dally by the Hawkesbury waters near Ku-ring-gai. marvel at man's artistic aspirations in the Domain at Sydney, or gaze, awe-inspired over the serried ranges westward from Du Faur's Rocks at Mount Wilson".

Du Faur and his perseverance, commitment, ability and vision are reflected in this story.

Mary Reynolds

NEWS FROM ST GEORGE'S

Regular Services

Church Services are held on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 3pm followed by a friendly cup of tea. Villagers and visitors are always welcome at St George's.

Working Bee

A working bee is held from 9am until 11am on the 1st Friday of each month. We mainly work on the garden & cemetery, pulling weeds, pruning, raking leaves etc and would welcome anyone who could help. Morning tea is provided and we are very grateful to those who attend. For those who do not like working outside there are a variety of inside jobs as well.



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

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

THE AVENUE, MOUNT WILSON NSW

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2024 7.00pm

Supper in the School House afterwards

A small plate towards supper would be appreciated

St George's regular monthly service 3.00pm 8th December 2024

Everyone Welcome

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES 25TH December 2024

St Peters, Mt Victoria 8.45am

St Aidan's, Blackheath 10.30am

ANGLICARE'S TOYS 'N' TUCKER

This Christmas, we're collecting food and gifts for those who are doing it tough. Our partnership with Anglicare's "Toys 'n' Tucker" aims to share the joy of Christmas with families who would otherwise go without. Even the smallest donation can make the biggest impact!

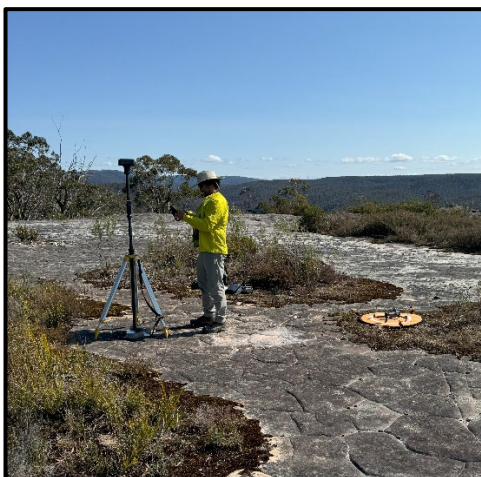


Donations can be left with any of the church wardens, David Howell, Robyn Hyde or Helen Freeman by 8 December.

THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS COME TO TOWN

In early September members of the University of Sydney Archaeology Department visited Mt Irvine for the first field trip of the Gulamada Project.

The Gulamada Project is made possible by a grant of \$250,000 awarded by the Commonwealth of Australia under the First Nations Heritage Grants jointly to the University of Sydney and the Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation. The purpose of the grant is to generate new information on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values in the northern Blue Mountains area by locating and recording previously undocumented rock art sites. Research will entail on-ground surveys, data digitisation, reporting, and publication.



The first week of field work occurred around the Tessellated Pavement in early September when Drs Amy Wey, Jacob Bongers and Wayne Brennan spent a couple of days examining the site. As a student of Archaeology at the University of Sydney, I was lucky enough to spend a day with them.

While Jacob ran a drone over the Tessellated Hill (see picture left) Amy, Wayne and I walked further north and found a grinding stone which appears to perfectly match the grinding hole at Tessellated Pavement (see pictures next page). In addition, later that week, a marine shell was found in a cave in Morley's Creek, raising questions as to why it was there. Perhaps it was an ornament, used in trade, or a tool of some sort.



On 9th November Dr Wayne Brennan addressed the AGM of the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society where he spoke of the work being undertaken, explaining the project and its aims. He outlined how the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine area formed an elongated hill which has yielded significant finds from Wynne's Rocks Road to Tessellated Pavement and beyond. These finds form a uniform story of meetings, initiation and dancing for many peoples of the Blue Mountains and further afield.

Dr Brennan's talk was met with great interest by the members of the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine communities who were at the meeting and were intrigued to discover this new aspect of our area. We plan on asking him back to next year's AGM to give us a progress report

David Howell

FREDERICK JAMES SHARP

This is my 15th year of doing a history on the people on the war memorial. There are only three names left undocumented in these short histories by Arthur Delbridge and myself! The search for the military history of the men and women on the War Memorial began twenty years ago in 2004 with Arthur Delbridge asking a passer-by who are all these people?

In a reverse of the usual balance, this year we know a fair amount about Frederick James Sharp's mother and father but very little about the service man himself (right). Because of what we know, and to keep it in more or less chronological order, I am going to begin by talking about Frederick's mother and father (next page).



In so doing I owe a great deal to Mary Reynolds' article on the history of the Post Office at Mt Wilson. It is yet another example of how important the history archive is in the community and

beyond. And thanks once again to Peter Rickwood for reminding me about this article, and for other information.



Mary's article, originally published in *The Blue Mountains History Journal* 2, 2011, begins with the following summary:

Mt Wilson was settled in 1875 but not until 1879 was a Receiving Officer for mail appointed at the nearest railway platform [originally called Mt Wilson platform] at Bell, from whom Mt Wilson residents had to collect their mail. From the start of 1889 a contractor carried the mail from Bell to Mt Wilson and in 1890 delivery commenced to a Post Office in the grounds of Beowang (now Withycombe, the image below dates from 1917) where a telephone exchange was installed in 1916. Eventually a dedicated Post Office building was erected adjacent to St George's church in 1922 and it functioned until 1986 with only a manual telephone exchange. Then all services were transferred to Mt Victoria from which mail had to be delivered to individual properties in Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine.





Richard Wynne was the person responsible for pushing for the postal service. It is a timely reminder of just how important such a service was in that time when there was no alternative. This is in sharp contrast of course to today, and it is 'useful' to know that the service was supplied daily (except for Saturday and Sunday). In the week ending 21 March 1878, 77 letters were received at the railway station and nine despatched. The usage was much higher in the summer months when most of the main landowners were in residence.

After considerable discussion and negotiation, and the establishment of a Post Office building in the grounds of Beowang (below) we come to the appointment of Mrs Eliza Sharp (left) as the post mistress in 1890.



She replaced Cox's daughter Lucy who had been acting Post mistress for a short time after the abrupt departure of a Mrs Mahoney. Eliza Sharp and her husband Charles had been caretakers for George Henry Cox (right) at Beowang. The long visits by the Cox family and the extent of the house and garden, as well as general security, make the need for caretakers obvious:

January 8 1895: It was fine here at Xmas and then rained for a week, then had three fine days and now it is raining steadily and has been ever since last night. It has been destructive to our fruit but yesterday we fortunately gathered a quantity of gooseberries, raspberries and currants and



the jam making is now going on in full swing. Of course the mountain looks very pretty, the lawns as smooth as a billiard table, dahlias in full bloom, gladioli just coming into flower, hydrangeas half out and small flowers making the garden very bright, not forgetting the fuschia.

On the day she was appointed as Receiving Officer Mrs Sharp wrote to the secretary of the GPO:

Having been preposed [sic] by the gentlemen of Mount Wilson to take the post office in place of Miss Cox resigned I herewith send in an application for the same and if [a]ccepted will undertake the duties of the same to the best of my ability.

She was still in office in 1896 when she pointed out that mail deliveries had increased to six times a week and politely asked for an increase in salary. The reply acknowledged the validity of her request and she was appointed to the full status of Post Mistress with an annual salary of 10 pounds. In 1909 her daughter was appointed as her assistant. In 1916 a telephone exchange was added to the building in Beowang at the initial instigation of Henry Marcus Clark (right) who was the first on Mt Wilson to install a telephone.



He had Sefton Hall connected by telephone with the Post Office at Mount Victoria. 'Before that it was necessary to drive into Bell to contact the outside world.' As the necessary poles were then only in situ as far as Bell, his initial outlay, for which his estate was later reimbursed, was substantial.

Mrs Sharp pointed out that the increase in her duties should be compensated by a rise in her salary, threatening to resign if this did not happen. At about the same time her daughter stopped being her assistant so her duties must have increased a great deal. Her threat to resign if not properly paid, and the subsequent consternation of the residents of both Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are good indications of her importance and efficiency. Nevertheless, she did resign and subsequently claimed, correctly as it turned out, to have been underpaid and demanded full restitution.

At this point I should mention a bit more about Charles and Eliza Sharp's life. The marriage was registered in Mudgee, and they were married in a nearby small town called Mullamuddy on 6 July 1881. Charles and Eliza had four children. The eldest, and only son, was Frederick James born in 1882 in Mudgee. He was followed by Louisa in 1885 and Mabel in 1887 both of whom were born and/or registered in Mudgee. The birthplace of Mudgee suggests that Cox may have known the Sharps and even employed them before coming to Mt Wilson. George Henry Cox had lived on a couple of properties in the Mudgee district and was greatly involved in the town community, and in all matters rural. The Sharp's youngest child, Ada, was born in 1893 in Lithgow. I do not know which of the older two daughters helped her mother in the Post Office. Their permanent life at Mt Wilson is further indicated by the 1912, 1912-13 and 1913 electoral rolls that include Mount Wilson where Charles and Eliza Sharp were electors.

Charles Sharp seems to have been active in the permanent community of Mt Wilson. He was 'the active agent' in the frequent absence of the landholders (George Cox, Judge Stephens, Mr Merewether and Mr Wynne) in urging a school to be built for the seventeen children of six parents, most of whom were caretakers on the bigger estates. His name headed the document which, along with the political clout of the promotors, prompted the inspectorate in 1890 to

recommend building a school. It is fair to assume that the Sharp children attended the Mt Wilson school. As well as working for George Cox, it is likely that Charles also did work for Marcus Clark at Sefton Hall.

Let's look again at the dates: Frederick was born in 1882, his parents moved to Mt Wilson before 1890, the school opened as a provisional school in October 1891. It would have been unlikely that Frederick, and his siblings, would not have attended the school. Additionally, in 1891, or soon after, Miss Lucy Winchcombe arrived as the inaugural teacher, lodging with Cox's caretaker, Charles Sharp and his wife. This was before Eliza took over the running of the Post Office. It maybe that the school teacher's house was built after the School House. A history of the school is still to be written.



Cox died in 1901 and is buried at Mudgee (left). The post office remained in the grounds of Beowang while the estate was managed by his executors until it was moved to the site we all know next to the church in 1921-22. I do not know if the Sharps stayed on as caretakers after Eliza left the Post Office, nor where they went, if they left Mt Wilson. However, their role and life on Mt Wilson was certainly sufficient to see the name of their son written on our War Memorial. Eliza died 2 January 1923 at Mt Wilson and she is buried at Rookwood Cemetery (below). Charles had died the previous July in Parramatta.

I am fortunate in having been directed to much of the above information as there are 616 enlisted people in WWI with the name of Sharp!

We do not know where Frederick lived as an adult between leaving school and enlisting for WWI. He may have stayed in the area of the upper Blue Mountains and the western foothills from Hartley to Mudgee, but it is probable that sometime in the pre-war years Frederick moved to Sydney. His first marriage was to Mary Louisa Lette on 12 September 1908 at All Saints Church, Woollahra. Mary Louisa died in February 1911.



His second marriage was to Stella Pearl Justelius in Newtown in 1916. They may be living at 77 Newman Street Newtown at this time.

His enlistment paperwork shows he worked as a labourer and carter. Stella is listed as next of kin in his service book. The address at this time was 30 Gurner Street Paddington. However, this seems to have been almost immediately updated to 81 Guernsey Rd Paddington. The road name was amended to Jersey Rd (there is no Guernsey Rd in Paddington, perhaps the mistake occurred from someone familiar with dairy cows!)

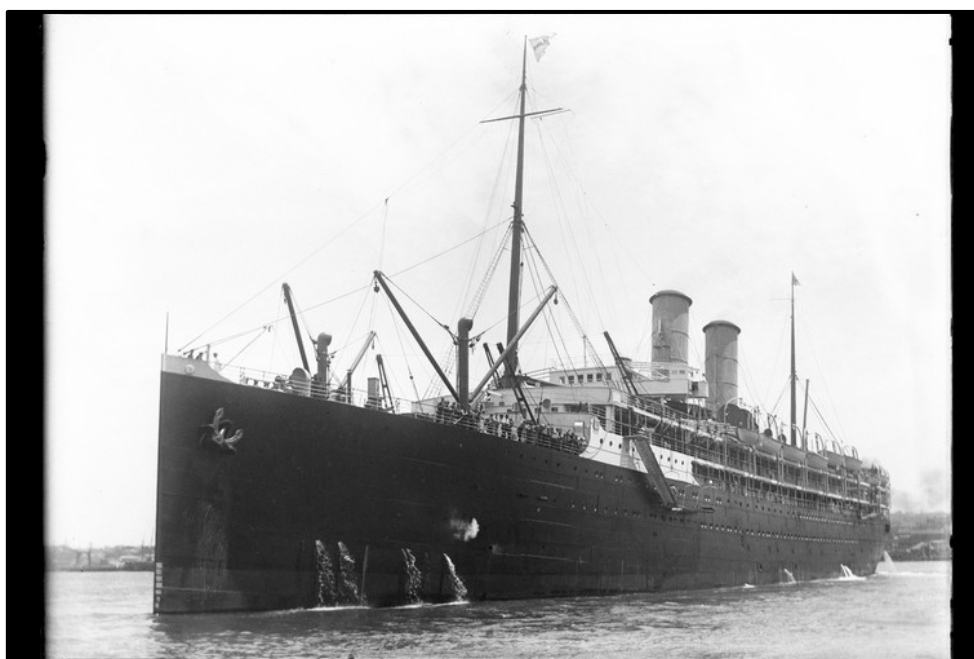
The following is taken from the war service record of Frederick James Sharp, courtesy of The National Archives of Australia.

Frederick enlisted on the 23rd October 1916. He was 34 years old. His service number was 32752. His rank was private, and then gunner and his unit was 5 D.T.M.Bde; an acronym meaning 5th Division Trench Mortar Brigade. He is also listed as serving in Medium Trench Batteries, 6th reinforcements [could be 28th infantry].

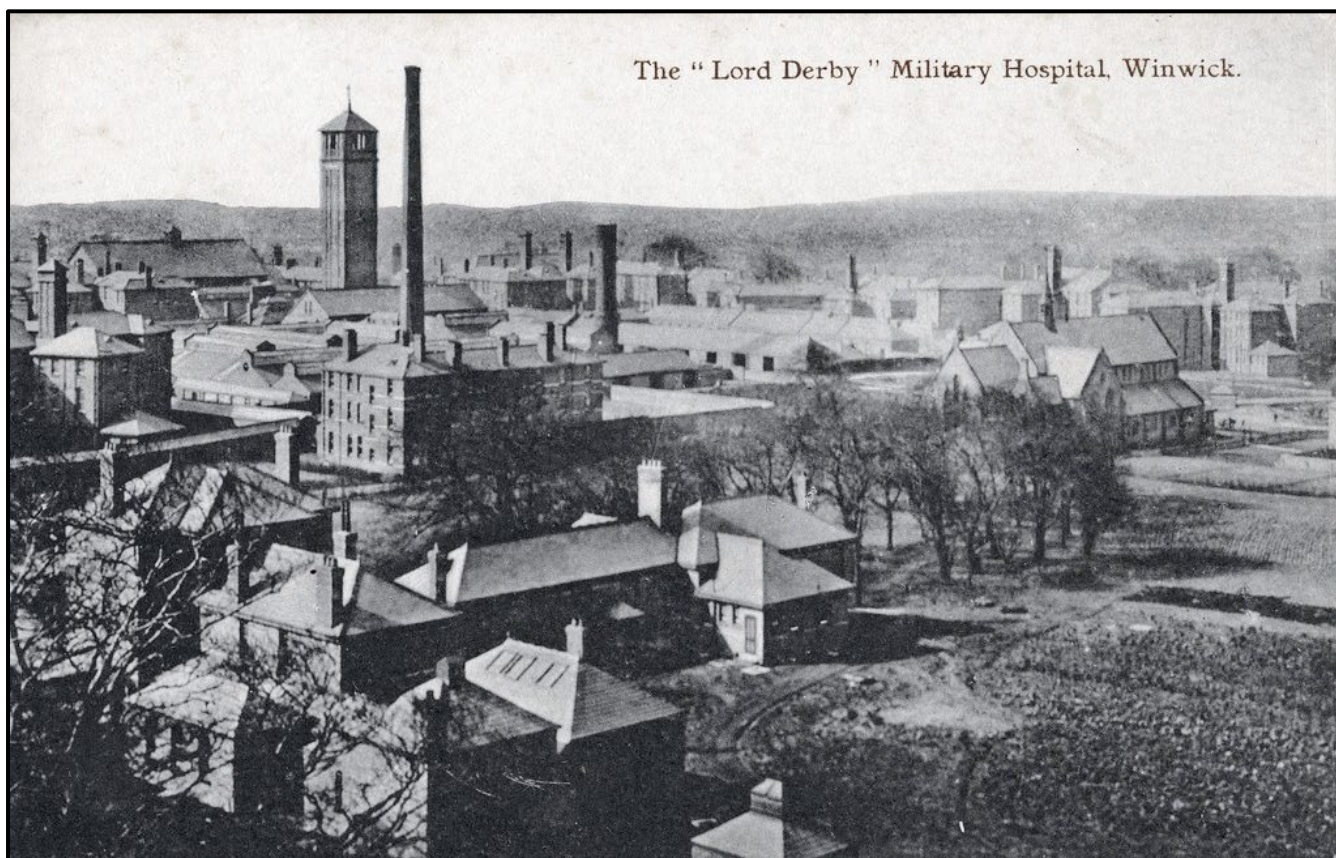
Description of <u>SHARP Frederick James</u> on Enlistment.		DISTINCTIVE MARKS.
Age	34 years — months.	<i>Dilated Veins up per part of Chest Slight Varicocele pendulous Testicles pigmentation area upper right thigh</i>
Height	5 feet 10 1/4 inches.	
Weight	146 lbs.	
Chest Measurement	33 1/2 inches.	
Complexion	Dark	
Eyes	Blue	
Hair	Dark Brown	<i>High.</i>
Religious Denomination	Anglican	

At enlistment (at Victoria barracks) he is measured as just short of 5'11 inches, with blue eyes dark brown hair and a dark complexion. Under 'identifying features' it is noted that he had 'dilated veins in the upper chest, a slight varicocele, pendulous testicles, and pigmentation area on the upper right thigh.' In other words, he had varicose veins in his testicles. Nothing was hidden from the army medical officers! He gives his religion as Church of England.

On 10 February 1917 he left Sydney for Plymouth on board 'Osterlay' [sic] (below), arriving in Plymouth 11 April 1917. In late May he left for France from Southampton.



For the rest of that year he worked as a gunner being 'active in the field', and it seems that he was shifted about quite a bit. In September 1918 he received a shrapnel wound in his left thigh while on active service. It is described as: 'entrance wound on front aspect of left thigh. No exit wound'. It is reported that two fragments of bullet or shrapnel material could be felt about ½ inch under the skin. He was hospitalised and then transferred to the Lord Derby Military Hospital, UK (below). The medical report notes that he had 'no symptoms, feel[s] quite strong in leg and thigh. No disability'. On 21 November the medical record notes that he was 'improved' and 'nerves better'. On discharge he was left with a 'small scar'. He was fortunate not to return to active duty. In December he had 12 days leave with a Mr White in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire.



The " Lord Derby " Military Hospital, Winwick.

On 20 September 1918 his wife was notified of him being wounded (below), and she promptly wrote to 'the Officer in Charge at Base Records' asking for further information: 'I would be very grateful if you could find out the nature of his wounds and let me know'. Unusually, there is no reply in the record.

Frederick left England for home on the 24 January 1919 on the 'Delta'. The red cross symbol is on the side of the ship because she was used as a hospital ship during the Gallipoli campaign. He was awarded three medals: the Star, the British war Medal and the Victory medal. Frederick had a lucky war.

B.R. Form No. 9.
In all communications regimental number, rank, full name, and unit of Soldier referred to are to be stated.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.
RG

BASE RECORDS OFFICE,
VICTORIA BARRACKS,
MELBOURNE.
10th September, 1918

Dear Madam,
I now beg to advise you that by War Hospital, Warrington, England, has been reported as suffering from gunshot wound left thigh, actual condition not stated.

His postal address will be—
No. 32752 Gunner. F.J. Sharp
5th Australian Divisional Trench Mortar Brigade,
Australian Imperial Force,
Abroad.

Don't fail to send change of your address to Base Records, Melbourne.
In the absence of further reports it is to be assumed that satisfactory progress is being maintained, but anything later received will be promptly transmitted, it being clearly understood that if no further advice is forwarded this department has no more information to supply.

Yours faithfully,
J. McLean Major,

NAA: B2486, SHARP, FREDERICK JAMES

National Archives of Australia

He had returned to Australia by 29 January 1919. After this they moved back to Newtown living at 175 Alice Street Frederick's wife Stella died in 1929 aged 45.

Frederick married, for the third time, to Kathleen Mason, nee Lyons, on 30 October 1943 in Auburn (Sydney). I then lose sight of Frederick James Sharp in the public records, and it seems that he may not have had children (one cannot search for children under 100 years from the present).

Frederick James Sharp died 27 July 1955 in Auburn. He was 72 years old. Kathleen died 22 January 1961.

Some of you may not be aware that there is a WW1 memorial timber plaque in the church and Frederick is listed on it. If you know any information about the origins of this plaque I would be very pleased to hear from you as I am writing a history of the church at the moment.

Here are the last three names still to be documented, all from WW1:

J Geary

J P McDonald

F J Nixon

Alison Halliday



UPDATE FROM YOUR RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

As we approach the end of the calendar year, we've been working hard, as usual, getting ready for fire season.

We've had more Brigade Members qualify as Village Firefighters – well done all! We've got three new Community First responders who have passed their NSW Ambulance Certificate 2 course and, we've been banging that drum on how the community (that's you) can be well prepared in the event that we have any fires this season.

We've continued training with some excellent sessions, including combining training and water source familiarisation with having a number of important water sources around our two villages all topped up and ready in case they're needed. Our station officers continue to hone their skills – not least of which is keeping totally on top of the latest in weather conditions and looking after signs on Total Fire Ban days. This is really important to advise the community and visitors about when it is and isn't safe to light fires and they're rather fast at taking them down when they aren't required – that's important too.

Maintenance Fridays (we hold them twice a month on the second and fourth Fridays) are always interesting with a variety of jobs to do on both the vehicles and around the Mt Wilson station, in particular. In December, we hold only one Maintenance Friday which will be followed by a yummy Christmas themed dinner. Hey, even firefighters get to party now and again.

At time of writing, the Executive is getting ready for a Brigade General Meeting on 22 November- where we report to Members on what's been happening and ask for Members to make decisions on matters which can't be made by the Executive - democracy!

And what “action” have we seen since our last column? Four Brigade members participated in a Hazard Reduction exercise in the Blackheath Catchment; a member assisted with a search at Leura; we attended an oil spill on Bells Line of Rd; we attended a tree over powerlines at Mt Irvine; attended two CFR calls to assist members of our community and we went to a mysterious motor vehicle accident on Bells Line of Road (reported in to 000 as a collision between a truck and a car) – we found a damaged vehicle but no driver (we did look for them!) and no “other” vehicle. We made sure the site was safe and taped the vehicle for attention by others the following day. All part of the rich tapestry which is the life of our Brigade!

With all this, will your New Year’s Resolution be to get (more) involved in your Brigade? I hope so. We do good things and we do them in our community.

From your Brigade, we hope you all have a wonderful and peaceful Summer season with no visits from us with fire trucks and uniforms!

Elizabeth Montano, Member of the Brigade Executive and WH&S Safety Officer

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.

BMCC provides all equipment, including gloves, secateurs, spade, herbicide, kneeling pads etc. Those interested should check the calendar on the Mt Wilson Mt Irvine community website to determine the location each month. There is a good chance there will be a delicious home-baked cake at morning tea! Please bring your own tea/coffee.

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

The warmer spring temperatures and rain have brought new weed growth in the Mt Wilson reserves, all help in preserving the native bushland is appreciated.

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)

Council contact: Tracy Abbas (0428 777 141)

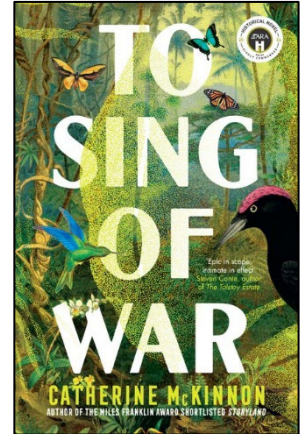
Alice Simpson

BOOK REVIEW

War lives in our television, bombards us from radio, confronts us in theatre and film – it is everywhere. It is inevitable that amid this deluge of horror that we should become almost immune. Suddenly self protection clashes with the need to know and to not look away. In *To Sing of War*, Catherine McKinnon threads together three stories from WWII to make a rich and haunting tapestry.

The experiences of Australian nurses and soldiers in New Guinea vividly presents the terrible difficulties of war in the impossible landscape of jungle covered mountains where mud and insects compete with the Japanese. This is basic fighting where frailties, illness, and mental trauma affect both sides. Within the despair and blood there are moments of joy and extraordinary courage.

The lives of these soldiers and nurses is interwoven with the scientists in the USA creating a bomb that they hope will end the war. Oppenheimer wavers in his determination and he is undermined by those who are working with him, and the power hierarchy. At the same time, we learn about his wife Kitty who is undergoing her own struggles with the social expectations of her restricted roles. The atomic bomb may offer a way to achieve freedom for the allies but the necessary secrecy and occasional betrayals comes with the loss of so many freedoms for all involved.



Despite the reader knowing what is to come McKinnon instils a great deal of suspense, and none more that in tracing the story of Hiroko Narushima and her family in Japan.

To Sing of War works so well because of the focus on the lives of several and very different characters – some from real history and others fully fictional creations but all believable in their desire for survival and the end of war.

Alison Halliday

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY SUBMISSION ON PROPOSED FLIGHTPATHS FOR WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

Community Members will recall that the Mt Wilson Progress Association and the Mt Irvine Progress Association lodged a joint Submission on the proposed flightpaths for the new Western Sydney Airport (Nancy Bird Walton Airport), noting the impacts of the proposed flightpaths on the two communities and suggesting some minor deviations to the flightpaths. We cited how planes overhead, even at relatively high altitudes, could impact on our communities and the surrounding areas and wildlife, particularly noting that our ambient noise levels are very low here and that our topography could increase the noise levels from planes using the new airport. We made some suggestions on how the flightpaths could be altered to alleviate these risks while not adversely affecting the flightpaths' viabilities.

We worked closely with our neighbours at Mt Tomah and Berambing (who were also potentially affected by the flightpaths as originally proposed) so that our respective submissions were consistent and constructive.

Results of the consultation process on the flightpaths have recently been released. While we are still to examine the amended flightpaths in detail, it appears to us (and the supporting documentation from the Commonwealth Government supports this view), that at least the daytime flight paths have been altered as we requested – so that they do not fly directly over Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. The flight paths have been altered so that they fly more over unpopulated areas, further to the south and west away from Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. We’re still looking at the new flightpaths (the nighttime flight paths in particular) to get a better understanding of the change in impacts on our two communities.

More detail to emerge soon. But, in the meantime, we think we’ve had a win.

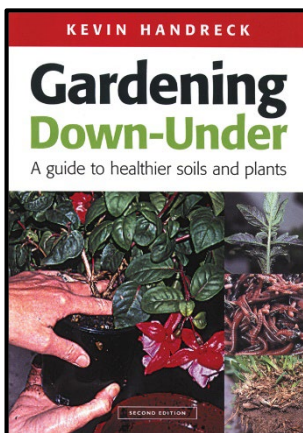
Elizabeth Montano, Lead - Flightpaths Submission Group

CHOP AND DROP

Another successful day in the garden at Merry Garth was held in spring, the third in a series based around garden care and strategies. Micah Fink presented a talk and demonstration on the importance of nurturing the earth, soil or dirt – which ever name you prefer. He emphasised the need to disturb the soil as little as possible and to nurture it from all that grows above it. The main principal is demonstrated in forest and bush lands where leaves, twigs and branches of all sizes drop to the ground. There they slowly disintegrate with the help of time, weather and all the insects, fungi and small creatures. A natural mulch is formed and is then carried down into the soil where the broken-down plant parts



feed and nourish the growing plants. So the cycle goes on. If the cycle is broken by disturbing the soil through digging, ploughing or being driven over (or cut into by feral animals) the composition of the soil structure is damaged and then plants are affected. Obviously, some (ivy and blackberry for example) need to be removed and disposed of away from the ground but otherwise they may be used to form compost. It is all summed up by the simple direction of ‘chop and drop’.



Micah answered a number of questions about the use of pesticides and plant poison, the various ways to make compost and the difference between compost and mulch.

Above: a book (oldie but goodie) recommended by Micah



Many thanks to Micah for his trilogy of propagation, pruning and soil care. Our gardens are going to be even more beautiful.

Alison Halliday

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.

The closing date for the Summer edition of The Mounts is **Friday 14 February 2024**. Please send submissions in Word format to 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.