

COMMUNITY

ASSOCIATION

The Whisper

March 2006 CIRCULATION: 1025

All proceeds from advertisements after printing costs go to the WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, which started the Whisper in 1981 and continues to own it. This Newsletter is distributed to all RMBs in Wamboin, Bywong, Clare, and Yalana at the beginning of each month, except January. Editor is Ned Noel, 17 Reedy Creek Place, Wamboin, 2620, phone 6238-3484. Contributions which readers may wish to make will be appreciated, and should be submitted to by email to nednoel@optusnet.com.au or dropped into his mailbox at 17 Reedy Creek Place. The deadline for the next issue is always the last Sunday of the month, 7 pm, so for the April 2006 Whisper the deadline is Sunday, March 26, 2005, 7:00 pm.

LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES Fire/Police/Ambulance - Dial 000 All Hours

Queanbeyan Police 6298-0599 Wamboin Fire Brigade Info Centre 6238-3396 Ambulance Bookings 131233

WAMBOIN FACILITIES AND CONTACTS

Wamboin Community Assn	Lofty Mason	President	6238-3258
Bywong Community Assn	Warwick Cathro	President	6236-9187
Fire Brigade	Cliff Spong	Captain	040-999-1340 bh 6236 9220 ah
Wamboin Playgroup	Leanne Quick	Convener	6238 3435
Landcare	Roger Good	President	6236-9048
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison	Bungendore	6238-1333
Breastfeeding Assoc.	Lisa Whitney	Community Educator	6238 3059
Emergency Services	NSW Call Centre	Staff	132-500
Emergency Services Admin	Colin Brown	Controller	6238-1067
Justice of the Peace	Peter Greenwood	JP	6238-3358
Justice of the Peace	Keith France	JP	6238-3596
Wamboin Scout Group	Peter Harrison	Contact Person	6238-3525
Wamboin Guides	Rosemary Riley	Contact Person	6297-7632
Wamboin Pony Club	Maureen Purdie	Contact Person	6238-3343
Gearys Gap Pony Club	Julie Abbey	Secretary	6230-3129
Play Group	Leanne Quick	Convenor	6238-3435
Hall Bookings	Joan Mason	Bookings	6238-3258
Church, Anglican	Robyn Robertson	Warden	6238-3202
Christian Prayer Group	Steve & Imelda Taylor	Contacts	6238-3220
Golf	Peter Greenwood	Golfer	6238-3358
Injured Wildlife	Wildcare	Helpline	6299-1966

THE YOUNG WAMBOIN ENTREPRENEURS

Deanne Brucic, babysitting & Petsitting	6238-1884
Ellen Smith, petsitting (experienced with horses)	6238-3115
Sarah Dunn, babysitting, cooking	6238 1849 or 0424 023 841.
Fiona Skea, babysitting	6238-3290
Rebecca Purdie, petsitting	6238-3343
Damien Montesin, petsitting, odd jobs	6238-3208
Frank Deveson, bicycle maintenance	6238-3294
Alycia and Hannah Elword, babysitting, petsitting	6236 9186
John Brennan, babysitting and petsitting.....	6238 3472
Gabrielle Simpkin & Nicolette Neveu-Abramczuk, petsitting	62383600

Macs Reef Tip Hours 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Fri-Sat-Sun-Mon (to 7 pm Sat - Sun in daylight saving time) closed Tue-Wed-Thurs

WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION President's Paragraphs

We have added tables and chairs plus scones, jam and cream to go with the cups of Wagonga Coffee at the Wamboin **Produce Market**. This has proved very popular with some residents meeting people over a cup of coffee that they 'haven't seen for ages'. Now that Wamboin gardens have sprung to life the amount and variety of fresh fruit and vegetables on sale is quite impressive. Cakes, jams, preserves, craftwork, sausage rolls, plants, flowers, fresh milk, cheeses etc. are also on sale. Stall holders \$5. Buyers; free entry, so it costs nothing to look. Our next Market is at the Wamboin Community Hall on Saturday the 18th of March from 9am till noon.

Thirty residents of Wamboin/Bywong heard **Steve Whan MP** address our meeting on Tuesday the 21st of February. After some spirited questioning on Rates, Finances and Equity my co-chairman, Warwick Cathro, moved a vote of thanks to Steve for his attendance. Further discussions continued around the coffee table.

While checking background for the above meeting I came across an early example of the '**Unearned Wealth Tax**'. Around 1880 the Colony of NSW started building a net work of roads and railways into the interior. The ease of transporting wool and other produce caused property prices to increase dramatically. Farmers, who had purchased large holdings very cheaply because of the long distances from easy transport, became owners of very expensive land. The Government introduced an Unearned Wealth Tax which forced the farmer either to sell part of his property or to borrow money to pay this tax. I then noted that some farmers complained about 'being very rich but not having any money'. Sounds very familiar to me.

Another reminder that the WCA will hold their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday the 8th of March. All positions on the executive committee are open. -- Lofty Mason. 13jmason@bigpond.net.au



**WE ARE RECRUITING
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Bywong Community News

Collated by Morag Cotsell

Wamboin and Bywong in Tandem: A number of recent events have emphasised the close ties between the neighbouring communities of Bywong and Wamboin.

Bywong Community President Warwick Cathro recently joined with Wamboin representative Helen Montesin to give a joint presentation in Bywong Community Hall on some of the rates models considered by the Rates Model Reference Group, of which both are members. Wamboin and Bywong are two areas facing steep increases in rates under present and proposed Council models. About 25 Bywong and Wamboin residents heard Warwick and Helen discuss a number of options and outline the difficulties faced by Council. Both members of the Reference Group subsequently presented their advice to Council.

The next evening, the two Community Presidents, Warwick and Lofty Mason, jointly chaired a lively meeting with State MP Steve Whan, during which residents from both areas made no bones about their view of the State Government's handling of the amalgamation which resulted in the formation of Palerang Shire and discussed the Shire's present economic difficulties. Mr Whan responded readily during a lengthy session, and continued discussions with locals over a cup of tea.

By the time this paper is published, Bywong and Wamboin residents will have joined in yet another event - the Council-sponsored Visioning Workshop scheduled for 27 February in the Bywong Hall.

Clean Up Bywong! Sunday 5 March is Clean Up Australia Day, and Bywong will be making its usual effort to clean up what we choose to think is the rubbish deposited by others along our roads. Wal Johnston is the coordinator to our locality. If you can spare a couple of hours or a morning, ring him on 6236 9107.

Car Boot Sale Sunday 26 March is the date for this year's Car Boot Sale, now recognised around the region as a major event in the community calendar. The Sale takes place at the Bylong Community Hall in Birriwa Road from 9 am to 1pm. Stallholders can enter to set up from 7.30 am. Charges for stallholders remain at \$10 for a car or ute, and extra \$5 for a trailer and \$20 for a larger vehicle. This year's highlights will include flyball dog events, a demonstration by the Pony Club, Irish Dancing and a demonstration by Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade. For more details contact Warwick on 62369187 or Judith on 62369321.

Diary Dates Watch out for -

17 April general meeting - 7.30 at the Community Hall

7 May Bushwalk - details to be advised

July 1 - Annual Bywong Trivia Challenge

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Thanks to the persons below, Wamboin and Bywong residents have a free community owned newsletter.			
129 CO-ORDINATED BY HELEN MONTESIN:			
Dean Evans	Nrtn Area frm Campbl West	18	Ph 6238 3208
Helen Montesin	Fernloff Rd	33	Bill Owen Cooper Rd. 27
Hank Berlee	11 Poppet Rd (for all on road)	34	Cathy Abell Canning Close 17
271 CO-ORDINATED BY SUE GANE:			
Joan Mason	Bingley Way	45	Ph 6238 3463
Sue Ward	Norton, Bngly to Weeroona	32	Margaret Heleimin Merino Vale Drive 17
Sue Gane	Majors Close	20	Anne Gardner Weeroona, Norton to Majors 30
Ned Noel	13 YrCn 35Adv	48	David Anderson Weeroona, Majors to Denley 35
Kathy Handel	Yalana West	19	Penny Evans Norton, Cmpbell to Bngley 25
227 CO-ORDINATED BY KERRIE FISHER:			
Colleen Foster	Joe Rocks to Norton	20	Ph 6238 3489
Deb Gordon	Yalana East	41	Rob Gorham South End - Clare Valley 43
Cassie Fisher	Clare Lane	11	Pauline Segeri North End - Clare Valley 42
Lyle Monetesin	Forrest Road area	60	Bungendore Shop Bungendore 10
204 CO-ORDINATED BY JOHN VAN DER STRAATEN:			
Sheryl Barnes	Quinn's Estate / Denley	20	Ph 6238 3590
Don Malcomson	Macs R -- Denley to Gum Flat	35	Brian Higgiso Deley/Kestral area 11
Ann Platts	Denley MacReef to Birchman's	26	Rhett Cox Macs Reef /Nwngtn to FdHwy 12
Warrick Cathro	Macs Reef -GumFlat to Harriott	18	Morag Cotsell MReef /Newington/Harriot 45
Joan Milner	Birriwa Road	12	Esther/Ian Rudd MReef/Bankers/FedHwy 25
194 CO-ORDINATED BY LAURA SNOWDON Ph 6236 9609			
Trevor Kirk	Macs R - Denley to Bung Rd	20	Snowdon Family Hogan Drive 27
Len Parrish	Summerhill Rd Area	32	Diana+Keith Gascoine Snow Gum Road 23
Sue Gorham	Schofields/Brooks/Millyn	47	Thelma Martin Shinglehouse Rd area 20
Sue Aunella	Doust/Wyoming/Brooks	25	TOTAL FOR WHISPER 1023



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NEW WHISPER CLASSIFIEDS
WANTED: Babysitter for 7yo and 4yo in Fernloff Rd area. We would need someone who could be available for weekend work as well as infrequent weeknights. Own transport would be preferable but not essential. Ph. 6238 3895.
100% recycled paper loo paper. Degrades in Septic. 48 rolls, 400 sheets, 2 ply for \$36. Call Melanie on 6238 1816. Busy Bottoms Nappy Express
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STORAGE to rent - large space, clean and secure, suit furniture storage. Please ring to discuss your requirements. Ring Judy on 62383050.
1. Wanted- Cleaning person for 4 bedroom house on Bungendore Rd, around 4 hours per week. Also require ironing person. Contact Martine 62369108
LONG RUNNING CLASSIFIEDS
Help save the planet by recycling your egg cartons! Just drop them in our mail box at 413 Norton Rd (opposite the old shop site). Thanks Penny Evans
SWARM BEES - Beekeeper happy to offer prompt service to the local community to collect and remove swarm bees that may arrive uninvited over the next few months. A small fee charged depending on distance I have to travel. Please call John 62383791.
Large Holiday house situated in Tuross, 180 degree Ocean views, opposite shops, 2 minute walk to beach, large block for parking, available now. Please phone Cherrie 0418 621 462 for further information.
Pilates for young and old, no previous experience required, just enthusiasm to enjoy yourself with some wonderful locals while strengthening your lower back, general posture and abdominals. All you need is a firm mat/towel, water bottle and \$3. When: 6-7pm Monday nights ONLY at the Community Hall on Bingley Way Wamboin.
FOR HIRE: WAMBOIN COMMUNITY HALL. Bookings arranged by Joan Mason 62383258. Local Hire \$65 per use - Bond \$200. Outside Hire \$125 per use - Bond \$250. Teenage/18 year old birthdays/parties (must be supervised by parents) \$160 - Bond \$1000.
ADVERTISING RATES: Local classified advertisements are free, as are announcements from community organisations and clubs. Business advertisements attract a small fee (see below) which is donated to the Wamboin Community Association. Please make your cheque out to this association, but post it to the editor. Contact editor on 6238-3484 for information. Advertising rates: Full Page - \$100 Half Pg - \$50 1/3 Pg \$35 1/4 Pg - \$30 1/5 Pg - \$25 1/6 Pg - \$20 1/8 Pg - \$15
Trestles and chairs are available from the Wamboin Hall in Bingley Way for private hire by local residents. The trestles are 2.4 meters long and seat 10. The hire rate is \$10 per trestle and \$1 for chairs. This price does not include delivery or pick up charges. Chairs and tables are to be returned in a clean and serviceable condition. To arrange pick-up and return, contact Joan Mason on 62383258.
For Hire from the Wamboin Community Association: Gas Barbecue - Party Size, Portable \$25.00 per hire (includes gas) and \$25.00 cleaning bond, both payable on collection of barbecue. Cleaning bond is refunded if barbecue is returned clean - Bookings arranged by Helen Montesin- 6238-3208
The Whisper is a community newspaper for Wamboin and Bywong. If you live in the area and have something to say about living here that is informative, thoughtful or entertaining, think about writing it up for the next issue. For more information contact the editor on 6238-3484 or email nednoel@optusnet.com.au. And thanks if you have already done so.

GEARY'S GAP/WAMBOIN LANDCARE - MARCH 2006 EVENTS

There are several Landcare events coming up this month:

Propagation Session: Saturday 4 March 9.00-11.00am. Propagation sessions are held on the first Saturday of each month at Geoff Butler's place at 38 Birchmans Grove, Wamboin. New participants are very welcome. Email Geoff at g.butler@iimetro.com.au or phone him on 6236 9158.

Clean up Australia Day: Sunday 5 March 9.00-11.00am, corner of Macs Reef and Newington Roads, Wamboin. Landcare has been assigned the road section from Newington Rd to the tip. Please bring gloves, hats, water and secateurs for removing feral pines. Contact is Roger Good, email roger.good@bigpond.com.

Meeting, Monday 13 March, 7.30pm: Landscape design with sustainable materials. Landscape architect Jennie Curtis will discuss choices of appropriate materials for use in local landscapes. The meeting will be held at Bywong Community Hall – Birriwa Rd (Off Macs Reef Rd).

During last month's meeting on nest boxes, Geoff Butler discussed some local species of trees that we can plant now to make excellent homes for animals in the future. These include *Eucalyptus rossii* (Scribbly Gum), *E. mannifera* (Brittle Gum), *E. viminalis* (Ribbon Gum), *E. macrohyncha* (Red Stringybark), *E. polyanthemos* (Red Box), *E. melliodora* (Yellow Box), *E. bridgesiana* (Apple Box), *E. pauciflora* (Snow Gum) and *E. rubida* (Candlebark).

Car boot sale, Sunday 26 March, 9.00am-1.00pm, Bywong Community Hall. This will include a native plant sale by the Landcare Group. **Plants are half-price to Landcare members**, so come along and get some bargains. We need a few helpers to load the plants on sale day, set up our site at the community hall grounds, and sell plants during the morning. If you can assist please contact Roger Good by email: roger.good@bigpond.com.

-- Kathy Cook, Secretary, Ph: 6236 9153, Email: kj.cook@bigpond.net.au

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Bungendore Evening VIEW Club

Report on February 2006 meeting by Kath Funnell (Publicity Officer)

“A home away from Home” is how guest speaker, Pauline Dunk described her workplace to members and guests at a recent Bungendore Evening VIEW Club dinner meeting. Pauline is the coordinator/manager of The Respite Cottage – Carers ACT. Three years ago she received a phone call asking if she would be interested in taking on the role as a temporary job and her pride and enthusiasm in what has been achieved over that period is obvious to all who heard her speak.

Describing it as a “most challenging job” Pauline outlined some of the innovative activities that are available at the cottage to help maintain daily living skills plus individual hobbies for people suffering from dementia. “The Respite Cottage provides professional and quality care that supports and respects the independence of people with dementia” in small groups. The Respite Cottage provides flexible and individually tailored respite for Carers while simultaneously providing quality care to the person with dementia. As Pauline said, the activities organised by the staff often trigger a memory or interest and the patients return “home more peaceful and calm”.

The next meeting of BEVC will be held at Café Woodworks on Monday, 6th March at 6.45 for 7.00pm. The members will celebrate the Club’s Birthday and a very enjoyable, fun evening is assured. Members and guests are asked to wear a favourite brooch on the night. Visitors and newcomers to the area are always welcome. Bookings to Debbie Hudson 62381571 (H), 0418622369(M) or email dhudson2@vtown.com.au by 27th February .

LAKE GEORGE DAY VIEW CLUB

The next meeting of the Lake George Day VIEW Club will be held on Tuesday 21 March, commencing at 11.30a.m, at Rydges Eagle Hawk Resort, Federal Highway Sutton. The cost for lunch will be \$20. At this meeting we will be celebrating International Women’s Day and our Guest speaker will be Helen Palethorpe, manager of the City Y, recently recognised in the Australia Day Honours for her service to the community through the development of recreation programs particularly for mature adults. For bookings please ring Kerry on 6238 0603 by cob Thursday 16 March. We welcome new members and guests. VIEW - a valued member of The Smith Family. For more information about the Club please ring Bernie Greethead on 6230 3165.



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MISTAKES MADE IN WHISPER

In each Whisper and in sending out accounts to advertisers, I make mistakes. If your item for publication is not handled properly or your ad or its account is not handled properly, please let me know and I will try to make amends. The whole point of the Whisper is to print information of interest to the community and its members and to pay the costs by offering local businesses a helpful way to advertise what they do. If you hoped for either of these things to happen and were disappointed, please phone me on 6238 3484 or use email to nednoel@optusnet.com and I'll try to do better in the next issue.
– Ned Noel, editor

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Wildcare is a volunteer, non-profit organization serving communities as far south as Bredbo, east through the Bungendore district, north west through Yass, to Young, north through Gunning, and past Crookwell. Wildcare's aim is to rescue and care for wildlife with the goal of rehabilitating and releasing injured or orphaned native animals back into their native habitat. The group is licensed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife service and members attend training courses which allow them to rescue and care for these animals. Once trained, members can elect to participate at a number of levels. For those who are able to be more actively involved, members can elect to rescue only, care only or both. We also have associate memberships and the Wallabats for junior members.



There is a large variety of native mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and bats in this area, so there is something to interest everyone. The group provides a great deal of support to make this rewarding experience one you will never forget. Our next Basic Training Course (a must to rescue or care for native animals) is being held in early March. If you are interested in joining Wildcare, then call 02 6299 1966 or log on to the website www.wildcare.com.au and download a membership form.

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<div data-bbox="365 1344 507 1469" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>RIDING INSTRUCTION ACCREDITED EFA LEVEL 1</p> <p>Local riding instructor available for beginners and more experienced riders. I will come to your property, or have sand arena available. Improve your dressage, jumping or just increase your confidence. Available weekends or weekdays.</p> <p>TEACHING IN WAMBOIN FOR OVER 10 YEARS Phone Leanne on 6238-3435</p>	<div data-bbox="821 1317 1050 1505" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Painters & Decorators Aurora For Added Value and Quality</p> <p>Free quotes References available on request No mess, no fuss Qualified City & Guilds Tradesman</p>  <p>Ph: 62411 727 Mob: 0418 975 232</p>
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Wamboin 15 Years Ago

from the Whisper, April 1991 Editor: Suzanne Badford Circulation 265

from the Clean Up Wamboin Day report: "Last year's clean up got rid of most of the heavy rubbish and this year's effort yielded mostly paper, bottles, plastic and cans. The only significant difference this year was the number of shredded tyres.....do we have an increase in heavy traffic or are tyres of lesser quality? We were still unpleasantly surprised at the quantity of litter and are looking for ways of raising the awareness of the desirability of "doing the right thing" in Wamboin."

Geoff Wines

Convenor

Rainfall and Temperature in Wamboin 31 year statistics from the Robertsons

Feb rainfall to 23/2	47.75mm (av. Feb 51.3mm)	2006 rainfall to 23/2	171.75mm
Av. March rainfall	57.4mm	Wettest March	303mm (1989)
Driest March	3mm (1986, 1998)	Wettest March day	160mm on 15/3/89
Hottest March day	35 degrees C on 8/3/83	Coldest March day	13 degrees C on 14/3/94
Coldest March night	3 degrees C on 28/3/99		

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THE STABLE DOOR
by Ian Collet

Bilycarts – why blokes just might be better drivers....!!

Early 2003 in this column I then mentioned I had recently read an illuminating and hilarious little book produced by The Sporting Car Club of S.A. Inc. in its Diamond Jubilee Year 1994. The publication was called The Biography of Chas McGurk and was written by D. Tweaks. In this gem of a factual come fantasy rendition Chas sought to emulate all who had walked down Pit lane, pausing to inhale Castrol R thickened air and mixing with the best mates in the world as they hopped on or off their old racing bikes or much sought after but well dated and totally unsafe, offensively noisy four wheel disaster-waiting-to-happen machines. Well, I like Chas, still remember the early beginnings – bilycarts!

But my efforts were not on a race track. Well, blow it; in fact they were! It's just that my racetrack was a rather more imposing, nay intimidating hill atop of which was my parent's place. Asphalt road, cement paths. Either way, a challenging stretch for any bilycart ensconced with its enthusiastic driver. An obligatory right-angle turn just at the base of the hill – pretty well right at the point of maximum speed – or to put it another way – the point of no return!! Pedestrian, car, milko or anything or anyone else looming around the corner – dead-set – they were goners!! Memories of gravel rash and other hazards – got them all.

Couple of mates became pretty good at protoyping our carts. We started off with normal carts – pretty conventional; simple axis steering, length of rope for steerage – and not all so subtle at that; plenty of nails, wood; sheep skin or one of my Mum's cushions from the house for a seat; a decent suitably leveraged shaft of wood for a brake – yoh, way to go. Main problemo with the early models were the steel ball-bearing wheels. Fast? You bet. Only problem was – steel wheels while extremely fast didn't offer the greatest traction when it came to the right-angle turn at the base of the hill. Bit of a disaster really - on many occasions. Out here at Wamboin, what with the sparks from the wheels and all – and the phalaris being what it is – not really recommended.

The old tractor seat was an improvement – offering a little more stability for the derriere. And the pram wheels were a great boon – well in one sense, anyway. Main problem here was the sharp cornering required at the base of the main straight. Better traction by far. Issue here was – way, way too much grip. First time down the hill – breakneck speed as you'd expect – into the corner – wow! Ahem! Houston we have a problem!! "G" forces were a tad – actually, way too much. Maximum force into the bend – break on so hard it's lifting the cart sky high – simultaneously the rubber is departing the rim of the pram wheel, and talk about understeer!! Pailing fences (remember this was Melbourne) and rose bushes are pretty unforgiving things. Blam!!!! In fact, I recall managing to roll a dual seat luxury build at a pretty nasty point due to this very same problem. Well, the dust eventually settled. 'Tis the only time during the course of my now somewhat extensive driving career that I've totalled. Just goes to prove – there is method in madness – sometimes.

And now I'm learning to drive a fire truck. Norton Rd hill as it drops to Sutton Rd looks pretty interesting! !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Discovered a new noun the other day. Gosh there's a lot of spider webs around recently! You experienced that? Yeah, well I found this New Noun on the world wide web – pun totally coincidental. And the spider webs are especially apparent along the walking paths of the Greenway particularly when you are the first person along the track in the morning.

"Arachnoleptic fit" (n.) The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web!! !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



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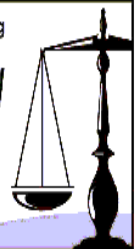
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Notes from St. Andrew's Church

Our Church congregation is becoming more and more active. Following on from our AGM after church last Sunday, the calendar seems to be filled with wonderful ideas for worship and fellowship. This month begins a Lenten study group led by the Rev'd Peter Grundy. This commences on the first Tuesday in Lent - 7 March at the church on the corner of Poppet and Norton Road, at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Harvest Festival is on Sunday 2 April - hopefully the grasshoppers will have left us something to harvest! The service will have a 'gardening' theme with all invited to attend in garden attire! Following the service we are having a working bee and if anyone would care to help us beautify the grounds they will be made very welcome. BYO garden implements and we will provide a sausage sizzle.

Our faithful organist and local identity Bill Owen has decided to close the keyboard after 15 years. When the church was after a musician Bill put up his hand - his previous experience had been as a schoolboy, but he has given us all so much pleasure and has become very accomplished. with the congregation enjoying his talents over the years. We have been fortunate to have a newcomer to Wamboin who is willing to take over; Lynda van Barneveld. Lynda has brought together a Choral group who have now been named the Wamboin Warblers. They practise each Thursday at the church at 8pm and any interested songbirds are welcome to join!

March services are held of the first and third Sundays beginning at 9am. Please think about coming along to join us; the worship and warmth welcome all. For further details or enquiries call Robyn Robertson, 62383202 or Bronwyn Elliot, 62383359. -- Claire Ayling

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The Wamboin Firefighter

A newsletter from YOUR volunteer rural fire brigade compiled by Cliff Spong with help from many members of the Brigade (Wamboin Brigade's website is www.wamboin-fireshed.com)

FIRE PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FROM YOUR BRIGADE IF YOU WANT TO BURN OFF OR LIGHT FIRES IN THE OPEN. You will also need to notify your neighbours and your fire brigade Captain 24 hours before you light up.

From the Captain's Desk



It is pleasing to report that there has not been any serious fire related activity in our area during the past month. There have been a few reports of minor incidents which we were able to put to rights quickly. Traditionally this time of the year, February and March are the most trying. We can but hope that our fears remain unfounded. As always we remain alert and hope the alarm doesn't go off.

At the risk of repeating myself dear reader, your brigade volunteers will sleep a little better at this time of the year in the knowledge that:

- ✓ you have made sure the fire risk in and around your property is at an absolute minimum,
- ✓ fire trucks have clear and unobstructed access in and out of your property
- ✓ all your firefighting equipment works
- ✓ your family understands your evacuation plans
- ✓ you have made plans for your animals and livestock
- ✓ you have checked the brigade's website or the NSW RFS website for more information

I would like to thank all residents in our brigade area who have taken the time to send donations following the recent letter box drop or stopped at our roadside collection points a few weekends ago. Your generous donations mean your brigade will be a great financial position to buy much needed equipment, ration packs and supplies. This tangible support helps us know we are helping our community.

The pictures below, taken by Keith Wrench show brigade members, Beth Wrench, Andrew Dunn, Peter Greenwood and Chris Legg meeting local residents and collecting some of the generous donations during the roadside donation day.



am



I still seeing some people

using on ride-on mowers late in the day when the humidity is low and the temperature is up. This is still risky and I can only hope that part of the message from last month is being heeded and adequate water is being carried to douse any fires started by sparks or the friction from rotating shafts on dry grass.

Our recent elaborate and expensive advertising campaign for new members in our area has resulted in seven people signing up. This does prove that the local blackboards do get the message across! Once the administrative formalities are completed the training starts in earnest. Paul Brugman and Liz O'Donnell have now started their basic fire fighter course.

While we are always seeking new recruits for fire fighting duties, your brigade also needs people to help us do that job. We always need people to help with our Support Crew. We need people who can spare time to help prepare meals, maintain our equipment, fire station and vehicles, assist with the administrative work, pick up supplies, raise funds, and many other things. This assistance is greatly valued but the few stalwarts need your help in whatever capacity you can and for as long as you can provide it. **If you can help PLEASE contact me.**

Over the past few weeks several training courses have been run at various locations around the Shire. Dave Cochrane and Mark Watson have been setting high standards during their village fire fighter course and Richard Hobbs has been helping and guiding them and other students in his role as an instructor. The assessment for this course was recently held at the Yass training facility where the students were put through hot fire incidents and assessment. During that time Erik Hughes, Lemmi Briedis, Michael Guilfoyle gave up most of their weekend as well to assist the students by acting as the safety crew for the hot fire drills. Thank you Richard, Erik, Lemmi and Michael for your help and guidance so that Dave and Mark could get the most out of their course.

On the 18th and 19th of March Dave Cochrane, David "Doubles" Doblinger, Peter Greenwood, Ian Coillet, Bob Pearson, Andrew Dunn, Cattlin Hubbard and yours truly will be attending a first aid course. We take safety very seriously and maintaining our first aid skills is vital.

There is much information on the brigade's website about property protection and things to do when fires approach. I encourage you to look it up, if you have access to the Internet. Failing that, please give me a phone call on 0409 991 340 or 6236 9220, especially if you need a fire permit.

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Nature Notes – February 2006

Jo Walker

The Koel seems finally to have left us for wherever it spends the three seasons before it visits again next summer. The noisiest birds around my place at the moment are a pair of Grey Butcher-birds. These are medium-sized birds (about 30 cm in length) with a melodious, flute-like and quite loud call. They are in the same family as magpies and currawongs, but are smaller with a black head and the rest of the body black, grey and white (juveniles are brown, fawn and white). They have rather large beaks, hooked at the tip. Butcher-birds are mostly insectivorous, but will also hunt lizards and mice and will take the nestlings of other birds.

At the moment, a lot of Red Stringybarks (*Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*) are flowering quite profusely – so many here that there is a distinct sweet, cidery aroma on the evening air – and the trees are buzzing with insects. This seems to have been a good summer for day-flying insects – perhaps this is why web-weaving spiders are so abundant this year. It's difficult to walk between two bushes anywhere without being snared in a spider's web!

The most common spider here this year seems to be the small Spiny Spider, *Gasteracantha* sp. These are about 1 cm across and wider than they are long. They have six spines protruding from the abdomen and their enamel-like cuticle is brightly coloured with black, white and yellow markings. Part of their snare is an untidy tangle of strands with small white thickenings along the threads, but the spider actually sits in the centre of an intricately woven, shimmering web in the middle of this untidiness. Although they are plainly visible in the centre of their webs, the Spiny Spiders don't seem to get taken by birds or other predators – something that seems to happen regularly to some of the larger, soft-bodied spiders.

Birds are not the only locals to prey on spiders, of course. We have several species of mud-nest wasps here. These insects paralyse spiders with a bite and carry them back to the nest they are building, lay an egg on each spider, and seal them up into mud cells. The wasp larvae hatch and feed on the spiders. At present, there are three large, slender, yellow and black wasps (*Sceliphron laetum*) constructing mud nests on the southern wall of my house, under the eaves. They have been busy for more than a week, and the biggest nest is just getting the final touches. The nests can be 10 cm long and 7 or so cm wide and are usually, in this area at least, made of yellowish clay. After the spiders and eggs are safely placed, the wasp mother spends a long time decorating the nest with longitudinal, rough ridges of mud. This probably provides insulation for her young as they develop.

I found intriguing the short amount of time elapsing between the moment the wasps left their nests and their return with another load of mud. Even if they were getting the mud from the creek 30 or 40 metres away, they made incredibly fast journeys. I timed them for a while, and for all of them the journey took less than 2 minutes and sometimes not much more than a single minute. This was pretty good going, as they had to fly to the creek, gather up a ball of mud of suitable consistency, and then fly back to the nest with it clutched between their mouth-parts and front legs. Efficient seems to be the only word to describe this effort!

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The February competition was sponsored by Tim Barter with the usual Navy flavour. Thanks very much Tim and also Robyn for both the trophies and the after game snacks.

Nearest the pin winners were; Geoffrey Fisher, Ken Gordon, Peter Greenwood, Bob Mettam, Cassandra Fisher, Charles Guscott, Rob Gorham and Tony Fisher x2.

Tom Argaet won the Juniors comp,

Nine Hole comp was won by Joan Mason.

B Grade won by Dave Argaet with Tony Fisher second.

A Grade won by Robert Gorham with Peter Greenwood second on count back from Charles Guscott.

- Peter Greenwood Golf enquiries 6238 3358

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Wamboin Muse

Jill Gregory

I suggested to my two most special little people the other afternoon that it was a good time to go across the creek and pick apples. Picking apples makes me think of mellow autumnal skies, pretty straw hats and baskets. We set off, however, in stout, snake proof boots with sensible canvas hats, sunscreens noses and a clutch of recycled plastic bags. But the image wasn't spoiled when we came back with bulging bags and the knowledge that we'd beaten the rosellas and left behind a few discarded apple cores for the kangaroos. Every now and then we are teased with the prospect of autumn and sense that the long, hot days of summer are losing their grip. Not that it's been a bad summer, if you can discount marauding grasshoppers and hail storms and a blackout or two. But I always prefer to see the back of summer.

We lost a dear friend the other day. Newly retired, and at the threshold of his "golden years", he won't see the seasons change again. And as I was busy swapping eggs for tomatoes across the creek, and potatoes for basil up the hill, and comparing respective rain gauges and hail damage, I began to think, yet again, about the transition from being "in the workforce", valued, purposeful, defined by your job, to being "retired"; being on the treadmill or suddenly off it; superseded by the latest model. Some of us never have to retire from our jobs, some are fortunate to withdraw gradually from employment, but many of us simply get the chop. Needed one minute, abandoned the next. And perhaps this is where gardens and growing things may be so important. To quote TE Brown, "A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!"...especially when the tomatoes, as one, turn red, the apples plead to be plucked and the figs ripen with a flourish, all demanding to be eaten or preserved this instant. You feel so needed!

I wouldn't live anywhere else.....I just wish that I could remember where I have been so carefully stowing all those glass jars for the next fruit season.

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