

COMMUNITY

ASSOCIATION

The Whisper

April 2006 CIRCULATION: 1026

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 May 2006 Whisper the deadline is Sunday, April 30, 2005, 7:00 pm.

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

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WAMBOIN FACILITIES AND CONTACTS

Wamboin Community Assn	Helen Montesin	President	6238-3208
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	Convener	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

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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
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

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martine@yarrowlumla.com.au for tasting notes and order form.

WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

The WCA AGM was held on 8th March, with minor changes to the executive. After nearly 4 years as president (his second stint), Lofty Mason stood down and I was elected (if that's what you call it) to the job. The other executive positions remain unchanged: Pete Harrison as the vice-president, John van der Straaten as the secretary and Keith France as the treasurer. I am looking forward to continuing working with this great team.

I would like to thank Lofty for all his hard work. He has worked tirelessly, way beyond the call of duty, for the Wamboin community for many years and I am sure he will continue to do so. He will certainly be a hard act to follow, but I hope that he will remain involved with the WCA and assist me in my new role (I'm going to need all the help I can get!).

The Palerang Council's Rates Reference Group has completed its series of workshops and determined two main models. Individual community representatives have reported their views to the General Manager and will present them to the councillors at their workshop on 6th April. The Council has applied to the State Government for a 9.9% increase in rates this year and will make the final decision on how the rates burden will be distributed. While, the Council do not have to follow the Rates Reference Group's recommendation, hopefully, the increase in community awareness and media coverage of this issue will result in a more equitable distribution of the rates burden this year.

Council's waste management consultants, Prior Knowledge, have completed a series of waste management seminars and are in the final stages of a draft report to Council on options for Palerang. WCA representatives have participated in these seminars and workshops and will report on these options at the May General Meeting.

In the interest of more equitable representation on Council, the WCA discussed the division of Palerang into wards or precincts and recommended consideration of this proposition by Council. John van der Straaten made a statement to Council to this effect which also supported a motion by Cr. Matt Gardiner for the preparation by Council of a paper on the advantages and disadvantages of Council wards. A paper was presented to Council at its last meeting and can be viewed on the Council's web-site www.palerang.nsw.gov.au.

If your property is 4 hectares or more, you will probably have received a letter from the Braidwood Rural Lands Protection Board (BRLPB) informing you that you are now required to pay rates to them – a minimum of about \$65 per year. The WCA is pursuing this matter. Lofty has written to the BRLPB asking for a representative to speak at a WCA meeting. He has not received a reply yet. Watch this space for further developments.

The next Wamboin Produce Markets will be on 15th April (Easter Saturday) at the Community Hall from 9am until noon. They're a great place to get lots of local goodies. Sorry, there won't be any scones this month – the cooks are taking a holiday.

The Annual Fireman's Ball will be held on 24th June, so keep this date free in your diary. Watch out for the details in next month's Whisper.

Last year, the WCA changed its meeting night from Tuesday to Wednesday to avoid clashing with the Palerang Council meetings. However, the Council promptly changed their meeting night to Thursday. At the last meeting, after some discussion, it was decided to move the WCA meeting time back to the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Consequently, the next **WCA meeting** will be on **Tuesday 18th April at 7:30pm**. -- Helen Montesin (helen.montesin@canberra.edu.au)

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Bywong News

by Morag Cotsell

Wildtalk: Steve Garlick of Wildcare will give a talk on his organisation's activities at the next general meeting of the Community on Monday 24 April (note the change of date to avoid the Easter break). Bring you queries and experiences on injured wildlife to this meeting.

Car Boot Sale: This year's Car Boot Sale (March 26th) confirmed its status as a defining local event. Numbers of stallholders- and we believe also visitors - slightly exceeded last year's totals and in spite of the deadweight of insurance premiums the Community expects there will be proceeds left over to make contributions to local organisations. Visitors again commented on friendly community atmosphere and the happy blend of fine weather, country air, and the friendly music of local icons Andy and Til. The committee's work this year was made much lighter thanks to willing members who turned up on the day to help with the Community stalls and especially to Theresa and Trevor who organised the prizes for the Monster Raffle.

Website: The Community Website is www.bywongcommunity.org.au and contains up-to-date information on all the community's activities.



**WE ARE RECRUITING
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Wamboin's Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade

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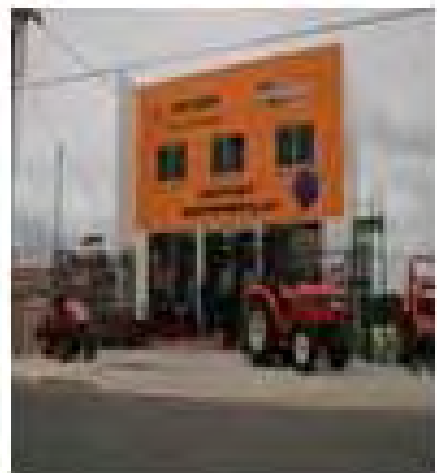
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NOTES FROM ST. ANDREWS CHURCH

If you saw lots of activity in the church gardens on April 2nd, you would have witnessed the congregation enjoying the true 'Harvest' spirit. We followed the Harvest Festival service with a working bee to tidy up the church gardens, which are growing to be a lovely sight as we all travel along Norton Road. Even with the water in short supply the plants have stayed alive due to dedicated people seen walking up with 2 litre bottles of the precious drop!

Easter is fast approaching and the services are set for 9am on Good Friday and then 9am on Easter Sunday. Many people take this important time in the church calendar to come along and we welcome all locals and visitors to join us.

To remind, our regular services are Matins on the first Sunday of the month at 9am, and Holy Communion on the third Sunday at 9am. If there is a fifth Sunday in the month we alternate the service with our sister church St Peters in Sutton. This month it is our turn and the service which is usually less structured with lots of singing will be at 5pm on Sunday 30th. After all of the services we enjoy coffee and cakes and the chance for fellowship.

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RATES MEETING AND REVISIONISM

by Terry Bransdon, Palerang Council

Palerang Council will review work done by the Rates Reference Group at a workshop on April 6. Wamboin's Helen Montesin will make a five minute presentation to the council on her findings during the modelling process, an exercise I called for after last year's unfair distribution of the 3.5 per cent ordinary rate increase. Hopefully, majority views in Council will be for a fairer rate distribution in 2006-07 and Wamboin/Bywong residents and others on properties close to Canberra will not again be unfairly slugged.

As former Mayor and Administrator of Palerang Council, I am amazed that Steve Whan suggests Palerang turned down an offer to transfer staff to Queanbeyan City Council after the February 2004 amalgamation. This is more revisionism by the local member and the former Minister for Local Government, Tony Kelly.

Within a couple of weeks of the amalgamation, I raised the issue of a transfer of five former Yarrowlumla Shire staff to neighbouring councils, Queanbeyan and Yass. This was based on an agreed formula between Administrators and General Managers of those councils. It was on the agenda for operational discussions held in Queanbeyan on 4 March 2004.

Persistently, I sought the transfers throughout 2004 and instructed the then general manager to arrange them. We discussed the issue with the then Minister and with Steve Whan several times in the first half of that year. The government's employee protection legislation removed any opportunity for Palerang to transfer two positions to Yass. This was because under the new laws the staff involved would have had to work in either the village of Sutton or Queanbeyan. That was never an option for Yass and both Mr Whan and the Minister were very aware of this.

With Queanbeyan, transfers of three staff — two outdoor workers and the office manager were identified. Queanbeyan, as I told Mr Whan on several occasions, declined to accept any staff. The staff transfer attempts were finally thwarted in mid-September 2004, when after repeated informal negotiations to transfer the office manager to a vacant office manager position at Queanbeyan, I formally wrote to Mayor Pangallo requesting agreement to the transfer.

Mayor Pangallo advised me that he could not accept it because the vacant position had been advertised. The Palerang office manager then applied for the position to which he was appointed. The refusal to accept the transfer, cost Palerang around \$50,000 which was part of severance pay entitlements that would have transferred with the manager to Queanbeyan.


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LAKE GEORGE DAY VIEW CLUB

The next meeting of the Lake George Day VIEW Club will be on Tuesday April 18, commencing at 11.30a.m. at Rydges Eagle Hawk Resort, Federal Highway, Sutton. Cost of this special lunch is \$20. Come along for a late but fun Easter celebration. Wear your Easter Bonnet and win a prize! Try your hand at Trivial Pursuit and Bingo. Bring and buy at the Trading Table. New members and guests welcome. For bookings please ring Kerry on 6238 0603 by noon Thursday 13 April. VIEW – a valued member of The Smith Family. For more information about the Club please ring Bernie Greethhead on 6230 3165

Thanks to the persons below, Wamboin and Bywong residents have a free community owned newsletter.			
130 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.
Hank Berlee	11 Poppet Rd (for all on road)	34	Cathy Abell Canning Close
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
Sue Gane	Majors Close	20	Anne Gardner Weeroona, Norton to Majors
Ned Noel	13 YrCn 35Adv	48	David Anderson Weeroona, Majors to Denley
Kathy Handel	Yalana West	19	Penny Evans Norton, Cmpbell to Bngley
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
Cassie Fisher	Clare Lane	11	Pauline Segeri North End - Clare Valley
Lyle Monetesin	Forrest Road area	60	Bungendore Shop Bungendore
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
Ann Platts	Denley MacReef to Birchman's	26	Rhett Cox Macs Reef /Nwngtn to FdHwy
Warrick Cathro	Macs Reef -GumFlat to Harriott	18	Morag Cotsell MReef /Newington/Harriot
Joan Milner	Birriwa Road	12	Esther/Ian Rudd MReef/Bankers/FedHwy
194 CO-ORDINATED BY LAURA SNOWDON Ph 6236 9609			
Trevor Kirk	Macs R - Denley to Bung Rd	20	Snowdon Family Hogan Drive
Len Parrish	Summerhill Rd Area	32	Diana+Keith Gascoine Snow Gum Road
Sue Gorham	Schofields/Brooks/Millyn	47	Thelma Martin Shinglehouse Rd area
Sue Aunella	Doust/Wyoming/Brooks	25	TOTAL FOR WHISPER 1025



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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 Joan Mason- 6238-3258
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.

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WAMBOIN GOLF CLUB – MARCH COMPETITION RESULTS

Rob Gorham and Step to Step Couriers once again were the sponsors of the March competition. In Rob's absence Joan Mason prepared the after game snacks. The Wamboin Golf Club thanks both Rob and Joan for their continued support. Nearest the pin winners were; Ted Evans, John Anderson, Bob Mettam x2, Steve Miners, Tim Barter and Tom Argæt x2. Jack Whitney with his first game of golf at Wamboin and Dean Argæt won the Juniors Encouragement Award. Nine Hole comp was won by Joanne Argæt. B Grade won by Tom Argæt with Paul Griffin second. A Grade won by Tim Barter with Steve Miners second. Tim with a net 57 will have a "serious mechanical adjustment of his handicap".

It is with great sadness that I advise you of the death of one of our past golf club members following a battle with cancer. Rhys Ollerenshaw was a long time regular player during the eighties and nineties until he moved to Fernleigh Park south of Queanbeyan. Our sincere condolences to his family. -- Peter Greenwood - Golf enquiries to 6238 3358



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Wamboin 15 years ago from the Whisper, April 1991

Editor: Suzanne Bedford circulation 265

From: All Creatures Great and Small by Dr Blair Lamont "This time a very personal subject....the overweight dog! This is actually one of the most common "problems" in the average household pet, and carrying excess weight does add considerable stress to the body (any body). The problem usually begins as the dog's growth rate tapers off at about 9-12 months old. The energy requirement is then greatly reduced from the earlier puppy stage, and food intake should be reduced accordingly. The vital factor is the quality and quantity of food. It is important to remember that, volume for volume, dry food is much more fattening than tinned food....largely because the latter contains up to 80% water. Any attempt at dieting should include cutting out tidbits....milk, eggs and chocolates! Increasing exercise would help, also. (Remember that meat is deficient in calcium, unlike reputable tinned or dry dog foods, and calcium may have to be added to the diet if your dog is on a "meat and vegetable" menu.)Being overweight can contribute to such problems as heart stress, skin conditions, joint problems and even disc prolapse. So prevention is more than just cosmetic. Till next time....good luck....and good health!"

- Blair Lamont, PS. Please don't tell the dog I wrote this.



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Rainfall and Temperatures in Wamboin - 31 year statistics from the Robertsons

March rainfall to 24/3 -- 28mm (March 2004 -- 9mm) 2006 rainfall to 24/3 -- 200.75mm (2005 to end March -- 138.5mm)
 Average April rainfall -- 48.8mm Wettest April -- 174.5mm (1989) Driest April -- 0.5mm (1997)
 Hottest April day -- 28 degrees (3/4/1986) Coldest April day -- 10 degrees (8 times) Coldest April night -- 0 degrees (27/4/99)

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Thanks from Lofty Mason

Our Clean Up Australia Day resulted in about 30 bags of rubbish being recovered from 15k of roadway. My thanks to Cliff Spong who arranged for the Fire Brigade to supply support vehicles. The CUA volunteers were John and Pearl van der Straaten, Don and Penny Evans, Sue Gane, Hank Berlee, Keith France, Cathy Handel, the Whitney Family, Peter Greenwood, Pete and Steve Harrison. I had the easy job looking for goodies in the recovered rubbish.

Now that I have become the IPP (Immediate Past President) of the Wamboin Community Association I would like to say thanks to some of the people who have helped my endeavours in my time as President. I can only hope that the new President, Helen Montesin, receives similar support.

Thanks to the following: my wife Joan who put up with my tantrums but could always be counted on for assistance, Secretary John van der Straaten, Money man Keith France, Computer wiz Pete Harrison, Tradesmen extraordinaire Don Evans, Charlie Montesin, Hank Berlee and Trent Abell, Media magnate Ned Noel and of course rates expert Helen Montesin who has taken over as Pres. -- Lofty Mason. L3JMason@bigpond.net.au

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Wamboin Muse

Jill Gregory

I buried Cedric this morning. He died on the back door mat near his cane perch outside the kitchen window where he has slept most nights for nearly the past eight years. He slipped quietly away while I was arranging his final car trip, this time to the vet.

He was not, as the vet had suggested, a "valuable" rooster, but one she quickly realised was priceless to us. Cedric was hatched by our favourite duck and, with his long pointed feet and sharp beak, quickly rejected as the "ugly ducking". We scooped up this motherless fluff ball and brought him inside by the fire. His first mother was an ugg boot in a warm electric frying pan. He spent his formative years in a four bedroom nest, and followed us everywhere. When he outgrew the ugg boot, he bedded down each night in a wine cask box. His nightfall was when the cardboard flap was closed above him, and dawn was when the lid was reopened. His was a fairly flexible schedule.

Cedric grew into a fine young rooster with a full throated crow that nearly turned him inside out. He wore a golden cape around his neck, and sported natty white pantaloons which peeped below his smooth white coat. His noble wattles dangled impressively below his chin and he developed intimidating spurs. But he walked with a mincing step, and was a practised voyeur. He would tap dance around the verandah, keeping a beady, but somewhat self conscious eye on all that happened within. It was his solemn duty to patter along the wooden boards, just as the first rays of light were penetrating the night, and be the first to greet the day. His enthusiasm was boundless. We grew to love his call, but our feelings were not universally shared, especially by guests who were savouring the country quiet.

Cedric was proud, inquisitive, territorial and sometimes coy. He had no inkling that he was a rooster. He would run out, hands clasped behind his back, to greet us when he heard the car tyres crunching on the gravel, then suddenly pull back, overcome with embarrassment for revealing his emotions. He took any open car door as an invitation for a ride, and enjoyed a trip to the letterbox. He knew he wasn't a rooster, but thought perhaps he was a dog until he got ideas above himself and in a flurry of dust and feathers the gentle Mort sorted him out. Then one day he went for a holiday, and camped with some feathered friends. He returned with a little less enthusiasm for taking his pleasures on the upturned plastic bucket and began to notice the hens. But he was never really sure of where they fitted into the grand scheme of things.

And so it was with great sadness and many tears, shared by all the family, that Cedly was laid to rest today. He has a special place in the garden. His father lies amid the daffodils under the crab apple. His short term foster mother is beneath a thriving melaleuca, and his unclaimed brother rests close by. I have a garden of memories that make me smile.

.....and I wouldn't live anywhere else. Where else would you find such therapy digging, albeit burial holes, in your gardenAnd thank you Cedly for choosing to fall off your perch after such a protracted dry spell.....digging in the hard ground added to my therapy.

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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.

THE FIRE SEASON HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL THE END OF APRIL.



From the Captain's Desk

There hasn't much publicity but the fire season has been extended until the end of April this year. Even though the mornings are feeling brisk and the mist lingers in the hollows, the fuel loads and lack of rain are still of some concern. Please ensure that you:

- ✓ have made sure the fire risk in and around your property is at an absolute minimum, the gutters are clear, the grass is low, the fire breaks are clear, the leaf litter hasn't built up,
 - ✓ 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

Apart from a motor vehicle accident on Bungendore Road and some minor incidents we have been lucky and had a quiet month. We have been concentrating on some training courses and undertaking some fund raising activities. On the 26th of March two of our new recruits, Tim Ayling and Ric Della-Torre finally passed their Basic Firefighter course in Braidwood. It has taken some time for them to pass this course only because they both were injured when the last assessment day was organised. I should point out that their injuries were not sustained during any firefighting activities! I have it on good authority that Tim and Ric's performances were excellent and they set a high standard for others to follow.

On the 18th and 19th of March Dave Cochrane, Scott Foster, Adrian van Prooyen, Peter Greenwood, Ian Coillet, Bob Pearson, Andrew Dunn, Cattlin Hubbard and yours truly passed their first aid course. The pictures below show the happy participants during a break and Andrew Dunn practising his CPR skills on one of the ever-quiet patients. It looks like Bob Pearson and Dave Cochrane haven't the heart to tell Andrew that his patient appears to be suffering from injuries that CPR isn't likely to be successful on!

On the 26th of March your brigade was again involved with the now famous Bywong Car Boot Sale. I would like to thank Richard Hobbs for organising our volunteers this year in the paddocks supervising the parking, collecting the entrance fees from the stall holders, cooking countless tasty goodies on the barbecues as well as conducting several demonstrations of extinguishing a kitchen fire. We were also fortunate in being able to borrow a large RFS marquee where we had a great number of pamphlets on display. It is a little unfortunate that the numbers of spectators at the fire fighting demonstrations was not large and many brochures were returned to our Fire Control Centre. Nevertheless, we can only do what we can do and we will be back next year to spread the message and organise the traffic.

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The weather is starting to change a little and the colder months are steadily approaching. It is a good reminder to check the flues in our houses. Creosote and other combustible matter builds up on the inside of flues and chimneys and they need to be cleaned annually. If this material ignites a chimney fire can cause a lot of damage and heartache. The heat build-up can be great in this material and then breaks out into the roof space, often without the residents being aware. The simple precaution of cleaning the flue or chimney is well worth the effort.

It is also a good time to make sure your smoke alarm is working correctly. Many alarms have test buttons or can be activated using a TV remote or torch. It is a good idea to wear ear muffs when you do this of course – assuming you did change the battery when daylight saving started, or within the last 12 months.

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 or Wendy Downs on 6238 3398.

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.

THE CAPTAIN’S LIST		Businesses supporting the Wamboin Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade
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**GEARY'S GAP/WAMBOIN LANDCARE -
APRIL 2006 EVENTS**

There are three Landcare events coming up this month:

Propagation Session: Saturday 1 April 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.

Gorse and weed control: Sunday 9 April, 9-11am. This session will focus on removal of gorse and other weeds on Macs Reef Road – meet at Yass River bridge. Bring hats, secateurs (long handled if you have them), gloves and water to drink. Contact is Roger Good, email roger.good@bigpond.com.

Meeting, Monday 10 April, 7.30pm: 'Natural landscape rehabilitation - techniques and approaches', by Dr Roger Good. This is a natural follow-on from last month's meeting but is focussed on natural ecosystems. The meeting will be held at Bywong Community Hall – Birriwa Rd (Off Macs Reef Rd).

Last month's meeting focussed on landscape design using sustainable materials. Further information on this topic may be found on the following websites:

- Sustainable Landscape Materials brochure <http://www.aila.org.au/environment/materials-01.htm>
- Other related information <http://www.aila.org.au/environment/DEFAULT.HTM>

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

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Nature Notes – March 2006

Jo Walker

This first month of autumn has been rather hot and dry for March, until the storm a few weeks ago. It was nice to see rain again, but it came down so hard that its main outcome was topping up the dams rather than getting much moisture into the soil – I had frothy rivers running both sides of the house, and a lot of soil from the garden area is now down by the creek.

The rain was sufficient to fill up the little pond right at the bottom of my land where a number of fat little tadpoles were struggling to survive. In the week before the rain, I had an American visitor staying here. She was quite happy to help me to top up the little pond every morning before we went out and was thrilled, the day before she left, to see two tiny but fully formed frogs by the water's edge.

While we were down by the dam one morning, we disturbed a lone White Ibis. White Ibis are usually gregarious birds and congregate in large flocks – a rather scruffy-looking flock can sometimes be seen foraging at the tip on Macs Reef Road. Maybe this one was hand-reared and never found a flock? I've certainly seen it many times on its own in and around Wamboin, and it seems to survive adequately as a lone bird.

Things on the bird front have quietened down now, with most of the young birds now fending for themselves – except for two very large juvenile Sulphur-crested Cockatoos who are still persuading their parents to feed them. A couple of weeks ago, I saw a pair of Stubble Quail on Norton Road. Twenty-odd years ago, these little birds were quite common here, but I hadn't seen any for several years and assumed that this was because our area has become more densely covered with vegetation – Stubble Quail prefer to seek their food in grasslands and stubble fields. But, since that first sighting, I've seen one on Poppet Road and disturbed one on my place, so perhaps the population is building up again here.

Right now, most of the female kangaroos have joeys in their pouches. Little heads are appearing to take their first look at the world and one or two of the joeys are almost ready to start leaving the pouch. Someone asked me, the other day, what the life expectancy of kangaroos is. I've heard that, in a safe place, they can live up to twenty years. Sadly, most of our local ones don't live that long, with cars, shooters, dogs and fences taking their toll. The oldest kangaroo on my place is Kicka, a female I reared. She is now seventeen years old and has reared fourteen joeys of her own. The male joeys move on after a few years, presumably a mechanism to prevent in-breeding, but the females form a loose family group. There were several very old females around when I first came to live here, and all of them lost their last two or three joeys while they were still in the pouch (possibly because they couldn't produce enough milk for them) before themselves succumbing to old age or illness. Kangaroos are intriguing creatures, and it is fascinating to watch the interactions between different personalities within the mob.

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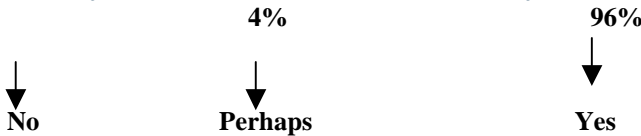
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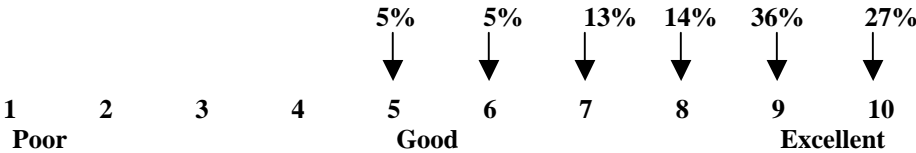
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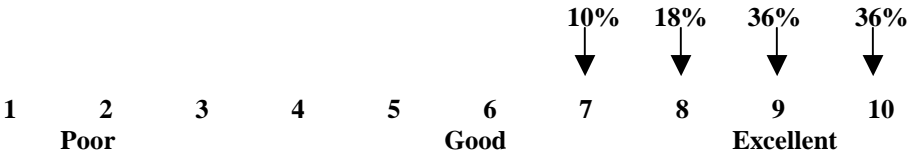
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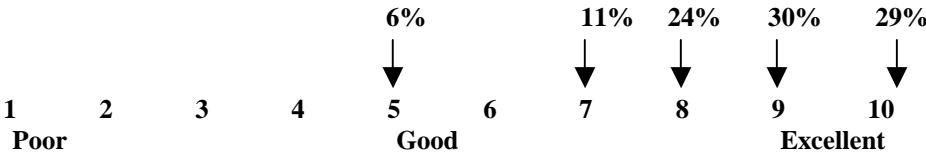
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With complementary therapies such as energy healing becoming more accessible it's important to understand something about what they can offer and to be able to sort out the fact from the fiction. Lynda Atkins explains.

Once considered to be the sole domain of witch-doctors and thought to be only part of ancient cultures it now surprises many people to find that a work colleague, friend or neighbor attends energy healing sessions.

Energy healing comes in many forms such as **Reconnective Healing**, EMF Balancing, **Reiki** and Pranic Healing to name only a few. This isn't just some new age mumbo jumbo. For example, the practice of **Reiki** is said to be over 2500 years old. However, **Reconnective Healing** is relatively new.

This work has no religious connotations nor does it require special naked dances under the full moon. The practitioner does not heal. The healing comes from the patient using the energy that exists throughout the universe. The practitioner is the facilitator.

It's a powerful form of healing. I know this from my own experience of breast cancer and experiences of my family and clients. However, don't assume that this will work for everyone. Energy healers cannot make any guarantees that they can cure your affliction, just as a medical practitioner cannot guarantee they will cure you from cancer.

However, in the June 2005 edition of the National Healers Federation newsletter it was reported that research shows that people who receive energy healing before and after medical procedures recover much faster and the need for drugs is lessened compared with those that don't.

As with every industry you need to make sure you use a qualified practitioner. Check that they are a member of professional associations such as the National Federation of Healers (NFH) or the International Institute of Complementary Therapists (IICT)

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*There is no better time than right now to be happy.
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THE STABLE DOOR by Ian Collet

A GOOD NIGHT OUT -- About 6pm last night (Saturday 25 March) the bride and 3 others and I motored up the gently rising driveway for what turned out to be a great evening – the Lerida Estate /Lark Hill Wine Dinner @ Lerida Estate winery. Lerida Estate sits at the base of the escarpment of the Lake George Range that shadows the western side of Lake George. Anyone who has travelled along the Federal Highway north or south will know that there are 3 wineries along this strip – Lerida, Lake George and Madews. You'll be familiar with the escarpment that rises quickly from a gentle slope at the base to a rather awesome angle from which trees arch sharply upward in search of the sun. The easterly slopes allow the morning sun to hasten the drying of overnight dew and, I believe, encourages vine health. It's probable that the slopes also help protect the vines from strong winds from the west and northwest. Lark Hill, most people will know sits atop the escarpment as you crest Smiths Gap on the Bungendore Road high above the village of Bungendore.

Anyway, back to the dinner. Lerida Estate and Lark Hill came together for this event with the aim of helping the uninitiated and even the already well-informed gain a better understanding of the Lake George/Bungendore "terroir". Throughout the night David Carpenter and his son, Chris from Lark Hill and Anne Caine and Jim Lumbers owners of Lerida Estate along with winemaker Malcolm Burdett and visiting French viticultural adviser Sylvain Pabion offered their respective interpretation of a particular grape variety.

So, as we milled around on the balcony with its dramatic outlook over the vibrantly pastel coloured mystery that is Lake George, as part of a group of 40 or more we reluctantly worked our way through canapès of prosciutto, cheese, trout mousse, tandori chicken and spinach semi-dried tomato crepe accompanied by a glass of rosè from Lerida and then Lark Hill. Pretty good start to the evening - the canapès so eloquently prepared and presented by Evelyn and the rest of the crew of the fabulous Café Schöneegg of Murrumbateman and Lerida and Lark Hill complementing with their wines. I was quickly warming to this – as I am sure were the others.

We were then ushered gently inside the Glen Murcutt designed winery building and seated at tables with 40 or more barrels as a back-drop either side. The wine making process flows through the building and my guess was we were at the barrel maturation end of the building.

Wasn't long before chicken and rabbit balantine arrived most appropriately accompanied by a half glass each of Lerida Estate 2004 and Lark Hill 2005 Chardonnay. I'm not overly fond of this grape variety but these two wines impressed. A little more commentary from the wine owner/maker and, again after a well-timed break Main Course arrived – roast duck breast on a sweet potato and carrot mash, game and pistachio sauce. I'm always a bit disappointed with mash but the one presented was pretty good and, of course, well complemented and washed down with a 2002 Lerida Estate and 2003 Lark Hill Pinot Noir.

Conversation across and up and down the table was becoming quite spirited. David Carpenter was in good form, as was Jim Lumbers. In fact, everyone who was invited to say something, and even those who weren't but did, added to a most warm and entertaining evening.

Anne Caine then asked the visiting Frenchy Sylvain Pabion who is helping out at Lerida to say a few words – which he did – goddamn it. Only takes a few words to be uttered by a native Frenchman and the bride goes to water. When Sylvain sat down after his thankfully relatively few utterances, the bride quickly reassembled herself as the cheese and fruit platters arrived at the table. Clover Creek brie, Jarlsberg, Watsonia Vintage cheddar and Blue Castello with fresh and dried fruits, grapes, strawberries, dried white figs and walnuts and the final wines for the night, a pour each of the same vintage ie 2004 Lerida Estate and the Lark Hill Shiraz Viognier. Quite fascinating how a touch of viognier lifts the shiraz to soften the palate and provide a long savoury tannin finish.

Coffee and tea and then it was time for a wee spot of *pigeage* – ie using a plunger to submerge the "cap" of skins and grape solids which is kept in contact with the fermenting wine to increase extract during the skin fermentation stage. I understand these days it is done mechanically or by recycling the juice over the "cap". Early day versions you'll perhaps be more familiar with ie the old foot stomping method or *pigeage à pied*.

Seemed time to depart after a particularly zealous amateur pigeageur *-n'était pas moi* – sent a few bright red splashes the way of a particularly well...um...dressed young lady. To Lerida Estate, Lark Hill and Café Schöneegg and their hard-working staff - a brilliant, non-pretentious, illuminating night. Our group enjoyed themselves as I am sure did others at the gathering. For information on upcoming events in which Lerida Estate, Lark Hill and Café Schöneegg may be involved during the Wine Harvest and Weereewa festivals, you may like to check out respective web-sites.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL BYWONG CAR BOOT SALE: Yes, Sunday 26 March, the Bywong Community Association has done it again. Beaut weather, lots of sellers and huge numbers of buyers – t'was a very busy car boot sale indeed. Given the kilos of steak, onions, bacon and eggs the Wamboin Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade served and with only a few cans of soft drinks remaining, the 2006 Bywong Car Boot Sale seemed to be an outstanding success. Hopefully, with the educational initiative of the Fire Brigade in recreating the speed and terror of a domestic kitchen fire, everyone went home with something.

