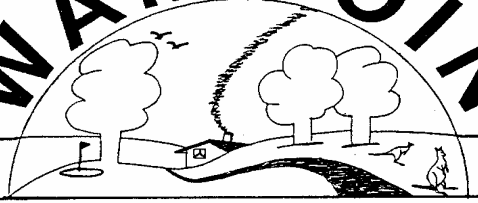


WAMBOIN

COMMUNITY  ASSOCIATION

The Whisper

March 2007 CIRCULATION: 1085

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 2007 Whisper the deadline is Sunday, March 25, 2007, 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	Helen Montesin	President	6238-3208
Bywong Community Assn	Judith Miller	President	6236-9321.
Fire Brigade	Cliff Spong	Captain	040-999-1340 bh 6236 9220 ah
Wamboin Playgroup	Leanne Quick	Convener	6238 3435
Sutton School Playgroup	Laura Taylor	Convener	62369662
Landcare	Roger Good	President	6236-9048
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison	Bungendore	6238-1333
Breastfeeding Assoc.	Belinda Dennis	Community Educator	6236 9979
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
Justice of the Peace	Margaret Fletcher	JP	6238-1211
Wamboin Scout Group	Peter Harrison	Contact Person	6238-3525
Wamboin Guides	Rosemary Riley	Contact Person	6241-6565
Wamboin Pony Club	Maureen Purdie	Contact Person	6238-3343
Gearys Gap Pony Club	Leigh-Anne Barlow	Secretary	6238-3376
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
Claire Ayling	WWOW Group	Convener	6238-3347

THE YOUNG WAMBOIN ENTREPRENEURS

Ashleigh Caird, babysitting	6238 0746.
Deanne Brucic, babysitting & petsitting	6238-1884
Ellen Smith, petsitting (experienced with horses)	6238-3115
Fiona Skea, babysitting	6238-3290
Rebecca Purdie, petsitting	6238-3343
Frank Deveson, bicycle maintenance	6238-3294
John Brennan, babysitting and petsitting.....	6238 3472
Elena Sutcliffe, petsitting and babysitting	6238-3228
Gabrielle Simpkin & Nicolette Neveu-Abramczuk, petsitting	6238-3600

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

Land Valuations – New land valuation have been issued for Palerang shire and they will be used for the 2007-8 rates. – **the higher your valuation the higher your rates!** You have 60 days in which to object to your valuation if you believe it is too high. The WCA believes that many Wamboin/Bywong valuations are excessive and there are some systemic problems in the way the valuations have been calculated. See the article later in the Whisper for details of the WCA findings and to find out how to object to your valuation.

Wamboin Community Association AGM – The next WCA meeting will be the AGM on **20th March**. All the executive positions are open for nomination. Please come along and contribute to the future of Wamboin. I would like to thank the committee and members for all their help and support throughout the past year.

Telstra – We are still trying to get Ian Peters from Telstra to come and speak at a WCA meeting to give us an update on what is happening with regard to mobile phone coverage and broadband in Wamboin. It is 2 years since he promised us better services and while broadband is now available in some areas, there has been no improvement to mobile phone coverage.

Clean-up Australia Day – is on Sunday 4th March from 9:00am till noon. Please register at the Bingley Way hall to help out with this really important community event.

Wamboin Produce Markets –The markets just seem to get better all the time. The next markets will be on **17th March** from 9:00am till noon and are sure to have lots of great local produce.

Fireman's Ball – Keep 2nd June free in your diary for the Fire Brigade's annual ball. The theme for this year is "007 – Your licence to come as whoever you secretly admire". Wow, the possibilities are endless!

Hall extension – Special thanks to Lofty and his team for all their hard work on the hall extension. They have done a great job. The roof is now on and the windows are installed.

WCA Electronic Noticeboard – Residents are continuing to subscribe to the noticeboard. It is a great way to keep up with issues of community interest and I encourage everybody to subscribe. To subscribe, simply send an email message (doesn't need any subject or content) to Wamboin_Noticeboard-subscribe@yahoo.com.au.

Calendar of events –If you have any events that you would like included in April's Whisper, please contact John van der Straaten (ph: 6238 3590). -- Helen Montesin (helen.montesin@canberra.edu.au)

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WWOW-Wonderful Women of Wamboin

Monday mornings sees the carpark of St Andrews Church in Poppet Road bulging at the seams and the chattering from within is far noisier than the Wamboin magpies. The WWOW group continues to expand and this month we have welcomed visitors to the area from overseas and interstate; if you are having family members to stay, they are more than welcome to come along to meet some local people and enjoy Wamboin hospitality.

The trip to Sydney was a great success; a long day but great fun. Thanks go to the 'Sutton Sew and Sews' for including us and Stevens coaches in Bungendore for the excellent mode of travel (and the great videos on the way home).

The patchwork project is off and running and everyone is beginning to feel quite a sense of achievement. Interestingly enough, when I visited the Canberra Show this week I was handed a pamphlet from Alzheimer's Australia (should I have felt offended!!), which encouraged people to "Mind Your Mind". On reading the pamphlet it struck me that within the WWOW group we are doing just this;the walking on Mondays and Fridays, the taking up of new hobbies and the social involvement and interaction with a lovely group of people.

We welcome any people who wish to join this worthwhile group and we meet at 10am on Mondays at St Andrews. The walkers amongst us are looking really fit, but all levels of walkers are encouraged to come along - the walk on Monday leaves at 9am and on Friday at 8am. With the welcome onset of cooler weather we are hoping numbers will rise and the traffic along Norton Road will begin to adhere to the 80km speed limit!

If you have any queries at all please feel free to contact Claire Ayling on 62383347 or Moira Power on 62383208

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Notes from St Andrews

Life is very busy at St Andrews. The Rev'd Peter Grundy is again holding the Lenten study group on Tuesday evenings at the church beginning at 7.30pm. Peter is an excellent speaker and the annual event is proving to be a informative and interesting event in the lead up to Easter. The Easter services will be Good Friday and Easter Sunday both beginning at 9am. Peter is also giving an interesting insight into the Da Vinci Code and the response from the church. This is advance information for the service which will be the third Sunday in April (15th).

For the month of March the services will be on the 4th (Matins) and the 18th (Holy Communion) beginning at 9am. We welcome all visitors and local people who may want to join this friendly and welcoming group in Wamboin.

For further details call Robyn Robertson on 62383202.

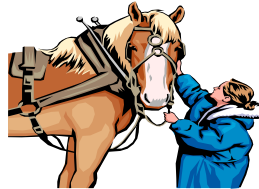
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For more information, please
call Melanie at Busy Bottoms
Nappy Express on 6238 1816

NEW CLASSIFIEDS

Since moving to Wamboin in 1998 we have experienced numerous problems with both our power and telephone supply. Nearly every time there is a storm (or sometimes if it is just raining) our power will go out and the phone line will go dead. It can take anything from a few hours to a few days to re-connect the phone lines. We are interested in getting in touch with anyone else who is experiencing these problems on a regular basis. Please contact us on: ewan.ward@defence.gov.au or 62383163. Thank-you. -- Sue and Ewan Ward

Occasional Babysitter - Mature adult available most evenings and some daytime for occasional babysitting in the Wamboin/Bywong area. Phone Nora 62303305 or 0431862853

Basic Gardening service – keen, reliable person available to mow lawns, tidy gardens and develop and maintain compost. Phone Martin 62303305 **Wanted: Chook wire** in reasonable condition that is no longer wanted– not rusty or too damaged. Can collect. Phone Martin 62303305.

'007', Who do you secretly admire?!! Your licence to come as Wamboin Rural Fire Service Ball is to be held on Saturday 2nd June. Keep this date free. More details regarding tickets etc to follow in the next Whisper.

The annual (nearly) Gordon Summer Nine Hole golf competition is to be held on Sunday 25th March. Where: 879 Norton Road. When: Shotgun start at 12:30pm. Cost: \$5 per player All welcome. Enquiries to 62383062.

LONG RUNNING CLASSIFIEDS

WCA Electronic Noticeboard – Residents are continuing to subscribe to the noticeboard. It is a great way to keep up with issues of community interest and I encourage everybody to subscribe. To subscribe, simply send an email message (doesn't need any subject or content) to **Wamboin_Noticeboard-subscribe@yahoo.com.au**.

Tractor, MF35 petrol, under axle front blade, ripper, 4'0" slasher, jib crane, offset disc harrow, Crump spreader, 5 tine chisel plough, back bucket, caryall - \$8500 the lot. **4 two drawer single beds**, \$15 each – mattresses to go to the tip if not required. Ph, 6238 3329.

CHOOKS WANTED – Any age & roosters. Phone Frank on 6297-3523 to arrange collection.

Maths and Science tutoring K-10. Diagnostic testing. Encouraging, expert coaching. Please contact Judy Shellard, [BSc(Hons) Dip Ed], Phone 62383050

MATHEMATICS COACHING: All levels and all years catered for by an experienced teacher with special expertise in college levels, including the International Baccalaureate. Please contact Judy Dalla on 6236 9990.

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. Discounts apply for Wamboin/Bywong residents. Please phone Cherrie 0418 621 462 for further information.

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

FOR HIRE from the Wamboin Community Association: GAS BBQ - Party Size, Portable, \$30 (includes gas) together with \$30 cleaning bond, both payable on collection. Cleaning bond will be refunded if BBQ is returned clean. Enquiries - Joan Mason 62 383 258.

Trestles and chairs are available for hire by local residents. Hire rates are: Trestle \$10ea and chairs \$1.50 ea. Price does not include delivery or pick-up charges. Available from the Wamboin Community Hall, 112 Bingley Way. Must be returned in clean servicable condition. All damages are responsibility of the hirer. Equipment must be tied securely on trailer etc. when taken (otherwise they don't go.) Time of pick-up and returned MUST be adhered too (I don't live at the Hall!) -Joan Mason, 62383258.

FOR HIRE: WAMBOIN COMMUNITY HALL. Bookings arranged by Joan Mason 6238 3258.

Local Residents \$70, Bond \$200. Non Resident \$125, Bond \$250. The Hall is not available for teenage or 21st functions.

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.

Steve Whan should be careful what he 'welcomes'

by Colin Brammall

(I am a small landholder Director of the Braidwood RLPB)

Steve Whan's welcoming of the State Government review of the Rural Lands Protection Board's (RLPB) rating system is a two-edged axe that might chop off some of his voters. The review is being conducted by former National Party MP Richard Bull, whose appointment gives Steve Whan's Labor Government an appearance of political even-handedness on this matter.

But the even-handedness required in this is between large and small landholders - between graziers and lifestylers/retirees/bush blockies and the like. If the outcome of a review by a farmers' party person is to impose/confirm/increase a tax on rural residential people, Steve Whan's outspoken support for it will backfire.

Of course, the election will be over by the time the review is completed, so perhaps Mr Whan might like to give us now his hopes for the outcome of the review. He says he listened to his constituents and took their concerns to the Minister. I hope he listened to all his constituents.

Steve Whan got it wrong when he said minimum rateable areas around the State range from 10ha to 4ha. That's true of about half of them - the rest range from 20ha to 400ha.

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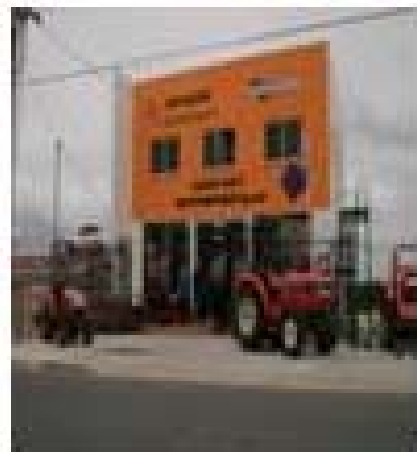
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WAMBOIN MARKET

Saturday 17 March 2007 9-12.00
Community Hall, Bingley Way

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CAMPBELL
PAGE



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HOW TO OBJECT TO YOUR LAND VALUATION

The Valuer Generals Department issued new land valuations for Palerang Shire in early January. The new 2006 valuations will be used to calculate rates for the next 3 years, starting in 2007-8 (2003 valuations were previously used). **Your land valuation has a direct impact on your rates – the higher the valuation the higher your rates!**

Land owners can object to their valuation if they believe it is wrong. Objections must be lodged within 60 days of receipt of the valuation notice. The final date for objection is printed on the valuation notice (23 March 2007 for most of Wamboin).

The Wamboin Community Association has been investigating land valuations for several months and found that

- All the valuations analysed have gone up from the 2003 values which is contrary to the depressed property market
- The increases aren't uniform across the whole area (as they were in previous years), with valuations in some areas going up a lot more than those in others
- Some of the valuations are way above the price of vacant land sold in Wamboin/Bywong in 2005-6 (information off www.allhomes.com.au) and similar properties in the sales report used to generate the valuations

Further investigation found that Wamboin valuations were done on 2 dates

- The valuations done on 14th November 2006 were reasonably consistent with both the properties in the GVSR and vacant land sales
- Those done on 5th October 2006 were valued much higher than the properties in the GVSR and vacant land sales
- This is indicative of a systemic error in the valuation process

In Bywong, valuations were done on 5th October

- The valuations for small properties (<4H) were reasonable consistent with both the properties in the GVSR and vacant land sales
- Those for larger properties (>4H) were valued much higher than the properties in the GVSR and vacant land sales

There are a number of grounds for objecting to a land valuation. These are detailed in the Valuation Objection Kit which can be obtained

- online at www.lands.nsw.gov.au
- by calling the Valuation Call Centre on 1800 110 038

The criteria for objecting to a land valuation are limited. In particular, the following are invalid supporting information and won't be considered in determining an objection

- Comparison of land values with other land values
- Comparison to prior land values
- Comparison with median and average land values
- Method of valuation
- Your personal circumstances
- Liability for rates and taxes
- Encumbrances

Valid supporting information for objection includes

- Sales evidence
 - Sales prices of comparable properties from the valuing year
 - Need to be for specific sales, not median or average and not asking prices of properties on the market
 - Need to include the address of the property, the sales price and the date of the sale
 - WCA has compiled a list of 19 vacant land sales in Wamboin/Bywong for 2005-6 (source: www.allhomes.com.au)
 - The General Valuation Sales Report (GVSR) for your property (can be obtained from Department of Lands – contact details above)
 - The Wamboin GVSR covers a broad area which with a wide range of land types and uses
 - Wamboin is not comparable to Royalla which has been marketed as an exclusive sub-division close to Tuggeranong (WCA has compiled a list of 13 vacant land sales in Royalla for 2005-6)
 - Properties of more than 16H should not be included with smaller properties because under Palerang Council zoning, they can generally be sub-divided
 - Large properties (64.76 to 75.96H) should not be included with rural residential properties (<20H) as they are generally productive farming land and not comparable
 - The adjusted land value should not be more than the purchase price, as is the case for 3 Bankers Rd, Bywong
- Features of the land
 - Including location, nearby development, land surface, soil type, land size and shape and views
 - Wamboin/Bywong is generally very rocky, with poor soil and limited value for primary production and as such is not comparable to other areas with more productive land
 - Some properties have erosion problems, are hilly or don't have scenic views etc...
- Concession and allowances
- Permissible use of the land

If you need help to lodge an objection or you would like a copy of the information that WCA has collated, please contact Helen Montesin on 6238 3208 or John van der Straaten on 6238 3590. – by Helen Montesin

Singers Wanted

The Warblers are in need of some more voices. If, sadly, you sing alone in the shower, but secretly nurture a desire to sing with others, come along to the church at the corner of Norton and Poppet Rds and join our ranks. We would gladly welcome any voices and any ideas to get a group together to sing for the sheer joy of it ... all sorts of music. We meet on a Thursday at 8pm until Easter. After that we will meet on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm. Exceptions will be made when clashes occur with WCA meetings. - Christine Davidson on 6238-3277 or Jill Gregory on 6238-3575

Rainfall and Temperatures in Wamboin 32 year statistics from the Robertsons

Feb rainfall to 22/2 .. 44 mm (av...51.2mm Feb 2006..48.75mm)	2007 rainfall to 22/2.....57.5mm (2006...172.75mm)
Av March rainfall.....56.9mm	Driest March3.0mm (1986, 1998)
Wettest March..... 56.9mm (1989)	Wettest March day..... 160.0mm (15/3/89)
Hottest March day35 degrees C (8/3/83)	Coldest March day13 degrees C (14/3/94)
Coldest March night..... 3 degrees C (28/3/99)	



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MY IRRESPONSIBLE BOSS.....

BY PHILLIP MACHIN

Oh what bliss. I've already had my morning sniff around the property (and off next door, but nobody knows that). The Boss leaves me out all day and all night. He hasn't a clue where I go. I'm just there when he wakes up to get my fodder. Found a lovely bunch of Roos this morning. What fun. The Boss thinks its good exercise, but I know better. I've Googled it. They get seriously damaged. Even though I can't catch them they will slow up and die anyway.....from cardiomyopathy. How about that? I'm a natural predator, so they're real frightened of me. My Boss doesn't know that. The other day I had a great chase and got a young roo bound up in a dam. I went in after it, but it got the better of me and I had to back off. A lot of people think they are attacking us dogs, but it's really the other way around. Don't tell, but!

I got a great trick. The next door neighbour has some fantastic lizards in her garden. As big as me. But I can break their backs with one fell shake of my head. I'm lucky. They're rare as hen's teeth, but I know where they are. Her ducks are good fun too. They like their bums bit. Lots of feathers there. Saw a snake the other day down at the creek a few K away. Gave that one a wide berth. They can do serious damage. Cost my Boss heaps to get the cat sorted out last year.

But you know what's the best thing? Me and my pals get together occasionally and go on a night hike. Just like in the scouts. We know a great place to chase sheep. They're fun. We always end up getting a few. They just get run off their feet and give up. What a feast.....guts and all.

What a Boss. The neighbour rang up the other day and complained about me. But he just shouted them down. It wasn't my dog he said. But I know different. He's got no idea where I go. Got in trouble last week. Cost the Boss a bomb. Rangers got me and held me for ransom. Cost the Boss a fine.....and a red face. He didn't like me that night.

Oh Yea. I've Googled the Law too. And me and my Boss are doing everything wrong. What a gag. But really I do want to do the right thing. If only my Boss just took me for a walk and said hello occasionally. I'd even like my own secure run and a comfy place to doss down. I need to feel safe too. And that next door neighbour.....I heard him say that he would shoot me next time.

Please look after me better.

(picture courtesy of <http://www.ace-clipart.com/dog-clipart-01.html>)



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Wamboin 15 years ago, from the Whisper, March 1992 , Ed: Judy Frazer-Jans circulation 265

“Clean up Wamboin Day Sunday 1 March 1992 : More than 120 children and adults scoured over 35 kilometres of roads for the litter that had been dropped since Clean up Australia Day in March last year. Teams at the Hall cleaned up around the hall and sorted rubbish into recycleables and that destined for the tip in Tony Fisher’s truck. The feature of this, our third Clean up Australia Day, was that the quantity of rubbish collected was only half that collected last year. Our efforts, both collection and education, are paying off. Will we be able to have a nil return next year? -- Geoff Wines, Convenor”

Wamboin Playgroup

Playgroup has resumed for the new school year. We meet every Tuesday at 10.30 am during term time, at the Community hall in Bingley Way. We welcome parents with children from newborns to five year olds to share a few hours together in a relaxed setting, enjoy a chat and a morning cuppa, and engage with our children at play. The Wamboin Playgroup operates under the umbrella of the ACT Playgroups Association. We have a safe, imaginative playground, cubby house and hall where the children may participate in craft activities, music, story time and play.

Last year we were fortunate to obtain a grant of \$400 from the Palerang Council. This money was used to provide shade cloth for the sand pit and to purchase some small chairs. We had several excursions during the year, an Easter egg hunt at one of our homes and gathered for a picnic at Molongolo Gorge. Birthdays were celebrated and we all enjoyed watching our children grow and develop.

We look forward to meeting you and your children at our Tuesday morning sessions. We can guarantee a warm welcome. -- Leanne Quick , Convenor

<h2>BRUCIC EXCAVATIONS</h2> <p>Trucks, Bobcats and Excavators For Hire Rock Hammer, Auger and Pallet Forks Roadworks House Sites Sheds & Garages Water Tanks Footings Sand & Gravel Landscape Supplies Supply and Install Septic Tanks and Absorption Trenches Enquires Phone Darko Phone 6238 1884 Mobile 0408 682 191</p>	<h2>TREVOR BARKER & ASSOCIATES</h2> <p>SOLICITORS</p> <p>Trevor J. Barker Solicitor Mike Cramsie Solicitor Caroline Bragg Property Clerk</p> <h3>General law practice Canberra & NSW</h3> <p>379 Weeroona Dr via Bungendore & Second Floor, Dickson Chambers, Dickson Place Dickson ACT 2602</p> <p>PH: 6248 8085 <i>Your local Legals.</i></p> 
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Wamboin Muse

by Jill Gregory



Recently I had cause to ring a mobile phone company on behalf of a younger family member who is overseas. I obediently followed all the prompts, but did pause to wonder why a simple phone call had aroused such excitement from the sweet young voice on the end of the line. I thought she may have been rehearsing for *The Young and the Restless*. Then, when I was finally connected to something that was living and breathing, I had the greatest difficulty decoding what he was saying. He was speaking my mother tongue, I believe, but at lightning speed and with words that I had never before encountered. I felt old and bewildered.

Apart from the "foreign" language, I am puzzled as to how anyone can get so excited about a mobile phone. I see them as a convenient tool, at best, and an intrusion, at worst. In my day we had yo yos and a bag of marbles to keep us amused and we were told it was rude not to look at someone when you spoke to them. But times change and so does the English language. This fact has become clearly evident in our little part of the world. No longer do you greet your neighbour with a "Giddy", or a "How are you". Now we say, "Wotja get?" And ... what did **you** get?

Like everyone else, I have been watching the afternoon skies build massive bubbles of cloud, then darken ominously only to slip away to the north or the south or to the east or the west and leave us in brilliant sunshine. We would be teased with a few heavy drops or a distant rumble of thunder but nothing more. I began to think we were being punished for daring to challenge the uneven and exorbitant Council rates hike. But last night we got it. Not a flood, not even "heavy soaking rain", but enough to see it in the rain gauge without your glasses. Already I can hear the grass stirring and the kangaroos sighing with relief that soon gladioli and canna leaves can be crossed off their impoverished menu. Even the magpies can dare to imagine a fat juicy worm instead of dog pellets.

I wouldn't live anywhere else...mind you I began to have some doubts for a while... but now the rain has found us. What a welcome change! (*Wamboin Muse ends*)

Tourist Mecca. Spotted in the vicinity of Canning Close . . . a car load of well heeled German tourists. They'd been told to come to Wamboin if they wanted to see kangaroos. Had they heard about our mobs of kangaroos on the grapevine, or is the word "wamboin" in the German English dictionary listed as meaning "an Aboriginal word for kangaroo"?

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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)

THE FIRE SEASON HAS NOW STARTED.

NO FIRE PERMITS WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS FIRE SEASON.

THIS MEANS NO BURNING OFF IN THE OPEN WILL BE ALLOWED THIS FIRE SEASON

RING 000 TO REPORT FIRES OR SMOKE SIGHTINGS.

From the Captain's Desk

I hope that the predictions of some long range weather forecasters remain on track. Several opinions have been expressed that the week of February 23 would make the beginning of some much sought after rain. So far, it looks like a good beginning. We can only hope that it continues and proves a previous captain of the brigade right. His profound statement that "It always rains at the end of a drought" may yet be realised!



We have had a reasonably quiet month during February. On one day several fires were reported being started by lightning strikes and so we had to spread our resources while other brigades were called in to assist. One fire that was threatening to cause some major headaches was contained through the quick decisive action of the two-person crew of our smallest fire fighting vehicle. A containment line around the fire was quickly constructed using hand-held rake hoes before the other brigades arrived. Another fire a few kilometres away, also started by a lightning strike, in about a hectare of open and hilly grassland. The fire was well contained by the local residents before several crews from the Wamboin and Bungendore brigades could arrive to make sure it was completely blacked out. The picture shows Deputy Captain Darrell Tipton examining what remained of the tree that took the lightning strike.



We have also spent some time chasing some smoke sightings and attending to a power pole that caught fire. The interesting thing about the pole fire, apart from the fact that it luckily did not cause any significant damage in the paddock where it was located, was that the problem with the pole was likely to have caused a blackout the day before, but the cause had not been found. While at the scene with the Country Energy crew a young boy mentioned he had seen flashes in the paddock the previous night. It seems that if the pole had not caught fire, and the electricity crew not needed to check it out, the electricity company would have had to spend a lot more time trying to find the problem from the previous day.

It is pleasing to report that quite a number of people have joined the brigade over the past few months. People living in our brigade area and even in the ACT have applied to join us. Importantly not all these people have volunteered to do the fire fighting but are keen to help with our support crew, a vital part of the workings of the brigade. It is great to have the new members and I welcome them all.

In case you might be wondering, the strange looking large box near the dam behind our Community Hall is the new enclosure to house the pump for refilling the brigade's tankers at the fire shed. The picture shows Peter Greenwood making sure it doesn't fall off the back of Darrell Tipton's truck! We are grateful to Peter for his time and efforts in arranging and ACTEW for the donation of the surplus electricity sub-station enclosure. Perhaps we need to have a competition to see how it could be painted to blend it into the Wamboin community.



While many people believe that the role of their local fire brigade is to put out fires and attend emergency incidents, we believe that we also have another important job to do for our community. I am sure that our faithful reader knows that I have often tried to point out some of the facts of life for us rural residents, especially when it

comes to emergency incidents involving fire. Whether we like it or not, if a fire threatens our property or if a fire breaks out on our property, it will take time for the emergency services to respond. We live in a rural area and that time will be longer than if we live in town. The fact of rural life is that we have to plan for what could happen in the first 30 to 40 minutes if a bush or grass fire threatens. This is about the average time it takes for any emergency service to respond to most properties in our area. I stress this is an average. The response time will also depend on the time of day and the day in the week the incident happens.



Even though we are often assisted by the full-time NSW Fire Brigade and other volunteer rural fire brigades, residents in our area need to plan for and understand what they should do before and during those crucial minutes. This is even more imperative if a house fire occurs. The time for a house to be fully involved in fire can be as short as 7 minutes! As we have been urged, we need to be alert to these realities rather than being alarmed by them.

Members of your Brigade have been working on several strategic plans to help residents in our brigade area improve their preparedness and understanding of fire related incidents. During the "off" season will be refining the plans to make sure we can spread the important messages and provide advice and assistance to as many

residents as we can. In the meantime why not come to the now-famous Bywong Car Boot Sale on the 25th of March. Not only could you pick up a bargain, or sell some of your treasures, but you will be able to get a lot of information about fires and how to prevent them. You will also be able to see your new fire fighting tanker and other brigade vehicles. We will also be putting on some controlled fire fighting demonstrations, conditions permitting.

If the prospect of having a half-hour flight around our area appeals to you or if you have ever wondered how your roof looked or you simply get a buzz having a ride in the helicopter shown in the photograph, have we got an offer for you! One of our local residents would like to show their appreciation to the members of your rural fire brigade by offering a half-hour flight in her helicopter as first prize in a raffle being jointly run by the Wamboin and Bungendore brigades. The tickets are \$5. First prize is a half-hour free helicopter flight, 2nd prize is a knapsack spray and 3rd prize is 2 bottles of wine. There are a limited number of tickets being sold and the raffle will be drawn on the 30th of March. Winners will be notified by telephone and the results will be published in the next edition of *The Wamboin Whisper* and *The Bungendore Mirror*. The proceeds of the raffle will be used to purchase the fittings to be installed behind the fire shed for the new water delivery system for refilling our fire tankers and for fire protection for the shed and the Community Hall. If you would like a ticket, we will be selling them at the fire shed between 2 and 4 pm on the 10th of March, at the Wamboin Community Markets on the 17th and at the Bywong Car Boot Sale on the 25th of March.

THE CAPTAIN'S LIST	Businesses supporting the Wamboin Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade	
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GEARY'S GAP/WAMBOIN LANDCARE - MARCH 2007 EVENTS

by Cathy Cook

There are several Landcare events coming up this month:

Propagation Session: Saturday 3 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 4 March 9.00-11.30am. Meet at the corner of Macs Reef and Newington Roads, Wamboin. Landcare has been assigned the road section from Newington Rd back towards Bungendore Road. Please bring gloves, hats, water and secateurs for removing feral pines. Contact is Roger Good, email roger.good@bigpond.com.

Meeting, Monday 12 March, 7.30pm: Planting techniques. Local plant and weeds expert **Geoff Butler** will talk about planting preparation and techniques in a variety of situations found in Wamboin and similar areas. This is perfect timing, given it has started to rain again and the annual car boot plant sale is coming up. The meeting will be held at Bywong Community Hall – Birriwa Rd (Off Macs Reef Rd).

Car boot sale, Sunday 25 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.

During last month's meeting on Wildlife and Woodlands, Rebecca Montague-Drake noted that Custodians of 'Wildlife Friendly Farms':

- Prevent clearing of remnant vegetation- *plantings are not a substitute, they are complementary;*
 - Conduct fox-baiting- *consider conducting a coordinated fox-baiting program with your neighbours;*
 - Manage woodland remnants- *e.g. weed control, enhancement plantings and management or exclusion of grazing pressure so as to ensure the regeneration of native grasses, shrubs and trees;*
 - Think beyond 'production' and 'conservation' areas- *include features of 'Wildlife Friendly Farms' (e.g. fallen timber and standing dead trees) in paddocks- not just in woodland remnants;*
 - Have a range of different vegetation types present- *e.g. old growth, regrowth, plantings;*
 - Look to the future- *when today's trees grow old and die- what will be there to replace them?*
- Kathy Cook, Secretary, Ph: 6236 9153, Email: kj.cook@bigpond.net.au



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News from Sutton School

by Gay McNeill

It has been a busy start to the year. Activities away from school have included the annual Infants' Picnic at John Knight Park, our swimming carnival at Dickson and the district swimming at Belconnen. Congratulations to our swimming stars: Fergus Conn, Hamish Driver-Rae, Emma Lock, Wade Fuller, Anna Vennonen, Charles Schaap and Amelia Burton. Moore was the winning House. Students from Years 3 & 4 have been to Camp at Berry and Years 5 & 6 are currently away at their annual camp. Senior students visited Sutton Fire Shed to learn more about the role, organisation and equipment of volunteer fire fighters. Climbing on the fire trucks was a highlight of our visit.

Staff changes for 2007 included the return of teacher Alan Petchell, a new teacher Bruce Scott from Wodonga, and Charmaine Szeremet from Queanbeyan who is working as a teacher's aide. We farewelled Vicki Bingley after many years hard work as our General Assistant.

In the last few months there have been many outdoor changes at the school. A new bathroom and access ramps for students with disabilities have been completed. Underground tanks are now used to store and treat our grey water, the bottom oval has been top dressed and an underground irrigation system is about to be installed.

Sutton School Playgroup again meets every Thursday morning from 9.30 to 12.00. This provides a chance for children to enjoy structured activities whilst parents relax and get to know each other.

Our After School Activity Centre is offering 'Get Fit and Healthy' sessions with coaching in touch football, basketball and hockey.

Parents are busy finalising preparations for our 2007 Fete which has a Country Fair theme. It will be held on Saturday 31st March from 10am – 2pm. Join us for Bush Poetry, Whipcracking, Gumboot throwing, Alpaca Magic and lots of fun fete stalls and games.

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Working Bee at the Hall

by Lofty Mason

There is something very rewarding about taking part in a successful working bee. On Saturday, February 10, a group of guys put the roof on the extension at the Wamboin Hall. There was Charlie Montesin, Hank Berlee, Don Evans, Trent Abell, Pete Harrison, John van der Straaten, Peter Greenwood and Gofor; me. Another valuable asset was Joan Mason who supplied morning tea and lunches for all.

Mike Smith from Mobile Fabrications had supplied, fabricated and erected the framework for not much more than the cost of the metal. Thanks to Charlie for getting Mike on side. We are also indebted to the Fire Brigade for storage, without damage, of the extension windows.

Although there were nuisance rain showers on the day (the first for a long time) we had pressures on to complete the job because I had stored all the roofing material in the Hall. First up the Hall was hired out that evening and the Markets being the following weekend were the added incentive.

Now I, an admitted old f**t, had a few restrictions. Basically I wasn't allowed to do much at all in case I compromised the safe work place. Charlie wouldn't let me on the roof. Hank wouldn't let me cut metal. Pete and John wouldn't let me lift the sheets of roofing. Trent wouldn't let me near electricity. Don always keeps me away from any pop riveter, and Peter kept taking the sharp knife away. Being old does have advantages?

Despite all the 'bosses' on site we managed to form a very cohesive group that worked together so well that there was a panic about finishing way before the planned lunchtime. So I changed my Gofor hat for a cook's apron and hurried the barbeque along so that the time of roof completion matched the start for an early lunch.

But wait, that's not all. After lunch the team was so fired up that they decided to install the windows and protective mesh. Joan even shamed us into cleaning the windows. Then a general clean up, a couple of coldies, and there it was. A very successful working bee that left us all feeling pretty good about life. As that 'feel good' correspondent says: Why would you live anywhere else? Lofty M.

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Feline Aids

by Chris Fowler

A recent article in the Canberra Times [a story about cat overcrowding in a Queanbeyan house] strongly, and incorrectly, suggests that all cats testing FIV positive, have to be euthanased. This information may have come to the reporter from the RSPCA, which appears to have a policy of automatically euthanasing such animals. This is, with respect, a flawed policy, but is probably adopted because of the perceived difficulties of caring for, and re-homing FIV positive cats, and it saves the organisation money by not having to do so. I quote from a recent article on www.catrescue.com.au, and refer interested parties [including the RSPCA] to the further article at www.catchat.org.fiv.html which is one of the most recent, and comprehensive information and references on FIV that is available.

“Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV), also referred to as Feline AIDS, is an infectious disease that attacks certain cells in the cat's immune system. As the virus replicates and spreads, it compromises the body's ability to fight off secondary infections. When a cat is initially infected with FIV they become acutely unwell. After a few weeks they then enter an asymptomatic phase where the cat appears healthy and is able to lead a normal life. This period may last for many years, even for the duration of an average life span. But all the while the virus continues to replicate and destroy more of the immune system.

Eventually the immune system ceases to function completely and can no longer fight opportunistic infections. Once this has occurred, cats display a wide range of symptoms such as weight loss, diarrhoea, chronic secondary infections, and cancer. Sadly this is the final stage of FIV. FIV is most commonly transferred between cats when they fight, because infected cats have large amounts of the virus present in their saliva. Undesexed adult male cats are the most likely to be infected, and through fighting and mating they spread the virus to others.

Once a cat has been infected with FIV they cannot be cured. So it is essential to provide them with quality preventative care and limit their exposure to disease. This means desexing, a trip to the vet at the first sign of illness, a high quality diet, and minimising their contact with other cats. There is now a vaccine to help protect cats from FIV, however it does not provide complete immunisation. The best thing you can do is have your cat desexed. This will stop the behaviours that predispose them to contracting FIV, such as wandering, fighting and breeding.

FIV is not a death sentence, it simply means adjusting your cats life style to support him or her to live with this virus. Through appropriate vet treatment and tender loving care an FIV positive cat can lead a happy life”



Sutton Country Fair

10:00am till 2:00pm

Saturday 31st March 2007



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WAMBOIN GOLF CLUB – FEBRUARY COMPETITION RESULTS

A good turn out for a fine hot February day where the ball ran long but with the usual unpredictable bounce! The trophies were sponsored by Tony and Kerry Fisher with help from Geoffrey and Cassandra. Our thanks to the Fisher family.

The Encouragement award was won by Dean Argaet. (On countback from his Mum!!) Long Drive and nearest the pin winners were; Dave Hubbard, Lofty Mason, Bob Mettam, Joan Mason, Stephen Miners, Larry King and Peter Greenwood 9 Hole comp winner was Ken Gordon on count back from Peter Greenwood

A Grade First Len Ivey with Tim Barter second

B Grade First Tom Argaet who threw caution to the wind by beating his old man Dave into second place by a whopping 9 strokes.

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Sue Gane	Majors Close	20
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Nora Steward	Macs Reef Nwngtn to Rovere	12
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Nature Notes –February 2007

Jo Walker

Some significant rain this month has at last brought back a tinge of green to the Wamboin countryside – still not enough to top up the dams, but a relief from the desert-like conditions we were becoming accustomed to.

There was enough moisture around to stimulate termite and ant movements. One evening, the air was thick with winged termites taking off to establish new nests: the two bats that spent some hours flitting around close to the house definitely seemed to appreciate the sudden feast. The next day, it was the turn of the meat ants. Fat, winged female ants, potential new queens, began emerging from the large nest nearby. Within minutes, a host of birds had mobilized, magpies, currawongs, and even red wattle birds, and began swooping and diving, snapping up the presumably tasty ants. There probably won't be many new ant nests as most of the fliers only rose a few metres before becoming a food item.

The birds have been enjoying the current damp weather in other ways too. During a recent sharp downpour, there were half a dozen sulphur-crested cockatoos, in a tree across the creek, hanging upside down from the branches with their wings outspread enjoying the first bath they'd had for a long time. And on another stormy day, when there were some impressive cumulus clouds rearing into the sky, I watched an eagle using the up-draughts to soar upwards until it was so high as to be barely visible. At that height, it certainly couldn't see any prey below - it looked as if it was flying for the sheer joy of it.

On the subject of flight, while our plant group was walking in Tallaganda Forest recently, two little spiders floated down amongst us. They appeared to be baby male Mouse Spiders. Like some other species of spiders, they disperse as tiny juveniles by 'ballooning'. They spin a small fluffy ball of silk, suspend themselves from it by a long strand and take off on the breeze to find a new home – a very effective dispersal mechanism.

We also noticed some less welcome wildlife there – lots of very hungry little leeches, on the ground and amongst the vegetation, on tree-trunks, everywhere! At least this is one problem we don't have to put up with at Wamboin. There are leeches here, some quite large ones in fact, but they are an aquatic species not taken to wandering around on dry land. They will, of course, attach themselves to anything warm-blooded that puts a hand, paw or foot in the water – their main sources of food are water birds and native wildlife taking a drink from dams and creeks. Cats too – years ago, when we still had water in the creeks, my little cat came back from his habitual afternoon drink in the pool below the house with a very large, still expanding leech attached to his chin.

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LAKE GEORGE DAY VIEW CLUB

Lake George Day VIEW Club will hold its meeting on Tuesday March 20 commencing at 11.30am for a 12 noon start at Rydges Eagle Hawk Resort, Federal Highway, Sutton. Cost \$21. Come along and join us for lunch. Our guest speaker, Fiona Spottiswood will talk about her visit to Bangladesh. New members and guests are always welcome. For bookings please ring Kerry on 6238 0603 by noon Thursday March 15. VIEW - a valued member of The Smith Family. - Lydia Teodorowych

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