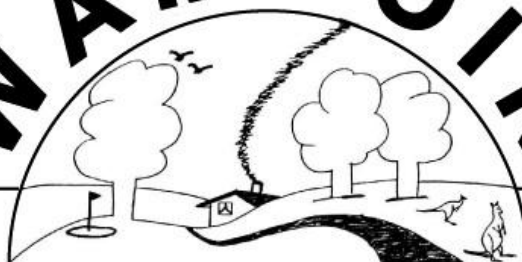


WAMBOIN

COMMUNITY



ASSOCIATION

The Whisper

May 2011

CIRCULATION: 1,225

Wamboin Community Assn:

www.wamboincommunity.asn.au

Bywong Community

www.bywongcommunity.org.au

Fire Brigade:

<http://brigade.wamboincommunity.asn.au>

All proceeds from advertisements after printing costs go to the WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION that started The Whisper as a community newsletter in 1981, and continues to own it. The newsletter is distributed to all letterboxes in Wamboin and Bywong (plus other localities in our fire brigade's area) at the start of each month, except January. Contributions from all residents are encouraged, valued and are the main content of the newsletter. The Editor is Ned Noel, 17 Reedy Creek Place, Wamboin, 2620, phone 6238-3484. Please email contributions to either nednoel@optusnet.com.au or whisper@wamboincommunity.asn.au or mail them. The deadline for the next issue of The Whisper is always the last Sunday of the month, 7 pm, so for the June 2011 issue the deadline is Sunday, 29 May 2011, 7 pm. Instant Colour Press will then multiply 1 copy into more than 1200. Then the new issue will go to the volunteer deliverers 5 days later.

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LOCAL FACILITIES AND CONTACTS

Wamboin Community Assoc.	Peter Harrison	President	6238 3525
Bywong Community	Darryl Bourke	President	6230 3055
Fire Brigade	Andrew Dunn	Captain	0409 991 340 or 6238 1849 ah
Wamboin Markets	Joan Mason	contact	6238 3258
Sutton School Playgroup	Toni Moore	Convenor	6238 3669.
Landcare	Roger Good	President	6236 9048
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison	Bungendore	6238 1333
Emergency Services	NSW Call Centre	Staff	132 500
Emergency Services Admin.	Colin Brown	Controllor	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
Justice of the Peace	Jill Sedaitis	JP	6236 9559
Justice of the Peace	Tony Holland	JP	6238 3762
Wamboin Scout Group	Peter Harrison	contact	6238 3525
Wamboin Pony Club	Robyn Slater	Senior Instructor	6238 3472
Geary's Gap Pony Club	Katarina Biondic	contact	0421 859 917
Wamboin Play Group	Emma Auzins	Convener	6238 3974 or 0417 464 517
Wamboin Hall Bookings	Joan Mason	contact	6238 3258
Church - Anglican	Robyn Robertson	Warden	6238 3202
Christian Prayer Group	Steve & Imelda Taylor	contacts	6238 3220
KYB Bible Study Group	Yvonne Barrett	contact	6230 3539 or 0409 951 388
Golf	Peter Greenwood	Golfer	6238 3358
Injured Wildlife	Wildcare	Helpline	6299 1966
Wonderful Women of Wamboin	Claire Ayling	Convenor	6238 3347
Lake George VIEW Club	Lydia Zielinski	contact	6230 3488
Wamboin Book Group	Alice Scott	Secretary	6238 3178

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

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Fiona Skea	babysitting	6238 3290	Ashleigh Caird	babysitting	6238 0746
Rebecca Purdie	petsitting	6238 3343	Gabrielle Simpkin	babysitting/ petsitting	6238-1335
Elena Sutcliffe	petsitting	6238 3228	Jack & Matilda Whitney	pet care, baby sitting, odd jobs	6238 3059
Alana Stenning	petsitting	6238 3030			

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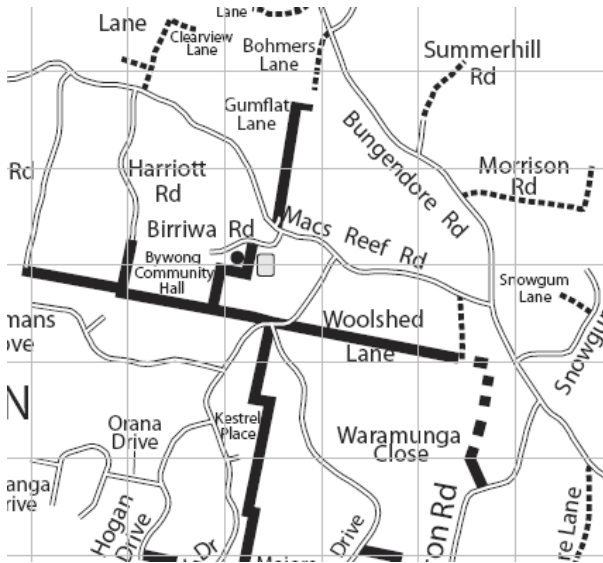
MEET THE CANDIDATES

All five candidates have agreed to address our meeting and answer questions
Bywong Community President Darryl Bourke will be in the chair

Date: Thursday 5th May

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Bywong Hall



Everyone is invited to meet candidates informally over tea or coffee after the formal proceedings

Bywong Hall is in Birriwa Road, off Macs Reef Road just west of the junction with Denley Drive (see map at left)

(Map Courtesy of Paul Brugman)



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Benjamin Gleeson

As president of the Braidwood Literary Institute and Secretary of the Braidwood Urban Landcare Group, I've enjoyed being able to contribute to some great community initiatives. I see a role on Council as an opportunity to make a bigger contribution and to help build a 'Community of Palerang'.



I've been appalled recently by some notable instances of council attempting severe disruptions in one Palerang sub-community or another. The attempt to close the Mac's Reef tip and the removal of 13 jobs from Braidwood are two glaring examples. In both of these cases, council claimed to be acting on behalf of the majority of Palerang citizens to force the sub-community involved to accept the changes. They invoked the economic requirements of an uninformed and disinterested majority as justification for their unrepresentative proposals. I have little space here to outline all of the details of these examples but I'm sure that the parallels in each case are more than coincidence. This is an example of 'divide and rule' from the core of councillors that were involved in both cases.

If we citizens fail to build a 'Community of Palerang', these unrepresentative individuals will continue to behave in this way; stirring suspicions and discontent and always acting on behalf of an unconsulted "majority" to inflict their ideology at any social or environmental cost. There are creative solutions to our problems but at present we have a council whose only response seems to be to reach for the axe. This is an easy solution because it's simple; some of our councillors are clearly too busy with their private interests to have time to seek creative solutions to Palerang's crises or to want to engage in consultation to seek solutions from the community.

In brief: I'm opposed to separate council-wards – three-quarters of our Shire would be 1 ward, with just 3 councillors out of 9 to represent it! Wards will disenfranchise our smaller rural sub-communities. Wards will entrench conflict and division and secret deals in council. I support the retention of the indoor-staff in Braidwood. I'm appalled that some councillors want to gouge so many jobs from a remote rural town in our Shire, without sound economic justification. 90% of the workers involved are country women. I'm also committed to work on the basics – parking and footpaths in Bungendore and a safe way for the elderly and children to cross Wallace Street in Braidwood. Let's finish the LEP too; give developers and the community some ground rules and move on.

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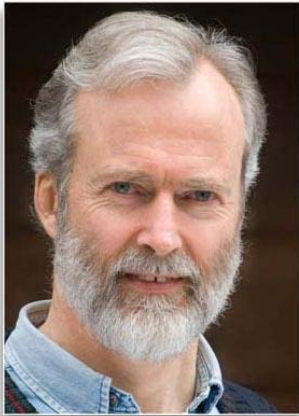
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Pete Harrison

I grew up on the outskirts of Albury, where my father and grandfather operated a family hardware business. I moved to Canberra almost 40 years ago to study chemistry at the ANU, although I ultimately gave up scientific research and followed a career in the IT industry. I retired from my last job, managing a team of engineers responsible for the design and deployment of communications infrastructure throughout the Asia/Pacific region, to spend more time with my family.



I have lived in Wamboin for 15 years and have been involved throughout in various capacities with the local Scout Group and the Wamboin Community Association. I am a member of the Waste Management Working Group that fought for, and is now overseeing the construction of the new waste transfer station on Macs Reef Road. I have been involved with the representation of our community's views to Council since the formation of the Palerang LGA, and have attended almost all the public meetings of the present Council. This, in particular, has allowed me to develop a good understanding of all of the issues that have been before this Council.

I have one fundamental objective as a councillor: to improve Council's record with respect to community engagement. Transparent governance is an essential element of constructive engagement, as, of course, is listening to, and acting on the concerns of individual communities within the shire. Too often I have seen controversy arise through a failure to communicate, either due to a fundamental lack of appreciation for the impact of a decision on an affected community, or simply through glossing over poorly considered 'details'. It is Council's collective responsibility to know how its decisions affect respective communities, and also to be entirely open about how it makes its decisions and manages its assets.

I am also concerned about the lack of genuine progress that has been made in the preparation of the new Palerang Local Environmental Plan (LEP). Having followed its development from the outset, I believe that environmental concerns have too often been compromised to accommodate the interests of individuals who stand to profit from development. The ad hoc manner in which the document is being modified also raises doubts about the integrity of the ultimate product. While I have made representations from the public gallery, on behalf of our community, I can provide much more constructive input as a councillor.

A vote for Pete Harrison on May 14th will be a vote for a community voice. (For more information, please visit my website at www.peteharrison.id.au.)

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Mark Horan

To the people of Wamboin and Bywong,

I am writing this letter to once again ask for your support, to elect a consultative, experienced person to represent you on the Palerang council.

I have spent half my life representing the views and aspirations of people that have shared my interests though sporting, business and community organisations. I have been involved with the Rural Fire Service for many years, serving the past two as captain in my local brigade.



My main aim in running for Council again is to inject a little more common sense into the council meetings and the decisions that form the future of our rural shire. During the two years that I have been off the council, I am still contacted regularly by residents who have fallen foul of council regulations. Often, many of these problems can be corrected by pointing people in the right direction, but there is a trend emerging that catches the unaware, that can be costly and socially unnecessary. I am keen to return to council to be able to stand up for the individual.

It is important to bring the LEP to conclusion. We residents need certainty, local businesses need certainty and the LEP is the roadmap that will provide the direction for our shire to grow in the future. When the draft is released for public consultation, the most important part of the LEP process starts, the public get to say how they want place they live, to work. I am keen to consult with you, to work to achieve the outcomes that will enhance our rural amenity.

While I understand that some of you may have the desire to vote parochially or along political lines, there is really little place for either in local council. Palerang is 5500sq kilometres in size and we are all here together.

I have the experience, the knowledge and the desire to be a strong representative for you on the Palerang council, what do you want in a councillor?

If you would like to see what I am about, you can visit my web site www.markhoran.com.au."

Mark Horan



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John McGrath

The Australia First Party has nominated Mr. John McGrath of Mongarlowe for the by-election for Palerang Council. Mr. McGrath has had decades-long connections with the Braidwood district and has worked there since the 1970's in farming and other business. John says:



"In this campaign, Australia First Party will stand for:

"(i) For Citizens' initiated referendum at council level; I want to see people be able to propose Council policy and by-laws directly so as to maintain democratic control over their representatives.

"(ii) Against the NSW Department. of Planning scheme to expand the population of Palerang by 69% by 2036. I am sure this will this be immigration-driven. Immigration is no friend of lifestyle, the environment or our heritage and is surely a policy whose time haspassed.

"(iii) Against the water takeover plans of the Murray Darling Basin Authority. The water plans threaten to destroy Australian farming and regional communities. The UN Treaty RAMSAR upon which this is based is acceded to by the major parties, Greens and others. I stand opposed and will work with all to win against the government.

"(iv)To make Palerang more friendly towards road transport. I note that farmers depend on the trucking industry and while I believe in the extension of rail wherever possible, Council must try to protect this vital industry.

"(v) For greater autonomy for local Councils over the NSW Department of Planning. I want to see domestic planning decisions made for the benefit of people."

Australia First Party's John McGrath is the only candidate in this poll offering any sort of programme to voters.

John continued:

"I do not say anything against the other candidates. Quite the contrary. However, there are community needs in Palerang and deep issues that cut into our collective future. I am offering a direct programme of action and defence."

For further enquiries: 0407 732 868 (Australia First office) or 4842 8075 (John McGrath)



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Garth Morrison

Situated on the doorstep of the nation's capital, Palerang Shire has great opportunity to grow in size and prosperity. With this opportunity lies the responsibility to ensure that infrastructure, services and facilities grow with the Shire and align with the needs of the community. The most effective way to do this is to listen and consult with the community about current needs and future directions.



As the Shire has grown in recent years, a number of issues have appeared. Many of our unsealed roads are in need of maintenance or upgrading. There is a distinct lack of aged care services and accommodation, and our tips are rudimentary and have little or no recycling facilities. These points are just a few of the issues that I have become aware of since moving to the Shire.

My wife and I moved to the Shire from Queanbeyan in 2010. We moved here with our new baby to build our family in a country environment while working in Bungendore Village and the region. During this time, I have been struck by the community spirit of Palerang Shire and the level of interest shown by residents in planning issues such as the drafting of the Palerang LEP. The residents of Bywong and Wamboin have shown particular interest in the affairs of council

and in the community. It is for these reasons that I am running as a candidate in the Palerang by-election.

My experience as a business man and project manager has given me the skills necessary to balance opportunities against risk. This experience has also given me the ability to negotiate and work with stakeholders to gain the most beneficial outcomes for the Shire. If elected, I will strive to ensure that the community is listened to and consulted in all matters of growth and development and that the community's needs are at the forefront of all Shire plans.



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Bywong Community News



www.bywongcommunity.org.au

Darryl Bourke, President
This News Put Together by the
Bywong Committee



Meet the Candidates – Palerang by-election: Bywong Community will host a Meet the Candidates evening in conjunction with Wamboin Community Association on the evening of Thursday 5 May at Bywong Hall. All candidates have agreed to attend – a heavy schedule as they have similar meetings in Braidwood and Bungendore on the two preceding evenings. Candidates will be invited to give a short formal address and answer questions, and later meet locals over tea and coffee. Community President Darryl Bourke will be in the chair. Our hope is that this meeting will help locals to cast an informed vote, and will promote contacts between our two communities. Please turn up and show an interest in how Palerang is governed!

Car Boot Sale debrief: Under the Guidance of joint coordinator Pauline Chambers the Committee held a thorough debrief of the recent Car Boot Sale, its organisation and results. We shall report the outcomes in due course. The organisers and committee members received many congratulatory messages confirming the success of the event for those who took part. Typical of these was a letter to the Community from one prominent Bungendore businessman, who wrote : "The Bywong Boot Sale has become an institution and would not continue to exist without some very dedicated volunteers. Congratulations!"

To celebrate another successful event – the sixteenth in a long history of successes – the Committee marked its debriefing meeting by cooking up for themselves a celebratory dinner on an Italian theme, defined by the President's pasta dish. The committee declined to take the Italian theme as far as staging the "Bunga Bunga" party proposed by one of its less conservative members.

Trivia: The committee discussed some new ideas for the Community Trivia night for 2011, with some departures from the familiar round of set questions. Watch the Whisper for further news, and keep the date free – Saturday July 16th.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the Community will be at 7.30 on May 9th in the Bywong Hall. All Bywong residents are invited to attend.

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Note: Markets stop for the months of July and August and resume again in September.

I wish to also mention that I will be 'retiring' from cooking cakes and sausage rolls therefore the June market will be my last!
I still plan to run/organise the Wamboin Markets come September. Joan.

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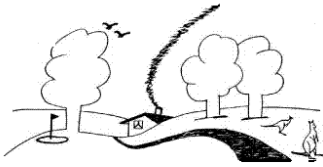
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Wamboin Community Association President's Paragraphs



Council By-Election — The Council by-election will be held on Saturday 14 May 2011. Candidate statements are included later in this edition. Please take a moment to read through these statements and, most importantly, to vote on the 14th. If you are not going to be here on voting day, register for a postal or pre-poll vote before you go away.

At the last by-election, even though voting is compulsory, more than 20% of registered voters didn't even bother to vote, and these lost votes amounted to more than ten times the difference between the first preference votes cast for the first two candidates. One of the biggest problems with our current Council is that its views are not representative of those of the broader Palerang community, and we only have ourselves to blame for that. Twenty per cent of the vote in a general Council election would elect two councillors, and that, by my reckoning, is precisely the degree of imbalance that has existed in the last two Councils that we have elected.

Meet the Candidates for the Council By-Election — To assist residents in making an informed vote, the combined Bywong and Wamboin Community Associations will hold a Meet the Candidates evening at the Bywong Community Hall on the evening of 5 May, starting at 7.30 pm. All five candidates, whose statements appear later in this edition of The Whisper, have accepted our invitation to attend. These events provide an excellent opportunity to hear and assess, first hand, how individual candidates might be able to represent your community's interests.

Upcoming Events — Information on all upcoming events within the community ("What's on in Wamboin") is provided on the WCA website. Just go to <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au> and follow the relevant links for more details on any event of interest. If you belong to a local community group and would like your event(s) included, please email details to the WCA Webmaster at webmaster@wamboincommunity.asn.au.

WCA Electronic Noticeboard — The WCA electronic noticeboard is a convenient way to keep up with community activities. Subscribe by visiting the WCA website at <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au/noticeboard>

The Whisper On-Line — Remember that copies of The Whisper are available on-line at <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au/whisper> on the first Sunday of the month.

Pete Harrison (president@wamboincommunity.asn.au)



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Phone: (02) 6241-8888



The Wamboin Firefighter

For further information visit the brigade's website at
<http://brigade.wamboincommunity.asn.au>

THE BUSHFIRE DANGER PERIOD HAS ENDED

RING TRIPLE ZERO (000) TO REPORT FIRES OR SMOKE SIGHTINGS.

For the present a Fire Permit is not required to burn off in the open but if you plan to light a fire in the open you must notify:

1. your neighbours, and
2. the Brigade on 0409 991 340

at least 24 hours before you light the fire.

Your thoughtfulness will help minimise neighbour anxiety and unnecessary brigade call-outs.

Management, including containment of a fire originating on your property, is your responsibility, however, if the fire escalates to become more than you can handle, don't hesitate to ring Triple Zero (000).

BRIGADE ACTIVITY LAST MONTH

TRAINING: On Saturday 9th April the Brigade, in conjunction with a number of landowners in the area conducted a major exercise in order to test several aspects of its capability. Nine NSWRFs vehicles plus just over 30 members (70% of our active members) were involved. It was an excellent training session drawing on navigation, hose, pump, water management, communication, vehicle placement and teamwork skills. It was a very successful afternoon's training and, as always, a number of lessons were learnt/relearnt.

RECRUITMENT: We've had a good response to our recent call for new members with several local residents expressing interest. The most pleasing aspect of this is the number of younger members of our community (Wamboin/Bywong/Sutton area south of the Fed Hwy) applying for membership. It is worthy of note that active membership of a volunteer rural fire brigade enhances any resumé, especially for people who are relatively new to the general workforce. We are always in need of new members, so, if you want to become involved either as a fire fighter or member of the Brigade's support crew, please contact us.

BRIGADE INVOLVEMENT IN A.C.T. HAZARD REDUCTION BURN: On Friday 8th April three members of Brigade in one of our smaller fire tankers (Wamboin 7B) along with units from Queanbeyan and Hoskingstown assisted the ACT Rural Fire Service in a large hazard reduction burn of 350 hectares at Googong Dam. There were several challenging aspects to the burn, the most obvious being the proximity to the dam and its valuable contents. Other key considerations included:

- High fuel load
- Steep terrain (35 degrees)
- Area had been unburnt since 1982
- A large number of habitat trees that required protection
- A burn area perimeter of 11 kms, and
- Remote area (over an hours travel from the assembly area).

The ACT RFS utilised a (rather impressive) flame thrower mounted on a trailer to ignite a large portion of the burn while more traditional methods e.g. drip torch were used in the initial stages of the ignition phase. The burn was an outstanding success and while smoke was visible from Canberra, no significant damage occurred to the habitat trees, although a number of ailing trees had to be felled. A common danger for firefighters is the presence of what, at first glance, appears to be a healthy tree at least on the outside. On closer inspection many of these trees which had been stressed by the years of drought have become diseased and in several cases eaten out and prone to falling over especially when there is fire around, albeit only briefly. This is also worth remembering for us all in the wider community given that fire has most probably passed through the areas in which we live at some stage. We should all take care when walking or working near wooded areas.



FIRE SAFETY AT HOME

Fire safety always starts with you! Following on from last month, we are concentrating our advice in the winter period on the home with the now familiar theme 'BE PREPARED'. Keep yourself, your family and your home safe from fire. Children are most at risk of serious injury or death in house fires. Householders need to take extra care as house fires occur more frequently during the colder months.

Ten tips for fire safety at home:

- **Take care in the kitchen.** Never leave cooking unattended and always turn pot handles in (so they cannot be inadvertently knocked).
- **Supervise children.** Children need to be protected from fire, and from the potential for starting fires.
- **Heat your home safely.** Ensure your heater is at least one metre from flammable items such as curtains, furniture, toys and bedding.
- **Dispose of cigarettes safely.** Wet down cigarette butts before discarding. Never smoke in bed.
- **Take care with electricity.** Have an electrician check the electrical wiring throughout your home. Keep your home appliances in good working order.
- **Install a smoke alarm.** Smoke alarms save lives! Keep your smoke alarms clean, and test them regularly. If battery-powered, replace batteries at least once a year. This should have been done last month!

- **Plan your home escape.** Create an escape plan and practise escaping from your home.
- **Use home security that lets you get out quickly.** If your home has deadlocks fitted to doors, keep a key in the deadlock so that you can escape quickly in the event of a fire.
- **Check portable fire extinguishers.** Check the pressure gauge on the extinguisher regularly.
- **Be prepared.** Know which fire safety equipment to use, know how to use it and ensure that all family members (if they are of a suitable age) know how to use the equipment.

Train Your Family in Evacuation Procedures:

Follow the escape plan (you do have one don't you?)

- Alert all others in the building.
- When there is smoke, crawl low to get under the smoke.
- Test for the temperature of each door by using the back of your hand; if the handle is hot do not open it.
- Close the door as you leave a room to prevent fire and smoke from spreading.
- Never go back inside the house, once out - stay out!
- Meet at the pre-determined assembly area – such as a prominent landmark.
- Make sure all the family know how to call emergency services (i.e. ring Triple Zero 000) and think about what they may need to say and to speak clearly.
- If possible, meet the fire service as it arrives; you have invaluable knowledge that can greatly assist them.

Teach your children to 'Stop, Drop and Roll'

Advice to anyone whose clothes are on fire:

- Stop. Don't run as this will fan the flames.
- Drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands.
- Roll over to smother the flames.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 14th – Wamboin Brigade Annual General Meeting at the Fire Station. Everyone is welcome to come along. It would be a great opportunity to meet people in our area and also for our visitors to see the fantastic facility your support has provided for your brigade to operate from and the equipment we use.

BRIGADE TRAINING (all sessions begin at the Fire Station)

If you are thinking about becoming a fire fighter or member of the brigade's support group, or would just like to see the brigade in action during a training session, you are very welcome to come along to any of the set training sessions. You'll be made welcome and we're happy to just have a chat. All training begins at the Fire Station.

1st Tuesday of the Month 7:30pm to 9:30pm

2nd Saturday of the Month 1:30pm to 4:30pm

4th Sunday of the Month 8:30am to 11:30am

In addition, several Brigade members meet at the Eaglehawk Hotel on the 4th Thursday of every month at 7pm for dinner. There's a great selection of food to choose from. We'd love other people in the community to come along and join in the fun. You might even be a winner in a raffle! Of course, if you want to just have a chat on the phone about becoming a member of the brigade, please give our Secretary a call on 6236 9794.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Wamboin Brigade Website: will help you to monitor local conditions and Brigade announcements. The Community Information section has useful information including links to other websites that provide guidance regarding bush fire preparations. You'll also find the brigade's history, some pretty interesting photos and other fascinating material on the site.

<http://brigade.wamboincommunity.asn.au>

Brigade Information Stall at the monthly Wamboin Home Produce Market: The Wamboin Fire Station and 'Shop Front' is open on Wamboin Home Produce Market days (3rd Saturday in the month) from 9am – 12noon. The next market day is Saturday May 21st. If you are coming to the market, which is located in the Wamboin Community Association's Hall, you'll find us in front of the Fire Station happy to answer all your questions.

If you have any queries on a fire-related issue including preparing yourself, your family and your property for a bush or grass fire and can't make it to a Shop Front, then please contact the Brigade on 0409 991 340.

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

Bidges Road Cleanup Australia

by EMU, Eagle Hawk Postie for the Whisper (aka Michael Deane)

What a great sight to see young and old volunteers hard at work on Bidges Road. Numbers were up on previous years. Special thanks must be given to the residents who supplied labour, trucks, slashers, mowers and other helpful equipment for

the day. With local council unable to attend the working bee again, thoughts must go to the ladies who organised and supervised the work of the day. They were scooting up and down the road in their ATVs. Thanks for the clean sweep of Bidges road. Well done.

How The Whisper Gets From the Printer To Your Mailbox

The 50 or so people below each spend time every month to make sure that Wamboin and Bywong homes own and receive a free community newspaper written by residents. If your deliverer has been on the job for a long time and you have a bit of time you could spare, think about offering to take over the job or help out. If you already have too many tasks in your month, every now and then give your volunteer paperwoman/man/boy/girl a thank you. - Ned Noel, volunteer editor

165: CO-ORDINATED HELEN MONTESIN: ph 6238 3208

Dene Evans	Norton Rd West Area from Cmpbl Pl	20	Bill Owen	Cooper Rd	26
Helen Montesin	Fernloff Rd	33	Stuart Whitten	Canning Cl	17
Hank Berlee	Poppet Rd (for all on road)	32	Alan Rope	Sutton Rd	37

278: CO-ORDINATED BY TRISH RICE: ph 6238 3791

Joan Mason	Bingley Way	48	Margaret Heleimin	Merino Vale Dr	17
Sue Ward	Norton Rd (Bingley to Weeroona)	32	Anne Gardner	Weeroona Dr (Norton to Majors)	31
Trish Rice	Majors Cl	18	David Anderson	Weeroona Dr (Majors to Denley)	35
Ned Noel	Pal Cncl (14), Advertisers/ Misc (40)	54	Penny Evans	Norton Rd (Campbell to Bingley)	24
Kathy Handel	Yalana West	19			

230: CO-ORDINATED BY KERRIE FISHER: ph 6238 3489

Lesley Page	Valley View Ln	4	Deb Gordon	Yalana East	42
Colleen Foster	B'dore Rd to Nrtn Rd	22	Rob Gorham	South end Clare Valley	38
Cassie Fisher	Clare Ln	12	Lyle Montesin	The Forest Rd area incl Joe Rcks	60
Axelby family	North end Clare Valley	42	Bungendore Foodworks	Bungendore	10

223: CO-ORDINATED BY JOHN VAN DER STRAATEN: ph 6238 3590

Sheryl Barnes	Denley Dr (Kestral to sthn end)	20	Brian Higgison	Denley Dr (Birchmans to Kestral inc)	12
Don Malcolmson	Macs Reef Rd (Denley to Gum Flat)	7	Rhett Cox	Macs Reef Rd (Newington to Bankers)	7
Connie & Hans Bachor	Dnly Dr to Macs Rf Rd incl Bchm Gr	26	Morag & Guy Cotsell	Macs Reef Rd b'n Nwngtn& Harriott	30
Nora Stewart	Rovere Ln	7	Sandra Favre	Macs Reef Rd b'n Nwngtn& Harriott	20
Carol & Clive Boughton	Macs Reef Rd (Bankers to Fed Hwy)	30	Joan Milnor	Birriwa Rd plus Macs Rf Rd to Harriott	30
Beth Hope	Gum Flat Ln	6	Tony Bond	Hogan Dr	28

122: CO-ORDINATED BY IAN COILLET ph 6238 3425

Michael Deane	FdHwSvcRd/Bidges/Hickey/O'Gold	63	Jenny Bryce	Wattle Flat Rd	11
Robt & Marz Luton	Sutton Park Estate	48			

207: CO-ORDINATED BY KEVIN ANDERSON ph 6236 9333

Phil & Pam Dawes	Donnelly Rd & Donnelly Ln	25	David Featherston	Summerhill and Creekborough Rds	24
Kevin Anderson	B'dore Rd (Macs Reef to Summerhill)	33	Diana & Keith Gascoine	Snowgum Rd	27
Kerrie Gougeon	B'dore Rd (Fed Hwy to Summerhill)	25	Chris Fowler	Shinglehouse & Millyn Rds	27
Sue Aunella	Brooks Rd	18	Richard Holding	Wyoming & Doust Rds	28

1,225: TOTAL WHISPERS FOR DELIVERY THIS MONTH

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MATHS TUTORING. Encouraging, expert coaching from Mrs Judy Shellard BSc(Hons), DipEd or Mr David Shellard BSc(Hons). Rates \$25 for half an hour. Length of session, location, type of help and diagnostic testing tailored to individual needs. Contact Judy. Phone 0262383050 or email jshellard@bigpond.com

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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 details.

ADVERTISING RATES: Local classified advertisements are free, as are announcements from community organisations and clubs. Business advertisements pay printing and Community Association Projects. Contact editor on 6238-3484 for information. Advertising rates: Full Page - \$120 Half Pg - \$60 1/3 Pg \$40 1/4 Pg - \$30 1/5 Pg - \$25 1/8 Pg - \$20

FOR HIRE from the Wamboin Hall: A 4 Burner, Hooded BBQ with side burner. Half cast iron plate and half grill plus temperature gauge. \$50 (includes gas) together with \$30 cleaning bond. Both payable on collection. Bond refunded if BBQ is returned clean. Enquiries - Joan Mason 6238 3258.

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. whentaken (otherwise they don't go.) Time of pick-up and returned **MUST** be adhered to (I don't live at the Hall!) - Joan Mason, 62383258.

FOR HIRE: WAMBOIN COMMUNITY HALL. Bookings arranged by Joan Mason 6238 3258. Local Residents \$100, Bond \$250. Non-Resident \$150, Bond \$300. The Hall is not available for teenage, 18 or 21st. functions.

FOR HIRE: BYWONG COMMUNITY HALL. Suitable for smaller functions and seminars, groups etc. Check availability and booking information on www.bywongcommunity.org.au.

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

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Are You Interested in Keeping Keeping a Photo Album?

Three years ago a small group of women started gathering in my kitchen once a month on a Friday night to work on our photo albums. We talked as we worked, making the most of a rare opportunity for uninterrupted conversation and relaxing over a glass of wine. Of course, you get to know people much more quickly when you see their photos and hear their stories. I was still new to the area and this was a great way to make new friends - something that is often hard to do with small children tugging at your ankles.

The group has steadily expanded since then and we don't all fit around my kitchen table anymore. We've found a home at the Wamboin Church instead, where there is plenty of room to spread out. Now that space is not an issue, I thought others might be interested to know that this is now a regular event and that they are welcome to come along. Everyone has photos to organise, everyone has a story to tell, so everyone should try this out.

I do some work to earn income in this area, but these sessions are not for that purpose. Instead they are something a group of us have come to enjoy, and think others might enjoy adding their interests to our group. We do ask participants for \$5 per session, with \$2 going to the church and \$3 going to pay for the snacks we eat.

In May we are meeting twice, on Friday, May 20th from 7:30 pm and on Saturday morning, from 9am till 1 pm. On the May 20th we will explore digital albums, for those who prefer this quicker alternative to more traditional album-making.

Please contact me for more details or feel free to just pop in during one of the sessions for a look. There are lots of simple tools that make the job of organising and preserving your photos much quicker and easier. If you like making albums, this is a chance to focus on your project. It's always much more pleasant to have company while you work.

Elisabeth Taylor, 6236 9896, elisabethtaylor@bigpond.com

<p>picture framing</p> <p>custom framing of your artwork photographs and needlework now available in wamboin quality work • reasonable rates obligation free quotes phone lyn on 6238 3591</p>	 <p>Bungendore CHAINSAWS & MOWERS</p> <p><i>Service and Repairs by Greg Welch</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mowers• Brushcutters• Chainsaws• All Small Engines• Accessories <p>31 King Street Bungendore <small>(opposite The Feed Shed)</small> Phone 6238 0410</p>
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<p>Nirvalley Homestead Nursery</p> <p>629 Cullulla Road, Tarago Ph: 4849 4481 Mob: 0422 112 779</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced ornamental trees • Fruit trees• Native & exotic shrubs • Tubestock and bulk orders • Windbreak & hedging plants• Rare or unusual plants & trees• Contract growing • Local delivery <p>Open: Weekends 8-5pm, Friday & Monday 10-3pm, or call for another time</p> <p>Ask us about • Garden Design • Landscaping • Irrigation</p>	 <p>Map showing the location of Nirvalley Homestead Nursery. The nursery is located on Cullulla Road, near Tarago. The map includes roads such as Windellama/Marulan/Nerriga/Nowra, Willow Glen Rd, Mayfield Rd, Braidwood Rd, Goulburn, Braidwood, Tarago, Bungendore, and Collector.</p>
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Community Representation

by John van der Straaten

Concepts such as “democracy” and “representation” contain many facets which have been the subject of much discussion and argument since time immemorial. Dictionaries will give you a variety of definitions and most of us will have our own interpretations and have our individual views.

My view of a democracy has changed with age and having been elected to executive positions in a wide range of voluntary positions in community organisations I have developed a clear view about representation. As the elected secretary for the Wamboin Community Association Inc. if I am asked to represent the WCA, and speak its behalf, I ensure that I obtain from a General Meeting or the executive an agreed brief from which to speak. This experience has not always been pleasant, especially when the subject might have a degree of controversy, and other people do not recognise the WCA point of view.

My worst experiences have been attending the current Palerang Council and being harangued by the Mayor or personally discounted by some Councillors for delivering the views of the WCA. Council has a Code of Conduct but the behaviour on occasions of some of our “elected representatives” has been inappropriate and, in my opinion, totally unacceptable. It is a pity that more community residents don't attend the odd Council meetings and view these performances. So why do we have people in our communities volunteer to represent these communities in fora such as Palerang Council? Is it a form of masochism? No, it is sometimes a self-interest agenda, an inflated ego, or in most cases, fortunately, a desire for a better society and participation to ensure that measures are taken to make this happen. On 14 May 2011 Palerang residents are required to vote at a by-election for a replacement Councillor for former Councillor Terry Bransdon. Terry was a very sound representative for the rural residential interests in Palerang, particularly Bywong and Wamboin.

A similar calibre representative is very necessary to look after the issues that involve our communities and to consult and listen to our needs. We are lucky to have a well qualified volunteer. Pete Harrison, who is currently the WCA President, has nominated to represent us. He has an excellent community track record and having attended all current Council meetings is well versed in most issues, including the soon to be completed Local Environment Plan. It is most important that there be a good balance in Council and able Councillors to achieve a fair outcome for all of Palerang. I strongly recommend Pete Harrison to you as by far the best option for us in Bywong and Wamboin.

Why I will vote for Pete Harrison

by Lofty Mason

Federal elections have Divisions so that we can vote for, and be represented by, a local member. State elections follow the same format. However, Palerang Shire is not divided into Wards, which can, and has, caused quite an imbalance of Councillors. Just check out the addresses of the present 8 Councillors!

We would like to think that all Councillors would deal equitably with all parts of the Shire. My experience over the last 32 years indicates that Councillors favour their local area and local demands. Despite all the rhetoric, how could it be any other way?

At the next general Council elections, for true representation, I believe we need to become more politically motivated and to stand more local people. In the meantime, now that Terry Bransdon has resigned we really must replace him with someone else from this area. Pete Harrison, the Wamboin Community Association President, has attended nearly all of the last year of Council meetings and he understands the machinations of Palerang Council. He has lived in this area for many years so he appreciates the problems of rural living. On May 14 make sure you vote for a balanced Council. I urge you to give Pete your number 1 vote.

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Website: www.lilyfieldyoga.webs.com

Email: lilyfield_yoga@live.com.au



THE STABLE DOOR

by Ian Coillet

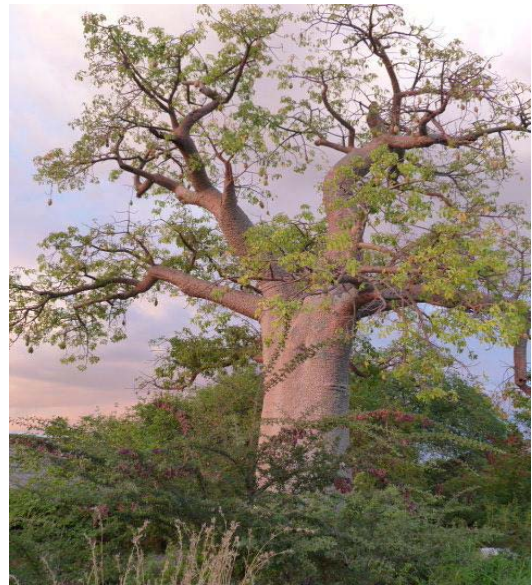
An Occasional Piece

Having just returned from a short time in southern Africa (Botswana, Zambia and South Africa) I've been left almost speechless by its beauty. In addition, thanks to the young Brazilian newly-weds sitting next to me during the eleven hour cattle class flight home, I now have their snuffle, sneezes and foggy head. Oh, the joy of airline travels.

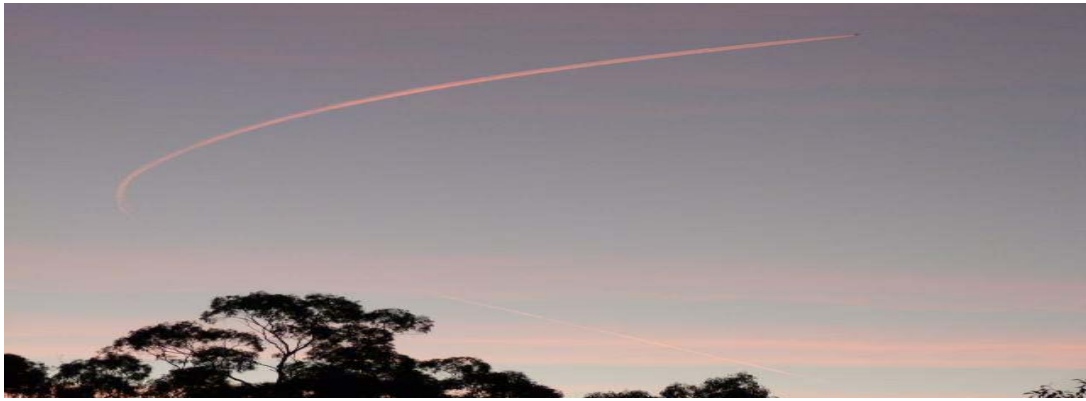
There are differences and similarities between southern Africa and Australia, not surprisingly I suppose, given that our lands were once joined. For me, the similarities are with the desert areas to our north-west including our vast salt pans, the McDonnell Ranges and the beautiful and remote Kimberley Ranges. I also found the climate and environment to be not all that dissimilar to ours.

Of course, southern Africa has elephants, hippos and rhinos. While we can't claim that, Wamboin sports kangaroos, wombats, shinglebacks.....and dachshunds.

So, preceded by snapshots of the African terrain, its wildlife and a powerful sunset, here's an extract of what I came home to this past week or so.







Feng shui addition just completed by moi.



Proof of good karma – surely?

The photo of the tree above is of the African *Adansonia* species known as baobabs that I took at the Planet Baobab Camp at Gweta in Botswana. The Australian boab tree (*Adansonia gregorii*) is related to the African *Adansonia* species and, like its relatives, is colloquially called a ‘bottle tree’ because of the shape of its trunk. While we don’t have any in Wamboin there are plenty to be seen up in the Kimberley Ranges as the bride and I observed when we visited in our 4WD some years ago. Some individual boab trees are 1500 years old and older which maybe makes make them the oldest living beings in Australia, and amongst the oldest in the world. The girth of the tree in the picture was huge and had to be all of 14 metres or so.

As usual, any of these photos and anything else in The Whisper can be viewed in living colour if you go to <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au/> then click on ‘The Whisper’ and call up the May 2011 edition.

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Delivery of new Telephone Directory books to Wamboin

Article Jointly Prepared by Sensis and Wamboin Community Association - Editor



On Monday 18th April, the delivery of the 2011/12 White/Yellow Pages Telephone Directory was undertaken to the Wamboin area. Unfortunately, this delivery was not successful, and did not meet expectations. Residents returning home that afternoon, found their Telephone Directory in various states – crumpled on the side of the road, dirty, wet, and in some cases completely ruined.

This generated a number of complaints – both to the Wamboin Community Association executive and direct to Telstra in Canberra for an explanation.

At the Tuesday 19th April Wamboin Community Association monthly meeting, the topic was discussed, where Dawn Goodburn from the local Canberra (Capital South East area) Telstra Country Wide office attended.

Dawn is a former local of the area, as is aware of the unique delivery circumstances facing a rural residential environment. Dawn was able to listen to the residents and take our concerns back to the Telstra (and Sensis – the directory division of the

company) team responsible for the Directory distribution. Some of the issues canvassed include:

- The merging of the White & Yellow Pages into one book – some people have found this to be too cumbersome.
- The removal of the protective plastic “shrink wrap” that has been used in past years’ deliveries – which stopped the dirt & weather from penetrating the directory on delivery, prior to resident collection
- The overall quality of this year’s delivery method, which resulted in damage to the book

The Yellow & White Pages – Canberra Team – have now issued the following statement that they asked be included in this issue of the Whisper:

“On behalf of Sensis the Yellow & White Pages team in Canberra would like to apologise for the manner in which the 2011/12 Yellow & White Pages directories were delivered in the Wamboin area.

The situation has been investigated and Sensis is working with the contractor responsible to arrange re-delivery of the directories in the correct manner to the customer complaints already received.

For anyone else who has had their directory delivered in an unsatisfactory manner, please address your request for re-delivery to:

Sensis, Level 5, 490 Northbourne Avenue, DICKSON ACT 2602”

In addition to this, Dawn from Telstra Country Wide has advised that she is happy to receive correspondence via email as well, to the Capital South East office email address of capitalsetcw@team.telstra.com which Dawn will make sure reaches the Sensis team.



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Wamboin Rural Golf Club by Lofty Mason

by Lofty Mason

The April competition was the Mini Masters. The format is prepared with a very loose regard to Master's Rules. The game is over 6 selected holes, which are played twice. It is an 'off the stick' competition with a cut, playoffs if required, leader board and even a green jacket. We also run a parallel handicap event however players can only win 1 major prize. The Wamboin Community Association sponsored the day and provided great prizes and delicious nibbles.



On return to the Community Centre we run a 4 event pitching challenge. These shots are played off a ramp, then from a high tee, the next while standing on a tyre and finally a sand bunker shot. This event, which is monitored by 'the local tradies', is great fun for spectators. Len Ivey recorded the best overall result.

A special prize to Larry King who was caught short with a call from nature during his second round. We thought his study of the walls of a small room could be used to advantage therefore he was awarded a very useful 'Potty Putter' which will enable him to use those times of contemplation to improve his golf.

Len Ivey again featured as a winner in the Handicap event. He recorded a 43.7, winning on a count-back from Jack Whitney.

Logan Beckett won the Junior Master with an 87. Tim Barter carded an impressive 52 to finish as Masters runner up however Ken Gordon hit a purple patch and recorded two, even par scores, to card a brilliant 46 off the stick. Congratulations Ken, who as wearer of the green jacket was entitled to all après golf benefits?

WAMBOIN 15 YEARS AGO - From the Whisper, May 1996 Circulation 500

From SNIPPETS FROM SUTTON SCHOOL: 'What a noisy month! April has seen the ending of our much needed repaint and maintenance to improve the physical appearance of the school - especially for our 125th birthday celebrations. However, our classrooms are now invaded by the noise of a bulldozer as preparations are made for the foundations of our new brick buildings, The noise has not outweighed the excitement that this brings.

We have hosted an Aboriginal Dance Group this month. They were covered with clay paint. Each member was named after an Australian animal and two played the didgeridoo. The children and teachers alike found it wonderful. We also had an Anzac Eve service to remind and teach the children about the bravery of our soldiers. The children brought in flowers as a symbol of remembrance. They placed them near the flagpole."

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GREENWAYS AND THE GREENWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

by Maria Taylor, (Secretary Greenways management committee)

Wamboin and Bywong are fortunate to enjoy a network of Greenways that are Council-owned recreational and conservation trails through the district.

Now in their 16th year, the Greenways provide a non-motorised right-of-way through the countryside, utilising a network of old Crown road reserves and road verge tracks. The second and equally important role for the Greenways is conservation: retaining and revitalising native vegetation patches in public ownership. Old crown roads, existing road verges and travelling stock routes are often islands of endemic species in a sea of agricultural exotics.

Yarrowlumla Shire Council adopted 'access to the countryside' as its Bicentennial theme in 1988 and established the Bywong/Wamboin Greenways with State government cooperation some years later. At that time they were seen as a pilot for a more extended network throughout the local government area. Opposition from a few individuals within the farming community ensured that would not happen. However Wamboin and Bywong benefit from what we do have and interest continues in extending Greenways elsewhere – more on that below.



The local Greenways grew from the perseverance and vision of local residents in the '80s and '90s. Community association members and Pony Club parents — who sensibly preferred a network of trails to having their children ride on roads — showed how Greenways might work at a time when the very idea was attacked by some as vaguely un-Australian. Former YSC Councillor Suzanne Ridley and Bywong resident Julian Thompson were there from the beginning, pushing the idea through many a paper hurdle and Council session. Now, real estate advertisements boast of the property-value-enhancing benefits of access to Greenways.

Local community associations have continued their support together with the Geary's Gap Wamboin Landcare Group.

Council established a Greenways management committee (s355 committee) of local residents in 1995 and this committee oversees the maintenance and enhancement of the existing trail for controlled public use as well as conservation works. Dollars for maintenance and improvement have come from the NSW government, Landcare and from individual contributions. Over time there has been much volunteer labour for fencing and gating, planting, minor earthworks, signage and public awareness.

New Greenway links would require negotiation between Palerang Council and the State government for transfer of relevant crown roads to Council control. Other Greenways are being deeded to public use by developers – for example some trails in the new Birchman's Grove Estate. Another developer proposal for a Greenways was presented to Council just recently. A new Greenways network ideally has its own 355 committee of local residents.

A subgroup of the Bywong Community Association, GROW, is exploring ways and means of possibly extending Greenways in the area – for example towards Lake George in the northern section of Bywong. Council staff have expressed reservations about managing new Greenways for budgetary reasons but have not recently been briefed on how very little existing Greenways have cost Council, with maintenance basically undertaken by committee/ community with outside financial support as noted at the top of this article.

Anyone interested in supporting new greenways exploration might like to contact Nora at nora@setdancing.com.au. GROW is also encouraging Friends of the Greenways support, and has started organising walks as a way for more people to appreciate the flora and the fauna and exercise offered by the Greenways. A map of the greenways is available on the Bywong Community Association website. Look under "local issues" and then "greenways archival material".

The wet weather in 2010 has given some parts of the trails a hammering, and indeed many sections are very prone to erosion so careful management is essential. Some fixup work has begun and more is planned. However, the Greenways will always be in a more or less natural state and some fallen trees, erosion channels and so forth are inevitable. For serious problems or more information about getting involved contact Bill, committee works organiser, at bill.taylor45@gmail.com or 0412 567 191.

Priority rules for Greenways use:

- (1) Reserved for pedestrian, horse or push bike traffic – No motorised vehicles, including dirt bikes
- (2) Dogs must be leashed
- (3) No hunting of any description
- (4) Protect the environment – no collecting, littering, fires
- (5) Stay on designated pathways – erosion is an ongoing concern
- (6) Respect adjoining private property boundaries and leave gates as they are found
- (7) No grazing of stock on Greenways
- (8) Maintain wildlife corridor. Neighbouring landholders are encouraged to take down top or middle strand-barbed wire and maintain wildlife friendly fencing with safe access top and bottom. The revised Landcare book *Look after your natural assets* has guidelines for wildlife friendly fences, p19. Ask Council for a copy.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

by Anne Goonan

Palerang Council will be asking you to give some of your valuable time to attend a community workshop. These will be held across Palerang in Bungendore, Braidwood, Burra, Captains Flat, Araluen and Wamboin.

These workshops will be held between 23-25 May and 14-16 June. They are open to the Palerang community, although if you wish to attend you will need to register your interest prior to the actual meeting. The meetings will be advertised widely once the program is finalized. Each session will run from 6pm to 9pm and dinner will be provided for attendees.

The workshops are part of Palerang Council's move into some new reporting - Integrated Planning and Reporting. This is being driven by the NSW Division of Local Government across all Local Governments in NSW. The aim is to produce an integrated reporting framework with a long term (20 year) outlook.

An important part of this integrated framework is the Community Strategic Plan which is developed as a partnership between council, community groups and individuals – so your input is important. This planning calls for the community to identify its main priorities and aspirations for the future (at least 10 years ahead) – and include strategies for achieving these goals. Members of the community who are prepared to assist will be asked to think about the issues and pressures that may impact your community, along with the resources (time, money, assets and people) that might be available in the future to achieve these aims and goals. These discussions will inform funding priorities, levels of service and the preservation of local identity.

Please keep a look out for more information on the workshops and think about coming along. It will be some heavy planning for Council- your input is valuable and an integral part of the whole process.



Leaky Dams - A Beginners Guide . . .

Part I

by Kevin Fiebig, Burra

Reprinted from the April version of the Burra Intermittent with permission from Kevin Fiebig, the author, and Murli Baker-Gabb, the Editor

When we first moved out to Burra (2005), the large dam on our property was empty and had those typical large fissures that form when the mud in the bottom dries out. The dam wasn't particularly deep, in fact if you stood in the bottom you could see over the lip. The spillway was set on the extreme right hand edge of the dam wall – which is fairly high because it closes

of a gully to form the dam – and you could tell from the pattern of vegetation behind the dam that water would back up into the paddock before it ever reached the spillway.

Despite some rain, the dam never got more than muddy or at best a small turbid pool at the bottom so I had the dam cleaned out by a contractor in '05 or '06, with some large boulders being pulled out and left at the edge as a 'feature'. Early rains showed promise when the dam two thirds filled, however it started to empty almost as fast as it went in. Lots of free advice followed like; re-dug dams need time to settle, that dam never held water, the material is all wrong, you need to put bentonite in it, pump water to a tank, and so on.

I had already decided that I wanted to be able to swim in a dam, rather than play in knee deep water, and wanted to be able to pump water to paddocks for my sheep; so what to do with a dam that leaks? I did a fair bit of research into using bentonite and into using plastic sheeting to seal the dam. I also asked a lot of questions of people that I know have been into farming for a long time (some of who had already given me the free advice), and ended settling on looking at using bentonite or plastic sheeting.

Bentonite, for those that don't know, is natural clay of extreme fineness that absorbs water and plugs leaks. Unfortunately its success is highly dependent on how it is applied and the recommended (most successful application) is by laying a membrane of bentonite with a layer of sand and gravel over the top. This optimal method is also fairly expensive. The other methods (scattering the bentonite on the water surface, etc) are less reliable and the rough quotes I got were in the vicinity of \$3000 for the quantity I needed to spread across the surface; a bit more than I wanted to spend and not even for the optimal method.

Lining the dam using plastic turned out to be just as expensive, plus you have to keep stock and people away from the dam as perforation of the plastic is a real risk.

I didn't really do much about it after that, not only was the whole exercise turning out more expensive than I thought it would be, it never rained enough to worry about. Then came this year's bumper rain; the dam overflowed into the paddock and became a lake. It surrounded the 'feature' boulders and poured over the spillway, forming a creek that wound through the next paddock and on to the neighbours. It looked bloody great and I wondered how I could stop it leaking out as fast as it had filled. As luck would have it I was browsing an old copy of 'Farmer's Direct' and saw an ad for sealing leaking dams . . . I assumed it was bentonite but instead it was a 'super absorbent, lineal & flocculating polymer'.

What happened next? Stay tuned for next months thrilling conclusion on applying flocculating polymers . .

Nature Notes April 2011

Jo Walker

April has been a dry month so far, although the grass is still green and a few grasses are still flowering.

Although not much is flowering at present, the Urn Heath (*Melichrus urceolatus*) and *Styphelia triflora*, the taller heath plant with equally pungent leaves, are both covered in creamy-white flowers. Both plants produce a lot of nectar, a welcome winter food source for Honeyeaters.

There are several patches of Little Dumpy Orchids (*Diplodium truncatum*) displaying their green and white striped hoods, some already turning a rusty colour with age. A more delicate little orchid, Parson's Bands (*Eriochilus cucullatus*) has also made an appearance.

The little band of Red-browed Finches has built up to a small flock, not surprising considering the amount of nesting they carried out here. I was watching one of these attractive little birds near the shadehouse a few days ago feeding on some grass seeds. The bird clasped the base of the grass stem in its beak then slid its beak to the top of the stem, catching all the seed as it went.

A few days ago, there were two Speckled Warblers scratching around in the leaf litter under some tall stringybark trees. I'd seen a single one recently, but it was encouraging to see a pair of them. I hadn't seen them for almost two years and was afraid they had succumbed to predation by the odd fox that passes through – they are rather vulnerable as they nest under tussocks or other low-growing vegetation. Two other birds that visited after a long absence were the local pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles, one noticeably smaller than the other. They flew over quite low, dived on and chased by angry Magpies and Currawongs, and one seemed to have something clutched in its talons.

A recent interesting but tragic find was a Dusky Antechinus (one of the marsupial mice) which had tried to get a drink out of a bucket and had slipped in and drowned. They are very different to introduced pest rodents. This one, a male, was about 10 cm long with a tail of similar length (the females are slightly smaller). The fur was short, very soft and dark brown, and the head was triangular, wide above the eyes and tapering to a thin delicate nose. Years ago, a Dunnart turned up here too. That little marsupial mouse has pale grey fur grading to a white chest and stomach and larger eyes and ears than the Antechinus. It's good to see these little animals are still sharing Wamboin with us.



Rainfall and Temperatures in Wamboin - 36 year statistics from the Robertsons

April rain to 25/4 ... 15.25mm	April 2010 ... 37.5mm
2011 rain to 25/4 ... 273mm	2010 to 30/4 ... 281.25mm
Average May rainfall ... 49.3mm	May 2010 ... 94mm
Wettest May ... 171mm in 1995	Driest May ... 1mm in 1985
Coldest May day ... 3C on 25/5/2000	Coldest May night ... -5C on 28/5/2001
Hottest May day ... 20C on 3 occasions	

Photo at left of a female kangaroo with its albino kangaroo joey that was born in Bywong this year. - Nick Hunter and Adrienne McKenzie, Bywong
colour version at www.wamboincommunity.org.au

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