

The Whisper

March 2020 Circulation 1,332



WAMBOIN BUSH DANCE FEATURING

Paverty Bush Band

Saturday 14th March 2020 Wamboin Community Hall

(Bingley Way Wamboin)

BBQ starts from 6pm
and band starts from 7pm
Admission is \$20 per family or \$10
single (tickets at door) Bring a
traditional supper plate for the
community to share (finger food or
sweets) and BYOG. Don't forget your
cash and gold coins for the bottle toss,
competitions and live auctions of some
fantastic items. Saddle up and come on
down and support the bushfire and
drought relief while having a great time
with your community. ALL PROCEEDS
TO BURRUMBUTTOCK HAY RUNNERS







"There's something for everyone!"

Old wares - Toys - Books - 'treasures' Landcare native plants sale Barista coffee, BBQ, morning teas

To SELL: \$20, IN by 08.45, OUT 12.00+
(No need to book, but NO food vendors)
To BUY: Free Parking, entry by gold coin
Where: Birriwa Rd, Bywong (off Macs Reef Rd)





EMPIRE GALLERY

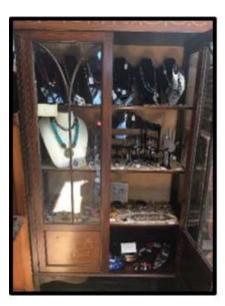
An amazing collection of antiquities, textiles, furniture, decorative items, jewellery and curios.

Everything very reasonably priced and generally not to be found elsewhere

Open: 1 day per month (on Wamboin market days) from 8.00am to 3.00pm or otherwise by appointment.

Bingley Way, just before the fire shed (look for the road sign)

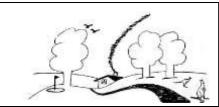
For enquiries / out of hours sales, phone Jo - 0402 357 183 or 6238 3788











Wamboin Community Association Presidents Paragraphs

"The "The fires are out!!"



Well a lot can happen in a month. Last month it was bushfires with dust and heat and then the rains hit. And didn't they hit. What an absolute reprieve with some great falls up and down the eastern seaboard, quenching fires and filling dams and water tanks. Already the barren landscape has transformed to a green tinge as the parched paddocks attempt a comeback. The grasses have started to poke through and hopefully some follow up rain will spur on to provide some groundcover before the winter frosts freeze the ground. We received around 75mm, enough to overflow the rainwater tank and the dam. I felt bad cancelling my standing monthly water delivery but I hope poor James can now grab a well earned break.

It seemed there was no Christmas break this year and everyone back at work seems to be exhausted already, constantly being on edge and mentally drained. The devastating fires took 25 precious lives with memories and lives changed forever. Huge thanks to our local Wamboin RFS for all the valuable work they have done, and continue to do, not only in our local community but also for others. Although there is still March to go, hopefully we have seen the worst of the bushfire threat this year. Help support the impacted communities by taking a drive for a weekend or even a day and spend some money

Wamboin Bush Dance - Don't miss the great Wamboin Bush Dance on Saturday 14 March. It will be held at the Wamboin hall from 6pm starting with a BBQ before the Paverty Bush bands entertains us and a good old country shing dig. There will be an auction on the night and games like the bottle toss. Just like the old days guests are invited to bring a supper plate for all to share and make sure you dress country for the night. Admission is \$20 per family and \$10 a single with all monies to be donated to Blaze Aid and the Burrumbuttock hay runners. Invite your neighbours and friends for this great community night out and let's raise some funds for those effected by the bushfires and still suffering in the drought.

Wheels of Wamboin - The lion is dead, long live the lion. The shock announcement by the American automotive giant to shut up shop in Australia is sad indeed. Let's make the Wheels of Wamboin a tribute to 164 years of Australian history. Bring your Holden no matter what model, shape or age to the Wheels of Wamboin on Saturday 18th April. Tell your friends and start to wake those sleeping beauties.

Life Membership –I am very happy to report that the vote to change WCA constitution to include Life members was a unanimous yes. The WCA will now modify our Constitution with a new class of member. We can now recognise those special

people who over many years have helped make our community what it is today.

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02 6241 8888 | www.canberraequinehospital.com.au Cnr Barton & Federal Hwy, Lyneham ACT 2602

Wamboin Social Drop-In Group and Table Tennis **Night**– the drop in group is now running 10 am - 12 noonevery Thursday. Drop into the Wamboin Community Hall for morning tea and activities. Everyone is welcome. Thursday evening the popular table tennis is also on at between 6 & 8 p.m. All are welcome. Light refreshments will be provided & a

gold coin donation will help cover costs. Contact Mike on 0406

New Members – Be a part of your local community and help make Wamboin. We welcome new members to our monthly meetings. It's only one evening a month and you get

to meet others in the local community.

606 238, or mikemuston@gmail.com



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WCA Meeting next General Meeting and a Special General Meeting is 7.30 pm, Tuesday 17th March at the Wamboin Community Hall.

We are Wamboin

Peter Evans -President.

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I often sell properties before they are advertised, as I have a huge client data base many clients after properties of a certain type and price range waiting for the right one. Which could be yours! So please call me, I have a great team that work with me, for you.



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E-mail: jan.ladmore@bigpond.com

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Website: www.allrealestatensw.com.au

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Bywong Community Association News – March 2020 Bywong Car Boot Sale 2020 - Sunday 22 March, 9-12

Join us for the 23rd Car Boot Sale at the Bywong Hall on Birriwa Road! **Sellers** pay \$20 and arrive before 0845, depart after 1200. **Buyers** enter from 0900 via gold coin donation. Come and mingle with local residents and visitors from further afield. There's something for everyone, with more fun for the kiddies this year!

-toys, books, old wares and 'treasures' on sale Dog Flyball and Pony Club displays Jumping Castle and Sideshows for the kids Dunny Lob and NERF Range Barista coffee BBQ snacks Morning teas in the Hall Landcare native plant sale Locals, YOU can help! BCA will run the BBQ and the Car Parking – but we are a small group and need more hands to make the day a success. We invite YOU to help for a few hours on the morning of Sunday 22 March with any of the following roles. You don't need experience, and guidance/equipment will be provided as needed:

- BBQ: Cooking, serving food, cash handling, general multi-tasking.
- Parking: directing cars into parking areas.

Choose from 2 shifts: 0730-1000 or 1000-12.30. Yes, it's a bit of effort on a Sunday morning, but I'm sure you'll enjoy pitching in and making new acquaintances and renewing old ones!

Please email Mike Wilkins at president@bywongcommunity.org.au advising what you would like to help with and which times. Thank You in anticipation of your help.

Public meetings/talks: All are welcome to attend and contribute to talks held at the Bywong Hall.

<u>Thursday 23 April, 7.30pm.</u> Bywong Boffins discussion: Do you want to learn how to reduce your electricity costs? We'll have tips on what to look for if you want to choose a new energy provider and how to reduce the amount of energy you use in your home. Come along to hear new ideas and contribute your own experiences to the discussion.

On 13 February, around 20 people attended a series of presentations covering simple ways to support our native wildlife - under severe pressure from the long drought, now intensified by the devastating bushfires - until the natural vegetation grows back. Mike, Attilio and Langdon outlined the various roles undertaken by volunteers with **Wildcare NSW.** Langdon also demonstrated his design of PVC water station, and Alice explained how many bird and mammal species prefer a specific design of nestbox. For more information on nestbox designs, materials and placement, check out the **Nestboxtales** group on Facebook.

Bywong Young Goalseeker Grants: Do you know a local youngster who is pursuing their goals and needs a financial boost to get there, to help pay for equipment or to attend training? BCA invites nominations for the 2020 round of Bywong Young Goalseeker Grants. See the BCA website for more details.

Don't forget the **Littlish Library** next to the Bywong Hall. No membership required, just take home an interesting-looking book and donate one of your own in return.

Recycle Right. To make sure your recycling can be fully used and not be rejected to landfill, follow the Recycle Right tips at

https://www.tccs.act.gov.au/recyclopaedia/recycle-right

A reminder to register your interest in the Wamboin, Bywong and Sutton Region (WBSR) **fibre optic network project**. For more information and to sign up/register your interest, go to the WBSR fibre network project website:

https://sites.google.com/site/wamboincommunications/home. Keep in touch with BCA via the BCA website: www.bywongcommunity.org.au and BCA Facebook Page, where we welcome YOU to contribute your ideas and/or get involved.

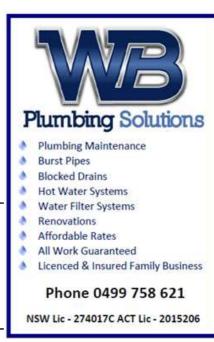
-Mike Wilkins, President, Bywong Community Association, 0417458320, Email: president@bywongcommunity.org.au



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Event Calendar

We are open Public Holidays April - June 2020

Mon 9 March	Canberra Day				
Mon 13 April	Easter Monday				
Mon 27 April	Anzac Monday				
Mon 1 June	ACT Reconciliation Day				
Monday 8 June	Queen's Birthday				
Summer Sunday Sounds 4-8pm					
Every	Sunday through to Mar 15				
Sat 28 March	Contentious Cabaret				
Sat 4 April	The Holy Trinity of Cheese-				
	making				
Fri 10 April	•				
Sun 12 April	Easter Sunday Kid's Egg Hunt				
Sat 2 May	Contentious Character &				
	Bentspoke-A Rule Benders Night				
Sat 9 May	Holy Trinity Cheese-making				
Sun 10 May	Mother's Day family Lunch				
Thurs 21 May	Sip, Swirl & Learn Workshop —				
	Riedel Glass Workshop				
Sat 30 May	Oyster Lovers Night				
Sun 14 June	J's Smokin' Workshop				
Sat 20 Jun	Truffle Dog Hunt n' Lunch				
Sat 27 Jun	Holy Trinity Cheese-making with Truffles				
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Don't forget Thursday is Pizza & Trivia night and Friday's Thank God It's Friday Specials!!

The Wamboin Firefighter FOR ALL EMERGENCY CALLS



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

remember!

COMMUNITY: The first fire season of this new decade - well may we all

An early start by many months, exacerbated by drought. It's been vicious, relentless, anxiety-making and destructive. There's been a tragic loss of human, animal and insect life. Homes, outbuildings, businesses have been destroyed or badly damaged, not to mention the significant adverse impact across the wider environment.

Finally, as we edge toward the end of summer, let's hope that the cooler, damper weather of these past couple of weeks continues. Unfortunately, in other areas there's been a double whammy - fires followed by floods. A hellishly cruel twist.

But throughout the duration it's been a period where people (local and further afield) have held and kept faith with each other - people saving their neighbour's home at risk to their own safety- people driving hundreds of kilometres with food for fire-affected regions - people donating water and fodder for drought-stricken farmers - and anybody with any initiative contributing whatever, wherever and whenever they can. The kindness and care around the nation and from overseas has been remarkable.

But for the people who've lost loved ones, homes, livestock, pets, businesses, relationships, dreams - the journey will have just begun. It be homies us who, for the present, are more fortunate to continue to reach out to them and one another. That's "COMMUNITY".

FIRE PERMITS: The statutory bushfire danger period in our area runs from 1 October to 31 March (unless varied). If you are planning to light a fire in the open during this time, you will need a permit. Fire Permits are available free from the NSWRFS. To seek a Fire Permit ring the Fire Control Centre in Queanbeyan on 02 6128 0600 during business hours.

Yes, there's a touch of greenery out there following the recent rains but the ground is still very dry. In this area, March has historically been when the environment is at its driest. A bush or grass fire can still start and spread quickly at any time.

BUSH FIRE SURVIVAL PLAN: Please prepare or have in place an up-to-date bushfire plan covering you, your family and your property. To make a bush fire survival plan, or for more information visit my fire <u>plan.com.au</u>

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade http://brigade.wamboincommunity.asn.au

NSW Rural Fire Service <u>www.rfs.nsw.gov.au</u>

Face Book Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade

Lake George Fire Control Centre 0261280600 BH's

Reliable High-Speed Broadband for Wamboin, Bywong and Sutton

Rural residental communities in Australia have as much need for fast, reliable broadband services as those within our cities. In recent years there has been a focus on the roll-out of fibre-based broadband, but other rapidly advancing technologies now provide efficient, fast and cost-effective options for rural areas. Yless4u has been a provider of wireless broadband across this region for over 15



years and we now supply services at NBN speeds (and better) across a region that stretches from Bredbo to Gundaroo and Braidwood. That's an area greater in size than Greater Sydney.

On Saturday 2nd February 2020 the Monaro Region of NSW from Michelago through to as far as Bombala lost all 3g/4g and NBN services. The NBN Tower in Bredbo is connected via Fibre and still went down. During this period the Bredbo RFS lost their ability to be able to communicate effectively with Cooma RFS Headquarters and where operating blind during the impending major fire threat. When Bredbo RFS put a call out to YLess4U and asked if it was possible to get them a connection so they weren't completely blind, Yless4U team members left their own properties (which were under threat from the fires) to build a solution for the RFS. YLess4U were the only telecommunications company to still have a working network. YLess4U donate services to Jerrabomberra Creek RFS which was used as a staging point for the Orraral Fire which threatened the Royalla, Williamsdale and Burra areas. YLess4U ensured the Jerrabomberra Creek had a 50mbps package which allowed the use of uninterrupted internet services at fast speeds —all done through Fixed Wireless Towers.

YLess4U are currently installing radios capable of delivering 10Gbps of data to the Bywong, Wamboin and Sutton areas. This will enable all residents in Bywong, Wamboin and Sutton areas within line of sight to our Sutton tower to achieve a minimum of 100Mbps connections – that's five times more than required by average household users. This means that YLess4U will be able to deliver to households' reliable connections of 100Mbps this year. Yes, THIS year. We already have businesses running at these speeds and in tests in my own home in Bredbo, we achieve speeds in excess of 200Mbps using the new gear.

What does this really mean? It means that as we roll out this new equipment, we will be delivering high speed reliable internet to households and businesses on our network.

These days needs to be as reliable as electricity and water, as demonstrated during this year's bushfire crisis, and YLess4U are delivering on that requirement.

YLess4U welcomes any enquiries and more information available on our website: https://www.yless4u.com.au/

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Wamboin Home Produce and Craft Market Saturday 21 March 2020 9-2md

Contact: Lance and Meriel Schultz 62383309 or 042 261 4304 Email: lmsconsulting@bigpond.com

A fairly quiet February market – maybe because people were out doing a rain dance instead? Good local and regional produce though and some lovely craft and art work so plenty to buy. I did notice how good the salad that evening was, with fresh lettuce and rocket and cucumber from Pauline, tomatoes from Joan and smoked trout from Jon! Lots of apples, pears and crunchy juicy plums coming through now too. A new idea suggested to me, was to make plum, pear and apple sauce to go with that lovely organic pork sold by Value Life Farm (best to order that online and pick up at the market). So I bought up lots of those plums, pears and apples and am busy preparing sauces for sale at the March market! To aid in bushfire and drought recovery, the market (which means YOU, the local community) can contribute in three ways:

- (1) By buying secondhand books and making donations to assist the son of one of our long time stallholders. He lost his house and all his belongings in the fires. Donations and money from the books will go directly to him.
- (2) By supporting the Wamboin Bushfire Recovery Drive at the March market. A small group of people in Queanbeyan are collecting up black plastic pots and potting up cuttings. Once a truckload is ready they take them down to fire affected families and distribute the plants. They also take garden and farm tools with them to distribute. SEE NOTICE elsewhere in the Whisper on how you can donate all those unwanted plastic pots and clear out your sheds and garages for duplicate or unwanted tools! Bring them to the March market.
- (3) By donating directly to the Wildcare stall at the monthly markets. They have a beautiful large owl moneybox for you to drop your donations! They also have a wide range of gift items to purchase.

Come and join us for the March market: Expect to find: Garden Produce Stone fruit, apples, pears Smoked trout and cheeses Plants Succulents Native tube stock Indoor plants and cut flowers Knitted goods Crocheted toys and other craft Art work Recycled furniture Home baking Jewellery Jams and Preserves Freshly brewed coffee Local organic pork

.....and a place to drop off your garden and farm tools, plastic pots and cuttings......

Wamboin Markets Bushfire Recovery Drive Saturday 21 March

We have established contact with a small group of people in the Queanbeyan area who have family and friends in fire damaged areas at the coast. They need our help. (a) black plastic pots for plants, all sizes (b) gardening equipment/tools (c) workshop/handyman tools This is a chance to clean out your shed and donate tools/equipment surplus to your needs

Collection: Wamboin Markets, Bingley Way, Saturday 21st March 8am-12noon Contacts:

0400244030 or 62383309 (please leave a message)

See you at the markets



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Home Insurance - when is a fire not a fire?

by Jenny Warren

Consumer advocacy group *Choice* has published a helpful article highlighting significant shortcomings in some home and contents insurance policies with regard to bushfires. The following is reproduced from Choice's website (13/2/20), where you will also find their petition asking the government for a standard definition of fire in insurance terms, as is in place nationally for flood.

https://action.choice.com.au/page/55064/petition/1?utm-source=homepage&utm-medium=choice&utm-campaign=bushfires

Major insurers are failing Australians with confusing "fire" cover

If your home is lost or damaged by fire, you should be able to rely on your insurance to cover you. It's what you've paid for. But right now, there is no standard definition of "fire" across insurance policies. This means individual insurance companies are free to define "fire" however they like – and these definitions can give them leverage to deny your claim.

There's already a standard definition of flood which insurance companies have to use, but this only happened after overwhelming public pressure to put an end to this unconscionable practice following the 2010-2011 Queensland floods.

It should be easy to know what you're covered for when you buy insurance. Right now, insurers are making it too hard to understand if you're covered for disasters by relying on tricky terms and vague language.

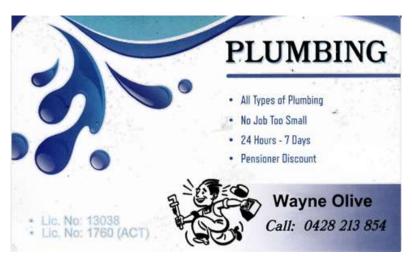
When is a fire not a fire?

Insurance companies can define "fire" however they like. These are the worst examples CHOICE experts found.

AAMI, APIA, GIO	All have confusing exclusions. If heat from a passing bushfire affects parts of your building or contents but doesn't ignite a burning building within 10 metres, you won't be covered.
COLES	Flames have to be present for your cover to kick in.
YOUI	Doesn't cover scorching, melting or smouldering unless there are flames. Cover is confusingly different for buildings and contents.
BUDGET DIRECT, VIRGIN MONEY, ING	Won't cover you for "smoke or soot when no damage from fire has occurred".
QBE	QBE "won't cover damage caused by charring, melting or scorching as a result of fire without the presence of flames".

For those of us in rural/rural residential areas, a couple of other things worth checking with your insurer:

- Does your policy cover water tanks, pumps, pipes, solar panels, inverters and other infrastructure attached to and supplying services to your home? Are you covered for full replacement cost? Or are these items covered to a maximum (say \$5,000 as I have read in one PDS) or as a percentage of the total sum insured?
- Can you increase the length of temporary accommodation cover? Commonly 26 weeks is included, clearly insufficient at a time
 when numerous homes in a community are impacted by a bushfire or other emergency resulting in competition for rental
 properties and building services.





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The Wamboin Whisper: The Whisper is a monthly community newsletter established in 1981 by the Wamboin Community Association. The Whisper is published at the start of each month, excluding January. It is distributed to every letterbox in Wamboin, Bywong and of Queanbeyan Palerang Council residents just southeast of the Federal Highway. Each issue goes to volunteer deliverers by the first Sunday of the month and is also then available at www.wamboincommunity.asn.au. All proceeds from advertisements in The Whisper after printing costs go to the Wamboin Community Association.

Local Facilities and Contacts LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES

Fire/Police/Ambulance - Dial Triple Zero (000) All Hours

Bungendore Police: 6238 1244 Ambulance Bookings: 131233
Wamboin Community Assn www.wamboincommunity.asn.au
Bywong Community www.bywongcommunity.org.au
Fire Brigade http://wamboin.rfsa.org.au

Fire Brigade	nup://wambom.risa.org.au		
Facilities (alphabetical)	Contact person	Phone	email / web address
Bywong Community	Mike Wilkins - President	6230 3473	president@bywongcommunity.org.au
Bywong Hall Bookings	Bookings Officer		lrrhallbywong@gmail.com
Church - Anglican	Bronwyn Elliott - Warden	6238 3359	
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison - Bungendore	6238 1333	
Fire Brigade	Matt O'Brien - Captain	6128 0600 bsn hrs	wamboincaptain@gmail.com
Geary's Gap Pony Club	Cameron Smith	0419 449 747	
Golf	Peter Greenwood	6238 3358	p.greenwood2@bigpond.com
Injured Wildlife	Wildcare – Helpline	6299 1966	
Justice of the Peace	Peter Greenwood - JP	6238 3358	
Justice of the Peace	Keith France - JP	6238 3596	
Justice of the Peace	Jill Sedaitis - JP	0409 369 559	
KYB Bible Study Group	Yvonne Barrett	6230 3539	
Lake George VIEW Club	Pauline Segeri	6238 1996	
Landcare	Kathy Handel - Treasurer	6238 3596	khandel@bigpond.net.au
NSW SES (assist – storm/flood)	NSW Call Centre	132 500	
NSW SES Bungend. (non-urgent)	After Hours Duty Officer	6238 0222	
Sutton School Playgroup	Belinda Robinson - Convenor	0422 262 426	BRobinson35@hotmail.com
Table Tennis	Mike Muston	0406 606 238	mikemuston@gmail.com
Wamboin Community Assoc.	Peter Evans - President	6236 9779	president@wamboincommunity.asn.au
Wamboin-Bung. Book Group	Sally Saunders	0419 303 229	Sally.saunders1@bigpond.com
Wamboin Hall Bookings	Joan Mason	6238 3258	joan.mason@internode.on.net
Wamboin Markets	Lance and Meriel Schultz	6238 3309	Lmsconsulting@bigpond.com
Wamboin Play Group	Jules Clancy - Convener	0439 586 188	wamboinplaygroup@gmail.com
Wamboin Pony Club	Stacey Burgess - Club Secretary	0414 672 979	wamboinpcsecretary@gmail.com
Wamboin Thurs Social Grp	Denise Hales	0400 310 685	deniselynnehales40@gmail.com
Wonderful Women of Wamboin	Gail Ritchie Knight	0416 097 500	Whirlwind1@argonite.com.au
ARF (Rescue Dogs)	Lisa Whitney	0408 260 796	Lisawhitney059@gmail.com
Voung Entrepreneurs, Rebecca Purdie	net/horse sitting 6238 33/3 Alex Les	Pet & House Sitting Go	ordening 6236 9657 or 0439 219 865

Young Entrepreneurs: Rebecca Purdie – pet/horse sitting 6238 3343 Alex Lea Pet & House Sitting, Gardening 6236 9657 or 0439 219 865



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Installed Heater Fans Serviced and Replaced
For appointments or further information
please phone Brian 6258 1792



Bird Of The Month

By Luke Downey

For March I chose the White-naped Honeyeater, an uncommon resident found in the treetops and flowering plants across Wamboin and Bywong.

White-naped Honeyeater (Melithreptus lunatus)

Size: 13-15cm Status: Uncommon breeding resident

The White-naped Honeyeater is a small bird with an olive green back, wings and tail. The throat, belly and vent are white. The distinctive black head has a white nape (back of neck) and red eyebrow. They are found in flocks that forage in the treetops, eating nectar and insects. These flocks often include other birds like other honeyeaters, thornbills or

pardalotes, which all move together through the trees, feeding and foraging together (often referred to as mixed flocks). They are often seen in the company of the similar Brown-headed Honeyeater, which has a brown (not black) head and lacks the distinctive red eyebrow present in the White-naped. This species is uncommon and can be seen year-round but tends to be a bit more common in summer. They have been visiting our birdbath several times recently, which is a good place to see them outside of the treetops where they are usually found. Their call is a series of chirps and twitting noises (especially a distinctive "shirp") which is key to knowing they are around. (Photo from Google images)

St Mary's Church Bungendore RFS/SES Thank You BBQ Picnic - Sunday 15 March

On Sunday 15 March from 11.30am in the grounds of St Mary's Church 28 Turallo Tce. The picnic BBQ is an opportunity for the local community to thank the local volunteer fire fighters for their courage and commitment over the long hot summer. Community organisations / local families are asked to act as hosts, with each family group hosting a volunteer and their family. We will have some ushers to help link host and guest families. RFS members are asked to wear an item of RFS clothing to identify them as guests.

Host families are asked to bring picnic tables, chairs and/or picnic blankets. Guests are encouraged to bring their own chairs. The organizing committee is arranging to provide lunch for the firefighters and their families. Host families are asked to bring their own lunch (BBQs available for you to cook it) and also sufficient nibbles and drinks to share with their guests before lunch. Bungendore Rotary kindly offered to cook traditional steak and sausage sandwiches for the guests. St Mary's Hall will operate as a café with coffee and cakes available thanks to the generosity of the CWA ladies.

If you are willing to assist on or before the day to help make this a memorable experience for the RFS families, please contact David Webster at <u>d.webster45@bigpond.com</u> or 0417 235 492 and watch the St Mary's Facebook page for more detail. Drinks will be provided for RFS members



WAMBOIN WEATHER – rainfall and temperature records

(45 years from Cooper Road) by Christine Rieber

February Rainfall Stats	Average February rainfall 57.7mm
February rainfall to the 23 rd 79.75mm	2019 February rainfall 31.0mm
2020 total rainfall to 23rd100.75mm	2019 total rainfall to 23/2 30.0mm
	44yr Av. to end of February 118.3mm
March Rainfall Stats	
2019 March rainfall 72.5mm	Average March rainfall 57.3mm
Wettest March 303mm in 1989	Average no. rain days in March 8.1
Wettest day 160mm on 15/3/89	Highest no. rain days 17 in 2017
Driest March 3mm (2 times) 1986 & 1998	Lowest no. rain days 3 (8 times)
	81, 86, 92, 98, 02, 06, 09 & 18
March Temperature Stats	
Hottest March day 35°C (2 times)	Av. Mar. temp 17.1°C (day+night comb.)
on 9/3/83 & 4/3/19	Coldest March day 13°C (3 times) on
Hottest March night 26°C on 9/3/83	14/3/94 & 3-4/3/12
Average day temperature 22.4°C	Coldest March night 1.1°C on 31/3/19
Average night temperature 11.8°C	Coldest March 2012
Warmest March1983	(Av. min day temp. 17.3°C & night 8.6°C)
(Av. max day temp. 25.5°C & night 15.2°C)	(coldest night temp. 7.9°C in 2015)
(warmest day temp. 26.3°C in 1998)	March 2019. Av. max 25.4°C & min 11.8°C

During the month of March daylight length will decrease by 1.1 hours from 12.7 hours on the 1st to 11.6 hours on the 31st. The **autumn equinox** is on the 21st March during which the aylight and night are both 12 hours long.

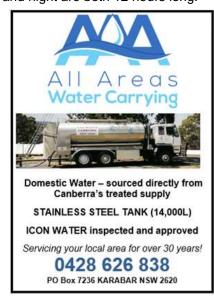


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Nature Notes February 2020

Jo Walker

Smoke drifting from a rapidly spreading fire in Namadgi National Park was not a good start to the month. But then, in the second week of February, we finally got some much-needed and very welcome rain. 45 mm fell in one day at my place followed by several days of lighter falls. My dam went dry this summer for the first time in more than thirty years. There wasn't sufficient rain to get the creek running, but there is now a sizeable pond in the dam.

A few days after the heaviest rain the dam resounded with frog calls, and five turtles of various sizes were floating on the surface their little snouts just visible protruding from the water. And, in the little pond below the dam, there were several large holes with excavated mud piles in front of them as the patiently-waiting yabbies made the most of the moisture. After standing there for a while, I was rewarded by seeing a large brownish-green yabby claw push out another pile of mud.

The sudden moisture and warm weather also encouraged thousands of little plants to germinate, casting a green carpet over the landscape in places. Probably quite a few are weeds, but it is fascinating to walk around trying to identify these little plants at cotyledon stage. The cotyledons are the first leaves and are present in the seed. They usually, bear no resemblance to the adult leaves of the plant

A few adult plants which had died back to the point of disappearing entirely are now throwing up new leaves. In recent days, Buttercups (*Ranunculus lappaceus*), Violets (*Viola betonicifolia*), Ivy-leaved Goodenia (*Goodenia hederacea*) and Yellow Rock-lilies (*Tricoryne elatior*) have all begun to make an appearance. And little Rock Ferns (*Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia*) are unfolding their bright green fronds just about everywhere at my place.

It hasn't been a good summer for flowers, but the tall Hickory Wattle (*Acacia implexa*) is showing off its clusters of cream flowers at present.

Although there are not many spiders around, the Red-Back Spiders seem to be doing all right. The two in my little metal bore-shed are now busy producing egg-sacs after surviving the extreme temperature of their chosen habitat. Some days this summer, the metal cover was too hot to touch and the temperature inside must have been many degrees hotter than it was outside.

Although we're going to need a lot more rain to keep things going, it's good to see the landscape with a bit of green covering it again as we head towards autumn.

Fire Brigade Fundraiser at Contentious Character by Tony Mansfield

Contentious Character's Australia Day Fundraiser for Wamboin Fire Brigade successfully raised \$3663 through ticket sales for the Australia Day themed event featuring the Canberra Advocates, who donated their fee to the collection. The Advocates are a well-experienced duo who have played together in the Canberra scene for over ten years. The day featured Aussie specials like Grilled Australian prawns, on garlic toast with dessert lime mayo, Local slow cooked lamb, Australian lentils, mint bush, and wood fired damper, Market fish with macadamia, watercress, Free range chicken with pepperberry potato salad. Desserts included their take on Mint Slice, Cherry Ripe and Golden Gaytime. Not to mention the Aussie wines such as Dry as a Dead Dingoes Donga Riesling and The Rough End of the

Pineapple Pinot Noir.

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Enquiries: Gabrielle LeGrande wamboin.playgroup@gmail.com 0410 294 420



Calling new members for Wamboin Pony Club 2020

It's 2020 and your local Wamboin Pony Club is back for anther riding year having already had our first rally day in February. Wamboin Pony Club has been active in the area for over 30 years. We have a small but dedicated group of riders and would love some more members to join our enthusiastic group who range in age from 5 to 25. Pony Club is a great way to improve your horse riding skills with riders of all experiences around you. We have a group of dedicated experienced instructors and an active committee made up of parents of our riders. Some may be aware that our Pony Club grounds are at the end of Canning Close. We have 3 fenced arena's – Jumping, Dressage and a large Main arena. The other facilities include a large Clubhouse with kitchen, plenty of horse yards so you can prepare your horse safely all of our facilities have been built up over the years to create a safe riding environment. To become a Pony Club member you just need access to your own horse and can even come along and try for a day to see what goes on.

Our club is one of a number in the area, we are smaller than some and do have riding places available for 2020. Rally days are a great social day out and as the year goes on Pony Clubs in the area hold different events such as Gymkhana's, Jumping competitions, Mounted Games events etc so there is always plenty to experience with your horse and to improve your riding skills. At Wamboin Pony Club we also try to bring in some guest instructors throughout the year. On rally days not only do you have fun riding and learning new skills or just gaining confidence but there is always a BBQ lunch for you and the family too. Unlike many Pony Clubs in the area Wamboin tries to meet twice a month if we can on Sunday's at our grounds from 9am - 1pm. The next Rally day will be on Sunday 1st March due the long weekend following (Rally days are usually on the 2nd Sunday of the month).

If you are interested come along and see all that Pony Club can offer. Should you like some more information about Wamboin Pony Club and our upcoming rally days feel free to contact our club Secretary Stacey on 0414 672979 or email wamboinpcsecretary@gmail.com we are also on Facebook. We hope we will see you soon. - Steve Quick

St Andrew's Church, Wamboin - Happenings

By the time you read this you will either have had your pancakes, or you forgot that Feb 26 was Pancake Day and missed out. That of course meant that Lent started on the following day. Have you made a serious Lent resolution? Not something feeble like cutting your intake of Choccies from three a day to two, something meaningful and beneficial to you.

With the recent the fires, the floods and the ongoing drought, many people have had to cut back on many things, particularly food treats, new clothes and entertainment. Massive amounts of money have been raised for Fire assistance and it is wonderful to see the support by those who feel for the victims.

Yet there are many farmers and graziers who are suffering from this drought, but who have not been burnt out, or flooded out, yet have no stock feed or water, and are relying on assistance to try to keep their lives on track.

For this reason the local churches of St Peters and St Andrews will be holding a Drought Relief Sunday on March 29 at the church

For this reason the local churches of St Peters and St Andrews will be holding a Drought Relief Sunday on March 29 at the church grounds in Sutton, from 5.00pm. Details are still be finalised, but please keep a few hours free in the evening to attend. There will be a free sausage sizzle, but we ask that you donate generously in the provided donation buckets. All money raised will be sent to the Tamworth branch of the Country Womens Association for distribution as they see fit to local farmers. Further details will be displayed as they become available on the area notice boards and signage in both church grounds.









Small Farms Network Capital Region

by Alex James, Bywong, Co-ordinator

The Small Farms Network Capital Region is a grassroots information service run by small farmers for small farmers. We use the term 'farm' pretty loosely to mean any rural property including bush blocks. Need help with weeds, managing livestock or looking after your trees? Got questions about how to look after your land? The network can help with that. We organise events and write a newsletter for everyone who manages the land, with a focus on helping people on smaller rural acreages. We publish information blogs about all sorts of topics including erosion, handling sheep, managing the land for horses and lots more. Become a member, read a blog post and register for the free newsletter at www.smallfarmscapital.org and on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/smallfarmscapital/

You may find helpful something that one of our contacts, Land for Wildlife member Alice McGlashan, has created. It is a website and Facebook page called Nest Box Tales that aims to educate and support people wanting to provide habitat for hollownesting native birds and animals. Based in the Bungendore/Bywong area just outside Canberra, Alice aims to help birds and animals to survive in South East New South Wales by providing key information to people who want to help build and install nesting boxes. See: Facebook https://www.facebook.com/groups/nestboxtales/ and Website: https://nestboxtales.com/



Photo at left eft sent in by Anneke O'Halloran She suggests this caption:

"What an Aussie!! Were we glad to see the rain?!!" or else: "Water at last! Sunning himself just like a human."

> jessicagourlay@hotmail.com 0401249778



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Lucie Klaassen - 3 day clinic 20-22 March 2020

Bookings:

sheronypark@bigpond.com

29 March 2020

charles@webbequinevets.com.au

Belinda Bosenbroek

1-4 April 2020

Intro to Rainbow program for Parents with Neuro-diverse children

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patricia@sociallivingsolutions.com

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How the Whisper Gets Into Your Mailbox Each Month

Without the month by month donation of time it would not be possible for Wamboin and Bywong to produce the Whisper. If you enjoy finding this community owned newsletter in your mailbox, and if you see someone putting it there, think about thanking her or him.

Julie Veal of Poppet Road lost her hard fight with illness in February. She was many good things to many people. One of the thousands of small things she did over the last dozen or so of those years,, amid many much bigger things that those who knew her will remember, was deliver Whispers to Poppet Road. Sue Aunella of Brooks Road has delivered their Whispers, also for many, many years, but is moving out of the area. To them both, thank you.— Ned Noel, volunteer editor

	0	,	•						
168: CO-ORDINATED BY ALICE SCOTT: ph 0407 005 506 email alicehscott@bigpond.com									
Fay Kelly	Norton West Area from Cmpbl Pl	20	Christine Rieber	Cooper Rd	26				
Cheryl and David Steele	Fernloff Rd	34	Jill & Richard Gregory	Canning Cl	17				
Julie Veal	Poppet Rd (for all on road)	31	Alan Rope	Sutton Rd	40				
180: CO-ORDINATED I	BY KATHY HANDEL: ph 6238 35	96 kha	ndel@bigpond.net.au						
Joan Mason	Bingley Way	44	Margaret Hekeimin	Merino Vale Dr	19				
Sue Ward	Norton Rd (Bingley to Weeroona)	32	Anne Gardner	Weeroona Dr (Norton to Majors)	31				
Kathy Handel	Norton(Wrona2 Hilltop+Wirndra)	22	Phil Leeson&Coleen	Norton Rd (Campbell to Bingley)	32				
			Fogarty						
231: CO-ORDINATED B	SY KERRIE FISHER: ph 6238 3489	9							
Lesley Page	Valley View Ln	4	Deb Gordon	Yalana East	45				
Colleen Foster	B'dore Rd to Nrtn Rd	22	Rob Henry	South end Clare Valley	41				
Cassie Fisher	Clare Ln	12	Lyle Montesin	The Forest Rd area incl Joe Rcks	65				
Dominica Lorima	North end Clare Valley	42							
161: CO-ORDINATED B	SY JESSICA GOURLAY: mob: 04	01 249	778 jessicagourlay@hot	mail.com.au					
Robyn Elsom	Denley Dr (Sth End to 429)	15	Rhonda&NevParnell	Denley (Birchmans to ½ way to end)	26				
Joan Milner	Birriwa Rd & Macs Rf 2 Harriott	31	Beth Hope	Gum Flat Ln	6				
Connie & Hans Bachor	Dnly Dr to Macs Rf incl Bchm Gr	35	Tony Bond	HoganDr/OranaDr/Yuranga Dr	48				
106: CO-ORDINTED BY	GARETH JONES: ph Ph: 6238 1	988 giv	rjones@bigpond.com						
Nora Stewart	Rovere Ln	7	Sandra Favre	Newwington Rd	20				
Daryl Bourke	Harriot Rd	28	Don Malcolmson	Macs Reef Rd (Denley to Gum Flat)	7				
Carol & Clive Boughton	Macs Reef (Bankers2 Fed Hwy)	33	Cheryl Warnock	Macs Reef Rd (Nwington2 Bankers)	11				
156: CO-ORDINATED BY IAN COILLET ph 6238 3425 lodestar@ozemail.com.au									
Peter Huckstepp	Federal HwSvcRd	22	Louise Baldwin	Wattle Flat Rd	11				
Lyn Parkinson	Bidges/Hickey/OldGoldMines	50	Penny & Russell Ball	Macs Reef (Denley Dr to Bungdre Rd)	20				
Glen Dorahy	Sutton Park Estate	53							
144: CO-ORDINATED B	SY DAVID FEATHERSTONE ph	6236	97223 bushranger_au@l	notmail.com					
Chris Fowler	Millyn Rd	20	David Featherston	B'doreRd SmHill to&ncldgCrkBRd	26				
Sue Aunella	Brooks Rd	24	Leigh & Derek Morris	Wyoming & Doust Rds	40				
Kerrie Gougeon	B'dore Rd (CreekB to Fed Hwy)	34							
189: CO-ORDINATED BY NED NOEL ph 6238 3484 email nednoel@optusnet.com.au									
Diana Griffin	Majors Close	19	Judy Smith	Weeroona (254 – 400)	18				
Diana Boswell	DonnellyRd 29 & Grove Rd 8	37	Susie and Brad Edwards	Weeroona (417-512)	17				
Attila & Cherry Hrgsi.	Snowgum Road	27	Murray Goodridge	B'dore Rd (MRR to&ncldg Smrhill)	38				

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Wheels of Wamboin 2020 - The lion is dead, long live the lion.

I was going to continue the automotive anniversaries this month but with the announcement of Holden shutting its doors, I thought it might be good to explore Holden's history. Now Ford blue flows through my veins but I must say it is a very sad day to see Holden close the doors. I remember when you were either a Ford or a Holden man and when Bathurst rolled around you sat glued to the TV all day watching those big V8's thump around the mountain with your mates.

When British migrant James Alexander Holden arrived in Adelaide in 1852, he set about establishing a business as a leather worker and saddle-maker. After a few business hiccups, Holden decided to bring his son into the business in 1879, and then allowed Henry Frost to join as a Partner in 1885; Frost was well respected carriage builder, and the company was soon to become "Holden and Frost". In 1910 Holden & Frost began trimming motor vehicles and in 1914 they built their first one off car body for an imported Lancia chassis. Larger contracts followed but ironically the first major contract was for Dodge. By 1917 the Australian government had placed an import embargo on complete vehicles. This restricted imports to chassis only and forced local vehicle agents to look to local firms to provide the bodies. In 1919 Edward Wheeldon Holden registered "Holden's Motor Body Builders" as a separate company specialising in car bodies. At the time they built bodies for Overland, Chevrolet, Durant, Hupmobile and Dodge, and by 1923 they were producing over 12,000 bodies per year. In 1924 "Holden's Motor Body Builders" became the sole Australian body builder for General Motors vehicles and had an output of over 22,000 bodies (over 11,000 for GM) in 65 different body styles. During the 'Great Depression' in 1930, production fell from 34,000 units per year to a mere 1651 and, in 1931, General Motors were able to buy the entire Holden's Motor Body Builders and merge it with their North American operation to form General Motors – Holdens. It was renamed Holden Ltd in 1998, adopting the name GM Holden Ltd in 2005.

Economics - Globally, more than 75 per cent of all vehicles sold are left-hand-drive, while right-hand-drive countries account for the remaining 25 per cent of sales. However with right hand drive, car companies have less opportunities to recoup their investment because the cost to design, engineer and develop left- and right-hand drives is similar. General Motors has been making a slow retreat from other right-hand-drive countries over the past three years, getting out of lucrative markets such as the United Kingdom, Japan, India and South Africa. The three main remaining right-hand-drive countries were Thailand, Australia and New Zealand, but General Motors says it has become unprofitable to develop new vehicles for such comparatively small markets. GM was on the edge of bankruptcy in 2008.

The numbers that matter - The total number of Holden's made in Australia since 1948 is 7,687,675. In 1970 Holden eclipses over 200,000 sales for the first time in a calendar year. In 2019 Holden's tally of 43,176 sales in 2019 was the lowest since 1954 (FJ). Holden sales have halved in just two years since the end of its Australian manufacturing operations. The Toyota HiLux (47,649) – outsold Holden's entire line-up last year (43,176). In 1958 every second car sold was a Holden. Today Holden

accounts for just four new cars out of every 100 sold. The Colorado makes up 40 per cent of Holden's sales.

The Holden lion and stone was designed by Rayner Hoff (maybe related to the Hoff). The logo refers to a prehistoric fable, in which observations of lions rolling stones led to the invention of the wheel. – **Peter Evans**



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From the Corner

Planning Proposals—There's been some discussion over the years about land use planning, in our rural residential areas in particular. With the public exhibition of our new 'consolidated' LEP imminent, I thought I'd follow up on some of my previous articles on the NSW planning system with a brief discussion on the process involved in changing a planning instrument such as a Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

Changes to an LEP are effected through a formal request to the Minister, made through a Planning Proposal, a document that explains the intended effect of a proposed change and sets out the justification, including an assessment of the likely impacts, for amending the relevant LEP. In practice, the Planning Proposal document can be prepared by a council, a landowner or developer seeking to change the planning controls relating to a particular site, area, locality or local government area, or by a third party on behalf of a landowner or council.

To protect communities against poorly conceived, ad hoc planning decisions, a Planning Proposal will generally need to demonstrate its strategic merit in the context of relevant local, regional and state strategic plans and policies. Further, the assessment of this merit is undertaken independently by the Department of Planning, not the proponent. The Department offers guidelines on how a Planning Proposal should be prepared, with explicit reference to the need to consider the strategic context of proposals. Advice is also provided with respect to the need to avoid identifying specific solutions and focus on intended strategic objectives to provide flexibility in the way associated outcomes might be realised.

Once prepared, having identified the relevant strategic objectives and completed any preliminary studies, the Planning Proposal is forwarded to the Department of Planning for independent assessment through what is known as the Gateway process. The purpose of a Gateway determination is to ensure that there is sufficient justification, early in the process, to proceed with a Proposal. It enables Planning Proposals that lack strategic planning merit to be stopped early in the process, limiting unnecessary expenditure of time and resources.

If a Proposal is deemed to have sufficient merit, the Gateway determination will set relevant conditions that must be met before the Proposal can be progressed. These may include further studies being undertaken, public consultation, public hearings, agency consultation and time frames. A Planning Proposal is not usually progressed without conditions of this nature.

If a Gateway determination is issued, the proponent is then obliged to comply with the relevant conditions and, if necessary, amend the Proposal before it is progressed any further. One of the conditions will invariably be the requirement for a period of public exhibition, providing residents with an opportunity to offer formal comment. Council is obliged to review all submissions received during the period of exhibition and may subsequently amend the Proposal to reflect their content.

The Gateway process can be an iterative one, where the proponent amends a Proposal in the process of complying with the conditions of a Gateway determination, resulting in the need for resubmission for a further Gateway determination. In the instance where a Planning Proposal is to proceed, the Gateway ultimately needs to be satisfied that the level of information available leads to the conclusion that any potential impacts can be addressed and that the LEP or amendment thereof can be completed within a reasonable timeframe.

Having dealt with any matters conditioned by the Gateway determination, the completed Proposal is again reviewed by the Department and, if considered satisfactory, forwarded to the Parliamentary Counsel for drafting into legislation.

The process can be quite a protracted one, especially when it involves an entire LEP, as evidenced by the fact that the present QPRC LEP consolidation exercise began soon after the amalgamation in 2016. There was a significant body of work undertaken prior to the issue of the Gateway determination a little more than 12 months ago and council was set a May 2020 deadline to complete the process. In line with the conditions of the Gateway determination, the exhibition draft LEP has been endorsed by Council prior to forwarding to the Department for its approval to exhibit. We await their response...

The OPR Blog—New or related entries in my Blog (http://peteharrison.id.au/blog) include:

Planning Proposals (Feb 2020) Planning Legislation (Coda) (Oct 2018) Planning Legislation (Sep 2018) Land Use Planning (Aug 2018)

-Cr Pete Harrison Ph. 6238 3640 Mob. 0427 711 028 Email: contact@peteharrison.id.au Website: www.peteharrison.id.au [This article is provided for information purposes only and does not represent any recommendation or formal position of the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council. It draws in large from the guidelines issued by NSW Department of Planning & Environment in A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals.]

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Wildcare's Special Rescue

The recent stormy weather across Australia's eastern seaboard may have helped to overcome the drought, and put out bushfires, but it also caused a surprising rescue of two very confused and exhausted seabirds – a Red-tailed tropicbird (rescued in Murrumbateman) and a White-bellied storm petrel (found in the Fyshwick area). Only the most discerning 'twitcher' would recognise just how rare it is to come across these birds so far inland in our neck-of-the-woods – having been blown hundreds of kilometres from their normal habitat.



As Wildcare's assistant bird coordinator, Melissa commented: "The tropicbird that was found must have been blown inland a distance of over 1000kms from where they are usually found. They are about the size of a small chook. They spend most of their life on the ocean, eating fish, crustaceans etc., only coming onto a tropical or sub-tropical island to nest on soft sand and away from the mainland. Except during nesting, they are not accustomed to being on land, so I can only imagine how confused this



little bird must have been to find himself sitting in a paddock of dirt in Murrumbateman rather than the soft sand of a faraway tropic island."

As for the White-bellied storm petrel, Melissa commented: "This bird was handed over to Wildcare by a local vet. These birds are seen on waters out beyond the continental shelf. They spend their lives skimming the ocean for small crustaceans, squid and fish. They are about the size of a peewee. Small, black and white, but with small webbed feet. This bird was also many hundreds of kilometres from home. Little is known of the White-bellied storm petrel, as they are rarely seen. Nesting occurs on remote rocky outcrops, away from habitation. During the day, they fly hundreds of kilometres at sea collecting food and then return to their nests at night."

These unusual birds were transferred to Seabird Rescue South Coast, who is more able to care for sea birds. The Red-tailed tropicbird was transported to the Taronga Wildlife Hospital to be taken all the way to Cooktown (Far North Qld) for rehabilitation and release – unfortunately it didn't make it. However, the White-bellied storm-petrel was taken out to sea on a deep sea fishing charter boat where he was successfully released.

By the way, it is now two months since Wildcare began its intervention to support wildlife that escaped the bushfire at Tallanganda, but lost its habitat. Wildcare has been extremely active keeping food and water stations going, as well as the erection of nesting boxes. Several burnt animals have also been rescued. The help from affected property owners, Wildcare volunteers, local businesses and other community volunteers has been extraordinary. Thank you. Supporting animals in the field, whilst their habitat recovers over the coming months, is working – with animals from burnt out areas discovering the food/water drop off points. Most recently a female wombat and her at-heel young were spotted gorging on a Wildcare hay drop! This is a wonderful result. If you would like to help, and donate to keep this effort going, then please check out wildcare.com.au

Wildcare can be contacted on 6299 1966 for help with injured and orphaned wildlife. - Philip Machin for Wildcare

Photos: Red-tailed tropicbird in care White-bellied storm petrel in care







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All sorts of automotive machines including old, new and interesting cars, motor bikes, trucks, stationary engines and even tractors are welcome.

A Display entry is a gold coin donation and swap/parts tables are \$5 (remember to bring your cash as there is no EFTPOS). Proceeds to the Wamboin Rural Fire Service

Please email president@wamboincommunity.asn.au for further information

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The first Europeans to traverse Wamboin, Bywong and Gearys Gap - part 2 of 2 By David McDonald, February 2020, email david [at] dnmcdonald.id.au, phone 0416 231 890

Introduction: In the first part of this account, published in the February 2020 issue of *The Whisper*, I mentioned the background to the first European explorations of the Wamboin/Bywong/Gearys Gap area. Details were also provided on the route taken by Charles Throsby and party from Lake George, through Wamboin, following the Yass River to Brooks Creek, and returning to Lake George via Gearys Gap, on 27-28 October 1820.

Oxley climbs Governors Hill: While Throsby's party was undertaking their circuit over and to the west of the Lake George Range, on 28 October NSW Surveyor General John Oxley, a member of Governor Macquarie's party, climbed the steep hill near their campsite at the mouth of Taylors Creek. His Surveyor's Field Book (New South Wales, Surveyor-General & State Records Authority of New South Wales 2001) does not mention any name for the hill, but it is identified as 'Ellendon (sic) Hill' on his 'chart of part of the interior of New South Wales', published in London two years later (Oxley 1822). The name was subsequently changed to 'Governors Hill', its official name today. The trigonometrical station on the hill's summit is called 'Ellenden' (sic).

From the hilltop he had panoramic views, but was unimpressed by what he could see to the west: the Lake George Range, the top of which concealed from sight the Wamboin/Bywong/Gearys Gap localities behind it. On his map he described what he could see across the lake as 'Lofty Rocky Hills'. His Field Book for 28 October 1820 gives additional details: 'The whole extent between the S.E. and West may be properly described as rocky, broken, and mountainous, and no feature or object in the prospect afforded any reasonable expectation that a good or even tolerable country could have existence in those quarters'. Oxley's map shows the Lake George Range as being limestone, an error made by Throsby that Oxley repeated. The range, as with most of Wamboin and Bywong, is composed of Ordovician sedimentary rocks, predominantly quartz-rich siltstone, mudstone and sandstone.

Charles Throsby Smith and party traverse Gearys Gap, Bywong & Wamboin, en route to the Limestone Plains: The third expedition of note, and the final one to be described here (the first two were covered in the February 2020 issue of *The Whisper*), took place in December 1820. At the direction of Charles Throsby, Charles Throsby Smith (his nephew), Joseph Wild, Constable James Vaughan, and apparently some others, left their camp at the southern end of Lake George, in heavy rain, on 3 December 1820, and ventured north along its western shore (Lake Road) to Gearys Gap retracing, in reverse, Charles Throsby's October route. From there they struck west over the range to Brooks Creek, camping there that afternoon to keep their supplies dry (Lea-Scarlett 1972, p. 2). They stayed in camp the following day, owing to the weather, but on 5 December reached the flooded Yass River in the vicinity of what became Upper Gundaroo, i.e. where Shingle Hill Way crosses the Yass River: old St. Luke's. As instructed, they followed the river downstream for some miles, and then reversed their route, heading back upstream.

They proceeded south-west to the vicinity of Ginns Gap (where Federal Highway drops down into Canberra), thence to the Duntroon/Commonwealth Park area where they camped on the Molonglo River. The limestone there that they reported (a valuable commodity for making mortar for constructing buildings) led to the name Limestone Plains. They climbed Black Mountain, noting the landscape around them, but failed to follow the Molonglo River the short distance south-west to its junction with the Murrumbidgee, their intended destination. They returned to Lake George via what is now the site of Queanbeyan. The settlement of the Limestone Plains by Europeans commenced two years later, in 1824.

Conclusion: The early expeditions by the British colonists from the Southern Highlands (the 'New Country', as Macquarie called it) to locate the great lake and river that Aboriginal people had told them about—Lake George and the Murrumbidgee River—feature prominently in Australia's early colonial history. Some of these expeditions traversed what is now known as Wamboin, Bywong and Gearys Gap. The many published works on 'the discovery of the Limestone Plains', and the early history of Canberra, generally omit or gloss over the fact that our area was on the routes taken by some of the first European explorers.

Tuesday 27 October this year, 2020, will be the bicentenary of the first Europeans to set foot in our area. I wonder if the community will develop any plans to mark the occasion?

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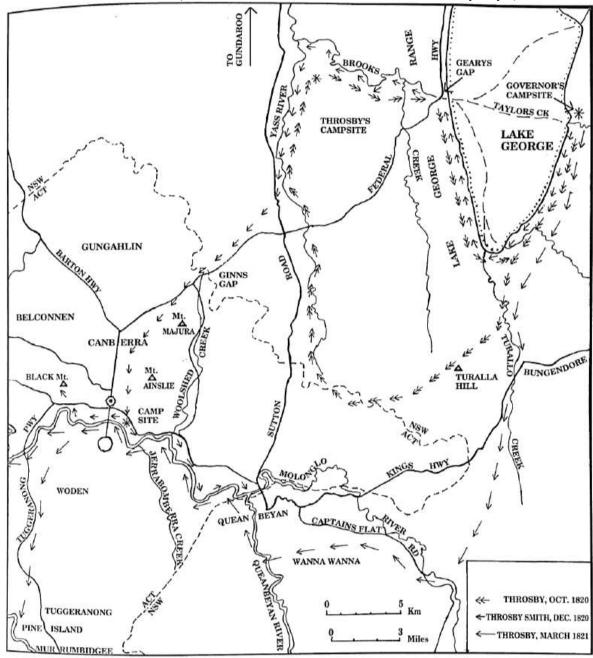
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Appendix: Explorers' routes on a map showing present-day highways and locations: The legend on this map is a little difficult to read. The first of the three routes referenced there, '<<-THROSBY, OCT 1920', was the expedition that first crossed the Wamboin/Bywong/Gearys Gap area (clockwise). The second one is '<-THROSBY SMITH, DEC. 1820' (anti-clockwise), and the third '<---THROSBY, MARCH 1821' (well to the south, not described above but discussed by Mayer).



Map Source: Mayer, W 2000, 'In search of a "considerable river": retracing the paths of the early explorers to Lake George, the Limestone Plains and the Murrumbidgee', *Canberra Historical Journal*, no. 45, p. 21.





Wamboin Muse Jill Gregory

Just add water...close your eyes and wait.....

After the smell of wood smoke in my nostrils for months I awoke one morning to a new smell...sodden wood ash. Two days later when the sun finally broke through the clouds it revealed wheelbarrows full of water, bird baths brimming to overflowing, the creek running and puddles everywhere. I could breathe again; relief lifted sagging shoulders. And then on my morning walk I smelled something different. It wasn't wet ash, it was the smell of damp pine needles on the ground and pine trees on a soft breeze. I had forgotten those smells.

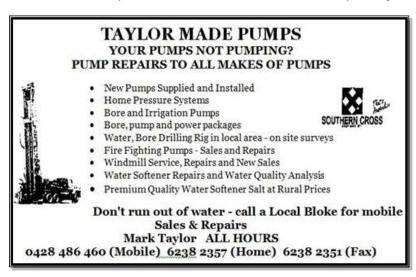
I saw two kangaroos, wet and bedraggled, bones sticking out staring empty eyed, a tortoise covered in mud seeking a better place and our dog, eyes alive and nose twitching, trotting through a string of puddles as if she'd seen water for the first time; it wasn't dam like, brown, smelly and ringed with sticky mud.

Within no time at all a noisy evening roll call rose from the gully, followed by the measured sounds of creaky doors, and a few days later a distant "ponk, ponk" was added to the rich tapestry of sounds; frogs calling out in the darkness looking for a mate. Fungi was next. White puff balls pushed their way through the cracks in the bitumen at the edge of the road, pale yellow miniatures appeared in the moist leaf litter and in an open paddock a fairy ring of mushrooms. A few weeds came up in one garden bed, but I left that novelty alone, rocket popped up in the oddest of places and some plants sprouted fresh green leaves. Life was stirring in the cool dampness after a summer that had sucked the life out of things.

Each day I checked the progress of the creek as it went from a trickle to a dribble and then nothing, but the holes in the gully were full. A red bellied black snake signaled its approval on the far side as it slid into the depths. I paused to let a brown snake sunning itself on the bitumen move off. There'd been few snakes around. Like them, I'd hidden myself away from the heat,

We didn't have a spring last year. It's almost as if spring has finally arrived, plants and animals are stirring and there is a green haze spreading across bare ground. But I'm not going to get too carried away, just yet. Nature has given us a reprieve, and we are indeed grateful, but who knows what may lie ahead. However, I've bought some new plants to plug holes vacated over summer and even considered filling empty pots with bloomers. What a difference a good drop of rain can make!

I wouldn't live anywhere else....but this summer was a sorely testing time!!!







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