



Local Covid-19 Epidemic and Responses

The Wamboin, Bywong and Sutton communities, as elsewhere, are now in lockdown. This reflects advice from communicable disease epidemiologists that the best way to slow down the epidemic is to massively reduce contact between individuals, hence reducing community transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the resulting Covid-19 disease. The Wamboin and Bywong community associations fully support the control measures that have been put in place, and urge all members of our community to comply

with both the letter and the spirit of the ‘Stay At Home’ orders that have been promulgated under the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW). Details are online at <https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/public-health-orders>.

Many sources of information available about both the restrictions that are in place and what we can do to keep ourselves, our families and our communities safe. The key Commonwealth Government’s web-based information source is <https://www.australia.gov.au/>, supplemented by the National Coronavirus Helpline which operates 24/7: phone 1800 020 080, and the Commonwealth Department of Health’s website <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>. The NSW State Government’s key online source is <https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>, the ACT Government’s equivalent is <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/>, and Council’s is <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/COVID-19-Coronavirus>. Bungendore and region-based community support organisations can be contacted on the Bungendore Community Help Hotline 0411 608 993. The services are particularly focused on identifying people who might be isolated at home, and needing outside supports.

Please see the community associations’ Presidents’ Paragraphs in this issue of *The Whisper* for information about other local impacts of the epidemic. The most obvious one is the cancellation of community activities that would have entailed more than two people gathering, including the monthly meetings of the Wamboin Community Association (WCA), its AGM formerly scheduled for April, the Wamboin Home Produce Markets, and the Wheels of Wamboin. The WCA is considering conducting future Community Association meetings by videoconference/teleconference. The community associations are more than willing to provide what support we can to members of the community. Contact details are listed under the heading ‘Local Facilities and Contacts’ below. Most importantly, please follow the new Stay At Home and physical distancing rules, while doing all we can to combat social isolation across the Wamboin, Bywong and the Sutton communities. Keep safe, everyone, and look forward to our communities weathering this difficult time and coming out of it stronger and more inter-connected than before!

To all automotive lovers and our loyal Wheels of Wamboin followers, In light of concerns around the Covid-19 virus we have unfortunately made the decision to postpone the 2020 Wheels of Wamboin to a date yet to be set. Please keep well and we look forward to seeing you when the world returns to normal. In the meantime we hope you may find the time for long drives in your automotive beauty (maybe searching for that elusive toilet paper). Message to the members and friends of the Wamboin Community Association, Inc. In light of the concerns in the transmission of the Covid-19 infection, the Thursday Drop in Group will unfortunately be adjourned until further notice. For any enquiries please contact Denise. We apologise for the late notice of this decision, and trust that it does not inconvenience anybody.

Local Facilities and Contacts

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

Bungendore Police: 6238 1244 Ambulance Bookings: 131233

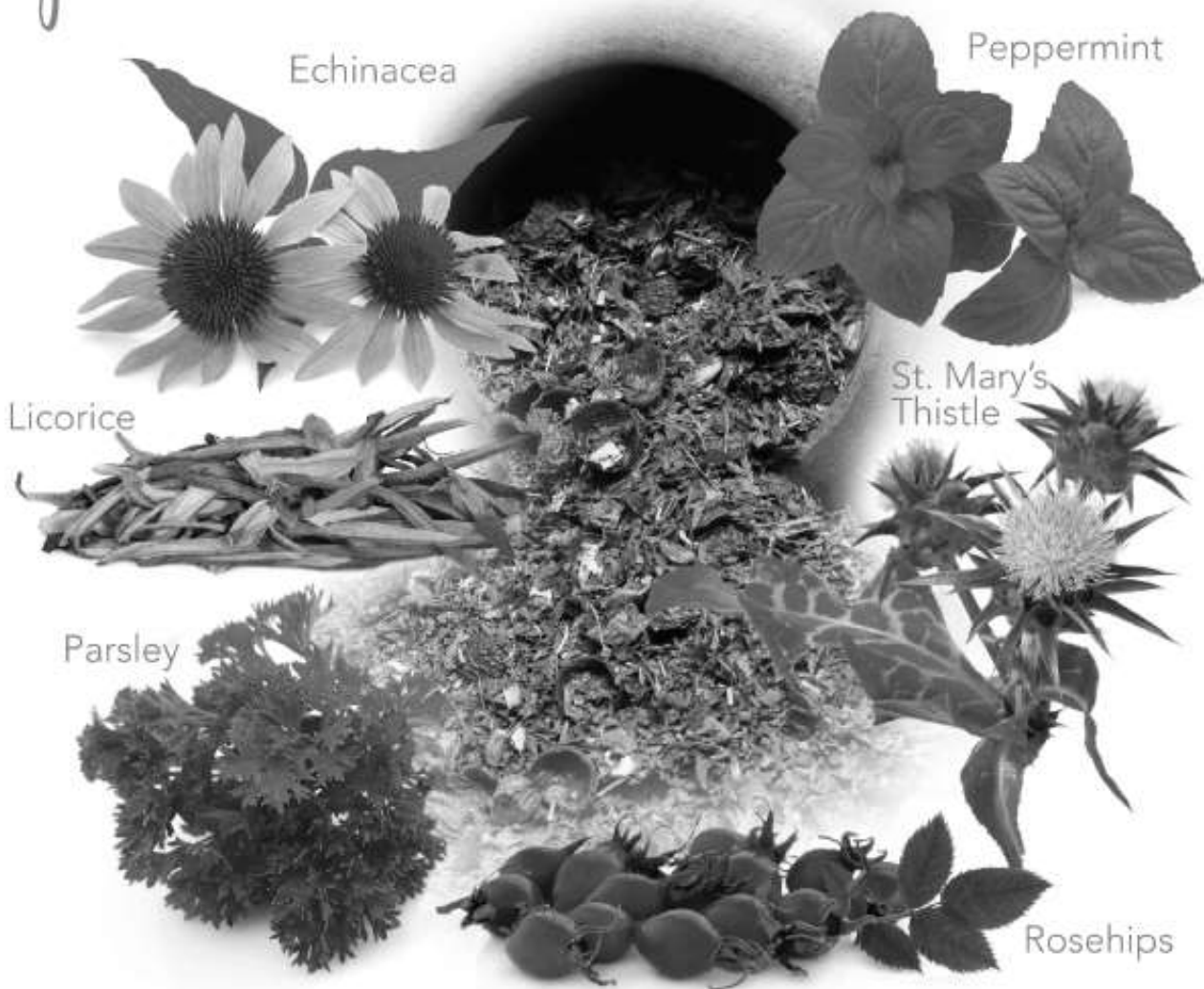
Wamboin Community Assn www.wamboincommunity.asn.au Bywong Community www.bywongcommunity.org.au

Fire Brigade <http://wamboin.rfsa.org.au>

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	deniselynnhales40@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

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	<p>Wamboin Community Association Presidents Paragraphs</p> <p>“Strange days indeed Mama!!”</p>	
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Fire, smoke, hail and now the Virus. Really can we just reset 2020 or skip forward to 2021. So far this is certainly a strange start to the year. Not sure what can happen next, maybe Aliens !!

Well a lot has happened in a month since our last issue with large parts of the world in lockdown from the insidious Covid-19 virus. As things change day by day it is difficult to keep up with the new rules and lockdowns attempting to flatten the curve to allow our healthcare system to cope with the impending tsunami. As I write (just before the end of the month) the Australian Government has announced a wage package to attempt to stave off the impending financial crisis to follow, with many retailers just shutting doors. What can we do at Wamboin? Social distancing out here is a little easier than urban areas and there are always those 1000 jobs to do around your block. Stay home and do them now. Wash those hands so they shine. The big issue however is the vulnerable and elderly within our Wamboin community. Please, if you have elderly or at risk neighbours or friends, regularly pick up the phone and ask them if they are ok, if they need supplies, groceries or medical assistance. Maybe they just need some social interaction and a voice on the phone can provide this. Please make us the community that looks after our own and we are all in this together. Please keep track of updates at our WCA Facebook page

Wamboin Bush Dance – Our inaugural Great Wamboin Bush Dance just beat the distancing restrictions and was a great night had by all. We raised around \$1200 which will be donated to BlazeAid and the Burrumbuttock Hay Runners. The Poverty Bush Band was great and really provided outstanding entertainment for the night. Depending on how this virus all pans out, we are planning to have another event next year, hopefully in a “Covid-19 virus free” world.

Wildcare – As part of our support for the bushfire affected communities the WCA has donated \$1000 to our local Wildcare group to help animals impacted by the bushfires.

Wheels of Wamboin – Okay, here starts the beginning of our event postponements. Yes unfortunately due to distancing and crowd restrictions the Wheels of Wamboin has been postponed to either a time later in the year or maybe even next year. **Home**

Produce Markets/Thursday drop in/ Table Tennis – The Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council has closed all community halls for 6 months. This affects the markets, Thursday drop in group and the table tennis nights. All these activities will be cancelled until restrictions are lifted.

WCA Meeting – at present all face-to-face WCA General Meetings are cancelled. The committee is looking at alternative methods to hold an online meeting so that members of the public can participate.

WCA AGM – Our AGM has also been deferred and will be held at a later date. – Peter Evans, President

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Bywong Community Association News – April 2020

It was reluctantly and after much deliberation that the Bywong Community Association decided to cancel the 2020 Bywong Car Boot Sale, aware of the increasing official advice against public gatherings. I believe this is only the second time the CBS has been called off in its 23-year history, and the earlier occasion was a deferral due to wet weather (hard to imagine these days!). We would have preferred to 'postpone' the event, but in reality it's impossible to pick a future date, given the uncertainty over just about everything at the moment!

QPRC has also recently announced the closure of all of its public facilities, which include the Bywong Hall and Les Reardon Reserve, for 6 months. This means that BCA's Trivia Night, usually held in July, has also had to be cancelled.

The loss of these regular Bywong events is sad, as there are few enough occasions in good times where locals can catch up with longstanding acquaintances and make new ones. However, BCA has resolved to be ready to re-launch events once it is safe to do so, and we hope that many of you will volunteer your help to make this happen.

Once this pandemic has passed, we look forward to again "Bringing Bywong Together" at our local events.

In the meantime, stay healthy and stay connected to friends and acquaintances in the area.

One thing NOT affected by the pandemic: **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>

Keep in touch with BCA via the BCA website: www.bywongcommunity.org.au and BCA Facebook Page, where we welcome your comments and suggestions.

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

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We are all facing uncertain times. As always, your local Rural Fire Service brigades and all our emergency service colleagues are here to help our communities.

We are following the advice of health professionals and the NSW RFS. During these uncertain times we will maintain our core business, responding to emergencies in our community (with some additional precautions in place to mitigate potential spread), but all other activities, without exception, have been put on hold.

We ask, that you join us and remain vigilant, patient and understanding of the bigger picture of the health welfare and safety of our brigade members.

Permits to burn will no longer be required from midnight on the 31st of March. However if you are planning to do any burning you will need to give your neighbours 24 hours notice of your intention to burn. Also you have to notify the Lake George Fire Control centre during business hours on (02) 6128-0600. Stay safe and healthy.

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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

NSW Rural Fire Service www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Face Book Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade

Lake George Fire Control Centre 0261280600 BH's




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Wamboin Golf – March 2020

Sunday, 1 March. So there's your correspondent, enjoying the Captain Cook Cruises trip around the islands – Goat Island, Shark Island, Cockatoo Island, Clark Island and Pinchgut Island - when a terrible thirst overcomes him. He breasts the bar and says to the Mexican bar attendant in as much Spanish as he can muster “uno Corona beerus por favor, and hold the lemon”. She jumps overboard screaming as a SWAT team of paramedics in full Hazmat gear throw him to the deck and whisk him off to isolation on Gilligan's Island out in the Timor Sea or the Arafura or wherever. So that is why this report comes to you from Mahogany Ridge, relying upon the truth-telling citizens of the Palerang. The day was sponsored by Deb and Ken Gordon whom we thank for the refreshments and prizes. They nominated a comp determined by stroke play. And so players mounted their iron horses and galloped off into the green-tinged Wamboin panorama.

Back at the Hall we rhapsodized at the changes wrought in the natural world by the waning fires, the dissipating smoke and the soaking rains. We congratulated ourselves on having dodged the bullet (this time) as we thought compassionately of those who hadn't. We lapsed whimsical on the ironies of fate and how fear of the burning of the South Eastern seaboard was replaced by the pandemic of COVID-19. (What happened to the other 18, eh?) And in that melancholy mood, conversation turned to the disappearance of Holden. I have to say that, although I never miss the Wheels of Wamboin, I'm not what you'd call a motorhead. So when I got home I dug out my old worm-ridden copy of Catcher in the Rye to see if Holden was still there. And of course he was. And so it will be for the millions of fans of the mighty Australian marque. Memories linger on.

The captain, having marshalled the crowd in stentorian terms, introduced our guests, Don Izetti, Ross Ini and Belle Canto all the way from Naples. Apologies were received from Ted Evans. The googly ball went to your correspondent in recognition of his absence on handicap maintenance. You can guess who got the dummy spit: yes, it's still Vicki (anger management isn't working). Encouragement awards went to Mads Gordon and Lemily, a first time golfer. LD and NTP ball winners were Vicki Still 3, Paul Griffin, Pete Harrison, Glen Crafter and Ken Gordon. Phoebe Beckett won the junior comp 71/31. Winner of the seniors nine hole comp was Lofty Mason 46/33, from Joan Mason 45/34 with Samuel Urquhart 52/37 in 3rd place. The 18 hole comp winner was Tim Barter 76/67 from Vicki Still 90/68 OCB from Paul Griffin 83/68.

Next month is the Masters. I mean the Wamboin Mini Masters sponsored by the Wamboin Community Association. Join us at 12.15pm at the community hall for the usual prompt 12.30pm kick-off. And the next time somebody says to you “it is what it is” you look down the twin barrels of your nose and reply “and it isn't what it isn't”. It means the same thing: bugger-all.

Larry King, golfer.



Wamboin Playgroup is TEMPORARILY CLOSED ...

... to assist the community in mitigating Covid-19 risks. At this time, nobody in Wamboin Playgroup has reported any Covid-19 infections or contacts, this is merely a measure to limit social gathering to assist with slowing the spread of Covid-19. Wamboin Playgroup will be reopening after the risk period has passed. Notification of Wamboin Playgroup recommencing will be given in the Wamboin Whisper and on the Wamboin Playgroup Facebook page. Stay safe and see you all when we return. – Gabrielle Legrande, co-ordinator, email to <wamboin.playgroup@gmail.com>



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- Chilli and fennel salami pizza with olives - \$26
- Roast vegetable pizza, Australian feta- \$24

PASTA

- Red wine braised beef cheek ragu, tagliatelle, aged parmesan - \$28
- Red wine braised beef cheek ragu, tagliatelle, aged parmesan - \$28
- Fusilli arrabiatta, buffalo bocconcini - \$24

SALADS / SIDES

- Beetroot salad, feta, toasted almonds - \$14
- Fried brussel sprouts, macadamia, lime, chilli oil - \$14
- Hand cut chips, contentious ketchup \$10

DESSERT

- Dark chocolate brownie, hazelnuts, chocolate sauce - \$14

CHEESE & MEAT PLATTER

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MEAL PACK FOR 4 \$159

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WAMBOIN WEATHER – Rainfall and Temperature Records

(45 years from Cooper Road) by Christine Rieber

March Rainfall Stats

March rainfall to the 29th 102mm
2020 total rainfall to 29th 202.75mm

Average March rainfall..... 57.3mm
2019 March rainfall..... 72.5mm
2019 total rainfall to 29/3..... 166.25mm
44yr Av. to end of March..... 175.6mm

April Rainfall Stats

2019 April rainfall..... 2.75mm
Wettest April..... 174.5mm in 1989
Wettest day..... 70mm on 20/4/84
Driest April..... 0.5mm in 1997

Average April rainfall..... 44.4mm
Average no. rain days in April..... 7.0
Highest no. rain days..... 19 in 1989
Lowest no. rain days..... 1 in 1997

April Temperature Stats

Hottest April day..... 31.3°C on 11/4/18
Hottest April night..... 16.5°C on 13/4/18
Average day temperature..... 17.7°C
Warmest April..... 2018
(Av. max day temp. 24.6°C & night 9.7°C)
(warmest night temp. 11.0°C in 1989)
April 2019. Av. max 22.7°C & min 8.4°C

Av. April temp.. 13.0°C (day+night comb.)
Coldest April day..... 8°C (4 times) on
13/4/94, 27/4/09, 26/4/12 & 22/4/15
Coldest April night..... -1°C on 25/4/13
Average night temperature..... 8.3°C
Coldest April 2011
(Av. min day temp. 14.5°C & night 5.7°C)
(coldest night temp. 3.5°C in 2013)



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[02 6238 3830](tel:0262383830) 12-8pm Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun, Mon 12-5pm

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It Really Is a Dog's Life

Hello!! I'm Molly and I'm a kelpie pup. I was born on a farm near Gundagai and came to live in Wamboin in October. I'm nearly 6 months old. I love company ... and being a bit cheeky... and running... and jumping. My cat brother certainly agrees I'm cheeky!

My first big Wamboin adventure was a car ride to the Community Hall. My owner said I need to know about the Hall – lots of places to sniff, dams for swimming & games and the oval for running & games. My predecessor, another kelpie, loved going there. So many smells – I loved my walk around. Then we saw three dogs getting ready to go for a swim. Their two very nice owners invited us to join them. I was a bit nervous (not as nervous as my owner) as I was quite tiny – Jock, Beau and Gretta were much MUCH bigger. But we didn't need to be nervous at all. Jock decided he had to take very good care of me. He made sure I didn't go too far away and wasn't 'run over' by the others racing after balls into, around and out of the dam. I could walk under his tummy and stay near him to feel safe. Beau tried to get me interested in the water. I wasn't convinced. Gretta wasn't interested in me at all – there were balls to chase in the dam and that's much more fun! We had a lovely time – I cried when I had to leave. It was such fun. And the start of my wanting to meet everyone!

My next car adventure was to Queanbeyan, for coffee with my owner and her friend. I now have a favourite café there – the staff are very friendly and give me big cuddles whenever I go back. They can't believe how much I've grown. I get to meet quite a few children there. And there's a lovely walk along the river – past the swans, across the suspension bridge, to the beach and back to the café. It's best to do that early in the day, before it gets too hot. I don't like it when it's too hot.

I have to be secured in the boot of the car for travelling. That's because I love chewing seat belts. (I could even chew seat belts when there were people sitting next to me!!) I'm now big enough that I can look out the back window and see what's happening so being in the boot isn't too bad. When I'm a bit older I might get another try in a seat...

At home I love going on walks – along the road, in the bush and in the forest.

It can be very busy along the road. There are lots of things to smell, old bones to chew (only if I'm very fast as my owner tries to swap them for treats – she says the bones are usually old and crumbly and I might injure myself if I swallow sharp bits), dogs to meet (hello Wilma and Nina and Hobson and Poppy), fellow Wamboin Whisper correspondents to meet, cars and trucks to get used to. And I can *look* at horses. I tried meeting some but discovered I DO NOT LIKE electric fences.

In the bush, I started off helping carry rakes for the people doing Kowen Trail Run trail maintenance. I'm very eager to help ... but not very proficient at rake carrying. Helping with the trails has meant I've met Gretta again – she's also a trail helper. Now that I'm bigger she thinks I'm a great playmate. That's good because I think she is too!!! We are trying to become experts at log selection – it's very important to get the right logs to line the trails. But mostly Gretta and I just play together. That's also good because we can be a bit boisterous for Trixie and Lucy. But I did have a chance to learn to be more calm when Missy used to come along.

In the forest I have big walks. Gretta and I take our owners out at least once a week. We're finding lots of places to walk and dams to visit – Gretta swims and I paddle. I'm trialling being in the Monday walking group with Trixie. I think that will be fun.

And after lots of exertion, we accompany our owners to the bakery so they can have coffee (and a lamington or danish or muffin) and we can meet more people and dogs.

Then we go to our homes and sleep. But I don't sleep for too long – there's too many things to explore. To quote the Whisper's Wamboin Muse, "I wouldn't live anywhere else". Molly (with quite a bit of help from Jenny)

Wheels of Wamboin



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Nature Notes March 2020

Jo Walker

Three days of very welcome steady rain during the first week of March brought more much-needed relief to the tired countryside.

The little pond in my dam that had resulted from the previous month's small amount of rain expanded until the dam was full – and overflowing for a short while. Frogs were croaking and creaking. One small patch of frothy frog spawn appeared at the edge of the water, but may have provided a feast for some other inhabitant as it was gone a day later. And Mole-crickets (*Gryllotalpa* sp.) responded to the welcome moisture in the soil with deafening whirring – a lovely sound we hadn't heard much of for a long while.

Many shrubs and some trees here had succumbed to the long dry period and didn't recover, but others have begun to sprout fresh new foliage. After the rain last month thousands of little seedlings germinated and came up everywhere, but it took a while longer for plants which seemed to have completely disappeared, but were surviving as small woody stumps underground, to make a recovery. This is just starting to happen now. Little groups of *Goodenia hederacea* (Ivy Goodenia) came up everywhere and a few are now showing some bright yellow flowers nestled close to the ground. The tough little *Pimelea curviflora* (Curved Rice-flower) is just beginning to produce green clumps of tiny green leaves. And extensive patches of grey-green leaves signal that the suckering *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (Yellow Buttons) will soon be flowering again.

A few plants are flowering at present. The largest old Yellow Box tree (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) here is carrying a heavy load of cream flowers that are keeping the bees busy. At the other end of the size scale, *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* (Clustered Everlasting Daisy) has a few tiny golden button flowers adorning it. And the little Yellow Burr-daisy (*Calotis lappulacea*) is flowering and already bearing the spiky tiny burrs that carry its seed.

Another small plant that has re-appeared is *Glycine tabacina* (Vanilla Glycine), a suckering pea plant. It has trifoliate leaves and flower stems (about 10cm tall) that are covered in dark purple flowers at present. This species is not as common in this area as *Glycine clandestina* (Twining Glycine) which, as its name suggests, climbs through the stems of shrubs – often forming a sizeable tangle of thin dark trifoliate leaves carrying masses of mauve flowers.

There seem to be a few more small insectivorous birds around after the rain. A tiny mixed flock here the other day consisted of a few Brown Thornbills, two Fairy Wrens, a Grey Shrike Thrush, a Golden Whistler female and an Eastern Spinebill. And, nearby, a White-throated Treecreeper was searching the bark of a tree for something to eat.

There are still not many insects or spiders around though – apart from the Meat Ants, that is. They are keeping the Echidnas well-fed. I recently saw two large and healthy-looking Echidnas at the top of the hill here. With a bit more rain and continuing warm weather, there should be enough food for the grazing and browsing animals – the Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Swamp Wallabies and Red-necked Wallabies – to have an easier winter.

Most of us are spending more time at home right now because of Covid-19. But, we're very lucky in Wamboin to be able to get out into the natural world and watch the contented wildlife in the rejuvenating green landscape.



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Wamboin Home Produce and Craft Market Saturday 18 April 2020 CANCELLED

Contact: Lance and Meriel Schultz 62383309 or 042 261 4304

Email: lmsconsulting@bigpond.com

We managed to go ahead with the March market by locating several stalls and the café outside. Fortunately it was a simply beautiful day and the social distancing requirements worked quite well. We actually had quite a few people coming through during the morning – maybe because sport was cancelled and there wasn't much else on! We had a good mix of stalls selling garden produce, home baking, craft, plants, jewellery and more. Landcare had native tube stock for sale as well – very popular.

To aid in bushfire and drought recovery, the market contributed in three ways:

- By selling secondhand books and accepting donations to assist the son of one of our long time stallholders. He lost his house and all his belongings in the fires.
- By running a Wamboin Bushfire Recovery Drive. We collected up black plastic pots and potted-up cuttings and plants and asked for donations of second hand garden tools. We got a great response with a ute and trailer load collected. See photo!
- By continuing our collection for Wildcare. Restrictions on public gatherings, social distancing and non-essential travel have now escalated.

WITH REGRET, WE HAVE DECIDED TO CANCEL THE MARKET UNTIL THESE RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED. Stay well and safe



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Help Us Assess The Bywong Wamboin Greenways Biodiveristy

For a project of the local greenways management committee, I am seeking community input to help establish a biodiversity picture of the Bywong Wamboin greenways corridors. The committee has on file a flora study conducted by an expert botanist, identifying some tree and understory associations in central sections of the greenways network, much of it comprising valuable remnant native vegetation. This provides some idea of local native habitats. An important step forward is to start identifying what wildlife: mammals, birds, reptiles and others inhabit or use the greenways corridors and neighbouring properties. As part of this exercise, we would like to hear about your anecdotal sightings of wildlife. This is an informal survey that can be added to and compared to other sources like the Canberra Nature Map. You can see this map, produced by the Bywong community, at <https://www.bywongcommunity.org.au/greenways/>



If you live within 1km of a greenways section, with sections as shown on the map shown in miniature here and in fuller size at. please send an email with the following information to the committee at inbox.greenways@gmail.com Please send us: 1.Name. Address. Email. 2. How close to a greenway section are you 3. Describe the predominant vegetation on your block and on the neighbouring greenway and note whether they are connected. E.g. predominantly woodland with trees and understorey, predominantly pasture – please note (if you know) whether your pasture is native pasture – or mixed woodland and pasture in roughly what proportions. 4. Please list by common name what native land-based wildlife you have seen/see within the past three years. I.e. Mammals, birds, reptiles, insects and amphibians.

Note: If you like please add, in a separate section, non-native species you have seen/see. (That does not include humans on foot or horseback!)

Thank you, your help and participation are invaluable.

OTHER GREENWAYS MATTERS

The Greenways committee would love to hear from you if you would like to become more involved with the maintenance and preservation work of our unique greenways network. If you would like to be added to an updated list of community 'Friends of Greenways' – possibly to

join future maintenance working bees, to share greenways information, for example the biodiversity findings as they evolve, or other activities – please contact us at the same email: inbox.greenways@gmail.com
 Posted by Maria Taylor. Committee member Bywong Wamboin Greenways

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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. It is the only pay they will get. – Ned Noel, volunteer editor

168: CO-ORDINATED BY ALICE SCOTT: ph 0407 005 506 email alicescott@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
Andrea Sadow	Poppet Rd	31	Alan Rope	Sutton Rd	40

180: CO-ORDINATED BY KATHY HANDEL: ph 6238 3596 khandel@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	Phileeson&CFogarty	Norton Rd (Campbell to Bingley)	32

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

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 BY JESSICA GOURLAY: mob: 0401 249 778 jessicagourlay@hotmail.com.au

Robyn Elsom	Denley Dr (Sth End to 429)	15	Rhonda&NevParnell	Denley (Birchmans to 1/2 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-ORDINATED BY GARETH JONES: ph Ph: 6238 1988 givrjones@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

157: 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	Fire Brigade	Headquarters on Bingley Way	1


145: CO-ORDINATED BY DAVID FEATHERSTONE ph 6236 97223 bushranger_au@hotmail.com

Chris Fowler	Millyn Rd	20	David Featherston	B'doreRd SmHill to&nclgdCrkBRd	27
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&nclgd Smrhill)	38
Advertisers & Misc	Out of area advertiser mailouts	33		TOTAL 1337	

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The Wonderful Women of Wamboin

Gail Ritchie Knight

The Wonderful Women of Wamboin (WWOW) have been meeting at St Andrew's church for some years, that is, until last week when a small group of us met at a member's house. That worked very well especially as we were able to maintain an easy 1.5–2 metres distance. Hearing aids were not required.

Sadly we will not be meeting face-to-face as a group for some time now due to COVID-19. But we've come up with another way of keeping in touch — the good old-fashioned phone. We've created a rotating roster to facilitate a weekly phone-in to each of us.

Modern technology enables many to communicate visually like Facetime, Skype or Zoom but we would need a reliable internet connection for that to happen. Now that's another story. However a simple phone call can still be effective in touching base. In my case it could be superior — I wouldn't need to get dressed; better still, I wouldn't even need to get out of bed. No visual assault there!

We sent emails to WWOW asking if they'd like to participate. If you've missed out but would still like to participate, then don't hesitate to contact me. Doing time in isolation could ring the death knell to WWOW. We don't know how long COVID-19 will be controlling our lives. Here's hoping this simple strategy will maintain our sense of extended family and we will emerge at the end of this ordeal like Phoenix Rising.

All women are welcome. For more information contact Gail Ritchie Knight 0416 097 500 whirlwind1@argonite.com.au.

Wildcare Impacted by COVID-19

No areas of society are immune to the impact of COVID-19. Wildcare's training program for current and new volunteers has also become a casualty with recently announced macropod and bird training courses being postponed. Indeed, all group training has been abandoned, until at least July. This does not mean Wildcare is shutting up shop – far from it. Providing a service to the community, in rescuing and rehabilitating injured and orphaned animals, is paramount and continues – albeit volunteers have to observe the government-directed social isolation rules, around people, just like anyone else.

With COVID-19 taking over our lives, as well as the 24/7 news cycle, it would be easy to forget that it was only a few weeks ago we were all worried by the threat of bushfire and drought. In our area, the Tallaganda bushfire and other fires raging to the south burnt through vast areas. Many animals died and those that survived needed considerable help to fix up their injuries – if they could be rescued – and to provide food, water and shelter to others.

Since Christmas, Wildcare, with the help of many affected property owners, and community volunteers, such as the Southern Tablelands 4WD Club, have been delivering essential food – grass, hay, pellets, bird seed, fruit/vegetables and 'browse' (native tree and shrub cuttings) – to known surviving animals, whose habitat has been destroyed. Over 40 food stations were positioned at strategic locations in and around the Tallaganda bushfire area, and in Michelago. These are being regularly replenished. Nesting boxes for possums and gliders have also been erected to provide shelter. It might appear that Wildcare is scratching the surface, but every animal saved will provide the nucleus to rejuvenate these areas in years to come. A Wildcare member's wildlife sanctuary, destroyed by bushfire on 23 January, has used a koala detection dog to seek out animals needing rescue.

Wildcare has received some cash donations (they are always useful!) and has also been supported by the World Wildlife Fund. Local businesses have been tremendous with their donations of food and equipment. Hay continues to be available to support grass-eating native animals (to obtain hay contact haydrop@wildcare.com.au).

On a weekly basis, Wildcare gathers native browse (wattle, acacia, bottle brush, grevillea, flowers, new shoots etc) and fruit/vegetables. If you want to help please email haydrop@wildcare.com.au and find out what is needed and when.

Photo: Peter attaches a possum box

If you need help and advice on wildlife issues, get in touch on Wildcare's helpline 6299 1966 (put it in your Mobile phone) or via wildcare.com.au. - Philip Machin for Wildcare, 4933 1892



Letter

25 Mack Street, Richardson, ACT 2905 26 March 2020

A big thank you to Jill Gregory and to all the people who attended the Wamboin Markets and bought her second-hand books, thereby raising money for me. As most of you would know, I lost my house at Bemboka and all belongings in the fire which swept through on New Year's Eve. Your generosity to someone you have never met, is astounding and most appreciated. Once again – a big **THANK YOU!!** - Ian Wheeler

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Bird Of The Month

By Luke Downey

For April I chose the Spotted Pardalote, a very small, colourful bird that lives high in the treetops.

Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*)

Size: 8-10cm

Status: Fairly common breeding resident

The Spotted Pardalote is one of the smallest birds in Australia. They have a black bill, white eyebrow, grey side of the face from the eye down to the chest, and black upperparts, except for the red rump. The back is covered with tiny white spots which distinguishes it from the similar Striated Pardalote. The male is more colourful, with a yellow breast and vent and cream underparts, whereas the female has a creamy-white breast and underparts with a yellow vent. Spotted Pardalotes are very active birds, fluttering around and foraging in the treetops. Recently, during the hot and dry weather, they have also been visiting our birdbath a lot. These birds nest during spring. Their nest is a tunnel in a creekbank or other bank of earth. They excavate a tunnel, up to several metres long, and then build a small chamber at the end which they line with leaves, bark and feathers. This chamber is where they lay their eggs. They will reuse the same nest as long as it is still in good condition.



Male



Female

(Photo from Google images)

Children Adopted

Thank you to everyone who bought plants from the Landcare stall at the last Wamboin market. We sold nearly 3 trailer-loads of plants in a frenzy of activity. You'd have thought it was toilet paper! More plants have been sold since the market and now the nursery has no plants that are ready for sale. Thank you all for your support. – Kathy Handel for Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group

Coming Events at Sherony Park

<p>Facilities available for hire at reasonable prices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered Arena with lights, stadium seating & Kitchenette • Classroom with Kitchenette • Stables, dayvards, roundyard • Short term horse stay <p>Lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position & balance lessons on the lunge • One-on-one <u>horse riding</u> lessons • Equine Assisted Therapy <p>Bookinas: 0422 244 433</p>	<p>Michael Godding Classical Training & Working Equitation Sundays and Mondays weekly Bookings: 0410 611 577</p> <p>Yoga for Horse Riders Starts Monday 4 May 2020 Bookings: office@sheronypark.com.au</p> <p>Belinda Bosenbroek 1-4 April 2020 Bookings: caithe78@gmail.com</p> <p>Belinda Bosenbroek 19-20 May 2020 Bookings: caithe78@gmail.com</p>	<p>Intro to Rainbow program for Parents with Neuro-diverse children 16 May 2020 Bookings: patricia@sociallivingsolutions.com.au</p> <p>Jent 101 & 102 13-14 June 2020 Bookings: Natalie.education@jent.net.au</p> <p>Ride with your Mind Ann Montgomerie 19-20 June 2020 Bookings: sdletts@hotmail.com</p>
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The Roads of Wamboin

By David McDonald, ph. 0416 231 890, email david [at] dnmcdonald.id.au

Introduction and invitation to contribute: This article provides summary information on the origins of the names of the roads of Wamboin. Please let me know if you can fill in any of the gaps, or correct anything that is mistaken. Another version, with more details (including sources), will be published, in due course, on the local history pages of the Wamboin Community Association's website <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au/localhistory/>.

For the purposes of this listing, Wamboin is taken to be the locality of Wamboin, not the parish of Wamboin. This is because the locality of Wamboin straddles three parishes, and parts of the parish of Wamboin lie well beyond the boundaries of the locality of Wamboin. The boundary of the locality is shown in reddish dashes on the map in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council online mapping system <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Building-Development/Planning-Zoning/Online-mapping>. Select the layers Boundaries | Suburbs, and zoom in to Wamboin.

Reflecting a decision of the Geographical Names Board of NSW, 'Wamboin' was gazetted as a 'locality' on 31 Jul 1981. The origins of the locality's name are discussed in my article 'The locality of Wamboin: its creation and naming', *The Whisper*, December 2018, p. 22, <http://wamboincommunity.asn.au/thewhisper/content/support/archives/2018/1812%20Whisper.pdf>.

There are 31 officially named roads in the locality of Wamboin, as follows.

Amungula Place: Although located in the parish and locality of Wamboin, the road name reflects the nearby parish of Amungula, the creek of that name, the former Amungula school, and the 'Amungula' property on the nearby Sutton Road. A local Aboriginal word the meaning of which is unknown.

Bingley Way: The Bingley family arrived in the district in the 1840s. They selected land beside the Yass Road (now Sutton Road) and established the 'Amungula' homestead. The next generation of Bingleys established the 'Woodfield' property on the Yass River, also farming further afield. They created the subdivision that became Bingley Way from land that they owned there.

Birchmans Grove: Named after the nearby Birchams Creek which, in turn, was named after an 1830s aspiring settler, Stephen Burcher. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.

Campbell Place: The absentee landlord of much of the Glendale/Burbong area, George Campbell of 'Duntroon', obtained a title to land there in 1871. The Campbell family took up a number of selections in the south-western part of Wamboin, and Glenburn, in the early 1880s.

Canning Close: Named after the property owned by James Canning, near what is now Bingley Way, from 1916 to 1927.

Clare Valley Place: Named after the former large landholding called 'Clare', within which Clare Valley Place is located, that was developed in the mid-to late-1800s by the Leahy family, commencing with many small selections. Pat Reardon purchased 'Clare' from the Leahys around 1930.

Cooper Road: Named after James Cooper, a former Queanbeyan policeman, who was one of the early selectors in the area.

Denley Drive: Named after John Denley who had a large land holding near the Federal Highway and Sutton Road, close to 'Woodfield', and subsequent generations of Denleys in the area.

Fernloff Road: The name of a property in the area owned by the Denley family from 1927. The original 'Fernloff' homestead is on a block off Finn Place.

Finn Place: John Finn was one of the two initial Deputy Fire Captains of the Sutton Bushfire Brigade responsible for the Wamboin area, and the first Captain of the Wamboin Bushfire Brigade, 1984-1989.

Gallagher Crescent: John Gallagher was one of the first settlers at Fell Timber on the Kings Highway near the JoC HQ turn-off. His son Thomas Gallagher, and other family members, subsequently took up selections in the Glenburn/south-west Wamboin area. The name is pronounced locally as 'Gall-a-ger', with a hard 'g' in the middle, rather than the Irish pronunciation Gall-a-har.

Hogan Drive: The Hogan family were land holders in the area in early part of the 20th century. W.S. Hogan purchased the land in the area from John Leahy in the 1919-1927 period.

Kestral Place: Perhaps named (with a miss-spelling) after the Nankeen Kestrel, a small falcon common in the area? Or named after a ship? Readers are invited to provide additional information on the origins of the road's name.

Lumley Road: The name of a prominent historical property in the Macs Reef Road/Donnelly Creek area, created by the Leahy family. The homestead is on the northern side of Macs Reef Road, close to its intersection with the Federal Highway. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.

Majors Close: The Majors were a family who, in the early 1960s, bought the land in the present Norton Road/Merino Vale Drive/Weeroona Drive area. The Majors lived in Canberra, but occasionally stayed in the cottage on their property just northwest of the Weeroona Drive/Norton Road intersection. Majors Close was created when the family subdivided their land in the area.

McEnally Place: In October 1865 William John McEnally ('Mac', frequently referred to as 'John McEnally') discovered gold near the 'Woodbury' property, subsequently developed as the Mac's Reef goldfield. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.

Merino Vale Drive: 'Merino Vale' was a block that formed part of what is now central Wamboin, formerly part of the Hyles family's 'Murryong' Station.

Norton Road: Named after the former Sydney-based firm Norton Towers Estate Pty Ltd which developed the 'Canberra Country Estate' subdivision. Canberra Country Estate was subsequently officially re-named Wamboin.

Orana Drive: A Polynesian word meaning 'be well' in the Cook Islands and 'hello' in Tahiti. Widely mistakenly attributed to Australian Aboriginal languages. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.

Poppet Road: Named after the nearby Poppet Hill (altitude 918 metres) and Poppet Trig Station there.

Proud Place: Readers are invited to provide information on the origins of the road's name.

Reedy Creek Place: Reedy Creek flows past the eastern end of the properties on this road, heading north to join Brooks Creek near the Bungendore Road/Macs Reef Road intersection.

Robertson Road: David Gerard Robertson OBE, Captain (retired) Royal Navy, one of the first residents of Wamboin (on Cooper Road) once rural residential subdivisions were created, was one of the two initial Deputy Fire Captains of the Sutton Bushfire

Brigade responsible for the Wamboin area, the first President of the Wamboin Bushfire Brigade, 1984-1986, and funded the building of St Andrew's Church.

Ryans Road: The Ryan family were prominent landholders in the central and eastern part of Wamboin, and created the Yalana subdivision there in the late 1980s.

Sarah Reef Road: 'Sarah Reef' was the name of a gold reef on the 'Woodbury' property close to Mac's Reef and the 1860s Newington goldfield township. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.

Valley View Lane: The lane runs north along the side of the valley of Brooks Creek, with good views into the picturesque valley.

Warramunga Close: The name of the property between Norton Road and the vicinity of Woolshed Lane, formerly owned by Diana and Keith Gascoine. Named after the Australian Anzac class frigate HMAS Warramunga (II) upon which Keith Gascoine served as a naval officer. Warramunga Close was created as part of the sub-division of their property in c. 2011.

Weeroona Drive: A word in the language of the Dja Dja Wurrung people of central Victoria, particularly the Bendigo region, probably meaning 'tranquillity' or 'we rest'. This word has been widely used to name properties, businesses, etc., across the nation, since the colonial era.

Wirreanda Road: An Aboriginal word from other parts of the nation, widely used by non-Aboriginal people for the names of businesses, homesteads, etc., presumably because of its euphonious nature. The road name was gazetted on 29 May 1998.

Woolshed Lane: The historic 'Clare' woolshed is on Woolshed Lane close to its junction with Macs Reef Road. At one stage it was the site of a local primary school. The road name was gazetted on 29 May 1998.

Yuranga Drive: An Aboriginal word, widely used by non-Aboriginal people because they like the sound of it, or like what it is alleged to mean ('extensive view'), without any connections to country nor etymology. The road name was gazetted on 25 September 2009.+

Acknowledgements: As noted above, a fully-sourced, enlarged version of this article will be published online. I acknowledge the assistance provided, to date, by Pete Harrison, Lofty Mason and other local residents, some of whose local history documentation is incorporated here.

Thank You Bushfire Drive Collection

A huge thank you to everyone who gave so generously to the Bushfire Drive Collection at the March Markets.

A ute tray full of plastic pots and potted plants, with a trailer behind loaded with garden and workshop tools was delivered to the Imrie family in Queanbeyan to be transported to families at the coast affected by the recent bushfires. Our load was most gratefully received. There is still a great need for similar items. If you missed the collection day at the Markets you may still drop off items. Please call 0400244030 - Jill and Richard Gregory



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From the Corner

Community Title—This is not something that comes up very often in rural residential areas, but community title rural residential developments do exist in our LGA. The structure of Community or Strata Schemes is such that they are often described as ‘the fourth level of government’ and anyone who has ever been involved with the management of such a scheme will understand why.

The reason for raising this issue is that Council recently had to deal with a matter that arose through a disagreement between a member of a Community Scheme and the local Community Association, this being the management entity responsible for the relevant Community Scheme and not to be confused with what most of us know as our local Community Association. The individual in question had built structures in violation of the Community Management Statement (CMS), the contract that usually defines a Community Scheme, and without council approval, but was nonetheless seeking ‘retrospective approval’ from council for the structures.

It probably goes without saying that, had the applicant followed the proper procedures, and sought development approval before building, that approval would not have been granted. The process of ‘retrospective approval’, however, is a little different in that it is not so much approval as it is simply a certification that the structure, illegal or otherwise, is sound with regard to the building code. Such certification does, however, come with a guarantee that council will not seek to have the structure demolished during period covered by the Building Certificate, that being seven years. At that point, the owner would again need to go through the building certification process to demonstrate that the structure was still sound.

In the event, respecting a request from the responsible Community Association, Council effectively declined to issue a Building Certificate on the basis that the application should be considered in the context of the CMS, a contract over which Council had no jurisdiction but which the NSW Land & Environment Court did. The subsequent Land & Environment Court ruling on the appeal against Council’s [deemed] refusal made a point of distinguishing the respective responsibilities of Council and the relevant Community Association.

In deciding Council’s responsibility, and ruling that Council must issue the Building Certificates in question, the LEC Commissioner determined that, as enforcement of the CMS was not within Council’s jurisdiction and its content was not relevant to Council’s deliberations [she also chose to ignore it in arriving at her ruling] and since Council had not provided any [other] reason why the Building Certificates should not be issued, Council effectively had no case. The Commissioner noted that it was the responsibility of the Community Association to pursue any case relating to violation of the CMS as a separate matter.

The Commissioner also [implicitly] noted that, if Council saw reason within its jurisdiction to refuse the issue of a Building Certificate, it should have resolved accordingly, but in any case it should not just have the matter sent off to the LEC to decide on its behalf. Ouch...

This situation is a variation on the general issue surrounding the consideration and enforcement of land title covenants. While council has the power to vary or release land title covenants, it is not generally responsible for their enforcement, although, perhaps not surprisingly, it does take an active interest in covenants of which it is the beneficiary. To add even more confusion to this situation, LEPs quite often include a clause (e.g. PLEP Clause 1.9A) that explicitly allows a council to set aside covenants (that it, itself, has not imposed) when granting an approval for development. There’s a lot of room for further ‘discussion’ in that clause alone, but perhaps I’ll leave that for another time.

The QPR Blog—New or related entries in my Blog (<http://peteharrison.id.au/blog>) include: Community Title (Mar 2020) Land Title Covenants (2017) Building Certificates (Aug 2014) -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. For the full details of the LEC ruling, see *Henock v Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council* [2020] NSWLEC 1070, orders issued 19 February 2020]

Opening Our Eyes

By Gail Ritchie Knight

A little while ago friends of ours decided to move back from Adelaide. On our invitation they have been living with us while they search for a house. It didn’t take them long to fall in love with life out here with its spaciousness and sense of community. While the March markets were unusually but understandably small they could see the relaxed friendliness of everyone there. Further afield they found The Baker at Sutton and quaint Gundaroo with its historical buildings.

What has been a boon for us is their joy in living in the bush. They continue to marvel at everything they see — the birdlife, ‘yabbies’ in the dam, kangaroos and wallabies bounding softly over the hills, even a cute echidna snuffling along the track. Having them here has reminded us of the treasures we have right under our noses. Sometimes the busyness of life gets in the way and we fail to notice just how special it is out here.

In addition their two young boys have become like brothers to ours. Every day they’re up early, dressed, had breakfast and off together playing. They’ve built a bike run, been down by the river building bridges, looked at yabbies in the dam and ridden their bikes up the hill. Their presence here has opened our boys’ eyes to the delights that living in the bush provides. Lately our boys seem to have forgotten these simple pleasures as they bury their heads in electronic devices. Now they are eager to get out and just have fun.

And then COVID-19 intensified its hold on the population and Sutton Public School encouraged the call to keep students at home. Our visitors had just enrolled in the school, so now we’re home schooling four boys. They follow the timetable, take turns to ring the bell, rush outside for recess and eagerly share news online with their fellow students, all the while dressed in their school uniforms. Now where did that come from? Wasn’t our suggestion but why not? It seems to keep them focused.

Soon our visitors will move into a house of their own. We will miss them. Having them here has reminded us why we came out here in the first place — to enjoy an intimacy with nature that is difficult to get in suburbia. The simple joy of watching the golden afternoon light play across the ridges, listening to the twittering of birds or the chatter of young boys playing in the bush — now that is gold.

Wamboin Muse

Jill Gregory

From my eyrie on Wamboin Hill the world below looks peaceful, ordered, bathed in autumn sunshine...or is it spring? I'm a little confused, and so is the garden. However, there is one thing I know for sure, this confusion is not a symptom of the Corona virus.

The crab apple blossoms have finished and the bees have moved on to the Chinese elms. Some are humming busily in the flowering salvias and others have found the correas and roses. Roses! I have never seen such blooms. My roses struggled for years but this "spring" they are making up for lost time. I thought many of the smaller deciduous trees had died, but suddenly they came to life and sprouted fresh new leaves. Manchurian pears that had started to turn a few weeks ago had a change of heart and grew green leaves again. There is finally colour in the garden; not just pinks and whites and reds, but green. And there is colour in the air, too. Frogs are becoming quieter, but the bird song is amazing. There are bird calls that I had almost forgotten, and the small birds are savouring the cover and nectar in the garden; bird seed on the old tree stump each morning is no longer pulling the crowds. There are better snacks to be found elsewhere.

Once weeds overwhelmed the garden, but the chooks loved them and time spent pulling weeds was better than meditation. I don't have chooks anymore, and I have had very few weeds in recent years, but now I have every type imaginable and I'm loathe to pull them out. They're a novelty, and they're green.

The sad old vegetable garden hung on to a clump of tarragon and a little parsley over a neglected summer, but nothing else. Now I am finding silver beet and kale popping up in the oddest of places. The night raiders seem to have vanished and nothing appears to want to eat the kale, not even us. The possums are even leaving the roses alone. Are they confused, too?

There was no spring in 2019, and maybe there will be two in 2020, with only a short autumn. But it certainly is beginning to feel like autumn. The days are getting noticeably shorter, the morning air is crisp and a few fogs have slipped over the hill and in between the trees. The season is changing, but not half as dramatically as the scene below!

The pandemic has changed our lives, suddenly, and with undreamed of and dire consequences. The World is in a state of flux and we are all affected. But humour, albeit black humour at times, can lift the spirits. I have enjoyed receiving some of the very clever and witty clips that are circulating the world on social media. You have to laugh, and you must laugh when you can. You might not be able to shake someone's hand or give them a hug, but you can laugh together, apart! On Wamboin Hill we are removed from the world at large, but we are still connected. And apart from the enduring wonder of the natural world, I have discovered all sorts of culinary delights, admittedly some well past their prime, hiding in my pantry, and the list of "Things to Do" seems to grow daily, things that we'd overlooked when the World was "normal".

We are so fortunate to be here...I wouldn't live anywhere else... and it will be even better when I crack the On Line Shopping code!



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