

The Wamboin Whisper: The Whisper is a monthly community newsletter established in 1981 by and owned by the Wamboin Community Association. The Whisper is printed at EnvoPrint in Fyshwick at the start of each month, excluding January. It is distributed to every letterbox in Wamboin, Bywong and 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. Any proceeds from advertisements in The Whisper after printing costs go to the Wamboin Community Association.

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Contributions to the Whisper: Contributions from all residents are encouraged, valued and the main content of the newsletter. The current editor is Ned Noel, 17 Reedy Creek Place, Wamboin, 2620, phone 0409 997 082. Paul Downey of Cooper Road also shares in doing the editing. Please email contributions to nednoel@optusnet.com.au or mail them or drop them off. On contentious matters the Wamboin Community Association will strive to maintain a balanced view, by seeking advice from the editorial team and by seeking alternative views to be published in the same edition. The deadline for each issue is the last Sunday night of the month before. There is, by tradition, no January Whisper, mainly to give all its volunteer workers a rest. The **deadline for the March 2024 issue is 7 pm Sunday night, February 25, 2024.** Advertising prices, per issue, based on rough fraction of inside the margins A4 area: 1/8 \$24 1/6 29 1/4 \$35 1/3 \$44 1/2 \$70 2/3 \$97 Full Page \$140. email or phone the editor as above.

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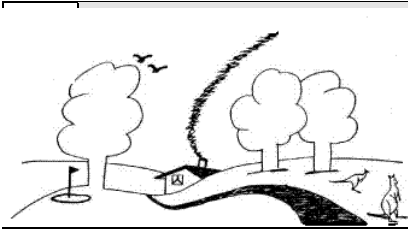
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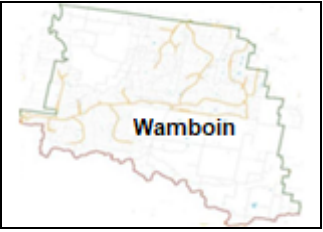
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President's Notes



Welcome back everyone to a new year. No doubt it will be as challenging and as successful as 2023 was. A few things to note down below.

1. **Christmas Carols.** Our annual Christmas Carol Night (held on the 2nd December 2023) was I'm gratified to say, an outstanding success. Numbers easily exceeded 80 adults and Santa gave out 73 Santa bags to many happy and excited children. I should have reported all this in the December issue of the Whisper but unfortunately family concerns interfered. Still they say better late than never. Our thanks go to: Poetry In Motion for providing the music; the Fire Brigade for supplying the fire truck for Santa to arrive in; the Salvation Army who received the generous donations of gifts and money; Sutton School who sang beautifully and took part in the Christmas Play; Joan and Lofty Mason for the tree and the drinks on the night; Ian Donald for helping with the tree; David, Ned, Diana and Keith of the Committee for making sure the event was well advertised; Santa, of course; but finally my own family for giving so much on the night. A special thanks to Skye (a great narrator but who also got the Hall set up); Zoe and Stephen (who manned the BBQ); Anita and Neryssa (who managed the costumes and the children for the play); and Anita again (who organized all those Santa bags). Thank you all of you. It couldn't have been the success it was without all of you.
2. **Christmas Letter Box And Gate Competition.** The Wamboin Community Association along with the Bywong Community Association were pleased to take part in the mail box and entrance competition. This event was organized by Gail Ritchie-Knight and although the number of entries was small I personally (as one of the judges) was impressed by the standard when I went around and viewed all the entrants. Pauline Sergei provided beautiful prize hampers and if Gail is willingly to do this event again I hope more people will enter. The hampers are worth it.
3. **The Wamboin Wall.** As many of you may have noticed we have a beautiful new wall at the entrance. I was fortunate to be there as the last bit was put in place and so able to congratulate our masons – the Argent Family. Although Dave Argaget the original wall builder is no longer with us his family has done a wonderful job creating a new monument that Dave would be proud of. Thank you all of you in the Argaget family for a job well done. Finally to people who were worried about the lack of

progress on the wall during last year; all they had to do was contact myself or any member of the Committee for information. We are available to assist you at any time. Alternatively attending the monthly meetings could also have put your worries to rest.

Well that's it for now. Remember the monthly meetings of the Wamboin Community Association are held at the Hall in Bingley Way every 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 pm and everyone is welcome. It is after all your community. – **Jenny Richards, president**



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Well happy new year everyone.

A few weeks ago we had our first meeting of the year and so far it has been a pretty big start. We discussed and laid out the calendar with our regular main events including the Car boot sale The Trivia night and the Christmas get together. This year we plan to continue building the Bywong Community spirit by also adding a series of “Community days”. These “Community Days” are a collaboration between the Hall Committee the Greenways committee and the us at the BCA.

The plan is simple, there will be an activity run by each committee, in some cases it might be working bee at the hall, or a walk along the Greenways, or an activity at the Hall for those less outdoorsy. When is all done all the groups will reconvene at the hall for a sausage sizzle, a cuppa and a catch up with the Community. This would be a good time for a speaker or other relevant community building group to come and join in.

The First Community Day 24th of Feb. Meeting at the Bywong Community Hall at 9 AM.

The next big item is the Greenways Master Plan. This Master Plan has been very ably put together and is almost ready to be sent to the Council. There is a little history of the Greenways and some plans for the future. The Greenways are likely unique in this part of the world and a valuable community asset. One thing that is needed before going to Council is as much input from the community as possible. So please go to the BCA face book page or the Website and have a look at the Master Plan. If you have any thoughts or comments we will make sure they are passed along to the Greenways Committee before it goes to Council.

Comments can be emailed to me president@bywongcommunity.org.au or through the Face book page or they can be sent directly to the Greenways committee, via Kathy Handel khandel@bigpond.net.au

The Master Plan will be on the Agenda of both the Bywong and Wamboin Community Associations at their next meetings: 15 February for Bywong Community Association and 20 February for Wamboin Community Association. You are encouraged to come to one of these meetings and participate in discussing the Master Plan.



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The NEXT thing that is coming up is the Car Boot Sale. Last year was a roaring success so this year let’s make it even bigger. Now is the time to start planning your stall, if you have things to sell then this is your chance. It is also another great reason to get out and about and come and buy something that you wanted... or something that you did not know you wanted. Last year there were plenty of gems to be found. The format will be similar to previous years with sellers arriving and setting up between 7 and 9 AM. With the buying and selling commencing at 9 am. Start your planning now and keep an eye on the BCA Face book page and Website for further information as it comes to hand.



Phew what a month. Let’s see what the next one will bring. - Justin Jarvis, President Bywong Community association.

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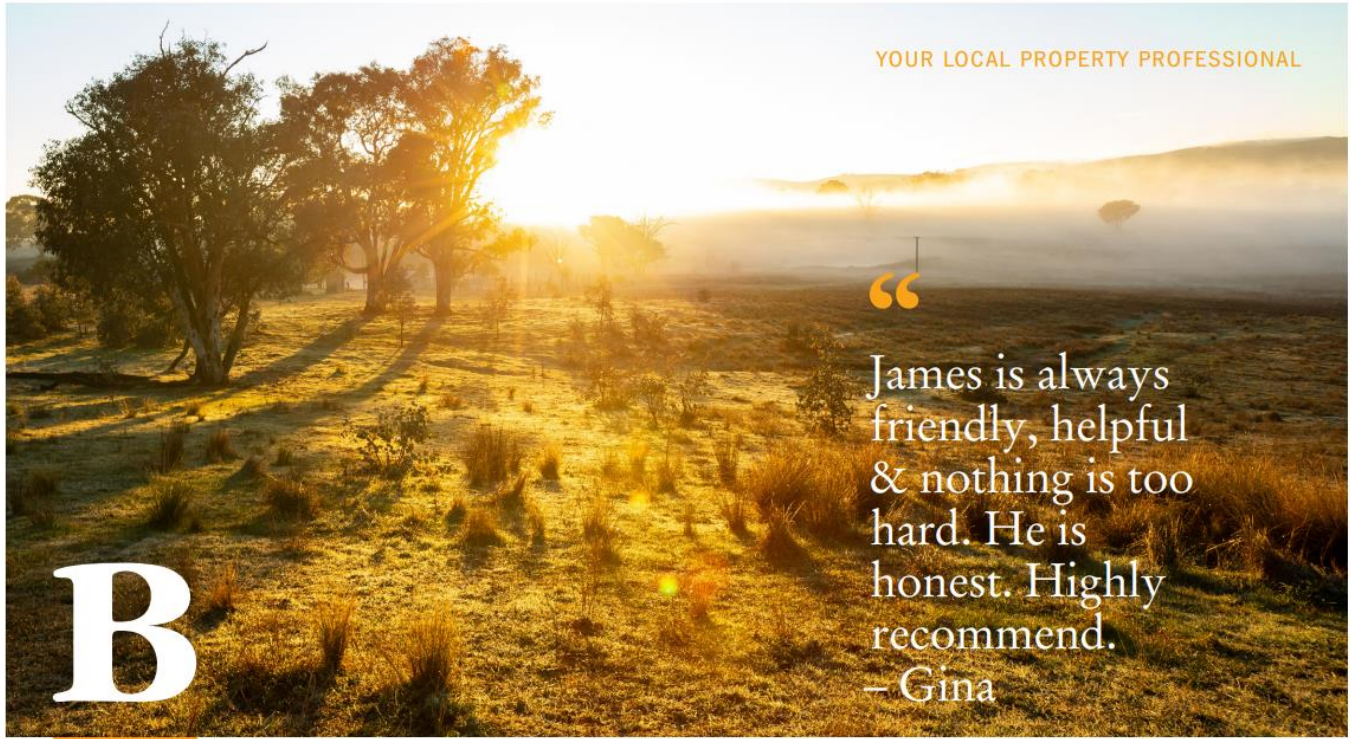
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Callouts and what we have been up to.

It's been a relatively quiet time as far as grass and bushfires since before Christmas. However, our callouts still came in, with 3 x MVA's and 1 structure fire since Christmas day and up to Australia Day.

Thinking of joining the RFS? (Us)



Planning for the future is important. As our Brigade (like most brigades) has older members that will probably start to leave over the next decade. We will need to replenish members, with those that can offer their services. When our area was first developed, we had no fire station, or Brigade. The locals built the first fire station in Cooper Road and later, we built the permanent Bingley Way fire station. Like most rural communities, local volunteers form their own Brigades, and provide a service to the community. The NSW Rural Fire Service is made up of volunteers from all walks of life – across all genders, cultural backgrounds, age groups, and professions. There are many different reasons people join the NSW RFS. Still, the common underlying desire is to make a difference in their community. An interview, Police check, training & assessment is required as a minimum to become an active fire fighter. Contact details for membership is below. There are a variety of member types for full-time or flexible memberships, which include:

Operational	Members that have firefighting qualifications or recognised experience. This classification includes members who are firefighters and members who fulfil specialist or support roles. For example: Firefighter, Air Base Operations, Field Communications and Catering, and other members who fulfil a role that requires Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
Operational Support	Members who do not require firefighting qualifications or recognised experience but fulfil equally important roles. For example: Catering, Communications, Community Engagement, Chaplaincy, and Junior Members. PPE and uniforms may be issued.
Administration	Other important roles where PPE is not required and members do not participate in field activities. For example: Brigade Administration, Fundraising and Social Secretaries. PPE is not required, but uniforms may be issued or acquired.
Reserve	Members whose participation is infrequent but available for operational or operational support roles during major incidents. For example: Members awarded Life Membership honours, who are no longer active within the brigade, members on leave of absence, or members that cannot participate regularly. PPE and uniform may be required depending on the role.
Social	Members who are involved only on a social or ad-hoc basis. They may infrequently contribute to brigade events, fundraising, or promotions, or occasionally be called on to assist in non-firefighting roles, but otherwise do not wish to participate in brigade activities. PPC/PPE or uniform is not required.
Community Fire Unit (CFU)	Members of a Community Fire Unit join the brigade to assist in property protection of their own and their neighbours' properties if the need arises. CFU PPE is required.

Membership enquiries Wamboinmembership@gmail.com

Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade <https://wamboin.rfsa.org.au>

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

Wamboin Facebook page [Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade](#)

Queanbeyan Fire Control 6128 0600 (business hours only)

We've been busy - thanks to you!



Wishing you a happy and safe 2024

The

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Bird Of The Month

By Luke Downey

For January I chose the Little Black Cormorant, a common bird in Australia but one that I saw at my place for the first time lately.

Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*)

Size: 58-64cm (wingspan 100cm) Status: Common breeding resident

The Little Black Cormorant is quite a common waterbird throughout Australia, so some might find it surprising for me to say its my first time seeing one at my place or in Wamboin. But that is because unfortunately this area does not have such good habitat for waterbirds like this Cormorant, which prefers larger deeper lakes, rivers, or coastal environments. Therefore, I was surprised to see 2 on our small farm dam recently, a nice addition to my bird list for our place. Subsequently I saw one flying around on a few subsequent occasions. The Little Black Cormorant is one of the most plain birds in Australia. It is entirely black, including bare parts such as the legs and bill, with the exception of having a blue eye. The upperparts can also appear scaly in good light. Some birds especially younger birds can appear brownish, and some breeding birds can develop fine white streaking on the neck. They can be seen singly but are often in flocks which can be quite large, often also with other Cormorants. The larger Great Cormorant can therefore appear similar, but is distinguished by its pale bill with yellow around the base, and in breeding birds, a white thigh and face (they are not plain black). They can co-occur often, so look out for this confusion. Little Black Cormorants are often seen swimming, they sit low in the water with their back and head sticking up. They dive frequently, taking fish, yabbies or similar aquatic prey. After swimming they dry their wings out by spreading them, while perched on branches over the water, which is why they prefer waterbodies with surrounding bare trees. They are also often seen flying and can travel long distances, often in flocks in formation, flying over areas without suitable habitat. Cormorants rarely make noise, so only an occasional guttural croak may be heard. They breed only in a few select spots locally, mainly along the Molonglo River, where they nest in colonies in waterside trees. Keep an eye out for this distinctive all dark cormorant around your local waterbodies and dams. (Photos from Google Images)



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The Whisperer by Tilly Devenport – Short Story and Drawing Contest Highly Commended Entrant – Intermediate Age Group

I was out for a morning walk, when out of nowhere, I suddenly felt like someone or something was watching me. Urila, my hometown, usually never feels like this. I looked around, not seeing anything but grass and a dirt road. I started to walk home so I wouldn't get this feeling, although, the feeling wouldn't stop.

When I got home, no one was home. I looked around for my parents and my brother, and I couldn't find my dog either. But then I thought, animals!! The animals would be home, right??

I walked over to the fish tank. The fish were all gone, except for one, laying dead on the small rocks. I ran to the chicken yard hoping the chickens were all there.....they were all gone. All they had left was a small pile of feathers. What about the goats.....and the llamas!! I slowly walked up the hill towards the dam and back paddocks. But before I could see past the hill, I heard a whisper, right next to my ear. I fell over, backwards. My ears were ringing badly. All I could hear was faint goat sounds and then silence. A sweet, but eerie, sound of silence.

I started walking back to the house wondering where everyone had gone. Suddenly I heard the whisper again. I ran before I could look back. The sound of heavy boots, stamping on the gravel, while I run for my life. The whispers were getting louder. My arms and legs were getting sweaty. Wind, starting to whistle through the trees. Rain clouds starting to form.

The rain started falling. Mud was washing down the hills. My sneakers were flooding with water. Darkness creeping behind me. I had to stop, but I didn't dare. Although, the water in my sneakers had stopped me. I had fallen over because my sneakers had been too heavy to run in.

My head felt heavy because the rain had soaked into my thick, knotted hair. I had to look back but instead, I got up and ran again so I didn't have to look back. I looked down at the gravel, but it wasn't gravel, it was some kind of void. I stopped so I didn't fall into it, but then I felt a hand push me in.

The end.

Editor's Note: Six more short story contest entries remain. They will be printed over the next few issues. Thank you, story writers and illustrators.



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G'day Whisperers

by Councillor Ross MacDonald

I hope you all had a restful Christmas & New Years and found some time for a break. A lot of things I planned to get done at my place were pushed back with the rain but in good news it's all looking very green! The end of 2023 and the start of the new year has also been a busy time for me on Council and it's been great to speak to so many of you about issues in our community.

The long debate around complying development in C4 zone is progressing. Community consultation occurred at the end of last year with a large number of residents either having their say through a submission or in person at a community meeting – my thanks to everyone who took time to be heard. Your views have been very helpful for me to understand the different views from across the area and I'm always happy to hear more so please get in touch if you have any questions or want to have your say directly with me. At the end of 2023 I established two committees of Council – one focussed on small and family business and the other focussed on issues relevant to seniors. Across the area there's a lot of groups representing and advocating for seniors though there has not been a committee of Council focussed on how Council decision making across a range of areas including participation, support for seniors' programs, access including housing, infrastructure and transport impacts seniors. This Committee will ensure that occurs.

Worth mentioning are some outstanding locals who were recognised on Australia Day for their contribution to our area. I was delighted attend the event in Bungendore which was supported so well by so many dedicated volunteers from our area. Beryl Tartelin was awarded Citizen of the Year for Bungendore for her outstanding dedication to the Bungendore community including through Rotary, tutoring local kids, the bridge club, seniors chair yoga (as Beryl explains that's yoga done in a chair!) and is working on an over 55s group in Bungendore. Sen McNamara was awarded Young Citizen of the Year for their advocacy of gender inclusivity. Sen established a support group for queer youth in Bungendore. Sen has fundraised and representing the Scouts for almost 10 years! Sen supported the operations of Bungendore Medical Centre's COVID immunisation clinics and has maintained a remote area First Aid accreditation to provide First Aid for the ACT Rogaining Association. The Event of the Year went to Bungendore Preschool Fair and Pig Races! Community groups across the area contributed and turned out one of the year's best events in the region (and it's on again – March 16!)

With a wetter than predicted summer there has been some urgent major road repairs undertaken across the area and there's also been what may seem like slower progress on some of the more routine road works in the area. In the month ahead I'll maintain focus on roads and maintenance to ensure safety and the look and feel of our area are addressed as priority.

Finally, I've also been asked by a number of residents about landfill. This is a complicated issue and there are a number of regulations including at the State level which are related to environmental and human health and the use of land fill. There's a fair bit on this topic so I'll be focussing on it in my next contribution to the Whisper – in the meantime though, please seek Council's advice on the use of land fill.

Have a great month ahead. I'm looking forward to seeing you at some of the local events and hearing from you soon. Cheers, - Ross cr.ross.macdonald@qprc.nsw.gov.au P.s. Thanks to those involved in repairing our beautiful rock wall on the corner of Sutton & Norton rds – it looks fantastic and a fitting welcome to Wamboin!

Bywong and Wamboin Classifieds

QPRC Mobile Library: The QPRC Mobile Library bus will be at the Wamboin Hall from 10.30-11.30am on Thursday 8 and 22 February 2024, and then fortnightly. The Mobile Library provides a wonderful opportunity to borrow books, CDs, audio books etc. Please support this great service. After you have visited the library drop into the Social Group and have a cuppa.

Wamboin Thursday Social Group: The Thursday Social Drop In Group operates each Thursday morning from 10 – 12 noon at the Wamboin Hall, Bingley Way. The group provides a wonderful chance to meet up with some local residents. If you have some time free on a Thursday morning pop in, have a game of scrabble, or rummykub, a cuppa and chat. New people are very welcome to attend.

Bungendore Lions Community Forum on Dementia & Brain Health will be held at Bungendore Scout Hall Thursday 7 March between 9 & 1. This free event will cover maintaining your brain health, diagnosing, treating & living with dementia, help for carers & relationship issues relating to Dementia . To book or find out more: Email bungendore.nsw@lions.org.au Mob: 0422 772 06

Young horticulture student seeking more work in Bywong. My name is Caitlyn, I'm a sole trader who has experience with Landcare, Soil Health, Gardening, Sheep Alpaca and Horses, Chainsaw work, Painting and general farm chores. While I gain my qualification i am hoping to expand on these skills with work as I'm fit for hard and arduous tasks and genuinely enjoy spending my time outdoors. I can provide my own tools or operate most equipment capably. Fully Insured. Rates start at \$35 p/h. 0431 759 153.

Guitar, Bass and Music Theory Tuition offered in Bywong and Wamboin area. I have been sharing my knowledge and deep love of music with people of all ages and experience levels for more than 15 years. I currently teach part time at Canberra Grammar and am a co-facilitator of the Community Rock School at the ANU Open School of Music. I have a teaching studio located at home in Bywong. Alternatively, I can conduct lessons at your home. I hold a current ACT WWVP registration (No. 124369). Please get in contact for further details. Anthony McIlwain Ph. 0403 658 944

The rebuilding of the Wamboin locality entrance sign, January 2024



At Left: the crash, 23 Jan. 2023

11 January 2024 was an important day for the Wamboin community, and for the Argaet family. On this day master stonemasons Tom Argaet and Jeremy Elkerbout completed the rebuilding of the Wamboin locality entrance sign/wall near the corner of Norton Road and Sutton Road.

Initially, a wooden sign there marked the entrance to Wamboin. In 2008, however, a stonework entrance sign was built for the Wamboin Community Association (WCA) by the late Dave Argaet and helpers from the WCA.

On 23 January 2023, an ACT-registered car crashed into this sign, badly damaging the northern end, and splitting the name in half. The police attended. The driver was not injured, but the car was a write-off. The WCA commenced the task of obtaining funds from the driver's insurance company to

rebuild the sign. Negotiations with the insurance company, and conducting a competitive tender process for the rebuild, extended over many months.

The community was delighted when, on 4 January 2024, the successful tenderer for the job, Pichelmann Custom Building, commenced the task. Pichelmann is the Argaet family company. The re-build work was led by Dave's son, Tom Argaet, with the support of the extended Argaet family.

By 10 January the work was almost finished, and the Argaet family gathered at the site, observed by representatives from the WCA Keith France and David McDonald, to install a time capsule into the sign. It contains the contents of the capsule that Dave installed there in 2008—contemporary newspapers and a handwritten note—along with a present-day newspaper, the December 2023 issue of *The Whisper*, a new note from the Argaet family, and one from the WCA. The job was completed on 11 January 2024.

Throughout the 15 years that the sign has been in place, it has not only filled a useful information function for people visiting Wamboin, but is also widely acknowledged by residents and visitors as a beautiful piece of craftsmanship.

The Wamboin Community Association is confident that our community will continue to thrive over what we expect will be many decades before the time capsule next sees the light of day. The WCA's note in the capsule communicates greetings to those who will follow us as Wamboin community residents, confident that they will have maintained and, indeed, strengthened the sense of community identity to which this delightful sign contributes so fully.

The Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group is preparing a landscaping design for the area around the sign, and a commemorative brass plaque is to be cast and affixed to the rear of the sign. After the landscaping is completed, the WCA and the Argaet family will conduct a low-key unveiling ceremony for the plaque. The community will be advised when that is scheduled.

- Wamboin Community Association, Inc.



Above: Dave Argaet portrait c. 2021, artist Tim Snowdon,

<https://aboutregional.com.au/living-life-to-his-own-tune-bungendore-remembers-dave-argaet/403980/>



**Above: Argaet extended family installing the new time capsule.
L to R: and Jeremy Elkerbout, Tom Argaet, Joanne Argaet, Renée Argaet, and two small family helpers.**

Below: The completed, restored entrance sign



Community Consultation on updated Greenways Master Plan

The Bywong/Wamboin Greenways Committee has drafted a major update to the Greenways Master Plan and would now like to get feedback from the community. The results of this will be included in the Plan (or possibly change parts of the Plan) before it is sent to Council for review. The draft Greenways Master Plan is available on the Wamboin Community Association website,

<https://wamboincommunity.asn.au> (under In the News), or with this direct link:
<https://wamboincommunity.asn.au/facilities/content/support/Master%20Plan%20January%202024%20Final%20Consultation%20Draft-160124-2140.pdf>

It is also on the Bywong Community Association website (on the home page), <https://www.bywongcommunity.org.au>, or with this direct link:

<http://www.bywongcommunity.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Master-Plan-January-24-Final-Consultation-Draft-160124-2140-reduced-file-size.pdf>

The final Master Plan needs to be presented to and adopted by Council before Council prepares its 2024-25 budget, so feedback is needed by the end of February. The Master Plan will be on the agenda of both Community Associations at their next meetings – 15 February for Bywong Community Association and 20 February for Wamboin Community Association. You are encouraged to come to one of these meetings and participate in discussing the Master Plan.

Written feedback is welcome. Please send your feedback to Kathy Handel by email at khandel@bigpond.net.au by 29 February. Bywong residents are encouraged to send feedback to president@bywongcommunity.org.au before the BCA meeting so that a combined view of Bywong residents can be forwarded to Kathy.

- Kathy Handel, Deputy Chair, s.355 Bywong/Wamboin Greenways

Committee

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Wamboin Pony Club

Wamboin Pony Club (WPC) is a small club local to Wamboin where riders are encouraged to have fun with their riding whilst also practicing many safety skills. We have 3 enclosed arenas for the safety of the members and their horses, a club house, cross country jumps and well maintained steel horse yards. WPC is lucky enough to have multiple qualified instructors ensuring our riders are getting the best help that they can and to have a positive environment for the riders to thrive in.

We have riders ranging from 4 years old to 60 years old, and all of the riders show incredible sportsmanship, are helpful to each other and very supportive of one another no matter rider ability or age. Wamboin pony club run rally days every 2nd Sunday of the month instructors and weather permitting of course. If we are lucky enough we like to run a rally day on the 4th Sunday as well.

In 2023 WPC asked many local professional instructors from lots of different disciplines to come and teach throughout the year. These included showjumping, cows and natural horsemanship, just to name a few. We hope to do this again in 2024. Our first rally day for 2024 is the 11th of February where WPC members will head down to Moruya pony club grounds to camp for the weekend. While down there riders will do some sporting, x country, trail riding and general riding all while hanging out and having a good time.

Any enquiries please email the club secretary Stacey Burgess at wamboinpcsecretary@gmail.com 0414 672 979. Or if you like come up and see us in action at 79 Canning Close Wamboin. We would all love it if you could join us for our next rally day. If you would like to keep up with the happenings at WPC give us a like on Facebook @Wamboin Pony Club - by Lara and Sammi Quick

When Solar Power Doesn't Cut Your Costs

Are you also experiencing recent increases in your electricity costs in spite of your Solar System?

You are not alone. This isn't an isolated incident as we have heard from friends who are also experiencing this problem. 5 years ago we installed a 10Kw Solar System and last year we added a 12Kw battery. Then our power bills went up (\$880 then \$1,111). We started receiving "High AC voltage Input" error messages on our internet monitoring system. Firstly I contacted my Solar provider, the power Supplier, then the power line provider and finally discovered the cause and the solution. Although the Australian voltage supply standard is set at 230v, it is not uncommon to find it at 240v supply. My supply has tested up to 261v and is causing the safety cutout of my Solar System (to protect the inverters), so effectively I have paid for a Solar System that does not work.

As more people connect solar systems, the grid has more feedback energy into the grid and the voltage supply is increased. The step down transformer's output was set before this and now needs to be adjusted by changing the setting or recalibrating it. My power line provider would not send out a team until I had an accredited electrician test the voltage, both with and without the solar system turned on. Apparently the power line people will now set up a voltage monitoring system on my supply, and monitor it for a week before they adjust the settings on the transformer. This does not seem to be well known by solar power users, so it may become a more common issue.

We have also experienced repeated needs to reset a fuse switch when we have had 3 things running (e.g. washing machine, clothes drier and dishwasher) and I am told that high voltages may also cause damage to household appliances. I hope this is helpful to other solar users.

Addit: Last Monday I had a great response from my grid line provider. I phoned them @10am, emailed them the voltage test results, & they were here by lunchtime ! They did say that all the connections along my line would be getting a higher voltage, but that they could only respond to requests. Those with solar power would know from electricity costs (& error messages if monitoring) but those without solar would have more fuse switch cutouts & probably no other warnings. - **Simon Scott-Findlay**



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Wamboin Home Produce and Craft Market - Saturday 17 February 9-12 md

Contact: Meriel Schultz. 042 261 4304 Email: lmsconsulting@bigpond.com

Come and join us to sell or buy (or both) at the February market. We have some new stalls and all our regular ones with lots of produce, craft and home cooking to choose from. Our Christmas market was very busy and full of good cheer - helped no doubt by some bubbles and mince pies for the stallholders! We raised another \$250 to contribute towards a car that can convert to take an electric wheelchair for 3 year old Jon. This is a local family - please support. Check out <https://gofund.me/38af2cf8> where you can read Jon's story.

The January market was surprisingly well attended. It's often a quieter market as many locals are away on holidays. Thanks everyone for coming along. We continue to publish the stories from our 2023 story competition. See you at the February Market.

100 or so of us residents ...

... brought this February 2024 Whisper into our Bywong and Wamboin. Thank you to each of you who wrote something for, ran an ad in or delivered this issue. We've made one more way to listen to and talk to each other.

Contributions from Bywong and Wamboin residents for the March issue will be welcomed with open minds by at least some hundreds of your co-residents. Deadline is Sunday night, February 25. Characteristics that seem to me help to make what's in the Whisper appreciated include:

- Written by a Wamboin or Bywong resident
- Is about or at least related to living out here
- Attributed to the writer, so residents will feel confident the words are from a real local person taking time to write them
- Isn't prompted by a desire to increase the writer's income, unless run as a paid ad that helps pay for printing
- Entertains, educates or invites readers
- Respects the diversity of opinions and lifestyles our 1300+ homes
- Hasn't been printed elsewhere
- A little humour never hurts

Thanks for anything you can come up with. The Whisper is one more way Bywong and Wamboin can talk to each other.

- Ned Noel, volunteer editor on behalf of the Wamboin Community Association, nednoel@optusnet.com.au or whisper@wamboincommunity.asn.au or mobile 0409 997 082



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What the Heck Chapter 20

In a previous chapter we discussed Lychgates which are referred to as the gateway to the church. One hundred years ago most people walked to church -- and strolled through the Lychgate. But in this current age, Shanks's pony has been replaced by ICE motor cars, which in turn are being replaced by EV's. Maybe some of you will live to see an even newer personal transportation method. Perhaps in the future congregation members will be delivered by drone. But in 2024, vehicle access through these Lychgate style gates in most instances is not possible.

Here in the SRMD, the Sutton church yard entrance was a gate off Camp Street at the intersection with Sutton Road where it crossed McLaughlins Creek, but as vehicle speeds and traffic volume increased, turning into the church became too dangerous so the decision was made to relocate the entrance around the corner in Middle Street.

Now access to the church is along a driveway which, when not in use, is secured by a lovely set of decorative iron gates. Some years ago, these gates were found stored and unused at St John's church in Reid, so a swap was negotiated in which we got the gates and they got the old harmonium which Joan Hardy had pedalled away at for many years to keep the congregation in tune whilst singing hymns. I think we got the better deal. The new access was created, and the gates were installed, by members of the congregation, led by Bill Cartwright and Ken Hardy.

The gates are usually kept closed so that passers-by can admire them, so this requires the first Sunday arrival, usually either Royce, Robyn or Alan, to get out of their car and open the gates before driving into the church grounds, but is not considered a chore as it is letting people know that the church is open for business. However there is sometimes a race to not be last out after church. Entry to the Wamboin church doesn't even require the first arrival to get out of their car to open the gates. There aren't any! Just an open space!

When the church was built, the council of the day, in their wisdom, decreed that a two way entry/exit was necessary so that several vehicles could enter and leave at the same time. It took much explaining and time consuming frustration to convince the council that 99.99% of the time, parishioners both arrived and left a church service at the same time. Sanity ultimately prevailed.

At first the fence ran through to the Schultz's fence line with just a single lane size 'gateway' where there was a chain which was stretched between the two posts to 'secure' the entrance. But the part of the fence to the East and one post were removed quite some time ago. This led to the removal of the chain which was of no further use. If you are interested in Wamboin heritage, an inspection of the remaining post will show the hook onto which the chain was fastened. – **Alan Rope**



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WHEELS OF WAMBOIN



Saturday 20 April 2024

9.00am to 1.00pm (in conjunction with Home Produce Markets)
Wamboin Community Hall - Bingley Way (off Norton Road) Wamboin NSW.

Nature Notes - December 2023-January 2024

Jo Walker

With summer temperatures and plenty of rain the countryside is green and thriving. In fact, the eucalypts here are putting on so much lush new growth that some of them look like European trees.

After being given a 'white Christmas' by the flowers of the Burgan bushes (*Kunzea ericoides*) and Cauliflower Bushes (*Cassinia longifolia*), it's back to yellow flowers, mostly daisies. There are extensive patches of the suckering Yellow Buttons (*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*) and the taller Clustered Everlasting Daisies (*Chrysocephalum semipapposum*) which is topped by clusters of tiny golden button flowers. And the Sticky Everlasting Daisies (*Xerochrysum viscosum*) are still bearing their papery flowers – although a few are already setting seed.

The Bulbine Lilies (*Bulbine bulbosa*) have finished flowering, but the lily family is now represented by Yellow Rush Lilies (*Tricoryne elatior*) and Golden Stars (*Hypoxis hygrometrica*), both species preferring damp areas.

Another plant appreciating all the extra moisture in the soil is the low-growing, suckering Slender Mint (*Mentha diemenica*). It only grows to about 15cm tall, but bears clusters of mauve flowers.

Other native plants with flowers in the blue and purple colour range include the Bluebells (*Wahlenbergia stricta* and *W. communis*) – both flowering at present. There are a few purple peas too. The creeper, *Glycine clandestina* (Slender Tick Trefoil) is twining through nearby bushes and the suckering ground-cover, *Glycine tabacina* (Vanilla Glycine) is bearing dark purple flowers on short upright stems.

Looking at something a bit taller, one of the large Yellow Box Trees (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) here is flowering heavily - to the delight of the bees. And the Hickory Wattles (*Acacia implexa*) are still bearing lots of cream flowers.

There wasn't any noticeable influx of Christmas Beetles again this year – or Bogong Moths. And there are still very few night-flying insects around. But there were swarms of Soldier Beetles (*Chauliognathus lugubris*) here at the end of December, with cluster of them hanging all over the flowering Burgan bushes. And the Mole Crickets (*Grylotalpa* sp.) are competing with the croaking frogs to give a loud evening chorus from their burrows in the soil. A pleasant end to a Wamboin day.



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Kowen Kapers - 1928 Arboreta

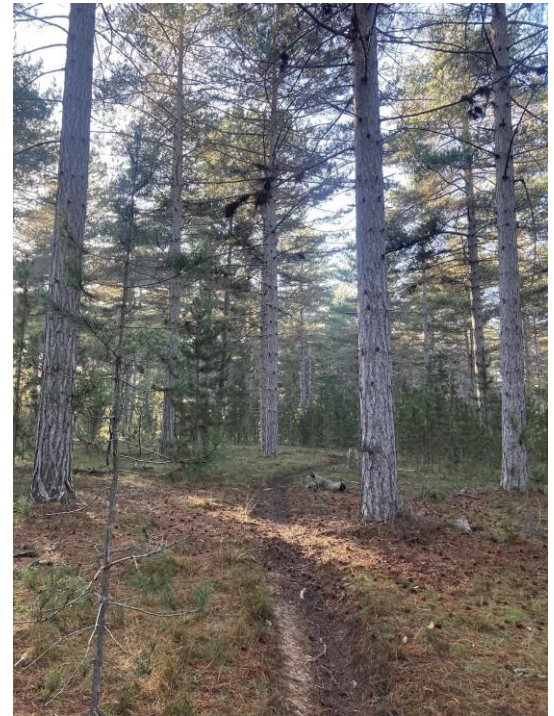
When you think of Kowen, the image that comes to mind is a seemingly endless landscape of plantation pine. Known as Kowen Forest, this plantation was first established in 1926. From its inception, the primary species used was radiata pine. However, in 1928 and again in 1955, trial plantings were undertaken of other potentially commercial pine species. While these species were subsequently found to be unsuitable for local conditions, the experimental coupes were retained and can still be visited today.

The two coupes we will be visiting were both established back in 1928. The eastern coupe contains a large stand of Coulter pine along with a patch of shortleaf pine. These two species are most easily differentiated by their cone size. Shortleaf pine produces a small cone, only 5-10 cm in length. Coulter pine by contrast produces the largest and heaviest cone of any pine tree. Weighing up to 5 kg the large, spiny cones are 20-40 cm in length and each segment of the cone is tipped with a talon-like hook. The western coupe is populated by shortleaf pine, ponderosa pine, and Torrey pine species.

Both coupes have a number of easy walking trails. Trails in the eastern coupe run east to west. If you look carefully, you'll also notice a disused road snaking through the coupe. The road was once part of a scenic drive for tourists back in the day. Meanwhile, in the western coupe, the trails tend to run from north to south.

It's fantastic that these arboreta remain unlogged, as the large mature trees along with their offspring make a picturesque contrast with the otherwise uniformly aged trees within coupe after coupe of the radiata pine monoculture that is Kowen Forest.

Nearest Entrance: Bingley Way: Turn left at the horse entrance (A) and take the first right turn at Jack's Break (B). After 300 m, the road makes a dog leg (C) first west and then south again. Continue down the hill to the next intersection (D). 100 m beyond the intersection, you'll find a trail entering the coupe (E). Enter the east coupe here. To get to the west coupe, walk in a northerly direction out of the east coupe until you meet a forestry road (F). Follow this road along and up the hill. At the intersection at the top of the hill (G), turn left. Proceed south for 400 metres and turn right at the intersection (H) as you walk along this road for about 100 m, look to your left for trails entering the forest. Retrace your steps to return home. - Peter Komidar, Wamboin



Kowen Events: February - March

Date	Event	More Info
24 March	Orienteering: ACT Relays, Hibernian Rd	https://eventor.orienteering.as.n.au/Events

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WAMBOIN WEATHER – rainfall and temperature records

(49 years from Cooper Road) by Christine Rieber

January Rainfall Stats

January rainfall to the 28th..... 113.5mm
 2024 total rainfall to 28/1 113.5mm

Average January rainfall..... 60.8mm
 2023 January rainfall..... 88.75mm
 2023 total rainfall to 28/1..... 46.75mm

February Rainfall Stats

2023 February rainfall..... 51.0mm
 Wettest February..... 170.75mm in 2010
 Wettest day..... 54.5mm on 9/2/20
 Driest February 1mm in 1986

Average February rainfall..... 58.6mm
 Average no. rain days in February.... 7.4
 Highest no. rain days..... 18 in 1976
 Lowest no. rain days..... 1 in 1995

February Temperature Stats

2023 Feb. maximum.....35.6°C
 Hottest February day... 42.8°C on 1/2/20
 (5.8°C higher than the previous high 37°C)
 Average day temperature..... 26.2°C
 Warmest February 1983
 (Av. max day temp. 29.5oC & night 16.9oC)

2023 Feb. minimum.....5.8°C
 Feb. 23.. Av. max 27.8°C & Av. min 12.0°C
 Coldest February day.... 12°C on 10/2/96
 Hottest February night.. 25.9°C on 1/1/20
 Coldest Feb. night..... 5°C (3 times) on
 17/2/98, 22/2/17 & 10/2/19
 Average night temperature..... 13.6°C
 Coldest February 2012
 (Av.min day temp. 21.0°C & night 11.4°C)

Av. Feb. temp.. 19.9°C (day+night comb.)

December Rainfall Stats

December 2023 rainfall..... 148.75mm
 2023 total rainfall..... 794.75mm

Average December rainfall..... 65.1mm
 48yr Av. to end of December... 704.3mm

2023 Wamboin Weather in review

2023 Rainfall Stats

Wettest month..... Dec. with 148.75mm
 Driest month..... July with 15.25mm
 Wettest day..... 47.5mm on 19th Dec.

2023 Total rainfall..... 794.75mm
 (90mm above the 48-year average)
 2023 was the 32nd wettest year
 Number of rain days..... 105
 (48-year average is 106.8 days)

2023 Temperature Stats

Hottest day..... 37.4°C on 19th March
 Hottest night..... 19.8°C on 29th Jan.
 Average day temperature..... 21.1°C
 Number of days above 30°C..... 45
 (48 year average..... 28.8)

2023 was the 4th hottest year
 Coldest day..... 6.4°C on 28th June
 Coldest night..... -3.7°C on 20th June
 Average night temperature..... 7.2°C
 Number of nights below 2°C..... 73
 (48-year average..... 64.3)

New records

Hottest March day..... 37.4°C on 19th
 (previous record 35°C on 9/3/83 & 4/3/19)

Hottest June day..... 20.9°C on 3rd
 (previous record 19.1°C on 2/6/21)

Hottest July... average day temp. 14.1°C (previous record 2022 with 13.2°C)
 Hottest September... average day temp. 21.0°C (previous record 2019 with 18.6°C)

No 9.

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**An Eventful Start to the Day - by Merle - Short Story Contest
– Highly Commended - Adult Division**

I was out for a morning walk, when out of nowhere,
I saw something that a motorist would find a nightmare.
It appeared in front of me, rather large and looming,
the sheer size of it was all consuming.
I stopped in my tracks, not sure what to do,

I wasn't sure if it had seen me, I hadn't a clue.
I was determined to be fearless, brave and strong,
so I took a deep breath and continued along.
As I walked gingerly over, taking my time,
my heart rate however was starting to climb.
Had it seen me walking, I wasn't quite sure,
how much more of this tension could I endure.

I was hoping that it hadn't seen me walking towards him,
only one kick was needed to break a limb.
I slowly continued walking along on my way
and stepped over that pothole that started yesterday.

As I walked closer he extended in height
his muscles were bulging they were a scary sight.
So I kept walking as calmly as can be,
the others around him looked over at me.
Then they all suddenly scattered about,
his eyes rested on me, there was no doubt.

I stopped in an instant to see what he would do,
I was just hoping that he would just shoo.
His muscles were ripped, he was big in size,
was this morning walk going to be my demise.

I wished he was different, a bird say an Emu,
or even a Wombat, or the elusive Yahoo.
But alas he was not a big feathered bird,
a Wamboin he was, his size was absurd.

I had to continue, my walk not complete,
I was close to home, it was the next street.
As I walked further I locked with his gaze,
I was wondering if it would be one of those days.
Yet in an instant he suddenly turned round,
jumping the fence in a single bound.

I gave a big gusty exhalation of air,
and knew all was good for my welfare.
I rounded the corner, my farm gate in sight,
thankful I never walked in the night.
Whilst I felt elated no incident had occurred,
I held my head high and felt self-assured
But I should have paid attention and not been rushing home,
as I tripped in another pothole and broke my leg bone.



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2024 Wheels of Wamboin

As the 10th anniversary Wheels of Wamboin comes around again, I thought we should look at some milestones in 2024 for cars and their brands.

Probably a surprising one is that the Mazda MX-5 turns 35 this year. Released in 1989 it was the revival of the two seat roadster akin to the MGB. It gave us cheap simple fun motoring with modern features. Mazda has sold over one million MX-5's and we are now into the fourth generation. The Volkswagen Golf turns 50 this year. It was released in March 1974 as a successor to the Beetle. 39 million Golfs have found homes around the world and the nameplate continues to sell into it's eight generation.

The iconic pony car, the Mustang turns 60 this year and has released the 7th generation with a special "Dark Horse" model to celebrate the milestone. It will have It projects 349kW (468Hp) and 548Nm, making it the highest performing vehicle in the Australian Mustang family to date. The Mustang continues to provide muscle car motoring to the punters with the nonreplaceable purr of a V8 motor.

Who remembers the Alfa Giulietta, well the first one is now 70 years old since the release of the first model in 1954. It was the first Alfa to feature the now famous triangular grille.

Although they seem to come and go a bit, Dodge is still a big deal, especially in the US and visible here mainly through their RAM pickups. Now owned by Stellantis (fourth biggest car manufacturer in the world). They turn 110 from their first car release in 1914, the Dodge 30-35.

Maserati also turns 110 and was founded in 1914. They started by building aircraft engines and sparkplugs. Their first car the Tipo 26 was built in 1926 as a racing car and racing has driven their passion ever since (as a note the Stellantis Group owns the Alfa Romeo, Dodge and Maserati nameplates).

The first Lamborghini Countach was delivered in 1974, also making it 50 years old. How many Countach posters of these were pinned up on teenagers walls. The angular, muscular sharp edges and signature scissor doors were a true design statement in the 70's and 80's.

One of the most recognisable shapes in the world, the Porsche 911 debuted in 1974. It too has stood the test of design time to become an icon in the motoring world. 50 years on it is still in production surpassing 1 million in 2017..

The Mercedes 300SL, Jaguar D type and XK140 are all 70 years old and aging with distinction. 1954 must have been a great year for motoring enthusiasts.

MG turns 100 in 2024. Not the new Chinese revived nameplate but the original British brand. MG (Morris Garages) was a powerhouse car manufacturer founded by Cecil Kimber. MG's raced, broke speed records and made some of the greatest sportscars of the era.

Hopefully we will see all these marques at the Wheels of Wamboin Saturday 20th April. – Peter Evans



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Without the month by month donation of time by the residents listed below, it would be impossible for Wamboin and Bywong to have the Whisper. Please remember all the residents listed below, as they do what they do in order to make Bywong and Wamboin a little bit friendlier and more sociable. Without the businesses who pay to advertise in the Whisper we could not pay for printed copies. Finally, the articles, invitations and notices you read in each Whisper are only there because one of your neighbours took the time to write it.

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Dave Power	Fernloff Rd	34	Vicki Still	Canning Cl	15
Andrea Sadow	Poppet Rd	32	Alan Rope	Sutton Rd	47

177: 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)	32
Kathy Handel	Norton(Wrona2 Hilltop+Wirndra)	21	Phil Leeson&C Fogarty	Norton Rd (Campbell to Bingley)	27

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

Lesley Page	Valley View Ln	4	Deb Gordon	Yalana East	45
Colleen Foster	BdoreRd BtwnJoRocks&NortnRd	25	Dominica Lorima	Norton Rd – North End	44
Cassie Fisher	Clare Ln	12	Lyle Montesin	The Forest Rd area incl Joe Rcks	65
Jules Clancey	Norton Rd #1033-#1240	37			

204: CO-ORDINATED BY GARETH JONES Ph: 6238 1988 givjones@bigpond.com

Sophie Davis	Weeroona (254 – 400)	18	Susie & Brad Edwards	Weeroona (417-512)	17
James Houlcroft	Macs Reef Rd (DenleyToGumFlt)	7	Maria Taylor	Birriwa Rd & Gum Flat Lane	19
Nora Stewart	Rovere Ln	7	Justin Jarvis Smith	Macs Reef Birriwa to Harriott	14
Megan Wallace	Harriot Rd	28	Belinda Morris	Macs Reef Rd (Nwington2 Bankers)	11
Sandra Favre	Newwington Rd	23	Carol &Clive Boughton	Macs Reef (Bankers To Fed Hwy)	34
Chrystal Earle	Snowgum Road	26			

170: CO-ORDINATED BY IAN COILLET ph 0402 027 452 lodestar@ozemail.com.au

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Lyn Parkinson	Bidges/Hickey/OldGoldMines	53	Fire Brigade	Headquarters on Bingley Way	1
Glen Dorahy	Sutton Park Estate	55	Russell Ball	Macs Reef – Denley Dr to BngndrRd	26

147: CO-ORDINATED BY DAVID FEATHERSTONE ph 6236 9722 bushranger_au@hotmail.com

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Sue Aunella	Brooks Rd	24	Leigh & Derek Morris	Wyoming Road	20
Kerrie Gougeon	B'dore Rd (CreekB to Fed Hwy)	33	Peter Sharp	Doust Road	20

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Tony Bond	HoganDr/OranaDr/Yuranga Dr	52	Mary & Paulo Beneforti	Dnly Dr frm MacsReef to Birchmans	12
Janey & Paul Pedersen	BirchmansFrmDenleyUp2SaraRf	15	Helen Longdon	SarahReef&BrihcmansFrmSarah2End	11
Murray Goodridge	B'dore Rd (MR to&nclgd Smrihl)	40	Diana Griffin	Majors Close	19
Diana Boswell	Donnelly Rd 29 & Grove Rd 8	36	Advertisers & Misc	Out of area advertiser mailouts & msc	26

TOTAL 1,354

Close Encounters of the Worst Kind

We have all been there, huntsman spiders climbing out of your ear muffs after you have put them on; that tail vanishing into the rocks, was that a snake or a lizard; the brown snake caught in the mesh protecting your strawberry patch from the birds that you only discover when you go out to pick your strawberries; stepping on something soft and slithery as you step down the garden steps in thongs, and my favourite that extra black irrigation line across the path when yesterday there was only one. Kangaroos, wallabies, ducks and cockatoos are obvious, it's the unseen critters that keep us excited and so happy to live in the bush.

We all have our compost bays where we send our kitchen scraps and garden litter so that we might add to the fertility of the challenged soils of the Wamboin area. All the gardening experts tell us we should aerate these compost heaps so that we might get oxygen to the fungi, microbes and critters that work to break down the garden litter into a valuable resource.

And so it was after all this rain that I thought it would be a good idea to turn over my compost to aerate the pile and to make sure the moisture was penetrating to the lower levels. I plunged my garden fork in and turned over a nicely damp fork full of compost. A second effort and again a nice fork load of well composted material. It was the third fork load that changed everything.

I drew the garden fork out of the compost pile and in a split second realised the compost was moving, that it was very black, scaly and shiny and it was a fork length from me. Time slows down to a crawl. I quickly realise this is a very close, very unhappy, very large and fat black snake. Most of it is still in the compost but it is obviously a large reptile. It is writhing and its tail is flicking back and forth in a very threatening manner. I drop the fork.

At this point I break into an ancient dance that is deep within our DNA. I am trapped between the snake and the trailer I had used to bring some fresh cuttings to my compost bays. Being unable to run away only increases the energy applied to the dance. Ancient and magical words come forth as my heart rate climbs. The snake has in a split second vanished into the pile and I am not sure if I had pieced it or whether it was just wrapped around the fork tynes. That is not my concern, it's my heart rate that has my attention. Is this aerobic or anerobic exercise?

In a few minutes I have calmed down and have decided that's enough gardening for the day and regardless it started to rain. I'm not sure about the health of the snake or even why it was in the compost pile but I hope it has survived the onslaught of the garden fork. I am also not sure how I will approach the compost piles when I come to empty them out, I don't want another snake encounter. I reflect this is one of those unique experiences that living in the bush brings to our lives.

If you are wondering, I did not have a snake bandage in my pocket.

In closing this story I should add we have a history with red belly black snakes. Some years ago a red belly black was caught in our strawberry patch. The Wildcare folk came out and took our snake away. It was injured and it was about to go into hibernation. Some months later Wildcare called to tell us the snake was out of hibernation and would we like our snake back. We certainly would, it was our snake. The Wildcare lady was somewhat amused by our insistence that our snake be returned, she commented most don't want the snake back. Some years after that incident Wildcare called again. They had another red belly black that a road crew had found with its head stuck in a drink can. Since these reptiles prefer a very specific environment and Wildcare weren't sure where it had come from they again asked would we like it on our block. Certainly was our reply. So we know we have maybe two red belly black snakes on our block or on our neighbours' properties and that this snake might be a descendant of these earlier inhabitants. It would appear our bit of bush provides a healthy environment for snakes, at least red belly blacks.

- Kevin Rowe, heart rate 155 BPM



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