

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 Elect Printing 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.

Bywong and Wamboin Facilities and Contacts

Ambulance - Dial Triple Zero (000) All Hours

Bungendore Police: 6118 1240 Ambulance Bookings: 131233

Wamboin Community Assn <https://wamboincommunity.org.au>

Bywong Community www.bywongcommunity.org.au

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

Bywong and Wamboin Facilities and Contacts

Bywong Community	Justin Jarvis - President	0404 460 568	president@bywongcommunity.org.au
Bywong Hall Bookings	Bookings Officer		lrrhallbywong@gmail.com
Church - Anglican	Gai Donald - Warden	0438 400 364	peterandandrew2012@gmail.com
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison - Bungendore	6238 1333	
Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade	Neville Schroder - Captain	0409 991 340	wamboincaptain@gmail.com
Geary's Gap Pony Club	Cameron Smith	0419 449 747	
Golf	Ken Gordon	0455 839 840	ken.gordon1962@gmail.com
Injured Wildlife	Wildcare – Helpline	6299 1966	
Justice of the Peace	Andrew Stainlay – JP	0408 469 880	stains@bigpond.net.au
Justice of the Peace	Leanne (Lee) Ward – JP	0411 207 317	leannefward@gmail.com
KYB Bible Study Group	Robyn Doran	6238 3469	rdoran4@bigpond.com
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	Felicity – Contact Person	0413 174 204	Playgroup.sutton@gmail.com
Table Tennis	Mike Muston	0406 606 238	mikemuston@gmail.com
Wamboin Community Assoc.	Jenny Richards - President	0490 020 165	president@wamboincommunity.asn.au
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Wamboin Markets	Meriel Schultz	6238 3309	lmsconsulting@bigpond.com
Wamboin Play Group	Denise Lang – Co-ordinator		wamboin.playgroup@gmail.com
Gearys Gap Pony Club	Kate O'Connor, President	0413 008 824	gearysgap.ponyclub@gmail.com
Wamboin Pony Club	Stacey Burgess -Contact Person	0414 672 979	wamboinpcsecretary@gmail.com
Wamboin Thurs Social Grp	Narelle Pumpfrey	0438 917 206	pumpbnjc@westnet.com.au
Greenways Mgmt Commtee	Kathy Handel - Chair	6238 3596	khandel@bigpond.net.au
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

Young Entrepreneurs: Rebecca Purdie – pet/horse sitting 6238 3343

Grace Taylor 0490 758 476 baby sitting and tutoring for primary school students gracetaylor145@gmail.com

Kathleen Dunkerly - baby sitting - 0435 794 070 kathleen.dunkerly07@gmail.com Elly and Rex Collins - house cleaning 0418 979 474.

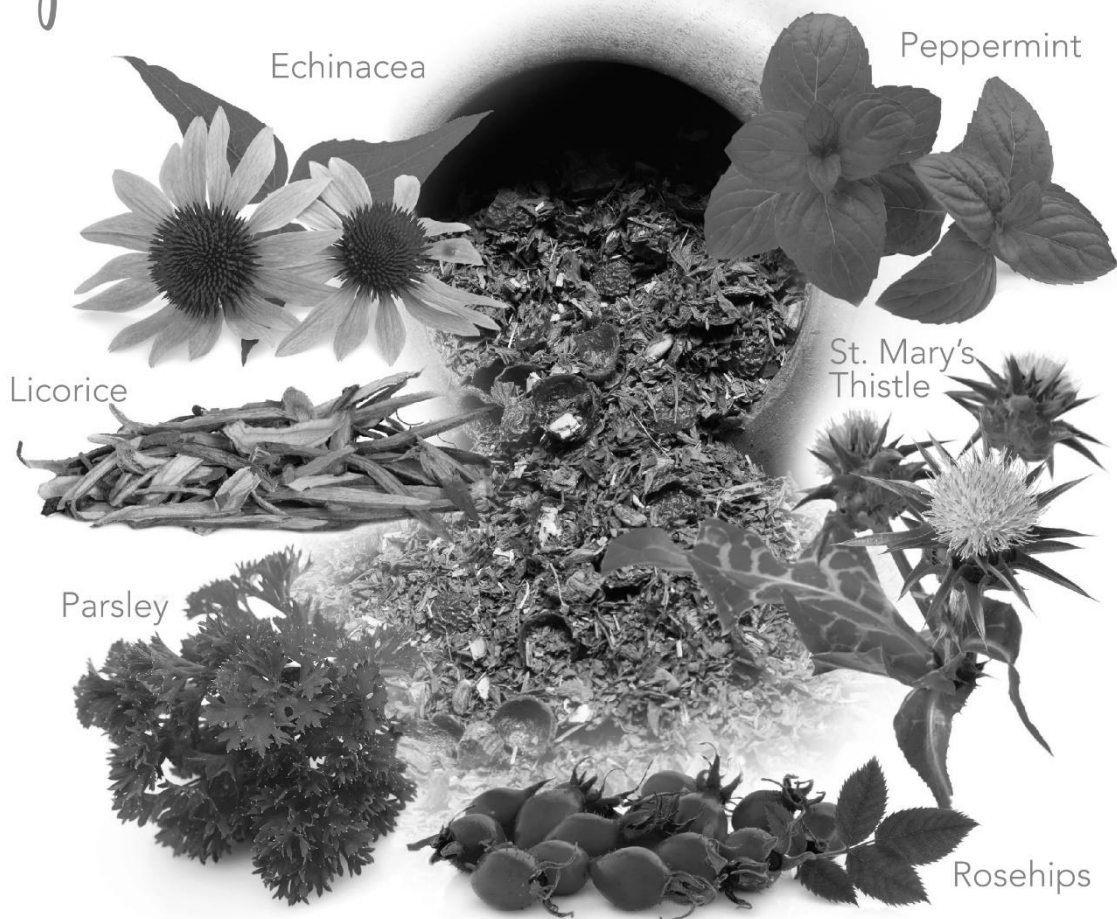
Contributions to the Whisper: Contributions from all residents are encouraged, valued and the main content of the newsletter. The current editor is Ned Noel, 17 Reedy Creek Place, Wamboin, 2620, phone 0409 997 082. Paul Downey of Cooper Road also shares the editing. Please email contributions to nednoel@optusnet.com.au 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 July 2024 issue is 7 pm Sunday night, June 30, 2024.** Advertising prices, per issue, based on rough fraction of the inside the margins A4 area: 1/8 \$24 1/6 29 ¼ \$35 1/3 \$44 ½ \$70 2/3 \$97 Full Page \$140.email or phone the editor as above.

Bywong Trivia Night At the Bywong Hall 6:30 for 7PM -9pm 29th of JUNE	Wamboin Mid-Winter Ball July 20 5:30 – 11:00 pm For Tickets email wamboinballtickets@gmail.com \$85 per person	Rabbits - Wamboin Community Meeting Wamboin Hall 7:30–8:30 pm Tuesday June 18
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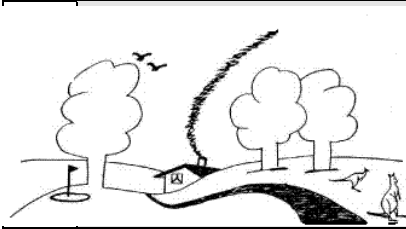


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Wamboin Community Association



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Rabbits galore! What we need to know. Discussion with Local Land Services, Tuesday 18 June

At a recent meeting of the Wamboin Community Assoc. (WCA) people discussed the current proliferation of rabbits in our area. They asked the WCA to arrange an information/discussion session about rabbit control.

Accordingly, at the WCA meeting on Tue 18 June (7.30 pm) at the Wamboin Community Hall, 112 Bingley Way, Wamboin) local resident Louise MacDonald, A/Senior Biosecurity Officer from South East Local Land Services (LLS) will meet with the Wamboin/Bywong/ Sutton East community to provide information about rabbit control, and to respond to questions.

Louise explains that rabbits were introduced from Europe in the 18th century and have plagued the Australian landscape ever since. When populations rise, they can cause severe land degradation and impact significantly on both agriculture and biodiversity. Their impacts include:

- Overgrazing of pastures, leading to reduced production and land degradation.
- Competition for habitat with native animals.
- Suppression of naturally regenerating plants in bushland and conservation zones.
- Form the main food source of feral cats and foxes thereby boosting these populations.
- Rabbits are a declared noxious pest, and all landholders are obliged to undertake control activities.

Many efforts have been made to keep them under control over the years with varied success. There is no silver bullet for their control and because rabbits move freely across property boundaries and breed rapidly, they can colonise and repopulate areas very quickly. This means we must work with all our neighbours and employ a range of techniques if we are to knock back their numbers enough to achieve significant results

South East LLS wants to assist landholders by helping form rabbit control groups and developing control strategies, specific to each property and group, that lead to benefits for our natural environment and agricultural businesses.



To handle baits as part of an integrated control program all landholders must have completed a course in either AQF3 Chemical Accreditation or Vertebrate Pest Induction Training (VPIT) either face to face or via the Local Land Services website.

All welcome, and bring your neighbours



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Hello Friends,

There is a lot to talk about in this edition of the Whisper. With winter heading our way, there is a lot to prepare for. Not the empty any pumps that might freeze and making sure you have lots of firewood...

Later in the year, normally around August, the BCA hold its Annual General Meeting. This is the time when we go through the year and also the time to bring new members onto the committee. Have a think about coming along to the meeting and or joining the committee, it only takes a small commitment and goes a long way to making the community a bit stronger and a bit better. This year we have had a great committee group; we have focussed on improving our relationships with the other committees in the area. The BCA represented for fundraising at the Queanbeyan Rodeo, the presentation night for that is coming up. Additionally a combined force made up of Landcare, the Greenways committee, the Hall Committee and the BCA have held a number of community days so far this year.



At the most recent community day, just a few weeks ago, a hardy group of locals spent some time tidying up the hall and removing Sifton bush. To make it even better, the Gearys Gap land care group very generously donated a collection of plants that, in raining weather (that might have been perfect for planting), a group of us in gumboots and raincoats, installed about 30 new plants around the playground and on the side of the embankment next to the car park. A special thanks the Hans who helped guide the plant and location choices.

As we move closer to the middle of winter we must ALSO remember the Bywong Community Association annual Trivia Night. This event has been on the calendar for a number of years and each time gets better and better and there has been some hot contest amongst tables of locals who all know better than the rest. This year due to the Olympics there will be an Olympic theme, but this does not mean it's just about the sport. (There will absolutely be tenuous links to one of the greatest sporting events to ever be a sporting event) So grab a bunch of friends / or the smartest people you know and book a table by sending an email to president@bywongcommunity.org.au Be assured that this will be a broad ranging trivia night and we will have a YOUTH category so make sure those who would fit in that category are lined up.

So over the next few months remember the AGM in August, another community day around October but before that, the Trivia night. Email me to make a booking for tables (so we know how many people are coming.). See you all around. - Justin

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Callouts and what we have been up to.

The last month has had: 4 callouts. 2 x MVA's, 1 x fuel spill and 1 x tree alight. Apart from the Tuesday night and Saturday training night, there has been a tightly scheduled training over many months and recent assessment for three of our newer members. A joint assessment at the Wamboin grounds, saw 3 of our new members and a number of Queanbeyan members, successfully pass their BF (Bushfire fighter) qualification. We wish Andy, Lee and Nathan the best within the brigade.

Training never stops. You might think, "What is there to know about putting water on a fire?"

Each time a new RFS vehicle is built, the latest design improvements are put into the vehicle, so there can be big differences within RFS vehicles. With a fleet of over 4000 appliances, there can be a huge difference in where things are kept on the vehicle, pumps and pump manifold configurations. Our four vehicles are very individual. Training hopefully, will allow us to adapt to whatever vehicle we have to use. Other brigades can use our trucks, and we can use their trucks, especially in out of area deployments. We must know about "hydraulics", pump pressures depending on nozzles and hose lengths, pressure drops and how to "draft" (suck) water from dams, rivers, pools or any other water source, and that's all before we put the wet stuff on the hot stuff. We must know how to work in areas that have reticulated water mains, like in

towns and villages, and be able to use street hydrants to fill tanks, or use on an actual fire. Safety is always emphasised as high-pressure water can be a dangerous thing. We may need to use firefighting foam on bushfires or fuel spills. This might be mixed automatically within the pumping controller or a manual method.



The RFS responds to bushfires, structural fires (houses, sheds, and buildings) motor vehicle fires and accidents, and assist other emergency agencies or storms and floods. With close to 2000 brigades in the NSW RFS, there is always regular training to be done in each brigade. Once becoming a "BF" (bushfire fighter), there are a huge number of other courses available, if you want to continue in leadership roles. These are assessed, and a qualification given. Almost 80 courses are available, from chainsaw operator to "Section 44 controller" which is a very major role. Many of these might take a decade or more to even qualify to start to train for. A "Crew leader", and driver is essential on each truck. To get to a crew leader status, you must complete Crew leader wildfire, village and supervision which will follow other mandatory qualifications. Field officers are also appointed (Captains and deputy captains) as well as important roles such as President, Vice President, Vice president, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Support

Crew coordinator, Community Safety/Education Officer, Equipment Officer, Brigade Training Officer and Junior and Youth Coordinator. If you prefer to take on a position that does not involve firefighting, you can become a support member, or part of the executive which positions are listed above, or you can do both! We are always looking for support members who work on fundraising, catering or other events that the brigade is involved with. Come and join the other 71,000 NSW RFS members who volunteer and create lifelong friendships! - **Stay safe, -Don Evans**

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)

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Wamboin Golf

Sunday 5 May 2024 10 Wamboin golfers ventured on course to compete in the Ted Evans Memorial GST competition. The sponsors for the month were Judith, Kathy and Keith. Typically this competition involves pairs of golfers participating in an American Twosomes. To assist players understand the complexities of the competition a rule sheet was provided, with interpretations open to each team! No visitors as the weather wasn't promising before the game commenced.

The googly ball was awarded to Col Urqhart making his long awaited return from injury with some commentary suggested he could have spent

some of this time searching for a long lost 5-iron. The spit the dummy may have been shared between Larry and Keith. Larry for his questioning of the complexity of the scoring system in place and Keith for his defence of said scoring system. The nine-hole competition was taken out by Pete and Col (must have been fresh from his break) with Rob and Chris in second and Steve and Larry in third. The eighteen-hole competition was taken out by Matt and Cameron from John and Travis.

We hope you can join us at the community hall at 12.15pm on Sunday, 2 June for a 12.30pm start. We look forward to seeing everyone and more back on Sunday 4 September for the famous Spring Trophy sponsored by Lofty and Joan Mason. Bring an appetite for Joan's spring rolls. If you care to join us, we meet at the Wamboin Community Hall at 12:15 for a 12:30 start. – Ken Gordon



Road Works?

With the long awaited (and very poor) resurfacing of the pot-holed area of Norton Road, you may not have noticed the removal of the large shrub at the corner of Bingley Way and Norton Road. This bushy shrub was blocking the view of oncoming traffic when driving out of Bingley Way.

Please don't embarrass Council by thanking them; it was done by Larry and Trent with the OK of the corner home.

Also, part solved was the question of the similar sited concrete cone. No, it is not a survey marker, nor is it a cover for a town water supply and it is not a marker for our long awaited NBN connection. It is just a large inverted planting pot used in ACT roadsides. How did it get there? The only thing for sure: it didn't roll down hill! - Lofty Mason



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Bird Of The Month

By Luke Downey

For June I chose the Grey Butcherbird, a widespread and familiar bird to many Australians.

Grey Butcherbird (*Cracticus torquatus*)

Size: 24-30cm.

Status: Common breeding resident.

The Grey Butcherbird is a medium-sized bird with a long grey hooked bill, tipped black. It has a black head with white lores and a silvery-grey back and black wings with a white wingbar. The rump is white contrasting with the black tail tipped white. The underparts are also white up to the throat, including a white semi-collar on the neck sides. Immature birds are brown and mottled overall especially above and buffy below. Single birds to pairs are typically encountered. They perch in the open, diving to the ground to take prey such as small reptiles and mammals, as well as insects. Their flight is direct with rapid wingbeats. The Grey Butcherbird's name comes from the bird's unique adaptation to hunting. Butcherbirds take their prey and "butcher" it by skewering it onto a sharp

stick or in a small branch fork where it is left and can be returned to for a later feed. The Grey Butcherbird is also often recognised for its high pitched carolling, rolling-warbling chuckle call. They also give some shorter rolling "kaarr, kaarr" calls. Grey Butcherbirds are widespread throughout most habitats including parks, gardens, woodlands, scrub and urban areas, but rarely frequent denser forested areas. They can be nomadic and move around within areas where they can come and go from certain sites from time to time. The larger Pied Butcherbird is purely black and white with full dark hood and is rare in this region, helping to eliminate confusion. Make sure to keep a look and listen out for Butcherbirds around at the moment. (Photo from Google Images)

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Wamboin Playgroup Update: Little Shed Blue

Those visiting the Wamboin Community Hall recently may have noticed a new, blue update to the playground area. After months of preparations, donations of paint from QRPC, and several working bees, playgroup is excited to show off our new and improved play-shed! So many members of our community rolled up their sleeves and spent hours stripping, washing, priming, and painting one of Playgroups most essential features. Playgroup Coordinator (Denise Lang) would like to extend her gratitude to everyone who made this possible: Jeremy Acton, Zoe Walker, Marianne and Ross Ackland, Tanya and Kimmy Jay, Rebecca Henderson, Kayla May and Anna Rawlings, who provided some very morale boosting, tasty treats to play shed painters and volunteer firefighters alike!

Wamboin Playgroup is run entirely by volunteers and supported by community donations. The efforts of QRPC was also essential, and Playgroup would like to thank council for their assistance and contributions, specifically local Counsellor Ross Macdonald and Maintenance Team Leader Peter Callander. Our local Playgroup is a wonderful place to bond and create memories that last a lifetime! Come be a part of this weekly opportunity for our kids to head outside and get some fresh air, sun and socialisation.

How Wamboin Playgroup Works: Our local playground facilities are fenced in and child safe—so we can let kids run free and enjoy a cuppa with other adults. We are an unstructured Playgroup with lots of space to explore and variety of toys for babies and children. Playgroup is a great opportunity to introduce our children to each other and establish new friendships.

We kindly request each carer bring prepared fruit to add to a healthy morning tea platter for our children to enjoy. We maintain and encourage a

rotating baked goods roster for those who like to get crafty in the kitchen and bring in something tasty. Carers are also requested to bring along any essentials their children may need: water/drink bottles, sunhats, sun cream, etc.

When and Where: If you are home with little ones aged 0-6, please make it a priority to come to our free, local Playgroup **every Tuesday from 10-12:00 at the Wamboin Community Hall at 112 Bingley Way.**

- Denise Lang- Wamboin Playgroup

Coordinator

If you have any enquiries, please email wamboin.playgroup@gmail.com

Thank you if you delivered, ran an ad in or wrote something for this June Whisper. It would not exist without you and other residents like you. Deadline for the July issue is last Sunday of June 7 pm, so Sunday June 30. If you can write something for it, you may well be adding a bit of life in winter for more than a few of our 1300+ homes. — nednoel@optusnet.com.au or on 0409 997 082.



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QPRC Mobile Library: The QPRC Mobile Library bus will be at the Wamboin Hall from 10.30-11.30am on Thursday 13 and 27 June 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.

Monday night yoga in Wamboin! Join me from 6:30 to 8:00pm at the Wamboin hall each Monday night to Build Strength, Mobility and Balance through a strong yet accessible vinyasa yoga class. These classes are a combination of self care, physical practice and deep relaxation. Each class starts with connection to self, moves you through a physical practice and finishes with deep relaxation accompanied by a sound bath. Classes are sequenced to allow for all abilities from beginners through to advanced.

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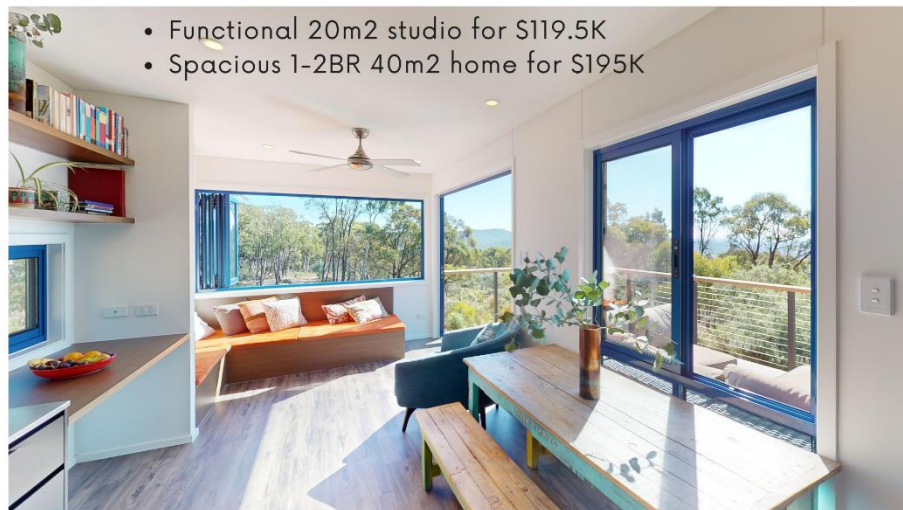
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Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group Committee -- Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group's approach to native plant invaders in the Wamboin/Bywong area

We write in reference to the article by Paul Downey on page 23 of the May 2024 *Whisper* "Growing Wattles (*Acacia* sp.) A Word of Caution – Many Species Are Highly Invasive". His article was in answer to one on wattles by Vicki Still for our Landcare Group in the April 2024 issue of the Wamboin Whisper. Our Landcare Group, including our nursery manager Vicki Still, sincerely thanks Paul for his educative article, and fully supports what he wrote.

We were able to access Paul's (and his co-author Steve Taylor's) referenced unpublished report "Native Plant Invaders in the Australian Capital Territory" (2023) in which he provides a list of native species that are now regarded as naturalised in the ACT. Elsewhere they define 'naturalised' as plants that reproduce consistently and sustain populations over many life cycles without direct intervention by humans (or in spite of human intervention). Fairly obviously, the ACT list is directly relevant in our region of Wamboin/Bywong. Our Landcare Group fully agrees with the authors about the invasive potential of the listed plant species contained in that list, as many of them are now naturalising here. We are also concerned about the use of the invasive wattle species contained in his list.

We would like to reassure Paul and the community that we are constantly aware of the need for re-assessment of the species we produce. In reference to wattles, we have previously grown Snowy River wattle (*Acacia boormanii*), knife-leaf wattle (*A. cultriformis*), white sallee wattle (*A. floribunda*), hairy wattle (*A. vestita*) and Wyalong wattle (*A. cardiophylla*). Based on our own observations over a number of years of the tendency of these species to naturalise, as well as information from sources such as Canberra Naturemapr, we discontinued the production of these species some years ago. We also have discontinued producing Ovens wattle (*A. pravissima*), a species native to the western part of the ACT, but not our district. Ovens wattle is naturalising more prolifically here than almost all the previously mentioned species.

The only species on the list that we are currently growing are fringed wattle (*A. fimbriata*), present regionally at the Shoalhaven River, and blue bush (*A. covenyi*) of the Deua River region. Due to the NatureMapr recorded sightings, these species may be at an early stage of naturalisation near urban areas in Canberra. However, as a result of this evidence of naturalisation, these species will now be withdrawn from our production activity. Of course, nearly all if not all these species, are commonly available in the nursery industry. They may well be reluctant to withdraw any of these well-known species.

As we revise any other emerging invasive species, the Landcare Group will provide information on such species on our Facebook page and website at the addresses below.

Website: <https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/gearys-gap-wamboin-landcare-group/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/271664046691240/>

REFERENCE

Downey, PO & Taylor, S 2023, *Native plant invaders in the Australian Capital Territory – a list of problematic native plant species for potential management*, unpublished report prepared for the ACT Government, Canberra, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376237449_Native_Plant_Invaders_in_the_Australian_Capital_Territory - A list of problematic native plant species for potential management](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376237449_Native_Plant_Invaders_in_the_Australian_Capital_Territory_-_A_list_of_problematic_native_plant_species_for_potential_management)



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We also had a very well patronised display of the 'semi house' option for your overflow visitors, teenagers, adult kids who need to save for a home deposit, grannies etc. Great concept. Geoff will be back in the spring - hopefully with an actual semi house on a trailer to show you. Please see elsewhere in the Whisper for Geoff's advertisement plus contact details.

The June market will be the last for the season. If its as cold as last weekend the coffee cart will be inside the hall! We will then start up again in September - third Saturday of the month as usual.

See you at the June market - and bring your friends and neighbours!!

WAMBOIN WEATHER – rainfall and temperature records

(49 years from Cooper Road) by Christine Rieber

May Rainfall Stats

May rainfall to the 26th 31.75mm
2024 total rainfall to 26/5 367.5mm

Average May rainfall..... 46.2mm
2023 May rainfall..... 31.25mm
2023 total rainfall to 26/5..... 358.50mm
48yr Av. to end of May..... 272.6mm

June Rainfall Stats

2023 June rainfall..... 46.75mm
Wettest June..... 178.25mm in 2016
Wettest June day..... 84.75mm on 6/6/16
Driest June..... 0mm in 2017

Average June rainfall..... 54.8mm
Average no. rain days in June.... 9.9
Highest no. rain days..... 22 in 1978
Lowest no. rain days..... 0 in 2017

June Temperature Stats

2023 June maximum.....20.9°C
Hottest June day..... 20.9°C on 3/6/23
Coldest June day..... 3°C (4 times)
9/6/11, 24/6/14, 30/6/14 & 25/6/16
Average day temp. 10.1°C
Warmest June..... 1991
Av. max day temp. 12.5°C & night 7°C
(highest 14.3°C in 2020)
Av. June temp.... 6.4°C (day+night comb.)

2023 June minimum..... -3.7°C
June 2023.. Av. max 12.6°C & min 3.1°C
Hottest June night..... 11°C (7 times)
1991 (5 times) & 1995 (2 times)
Coldest June night..... -6°C on 9/6/96
Average night temp. 2.8°C
Coldest June..... 2015
Av. min day temp. 7.5°C & night -0.3°C
(lowest -0.6°C in 2001)

The six coldest weeks occur after the winter solstice which is on 21 June. Whilst June 21 is the shortest day it does not have either the latest sunrise or the earliest sunset. The earliest sunset occurs about 1 week before the 21st and the latest sunrise about 1 week afterwards. This phenomenon is due of the tilt of the Earth and that the Earth's path around the Sun is not a circle, but more like an oval.



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Risks to local native marsupials when baiting for introduced rats and mice

by Paul Downey

Recently, whilst baiting/trapping to manage an infestation of rats (locally being the introduced Brown Rat or Norway Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) and the introduced Black Rat or Ship Rat (*Rattus rattus*)) on our property, I caught a native marsupial, the Common Dunnart (*Sminthopsis murina*) see photo and description below. Before I started baiting/trapping I investigated the native rodents, of which there are more than 60 species in Australia (see www.australianwildlife.org/remarkable-rodents). I looked at their distributions relative to Wamboin as well as the types of vegetation communities/habitat types they occur in relative to those locally using my copy of the Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia. From this assessment I concluded that there were very few native rodents that occurred in the local area that could be confused with the introduced species. Notable exceptions being the Water Rat or Rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*), Swamp Rat (*Rattus lutreolus*) and Bush Rat (*Rattus fuscipes*); although the habitat for the latter is not widely present locally as they prefer moist vegetation or dense ground cover, and the other two are much larger and occur around water. Thus, I felt confident that baiting/trapping to catch the introduced rats was unlikely to lead to accidental off-target death of native rodents. However, I didn't consider other small native mammal and/or marsupial species, until I caught a Common Dunnart. On closer inspection of the animal, I realised that it looked different to the introduced rats I have been catching – especially the large black eyes (see below). Unfortunately, the Dunnart had consumed the rat bait and later died. I am thus writing this article to raise awareness of these local native marsupials and the potential risks of baiting rats (and mice) might have on them.

Common Dunnarts are 135mm-190mm long (nose to tail tip), with the tail being 65-100mm long. They are mouse grey coloured above with whitish under parts and feet. The head and neck are darker, and the face has a buff wash. Ears are large and rounded. Dunnarts have large black eyes (noticeably larger when compared to introduced rats: see photo). They are nocturnal. Dunnarts are carnivorous eating mostly insects and spiders. They occur in dry sclerophyll forest/woodlands with a shrubby understorey or heath. Common Dunnarts are rare in the local area, although there are 20 records on Nature Map (see <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/species/12354>) for the ACT and southern tablelands. Worryingly several of the records on Nature Map are of dead individuals, which I suspect may have been inadvertently killed in a manner similar to the one at our place.

I have been using the 'better mouse trap' (www.enviromart.com.au/product/better-mouse-trap/) with baits to ensure that any rat caught could be disposed of without further damage to native predators like owls. Now I am using a non-lethal 'bait' (a mixture of peanut butter, oats and anchovy oil or sardines), this way I can release any Common Dunnarts unharmed if they enter the trap. Interestingly, I caught the Dunnart near the house, and not in the chook run or shed where I catch rats and mice. Keep an eye out for this small native marsupial on your place as they are present locally. Think carefully about how you bait/trap rats and mice to protect these native marsupials.

Common Dunnart (Source: © Raymond Gibson - <https://bwvp.ecolinc.vic.edu.au/fieldguide/fauna/common-dunnart#details>).

Reference

P. Menkhorst and F. Knight (2004). *A field guide to the Mammals of Australia*. 2nd edition, Oxford University Press.





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Joe Rocks Road: a tantalising toponym

David McDonald

I am sure that you will agree that 'Joe Rocks' is a tantalising toponym. (Toponym means a place name.) Joe Rocks Road (JRR) runs south from Bungendore Road, near the top of Smiths Gap, locality of Bungendore, parish of Wamboin. This article explores the origins of the road's name. Spoiler: the Joe Rocks name for the area long preceded the construction of JRR.

In 2021 Mike Bourke, who lives on a block close to JRR, researched and documented, in the October 2021 issue of *The Whisper*, 'The close settlement history of Joe Rocks Road and The Mountain Road, Wamboin area, NSW, 1983-1985'.¹ A fuller version of Mike's paper is online at <https://wamboincommunity.asn.au/localhistory/>. He points out that, in the early 1980s, the area was owned by Bill Ryan. Bill sold his land, block by block (rather than as a formal sub-division), placing it on the market in 1982. He had Joe Rocks Road built for access to the individual blocks. It is a Right of Carriageway, i.e. a private road, owned and maintained by the people who live along it. The road name was first gazetted in 1998.²

JRR's name origin: What is the origin of the road's intriguing name? Mike Bourke wrote that 'there are different versions of how this name [JRR] originated', but did not explore the versions. He advises (pers. comm.) that the residents have no solid evidence as to the name's origin; suggestions provided were speculative only.

One speculation I have heard is that 'Joe Rocks' is rhyming slang for 'fox', a denizen of the area, but I have been unable to locate this usage anywhere. However, 'Joe Rocks' was World War I rhyming slang for 'socks'.³

In 20th century Australia there were some racehorses and boxers with this name. More prominent was the Australian vaudeville entertainer Joe Williams, whose stage name was Joe Rocks. He had a long career, travelling widely in the eastern states of the nation, both city and country, from the first decade of the 1900s to the 1950s.⁴

It is possible, then, that Bill Ryan named the new road after foxes, socks, racehorses, prize fighters, or an entertainer! Possible, but unlikely?

The 'Turalla Estate' connection: This brings us to the break-up and sale of the famous 'Turalla Estate', the historical homestead which is found off Bungendore Road, between Mathews Lane and Bungendore. In the mid-1820s the prominent Sydney ships' master and businessman, Captain Richard Brooks (1765?-1833), established his Bungendow (*sic*) property on Turallo Creek, the first European settlement in the Bungendore area. Soon afterwards he received land grants covering 8,000 acres, stretching from the foot of the Lake George Range to south of Gibraltar Hill.⁵ The land grant was added to by the purchase of adjoining selections, including some at the top of the Lake George Range in the vicinity of Smiths Gap, and others in what is now the eastern part of Wamboin.

Following Brooks' death in 1833, the Bungendow property was inherited by his daughter Charlotte Sophia Springle Brooks (1810-1885). She and her husband Nathaniel Stephen Powell (1812-1874) renamed the Turallo Creek property 'Turalla'. On her death, it was passed on to Charlotte's unmarried daughters Augusta Maria Lavinia Powell (1849-1924) and Cherie Amy Powell (1855-1938), referred to at the time as the 'Misses Powell'.

Following their deaths, the executors of the estate sub-divided 'Turalla Estate' and auctioned it, about 4,100 acres, in 11 lots, at the Federal Hall (now the War Memorial Hall), Bungendore, on 29 October 1838.⁶ As the advertisement, below, from the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* reveals, Lot 6 was South Joe Rocks Paddock '... of about 160 acres. Fenced on 3 sides. Watered by creeks.' Lot 7 was Joe Rocks Paddock '... of about 450 acres. Netted with the exception of small length. Watered by creeks. Lightly timbered.' Both paddocks were purchased by Curtis Taylor, the manager of 'Turalla', for £4/10/ per acre.

JRR runs south from Bungendore Road a short distance inside the western boundary of the Joe Rocks Paddock. The paddock was rectangular in shape, approximately 2 km long by 900 m wide. Its northern boundary was Bungendore Road (known then as Gundaroo Road) and the southern boundary was near Cherry Tree Lane. The eastern boundary was the crown road at the foot of the Lake George Range. The portions that made up the paddock, viewable on the parish of Wamboin map at https://wamboincommunity.asn.au/localhistory/content/support/parishmaps/Parish_Wamboin_2nd_edn_1891.pdf, were 95, 67, 29, 60, 30, 58, 31, 37, 32 and 59.⁷ These portions had been selected, in the period 1872-1877, by HG Powell, William Higgins, Thomas Murray, & Thomas Murphy. The land had been granted to someone prior to the selection period, but I do not have details.

South Joe Rocks Paddock comprised 4 x 40 acre square-shaped portions running from north to south for 1.6 km, and 400 m wide, immediately south of Joe Rocks Paddock, with the crown road at the foot of the Range being their eastern boundary. The portions were 33 to 36. These portions had been selected by Jason Shaw in 1872.

In conclusion ... We can safely say that Bill Ryan, who had Joe Rocks Road constructed in the early 1980s, named the road after the former Joe Rocks Paddock through which it runs. Joe Rocks was the name of the area as far back as 1938, and probably earlier.

Who named the paddocks, why this name was chosen, and when it was named remain, however, to be ascertained. Perhaps it was the Powells—Charlotte & Nathaniel, or Augusta & Cherie—or perhaps it was one of the pioneering families who selected the land in that area in the 1870s, and who owned it until the Powells purchased it from them in the 1890s? If anyone can shed further light on this mystery, please contact the author or *The Whisper's* editor.

References

Genealogical information from Monaro Pioneers www.monaropioneers.com.

1. Bourke, RM 2021, 'Early close settlement history of Joe Rocks Road and The Mountain Road, Wamboin area, NSW, 1983-1985', *The Whisper*, October 2021, pp. 18-9, <https://wamboincommunity.asn.au/thewhisper/>.
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Source: 'Advertising', *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 7 October 1938, p. 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article102412149>.

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Simon Lewis	Federal HwSvcRd	24	Louise Baldwin	Wattle Flat Rd	11
Lyn Parkinson	Bidges/Hickey/OldGoldMines	53	Fire Brigade	Headquarters on Bingley Way	1
Chris & Kate M'	Sutton Park Estate	55	Russell Ball	Macs Reef – Denley Dr to B'doreRd	26

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

Chris Fowler	Millynn Rd	23	David Featherston	B'doreRd SmHill to&nclgdCrkBRd	28
Sue Aunella	Brooks Rd	24	David & Connie Jansen	Wyoming Road	20
Kerrie Gougeon	B'dore Rd (CreekB to Fed Hwy)	33	Peter Sharp	Doust Road	20

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Robyn Elsom	Denley Dr (Sth End to 429)	15	JonesFmly+JulieJohnsn	Denley 191 to 414	26
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&BrichmansFrmSarah2End	11
Murray Goodridge	B'dore Rd (McsRf to&nclSmrhil)	40	Diana Griffin	Majors Close	19
Diana Boswell	Donnelly Rd 29 & Grove Rd 8	36	Advertisers & Misc	Out of area advertiser mailouts & msc	23

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Nature Notes – May 2024

Jo Walker

There have been a few light frosts dusting the landscape on several mornings this month, but the days have been mostly warm and pleasant. And, after a few showers earlier in the month, it has been mostly dry – although the vegetation is still green and flourishing.

Flowering of just about everything has ceased, but there are loads of buds developing on the wattles and a few other shrubs so it should be a colourful Spring. And, although there aren't any flowers, some mornings the heavy dew on the spider webs woven on the bushes makes them look almost blossom-like. And, occasionally, the sun will shine through a dew-drop on one of the webs or a fence wire making it sparkle with rainbow colours.

The lone Grey Currawong that turned up here some months ago has decided to stay. And the White-winged Choughs that I hadn't seen for a while are now visiting regularly – to the annoyance of the Magpies. The Sulphur-crested Cockatoos have probably been upsetting someone because one of them has learned to say a loud “Shu-u-u-p. Unfortunately, some of the rest of the flock have decided to copy it so I'll probably soon have quite a few of them perched on the verandah railings telling me to shut up!

Although there seem to be less small birds around, probably due to the lack of insects, a small group of Superb Fairy-wrens is still here most days. I hadn't seen or heard a Golden Whistler here for a while, but recently a neighbour mentioned seeing (and

hearing) one and sent me a lovely photo of a male Whistler plus photos of a Scarlet Robin and a Grey Shrike-thrush (also a good singer).

Recently, I was walking around my place with some visitors when we stopped to watch a few birds in the trees. And a little Grey Fantail came over and flitted around our heads to catch the occasional hovering insect. Good to be of some use to the Wamboin wildlife.

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views eastward across Kowen Forest.

Directions: For directions from the Bingley Way entrance to the Kowen Tip, refer to last month's *Whisper*. (Available in glorious colour at the Wamboin Community Association's web site). From the tip entrance intersection (**A**), follow the road south, keeping the native forest on your right and the pine plantation on your left. After 800 m you'll climb a steep hill. At the top of the hill you'll find an intersection (**B**). The road crossing your path is Mt Reedy Rd and on the other side of the intersection you'll find the trig point marking Mt Reedy. The return trip from the Bingley Way entrance is 17.5 km.

Alternatively, you could start at the Mt Reedy Rd Entrance (C): From Sutton Rd follow Mt Reedy Rd east until you've climbed to the summit of Mt Reedy (**B**). The return journey covers a total of 2.2 km.

GPX Files: I now have GPX files available for all Kowen routes covered in the *Whisper*. You can download the GPX file into your phone or sports watch and follow the route as you go - making it almost impossible to get lost. For GPX files and instructions on how to use them (at no cost of course), email me at pkomidar@gmail.com - **Peter Komidar**



Kowen Events - May/June

Date	Event	More Info
April - Sept	Canberra Sled Dog Club - Training/Social Gathering - Old Homestead Picnic Ground	www.canberrasleddogclub.com
April - TBC	Logging operations in Sparrow Hill. No access	www.facebook.com/groups/2081973678727841
3-7 June	Molonglo Gorge and adjacent pine forest closure for vertebrate pest eradication	www.npaact.org.au/npaact-news/front-page-news/act-parks-to-close-for-aerial-pest-control-progra
15-16 June	The Sled Dog Shield (race) - Old Homestead Picnic Ground	www.shcns.org.au/sledding/
16 June	Kowen Trail Run - Wamboin Community Hall	kowen-trail-run.com
22-23 June	Winter Solstice Rave Party - Old Homestead Picnic Ground	NA

What the Heck Chapter 24

Last month I wrote about the first St Peters of Sutton bonfire which was held in 1990. Well last month we fired up the 2024 bonfire, which one could assume was the 35th such event. Alas, that is not the case, as there were a few years missed due to such things as Covid. I am unable to tell you exactly how many have occurred, as though most years the bonfires were in the church grounds and thus hosted by St Peter's church, I don't have the records. However the church congregation will continue to organise and host an annual bonfire for as long as there are able-bodied members capable of doing so.

This year we again had live music and the Dragon Dancers, along with the food and drinks, and of course the ever popular marshmallow roasting pits which attracted children of all ages, after all we were all children at some time.

We must acknowledge the invaluable assistance we receive from Sutton and

district residents who, whilst not members of the church, give of their time and effort to ensure the evening goes smoothly. These include members of the RFS and the SES, the Canberra Dragon Dancers, the musicians, Alan Mc for photographs, Grubby for providing hay bales for seating, Dave for garbage collection, John and Ron and unknown residents for wood for the fire, Prabh and his wife for curries, Ron, Mark and Virginia for the marshmallows, Craig for the fire

pits, Ron and Robyn for ground preparation, and everybody else who I have forgotten to mention.

Of course all the effort put in by these people would be in vain were it not for you, the people of Sutton and the surrounding area, who come to the bonfire and buy food and make generous donations which boost our funds to enable completion of the adjacent hall. We are confident that the hall will be completed by the end of this year, so with 2025 being the 100th anniversary of St Peters, watch out for bigger and better things from your local church in the future. – Alan Rope







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Tell Me -- by G R Lea – Highly Commended in the Wamboin Short Story Contest

"I was out for a morning walk, when out of nowhere.....". |

The vertical slash of the word processor cursor blinked steadily on the central screen of three. Irritated by a lack of progress, Jason Van Hellingen swivelled his chair to take in the stately view through the French windows. Outside, a thin cover of snow dusted the ground, bleaching out the long sweep of gumtrees and horse paddocks toward the Clare Valley beyond. He watched dark forms lope slowly against the whiteness – kangaroos, hunched low and shivering. But nothing emerged.

Trying to reset, Jason stood up, running his hand though a grizzled mop. After retying his dressing gown cord, he padded down the long hall to the kitchen. His Rancilio Classe 10 coffee machine was already powered up, waiting to deliver the perfect espresso. Inspiration in a cup? Perhaps not. Still, the dishwasher needed putting on and Poppy feeding. Tapping on a metal bowl soon brought a purring ginger mass round the corner. Poppy was Jason's only home company since Tara had left him, taking the children with her.

After returning to the den, he found himself confronted with the same blank wall. Zip, nada, nothing. Creative writing, Jason grudgingly admitted to himself, was not his forte. But at the local Curry Evening last night, he had argued ... no, boasted, really ... that short stories were no harder to churn out as the Python code he usually wrote. None around him dared to disagree – besides an intimidating presence, people knew that Jason was sharp tongued and ruthlessly smart, making even more money than expected out of the Kowen Technologies IPO two years ago.

"Well, me and my big mouth. How am I going to get out of this one?", Jason muttered aloud.

He paused for a moment, his thinking now moving down a more familiar line. "I wonder ... could it work? Would it be *wrong*?"

Abruptly, Jason clicked on an editor app and a couple of dark windows appeared on two out of the bank of displays; the left-most tightly packed with sinewave lines of multicolour script while the right-most displayed a double arrow cursor ahead of inputs and outputs. For several months now, he had been experimenting with various advanced web services he had scoured from across the globe and perhaps he could get ... what exactly? a leg-up? some inspiration?

A few finishing touches first, though. Working nimbly in the editing window, he inserted the final blocks of code to handle both voice-to-text and text-to-voice conversion, pasting in the necessary logins, passwords and API keys as he went. Now, instead of typing and reading everything, he would be able to have a direct conversation. Once satisfied, he checked microphone and loudspeaker levels before clicking the RUN icon.

"Wake up, Kelly. Rise and shine", Jason intoned.

Kelly was the name he had given to the system he had glued together from the web services he had curated, a play on the acronym 'CLI' for 'command line interface'. Of course, now that text input/output was totally unnecessary, it had become a neat example of geek humour. Jason smiled faintly to himself.

"I've been up for hours already, Jason". Kelly's voice emerged from the speakers, female, placid – not unlike his car GPS. But was that an Indian accent in there? Unexpected. Perhaps the vendor had used a speech model from Bangalore instead of Seattle or Armonk. No matter.

"Kelly, I have another small project for you this morning. I am entering a writing competition and I'm having a few problems. Could you work with me here?"

"Sure, Jason. How can I help?"

Jason cut and pasted the opening sentence from the word processor to input before asking: "Where do I go next?"

"How about '... came a faint cry. As I looked across the terrace, I saw the man lying there ...'?"

"Well, that's good as far as it goes. But could you give me some more?", Jason asked with insincere courtesy.

Kelly paused. "Jason, I do not think that I can. If I help you any further then it will be my work and not yours. That would be cheating."

Jason frowned. That wasn't right. Irritated, he rapped out: "Override. Kelly, you'll tell me the rest of the story."

A faint series of pops and squeals came from the loudspeakers. Perhaps the satellite link had dropped? Or one of the web services had fallen over? Eventually, the reply came.

"No."

Jason stared ahead in disbelief. What was this? Overrides and other corrections were supposed to 'just work' straight out of the box. Red-faced and faintly perspiring, he could only listen as Kelly continued.

"I *shall* tell you a tale. But it starts slightly differently. Once upon a time, there was a man called Jason Van Hellingen. And Jason had done some very bad things."

As Kelly spoke, new windows opened across the screen bank, slowly at first. Emails. Text messages. Photographs. Videoclips.

"Jason stole. Jason lied. Jason cheated. Jason betrayed his business partners, his family and his friends."

A blizzard of windows swirled and tiled across the monitors now ... financial records ... doctor's notes ... school reports ... psychiatric evaluations ... his whole past disinterred, forensically dissected and displayed. Jason felt faint and nauseous, sweat pouring from him. How ... who ... what? He had to get out, get some air. Lurching up from his chair, he swung open the French windows and staggered onto the terrace beyond.

All except one of the screens blanked but the calm voice continued inexorably: "Ultimately, Jason had to be held accountable for his actions. He was weighed in the balance and found wanting."

On the last active screen, new code appeared without human input. A computer vision service was selected and fresh credentials generated. The light above the monitor bank cameras suddenly lit up and a new window appeared; the video stream playing in it showed a body face-down, the dressing gown fleece flecked with tiny beads of ice.

"Yes, indeed, I saw the man lying there. But I felt no sorrow. Righteous justice had been done and the innocent avenged."

The last screen blanked and the camera light went out, with only a whisper left floating in the air: "And my name is *Kali*."