

WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Whisper

April 2025

Circulation 1,364

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

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NSW SES Bungend. (non-urgent)	After Hours Duty Officer	6238 0222	
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Wamboin Community Assoc.	Jenny Richards - President	0490 020 165	president@wamboincommunity.asn.au
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Greenways Mgmt Commtee	Chris Schweizer - Chair	0404 823 022	beltrim1108@gmail.com
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ARF (Rescue Dogs)	Lisa Whitney	0408 260 796	lisawhitney059@gmail.com

Wamboin Community Association

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Bywong Community Association

2025 Federal election Meet the Candidates



The Wamboin and Bywong Community Associations are inviting all nominated candidates for the Federal Electoral Division of Eden-Monaro to a **Meet the Candidates** event.

When: Tuesday, 15th April at 7.30pm
Where: Wamboin Community Hall,
112 Bingley Way, Wamboin

All residents of Wamboin and Bywong are invited. After the candidates' formal presentations, audience members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates during a 'Q&A' session, and later informally over light refreshments.

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Wamboin Community Association President's Notes



Well here we are April. Easter is almost here and the weather is slowly but surely beginning to turn colder.

1. **Meet The Candidates Night.** Yes the federal election has finally been called and as usual the Wamboin Community Association, with the invaluable help of Justin Jarvis President of the Bywong Community Association, will be hosting a Meet the Candidates Night for our electorate. This is very much a joint affair between Wamboin and Bywong Community Associations and will be held on **15th April at the Community Hall Bingley Way beginning at 7:30 pm.** This is opportunity for the local candidates to present themselves to the people of Wamboin and Bywong and of course their policies. There will be a formal part of the evening; a question and answer part and finally an informal section where people can mix with a cup of tea or coffee and a snack and talk informally with candidates. These evenings have always been considered by the community as being well worth attending especially by the younger voters so please come along and be part of this vital community event .
2. **Wamboin Booklet.** At the last Market Day we launched the new *We Are Wamboin* Booklet describing Wamboin and our lifestyle. This booklet was put together by Meriel Schultz and founded in no small part by a grant from the Community Bank at Bungendore and Braidwood. By now all who live in Wamboin will have received a booklet in your mailboxes distributed through the efforts of 12 volunteers and co-ordinated by Keith France. This is a gift for the people of Wamboin from the WCA to mark our 50th Year Anniversary and as such the initial booklet people received is free. People who want additional copies of the booklet or who live outside the area can still obtain booklets for a cost of \$5 at the WCA stall at the monthly market. We thank everyone who was involved in bringing this booklet to reality.
3. **Annual General Meeting.** Due to the advent of the upcoming election the WCA decided to postpone its AGM until the following month **20th May.** This gives us time to hold the all-important Meet the Candidates Night. Another reminder about this will be in the May issue of the Whisper.

Well that's it for now. I hope as many of you as possible will come to our events they are open to everyone in the community to attend. - **Jenny Richards – President.**

Notice of the WCA Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 20 May 2025

The next Annual General Meeting of the Wamboin Community Association, Inc. (WCA), will be held in the Wamboin Community Hall, 112 Bingley Way, Wamboin, at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 20 May 2025. The main business of the AGM will be the election of a new Committee for the 2025-26 year. Nominations for the election of Committee members should be made in writing, signed by two Association members, and contain the candidate's written consent. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Secretary or downloaded from the WCA's website:

<https://wamboincommunity.asn.au/communitygroups/index.php?op=wcadocuments> .

The Committee is keen to have some new members, so please consider nominating as an office-bearer or as an ordinary Committee member. You are welcome to contact me or the President, Jenny Richards president@wamboincommunity.asn.au , to discuss what Committee membership entails. The WCA and the events it has promoted have been well managed for many years, and the Committee would benefit greatly from some new members to help maintain this momentum. Should any member have any business to be dealt with at the AGM, please advise the Secretary more than 14 days before the meeting, or more than 21 days before the meeting if it requires a special resolution. Agenda: Opening; Acknowledgement of Country; Welcome to new members and visitors; Apologies for non-attendance; Adoption of the minutes of the previous AGM; Presentation and adoption of the President's, Treasurer's, and other reports; Election of the office-bearers of the Association (the president, one or two vice-presidents, the treasurer & the secretary) and at least three other committee members; other matters for which notice has been given; Close of meeting. David McDonald, Hon. Secretary, WCA, email secretary@wamboincommunity.asn.au , tel: 0416 231 890 or 02 6238 3706.

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.

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 May 2025 issue is 7 pm Sunday night, April 27, 2025.** Advertising prices, per issue, based on rough fraction of the 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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The highlight of this month was clearly the Car Boot Sale! It was a beautiful day for the event last weekend with the weather from a 'local supplier' providing the perfect ambiance for buying and selling. This year as I walked around chatting with stall holders I noticed a fair few first timers. Most people had been to the event in the past and decided to take the plunge so keep that in mind for next year.

We had a great turnout from the community. Devonshire tea was brilliantly served by the Bungendore Guides, stalls from the Greenways committee and Possumwood Wildlife (with Possumwood team successfully performing a rescue on the Greenways just nearby.) The Geary's Gap and Wamboin Landcare brought an eyewatering array of local plants for sale. This year we were lucky to have the QPRC mobile library in attendance to spark minds young and old and I am sure that many new library cards were issued. The Wonderful Women of Wamboin came down and reintroduced themselves to the community and looked like they were making many new friends. NSW Community Policing provided loads of interesting information, sitting alongside the RFS community Stand for local and helpful advice.

Thank you to Dave and Linda from O'Sullivan's waste a local company, who over many years have provided our rubbish bins for the day. Lorne and Ryan provided the ATM service ensuring that the cash sales could keep on flowing. The BBQ was woman- and man-ed by our dedicated Bywong Community Association committee members and regular local volunteer and all round great human, Chery. Of course, a massive shout out to the RFS for safely corralling the car parking across the day. This is the major fundraiser for the Community Association with the money raised allowing us to keep serving our area. We are open for ideas to make next years' event bigger and attract more local shoppers and help us all work towards less waste and more re-use! We want to know what you care about so please send us your thoughts via the Facebook page or to our email President@Bywongcommunity.org.au

Many people got a bargain, many people cleared space in their sheds. Everyone seemed to have had a good day. Now that the Federal Election has been called Bywong and Wamboin Community associations are combining to hold a "meet the Candidates" evening. This will be on the 15th of April at the Wamboin Community hall from 7.30pm. This type of event is always well attended and really quite informative so absolutely mark this in your calendars.

There are a number of events in the BCA calendar and these will all be advertised shortly. The next BCA meeting is on the THIRD Thursday of the month, 17th of April please feel free to come along. Thanks again for being part of such a great community. - **Justin Jarvis and the Bywong Community association team.**

Apology for putting the 2024 Car Boot Sale date onto the 2025 March Whisper front page. Justin emailed me the right 2025 ad. I failed to copy it onto the 2025 March Whisper front page. - **Ned Noel, editor**



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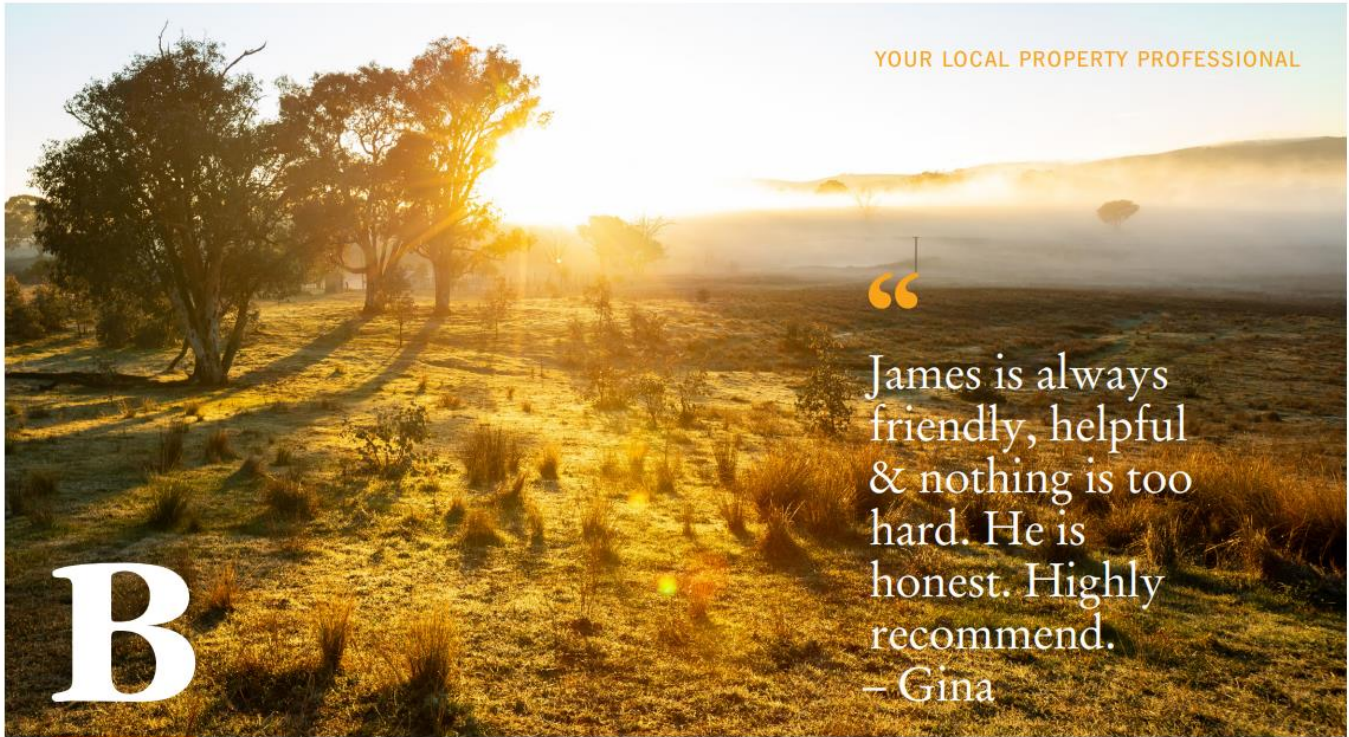
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B

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I've lived and breathed a rural-city lifestyle since I was young. From Mittagong, Queanbeyan, Canberra

and Wagga Wagga, I now call Wamboin home and am raising my family in this incredible area.

For over 18 years, I've been helping people across NSW and the ACT to buy and sell homes.

So, if you're thinking of selling and want friendly, professional advice from a local who loves living and working in our region, please get in touch with me.



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Updated guidelines on the use of Wamboin's chalkboards

For four decades we have been using the Wamboin Community Association's chalkboards to inform the community about local community events. In recent years, however, the Association has not been fully implementing its policy on their usage. The policy was set largely by Council: the chalkboards are to be used for non-commercial purposes only, and no signage/notices are to be attached to them.

The WCA has recently refreshed its policy and guidelines on using the chalkboards, as follows:

The Wamboin Community Association Inc. maintains three chalkboards along Norton Road, one at each end and a third at the intersection with Ryans Road. These chalkboards are provided for short term notices of a community nature. Please use them with consideration for other users, and clean off your notice once the matter notified has expired—the boards are cleaned early each week regardless.

Please note that these noticeboard areas are not intended for commercial advertising, for which separate Council approval is generally required. Commercial notices or advertisements are best included, for a modest fee, in the WCA's community newsletter, The Whisper, which is distributed monthly to all residents.

Please take care to follow these guidelines, and feel free to contact the Association's Executive if you have any queries on the matter.

The back story: an excerpt from the *Wamboin Whisper*, November 2007, p. 8; emphases in original:

The chalkboard story

In 1984 it became apparent that a method of notification of urgent events was required for the inhabitants of Wamboin. At a WCA meeting [held in July 1984] it was agreed, and Council gave approval, for a fixed Blackboard. Hank Berlee constructed the bits and John Finn assisted me in the positioning at the Norton Road, Gallagher Crescent intersection. The approval from Council stressed that no commercial signs go on otherwise, approval for the board would be rescinded. As the traffic flow into Wamboin increased, Council moved the board a few meters north and constructed the lay-by for safety purposes.

Throughout the years the board has been an instant spreader of local news. Little dogs lost, garage sales, meetings, bits and pieces for sale, community functions, Church services, Golf Days, Markets etc. We have also gone green. All good except for minor disagreements as to what constituted a commercial sign with people like 'Road makers', 'Wreck Removals' and 'Local Grader' insisting their message is non commercial.

Now for the bad news! About 4 weeks ago someone chalked up rude comments about 2 local lasses. This was quickly cleaned off. Next up an advertisement for the Fireworks Night was stolen. Then two weeks ago someone applied a polish to the board making it chalk 'no go'. This was washed off and a couple of days later the phantom polisher struck again. Again the polish was washed off. **Now for utter vandalism:** On Tuesday night, October 23 **some idiot daubed in paint** similar derogatory comments about the two lasses on both boards. Early Wednesday I removed both boards, sanded off the remarks and repainted the boards with Chalkboard green. This behaviour causes an unacceptable maintenance cost in time and money. Where from here?

If you want the boards to continue to serve a community purpose, please report any suspicious activity to any member of the Community Association. Council and Police have promised assistance. -- **Lofty Mason**



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Callouts and what we have been up to. Since the last whisper, the brigade has been busy with 2 MVA's, 1 x car fire, 1 x ambulance assist and members deployed to Coonabarabran to assist with fires.

End of the fire danger period starts on April 1, 2025. Every year it seems we have to remind residents (and that includes long term residents that have lived here over 20 years) about the "Fire danger period" and the "end of the fire danger period" and what that means. The RFS attends thousands of callouts that could have been avoided each year. A simple callout can easily involve twenty or more people, involve multiple brigades, paid staff, and take the time of volunteers. A callout is regarded as an emergency until a RFS unit arrives on scene to assess it. An incident report is completed by us after every callout, which identifies the property and the details of what has occurred. If the person who lights a fire has done something of a serious nature, a Duty Officer may attend, to discuss the matter with the owner and if necessary, take steps to take the matter further. The NSW Police are often called if there is a serious breach of the law, there are any threats to RFS members or denied access to any property. They have issued on the spot fines in Wamboin in the past. If you live in a bushfire area, you are required to know the rules, just as you are required to know the rules of the road. Saying you did not know the rules, will not stand up in a court if you are found guilty of a serious fire related offence, such as a fire escaping your property and damaging someone else's property or buildings. If you follow the rules like 99% of people do, you will be fine and know you have not placed yourself or your community at risk.

Typically, the fire danger period is October 1 to 31 March – (it can be extended if conditions warrant it) This period, October 1 to March 31 requires ALL BURNS (apart from a small cooking fire or small fire pit) to have an approved permit to burn dry vegetation only. An approved permit will almost always need an inspection by a RFS fire permit officer to visit your property. Not all permits are approved! A callout to a fire to a property without a permit in the fire danger period can result in on the spot fines, or prosecutions. Permits can be cancelled at any time too.

April 1 to September 30, (end of the fire danger period) will enable you to have a pile burn fire without a permit. This is to burn easily managed piles of dry vegetation. Clearing the land of native vegetation, or "Hazard reduction" requires environmental approval, which involves a more complex process and a "Bushfire hazard reduction certificate" to be issued by a Fire Control Centre. Most residents only usually require burning piles of vegetation.

Notifications! – 365 days a year In the Fire danger period or not. "Notifications" are required to be done (even with a permit)

at least 24 hours prior to lighting a fire. An online notification is required to be completed on the RFS notification portal, as well as notifying ALL your adjoining landowners. A simple letter box drop is the easiest way to notify your neighbours. A brief description of when and where your fire is going to happen and if you like, a contact phone number should they need to contact you. Not notifying your neighbours is in breach of the rules, and one of common occurrence where we are called out unnecessarily. The QR code will take you to the notification site, or by simply typing "Notify us of your planned burn" in your browser, will give you quick access to the site. If you do not have a smartphone or computer, you can ring the Queanbeyan Fire Control Centre on 61280600 during business hours (Mon to Fri only). Remember you must do



this 24 hours prior to lighting your fire.

The ability to burn inside and outside of the fire danger period comes with rules which is the law. It's easy to follow the rules, and the Rural Fire Service tries to make it as easy as possible to help landowners reduce and remove "fuel" to lessen the impact of fire, should one threaten your property.

- Pile burns are only for vegetation, it should be dry, free of building materials, treated timber, plastics etc. Burning unsuitable materials is in breach of the clean air Act and EPA policy. "Before you light that fire" and "Standards for pile burning" are documents which a simple online search on the internet or RFS website, or a hard copy is available at our monthly Community Engagement shopfronts at the Wamboin markets.
- You should be physically and mentally able to burn the pile in a safe manner. Building a huge bonfire can have similar flame heights to what might be experienced in a bushfire. It can be very overwhelming to see huge flames and this could create difficulty of controlling or containing a pile burn if something should go wrong.
- A fire you light belongs to you. You are required to check weather forecasts prior to lighting up, especially wind speeds. A fire close to buildings or power lines can easily cause damage from radiant heat. You are responsible for a fire from the time it is lit until the time it is extinguished. You must have the appropriate equipment (water supply and tools) to control or extinguish it if necessary. These should be in place before lighting up. Safe burning at any time is to protect you and the community.

Till next time, stay safe! - Don Evans (Deputy Captain)

Membership enquiries

Wamboinmembership@gmail.com

Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade

<https://wamboin.rfsa.org.au>

NSW Rural Fire Service

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Kowen Kapers - Mt Cohen – by Peter Komidar

Last month we visited Mt Amungula, today we travel another 3.7 km further east to the summit of Mt Cohen. At 924 metres above sea level, Mt Cohen is the highest peak in Kowen.

You would be forgiven for thinking that Mt Cohen, like Mt Atkinson and Sparrow Hill to the south, was named after a notable early European landholder. In actuality, Cohen is a variant spelling of the First Nations word 'Kowen'. Variations in the spelling of First Nations words is not uncommon and there have been various spellings of Kowen over the years. As well as 'Cohen', Rex Cross, author of *Bygone Queanbeyan* notes that other variants include, Kowan (as in 'Kowan Creek', the headwaters of the Yass River, which rises in the foothills of Mt Cohen), Kohan, Cowen, Coen and Kohn. A phonological reconstruction of the word by ANU academic, Harold Koch, suggests the word was derived from 'Kuwin'. Kuwin is also the first element of the

aboriginal Kuwiniyan from which Queanbeyan is derived. Alas, like Amungula, its meaning is unknown.

It is entirely possible that Mt Cohen was also the location of the first European footprints on Kowen's soil (and therefore the ACT's as well). Those footprints, placed in the dust in October 1820, belong to Charles Throsby and his fellow expeditioners. Throsby had heard through First Nations interlocutors of a great lake (Lake George) and a vast river (the Murrumbidgee) and wrongly assumed that the river and lake must be connected. His first expedition (which he himself did not attend as he was burdened with the responsibility of constructing a road from Sydney to Goulburn) was successful in discovering the lake. So impressive was the lake and the grazing land around it, that Governor Macquarie decided to see it for himself.

Throsby and two companions along with two First Nations guides formed an advance party with the aim of finding the Murrumbidgee so that they could then return in time to show it to the Governor on his arrival. The exact route is under contention but it is likely that it took them from Lake George past Turalla Hill and onwards to Mt Cohen - where they could look out over the Molonglo Plain and west to towards the Brindabellas in search of the elusive Murrumbidgee River.

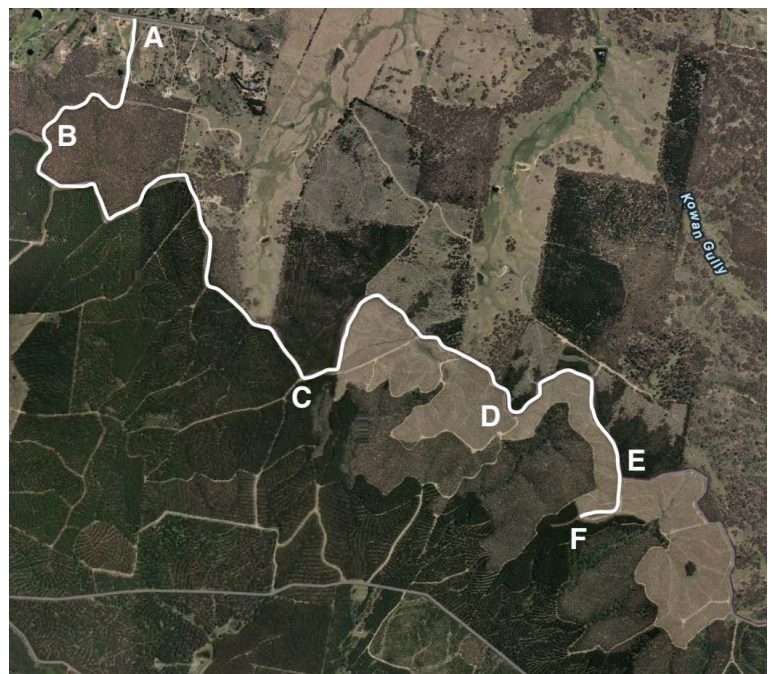
Realising the river must be much further away than anticipated, Throsby decided to turn back; proceeding along Kowan Creek to the Yass River before returning to Lake George. Whether Throsby actually crossed into Kowen will remain a matter for debate, but given his mission's objective, the topography of Mt Cohen and its proximity to the headwaters of the Yass River (Kowan Creek), my money is on the affirmative!

Being Kowen's tallest mountain it will come as no surprise that it also has its own trigonometrical station (trig). The trig was established on 1 March 1878. Up until recently the Mt Cohen trig consisted of a semi damaged cairn with a pole and galvanised iron vanes laying on the ground. In 2023 the trig was situated within a logging compartment without road access and surrounded by pines. Remnants of the original access road (now planted over with pines) which curved around to the south of the trig can still be seen.

Unfortunately, following logging operations in 2024, a new road was constructed from Wamboin Break to the summit.

During construction further damage was done to the trig, essentially destroying the cairn and pole. The galvanised iron vanes remain on the site along with scattered rocks from the original cairn covered by a pile of dirt and rocks from the adjacent area pushed into a heap. The type and whereabouts of the survey mark itself is unknown.

Directions: Starting from Bingley Way (A) we enter Kowen at the Bingley Way horse entrance (B) and head east following Wamboin Break passing the Mt Amungula intersection (C) descending into a valley then climbing up to the Mountain Road intersection (D). After the Mountain Rd intersection, continue along Wamboin Break down into another valley and up the other side where you'll find another intersection (E). Turn right here and follow the road to its end at the summit of Mt Cohen (F). The return journey covers 15 km.



April - Sept

Sled dog training weekends

<https://www.canberrasleddogclub.com/>

Councillor's Report

By Cr Ross MacDonald

If you're anything like me, you're looking at the changing weather and at all of the 'summer jobs' that are still waiting to get done around your place... Once I finish writing this piece I'll get planning! That said, I absolutely love this time of year in our region. I love the changing look and feel of the autumn and am already replacing BBQs with stews and the outdoors with some time inside reading. I also know the countdown until the world's best bonfire and fireworks event is on!

The end of the summer has been a busy time for me as your local Councillor too. With local events, Council and committee meetings and the Seniors festival which ran earlier in the month, I've been kept moving and that's alongside working on many different local issues. I also really value the quick informal chats at local events – I always learn something and that was the case at the recent Produce and Craft Market at Wamboin Hall.

The Markets are always great but it was a particularly special day with the launch of the book 'We Are Wamboin' by Meriel Schultz. Listening to Meriel speak, something really stuck with me. We don't have shops nor do we have a town centre yet there we all were as a strong, cohesive community. I saw so many people from different local groups (some who are members of multiple groups) there to share their love for our local area. What we have is somewhat unique and a testament to the shared love for where we live. I'm so delighted that this book highlights so much of that spirit and hope that for the newer residents who are yet to discover a local group will learn they're part of something great.

Another fantastic local event where I caught up with many people was the Bywong Car Boot Sale – despite threatening weather, lots of locals and visitors turned out to support local community groups and pick up a bargain. My daughter came home with a good as new doll that she absolutely adores and I picked up a few issues to pursue on behalf of community groups and residents so it was a successful day out for my family!

As I detailed on my Facebook, there's a lot of road repairs scheduled for the upcoming weeks and months. Some of them will be minor repairs but others will be major, like the repairs scheduled for Weeroona Drive. Please be patient and drive safe when the road crews are out working.

On roads, at a meeting in March, Council selected a contractor to undertake road safety works for intersection of Macs Reef & Bungendore Roads. The debate was in closed session due to the dealing with issuing a contract though a number of Councillors spoke personally and passionately about that corner. It sadly has been the site of a fatality and by the decision we took, it'll mean getting to work on dedicated turn lanes to make that busy part of our local road network safer.

Finally, at the last Council meeting, I brought forward to Notice of Motion seeking State Government's involvement, along with Council biosecurity teams in community sessions aimed at sharing information and some concerns about weed management. What I would like to see is policies that reflect our needs and that act to protect our environment and economy. Decisions made 250km away in Sydney don't always hit the mark for our community needs.

Thanks for reading and for putting your trust in me to represent you. As always, reach out if I can help in any way.

Cheers,- Ross



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COMMUNITY MEETING – WAMBOIN & BYWONG FIBRE PROJECT CANCELLED

NSW Labor Government's Betrayal – It's Time to Respond

 Wednesday 16 April 2025  7:30 PM  Wamboin Community Hall – 112 Bingley Way, Wamboin

STAND UP FOR OUR COMMUNITY'S DIGITAL FUTURE

The NSW Labor Government has CANCELLED the Fibre Network project for Wamboin and Bywong – a move that breaks promises, ignores years of local advocacy, and leaves many residents with only NBN's substandard SkyMuster satellite service. Starlink is available but only for those residents able to afford its much higher costs. This decision follows serious mismanagement by the Department of Regional NSW, with flawed project management practices and a damning Auditor-General's report. The consequences affect education, healthcare, businesses, and emergency services in our region.

WHAT THIS MEETING IS ABOUT  Demand accountability from decision-makers  Learn about the completely misleading \$60M cost claim  Discuss next steps as a united community. We've invited State and Federal Government MPs as well as a Local Government representative to explain the outcome of a recent debate on this issue at Council. An invitation has also been issued to the Department of Regional NSW.  **WE NEED YOU THERE. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.**

Residents & Local Business Owners – This Is Our Fight.  Read more at: <https://bit.ly/4h9ZFWK> and <https://bit.ly/3Eb7ZHm>

From 13th-19th of April, Wamboin Pony Club Members will be participating in a fun week-long annual Zone 16 camp held in Bungendore. This is a fantastic place to learn from some of the best instructors the zone has to offer and achieve personal bests as well as life long friendships made from a truly unforgettable week! We're going BLUE for Do It For Dolly Day 2025! On Friday 18th of April, Zone 16 Camp will be hosting a 'Do It For Dolly Day' at Bungendore Showgrounds. We ask that you wear Blue or 'Dolly's Dream' merchandise, blue items will be available to purchase with all proceeds going to the Dolly's Dream foundation to help raise bullying awareness and let people know there is always help and support whenever you need it. For more info see Zone 16 2025 Pony Club Camp Facebook page. Link below to donate to this great cause! <https://www.dollysdream.org.au/st/1021/s> **Zara Warren, Lyons Club**



QPRC Mobile Library: The QPRC Mobile Library bus will be at the Wamboin Hall from 10.30-11.30am on Thursday 3 and 17 April 2025, and then fortnightly. It really is worth visiting the Mobile Library. It provides a wonderful opportunity to borrow books, CDs, audio books etc and the staff are very helpful if you need any additional items. Please support this great service. After you have visited the library drop into the Social Group and have a cuppa. – **Narelle Pumphrey**

Wamboin Thursday Social Group: The group operates every Thursday morning from 10 – 12 noon at the Wamboin Hall, Bingley Way and if you have a Thursday morning free, we would love to have you pop in for a tea/coffee, chat or a game or scrabble, rummykub or cards. The group is very welcoming to new comers and provides a wonderful chance to meet up with some local residents. We look forward to seeing you. – **Narelle Pumphrey**

FROM UGANDA TO BUNGENDORE. 100% Hope Kids Choir. Singing-Dancing- Drumming. FREE EVENT- donations accepted. Souvenirs on sale War Memorial Hall. 51 Molonglo Street, Bungendore. Tuesday 8th April - 6.30 pm. To Reserve Seats: Text Name & Numbers 0411443211. Hurry - filling up fast. Hosted by Lions Club Bungendore. For more info see Zone 16 2025 Pony Club Camp Facebook page. Link below to donate to this great cause! <https://www.dollysdream.org.au/st/1021/s> --**Sonja Marie, Lyons Club**

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Come and try Landcare sessions!

By Leanne Brown

You may be wondering 'what does the Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group do anyway?' so glad you asked.

Education: The Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare group focuses on selling locally hardy native plant species that we propagate at our Wamboin nursery. The purpose of these sales is to educate the local community about the value of locally hardy native plants. We also spread this message with online and hardcopy communications such as our Whisper articles.

We hold monthly sessions at our nursery on the first Saturday of the month, from 9-11am. Our sessions involve propagation, potting up, tidying and labelling plants for plant sales and nursery maintenance, with a morning tea and of course, a good chat. Sessions are a great opportunity for members to share local knowledge, problems, solutions, ideas and experience. We also support local community planting projects from time to time by supplying plants, advice and when our volunteers are available, labour.

Propagation: Some members bring plant material from their own gardens to propagate cuttings at our monthly sessions. The cuttings are trimmed and placed in rooting hormone then potted in bulk, in cutting mix blended onsite. Root growth is encouraged with heated sand beds and misting in the nursery hot house. Depending on the species, it takes about 6-8 weeks for roots to peek from the pot base. This means roots are long enough for the young plants to be potted into tubes.

We also grow some plant species such as *Eucalyptus* and *Casuarina* from collections and purchased seed. Seeds are planted into punnets and germinated under the same conditions as cuttings. The potted up tubestock plants are hardened off in the shadehouse until they are ready for sale.

Please note: we will no longer be accepting forestry tubes dropped off at our nursery. The group will now only accept forestry tubes at our plant sales such as at the Wamboin market or the Bywong Car Boot sale. Forestry tubes are the only pots we use, about 5 cm square at the top and 12cm tall. We don't accept any other containers or pots. Thank you for recycling our tubes!

Plant sales: Our major sale is at the annual Bywong Car Boot Sale, followed by the Wheels of Wamboin plant stall (upcoming on 17 May 2025). We sometimes sell our plants at the monthly Wamboin markets. Our locally hardy native plants are priced below retail nursery prices, and we provide lots of advice about their establishment and care.

We always welcome new members, no previous knowledge or experience is required. You don't need to make a regular commitment to the monthly sessions, just give us a heads up via email if you're coming. To find out more, check out the Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group links below or simply email and join us next month!

- Website: <https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/gearys-gap-wamboin-landcare-group/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ggwlandcare/>
- email ggw.landcare@gmail.com



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Tales from Possumwood - Surrogate mothers and what's possible with very tiny kangaroos

One of the most remarkable sights you will ever see with our native animals is the live birth of a joey kangaroo. We have witnessed several of these at Possumwood; but you need to be in the right place at precisely the right time and be very patient and observant. The undeveloped newborn, the size of a jellybean with two forelegs, navigates the long distance from the mother's cloaca, under the tail, through the fur to the mother's pouch and then latches on to a teat. This extraordinary and potentially hazardous journey may take around five minutes. Many newborns are not successful in making this journey.

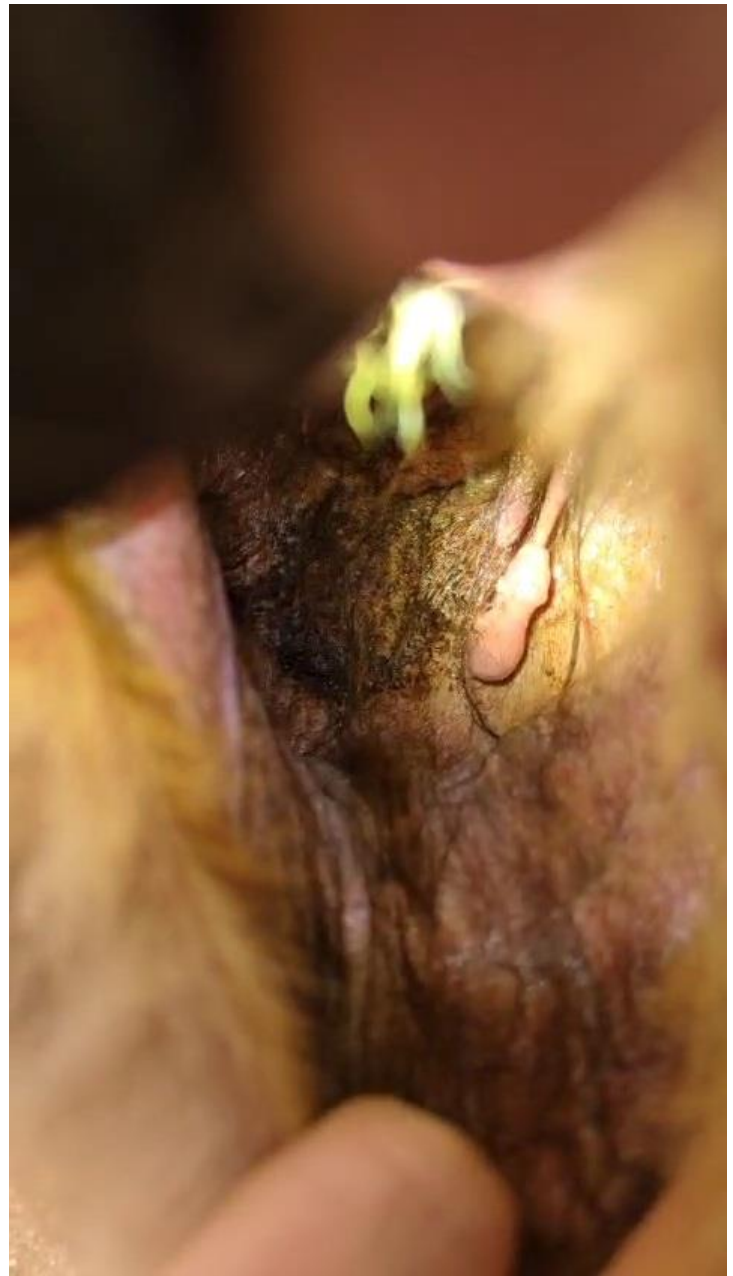
Female kangaroos have four teats in their pouch with each teat providing a different formula of milk depending on the dependent joey's stage of development. One gets an early warning of an impending birth when you see the mother vigorously cleaning her pouch. For a successful birth the mother needs to be erect and very still. Sometimes they sit on their tail at this time. A disturbance of any kind at this crucial time can be disastrous for the newborn.


In September 2024, we witnessed the birth of a kangaroo joey at Possumwood in a kangaroo that could not stand due to injuries from which she was recovering. The instinct of the newborn is to climb through the fur vertically to reach the pouch. In this case the newborn could not do this because the mother could not stand, and it fell to the ground. Ordinarily the result would be death as they get cold and run out of energy because they are so tiny. This time we were able to pick the newborn up and put it in another mother's pouch. The surrogate mother, named Gillie, took on the task and cleaned her pouch. We waited to see whether the newborn would attach to the right teat and get an immediate milk supply. With torch in hand and a compliant mother we could see this was successful (see picture). Instant milk, even though previously this mother had not been lactating for more than a year.

Gillie was rescued in Wamboin by a local resident after she had been hit by a car several years ago. She was brought to Possumwood for treatment and successful rehabilitation. Gillie has been a brilliant surrogate mother to the little one and the baby has, at this point, grown in her pouch to be around 300 grams and is looking very healthy. Since then, we have had several other surrogate situations where mothers have had to be euthanased due to their significant injuries, and the very tiny joey has been moved to the pouch of another mother. In all of these surrogate cases the joeys are currently doing well.

All these experiences at Possumwood demonstrate that these tiny ones can never be too small to get a successful outcome when they become orphaned from their mothers. It just requires patience, dedication, and a compliant surrogate mother.


- **Professor Steve Garlick**





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Hop into Easter Fun at Wamboin Playgroup!

WAMBOIN
PLAYGROUP



Parts of Wamboin may be known for having a rabbit problem, but in April one special bunny is being welcomed. This month is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month for the Wamboin Playgroup as children and their carers come together to celebrate Easter with a range of fun-filled activities. Leading up to Easter, Wamboin Playgroup will be putting on special Easter-themed activities, making everything from colourful bunny ears to beautifully decorated eggs. Craft time at playgroup will be a fantastic way for children to explore their creativity while enjoying the festive spirit of Easter. Of course, no Easter celebration would be complete without an Easter egg hunt in the fully enclosed playground of the Wamboin Hall!

The Wamboin Playgroup continues to provide a wonderful space for young children and their families to connect, play, and learn together.

Playgroup runs every **Tuesday of the NSW School Term from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm** at the Wamboin Community Hall, 112 Bingley Way. It's free to attend, and all children aged 0-6 are welcome.

Each carer is asked to bring some fruit or a healthy snack to contribute to a shared platter for the children. For those who enjoy baking, our rotating baked goods roster is always a hit—so feel free to bring along a treat to share!

Bring the Essentials: Hats, sunscreen, water bottles, and snacks are all important to keep little ones happy and comfortable.



Playgroup is more than just a place to play—it's where memories are made, friendships blossom, and families feel supported. For any questions, please reach out to wamboin.playgroup@gmail.com. - Claire Camilleri



WAMBOIN WEATHER – rainfall and temperature records

(50 years from Cooper Road) by Christine Rieber

March Rainfall Stats

March rainfall to the 30th..... 41.0mm
2025 total rainfall to 30/3 169.0mm

April Rainfall Stats

2024 April rainfall..... 92.25mm
Wettest April..... 174.5mm in 1989
Wettest day..... 70mm on 20/4/84
Driest April..... 0.5mm in 1997

April Temperature Stats

2024 April maximum..... 29.4°C
Av. April temp.. 13.1°C (day+night comb.)
Hottest April day..... 31.7°C on 4/4/21
Hottest April night..... 16.5°C on 13/4/18
Average day (max.) temperature.... 18.0°C
Warmest April..... 2018
(Av. max day temp. 24.6°C & night 9.7°C)
(warmest night temp. 11.0°C in 1989)

Average March rainfall..... 59.7mm
2024 March rainfall..... 57.0mm
2024 total rainfall to 30/3..... 243.5mm
49yr Av. to end of March..... 180.4mm

Average April rainfall..... 48.2mm
Average no. rain days in April..... 7.2
Highest no. rain days..... 19 in 1989
Lowest no. rain days..... 1 in 1997

2024 April minimum..... 2.4°C
April 2024. Av. max 20.2°C & min 7.0°C
Coldest April day..... 8°C (4 times) on
13/4/94, 27/4/09, 26/4/12 & 22/4/15
Coldest April night..... -1.6°C on 22/4/21
Average night (min.) temperature.... 8.2°C
Coldest April 2011
(Av. min day temp. 14.5°C & night 5.7°C)
(coldest night temp. 3.5°C in 2013)

March 2025 is likely to be the warmest on record with the average day temperature being 27.2°C to the 29th. Only two days were below the long-term average of 22.7°C. The average number of March days with a maximum temperature above 30°C is 2, and in 2025 we have had 8.



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Wamboin Home Produce and Craft Market Easter Market Saturday 19 April 2025 (9-12md)**Contact: Meriel Schultz 0422614304 or imsconsulting@bigpond.com**

Our March market was very well attended with new people coming - mostly because they had been invited to the launch of the new Wamboin booklet *'We are Wamboin'*. We hope these visitors will return. There was quite a buzz around the hall and especially in the queue outside for coffee!

Many thanks to Esma Livermore, Deputy Mayor QPRC and the Councillors for attending and Rebecca Ryan General Manager QPRC for taking the time to come out to the market on a hot March morning. Of course, I'd also like to thank all 'Wamboinians' - past and present - who contributed such gems of stories and many wonderful photos and illustrations.

Jenny Richards, President of WCA, welcomed everyone. I spoke briefly about the concept and development of the booklet, followed by the 'Cook and Fry' team (Gary Cooke, Chair of Bungendore and Braidwood Community Banks and Nick Fry Community Development Manager). The grant for the development of this booklet came from the Community Bank Bungendore, topped up by funds from the WCA to enable printing.

A free copy of the booklet has been delivered to every household in Wamboin. Thank you to all the volunteers who completed this delivery to around 690 households. Additional copies can be bought for \$5.00 at the Wamboin markets each month or at the WCA meetings. Copies will also be available at the Community Bank Bungendore.

'We are Wamboin' is intended as a celebration of our unique community and showcases :

- * the 50 years of our development
- * nature and how we nurture it
- * meeting the challenges of country life
- * what we've built
- * where we meet and how we celebrate together.

The booklet provides a snapshot of: * our achievements over the years * a vibrant and cohesive community, despite having no obvious village centre, schools, shops, or services * our 'glass half full' community (not a 'glass half empty' one) * the vast number of individuals and groups that have contributed to Wamboin over the past 50 years * how your experience may and build their own communities be useful to other small settlements seeking to strengthen.

We do hope you enjoy reading this account of Wamboin and celebrate with us the 50 years of our development. Please take these stories forward by adding your own and sharing with friends and neighbours. ***In other words 'keep the stories going'.*** A little later this year we will run another short story competition, which will also be a place to set down your own story of Wamboin. I also hope to run some 'story circles' at some of our local gatherings. These circles are an informal way to share memories and discuss aspects of our life in Wamboin that are, or have been, important to us.

Thank you all for your support with this project.....***See you at the Easter Market!***

What the Heck Chapter 33

I have just read the article on St Andrew's church in the brilliant booklet "We are Wamboin" and it has brought back many memories of events in the church. Most of these being pre-Covid when there were minimal rules and regulations as to what we could and could not do. Celebrations of weddings, engagements, birthdays, and other events were common. The annual Christmas Eve Nativity re-enactment attracted more than 100 locals, following which many of whom crowded into the church for a Christmas service. But those happenings are now just memories, but pleasant memories.

Even with church services there have been changes. We used to follow the service using a prayer book, not anymore. Now we read words projected onto a TV screen. We used to join the in-house organist singing hymns from a hymn book, now we follow the words on the TV screen using YouTube video clips, generally with frustrating American-English spelling or word-changed and shortened versions from 'Songs of Praise'. What is wrong with English-English, or the old English words used at the time the hymn was written? And why does the BBC insist on cutting each hymn down to three verses? We used to crowd together in the pews and shake hands with one another, now we stay the social distance and greet each other using the Sanskrit Namaste.

But as time progresses church life is constantly changing, and that is a good thing. At least we can sing some of the more recently written religious songs, backed by a band, not just an organ, even if it is pre-recorded and projected on a screen. And we don't get woken during the sermon when some other person who has nodded off drops the prayer book. Years ago a woman would not be seen dead in church without a hat, and men would always wear a suit and tie. Everyone had a 'Sunday best' outfit, even the littlies. But in our churches these days you are welcome dressed however you please, and ladies wearing hats are very scarce. And that suits me because I don't end up sitting behind an opera house sized fascinator, nor do I need to buy a new suit.

Does anyone want a second-hand tie? - **Alan Rope**



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Nature Notes – March 2025

Jo Walker

March was a warm month with daily maximum temperatures in the thirties or high twenties most days. There was little rain until the end of the month, but some solid rain fell on the last weekend. Because of the still-warm weather there might be time for the ground level plants – mostly grasses and forbs – to green up again before winter.

This is the time of year when most plants have finished flowering and their energy is going into producing buds for the springtime show of flowers. The Wattles, especially the Silver Wattles (*Acacia dealbata*), are putting on a large amount of buds already so the spring display should be something to see.

A few plants are still showing a few flowers. The yellow flowers of the small sprawling ground-cover, *Goodenia hederacea* (Ivy Goodenia), are still visible and *Cassinia quinquefaria* (Rosemary Cassinia) bushes are still bearing masses of pyramidal flower-heads carrying their straw-coloured flowers.

Years ago, I planted a *Eucalyptus moorei*. This isn't a local eucalypt – the nearest population is at the southern end of the Tinderry Ranges so not too far away. It is a mallee (eucalypts with multiple stems, usually not as tall as single-stemmed eucalypts) and has flowered many times over the years. But this must have been a perfect year for it as the stellate clusters of cream flowers were packed thickly along the stems, a beautiful sight.

The flock of White-winged Chough that appeared here a few months ago now consists of eighteen birds. And three more Crested Pigeons joined the five long-term resident ones. A pair of Gang-gangs were giving their creaking calls in a tree close to the house a few days ago. I hadn't seen Rufous Whistlers here for a while, but recently two males were disputing the territory until one gave up and flew off.

Some of the Kangaroos are still carrying pouch joeys, although most of the young ones are following their mothers on foot. I haven't seen a local Wombat for a long time, but they're still around as there was a large pile of droppings marking a stone in the middle of my driveway this morning.



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Bird Of The Month

By Luke Downey

For April I am writing about the Pacific Swift, a very scarce migrant in our region which I have observed for only the second time in the local area in recent weeks.

Pacific Swift (*Apus pacificus*)

Size: 16-19cm.

Status: Rare

summer migrant

The Pacific Swift is a smallish aerial bird that might resemble a swallow to an unknowing person, but actually belongs to the Swift family, which is not closely related at all. Pacific Swifts are larger than swallows, with mostly dark plumage, scalloped paler underneath, and a bold white rump patch and indistinct white throat. Structurally, they have long scythe-like wings and a long forked tail (hence alternate name Fork-tailed Swift), however the tail is often held closed and therefore appears pointed. Pacific Swifts are one of only 3 regularly occurring swift species found in Australia. Both the locally occurring species (the other being the White-throated Needletail) are long distance migrants, breeding in the Northern Hemisphere and spending their non-breeding season in Australia during the summer. Pacific Swifts gradually arrive in late spring from their breeding grounds in Siberia, China and Japan, with numbers peaking in Australia in late summer to autumn, and as such now is an ideal time to be on lookout for the species. Swifts almost never land outside of breeding, sleeping on the wing. They also rarely call here, but a high-pitched “dzee” may be heard occasionally, and sometimes if they fly low enough you can even hear their wings whooshing with the speed they fly at. Pacific Swifts seem to favour coastal areas and also further west in Australia, and as such have always been a tricky species to observe in the local region. Compounded by clearing and habitat changes in their breeding range, they have become increasingly scarce in recent years. Therefore, it was quite pleasing to observe a few small influxes of Pacific Swifts moving through the local region recently, presumably on their return northwards. I saw several flocks in areas between Bungendore, Queanbeyan and Sutton, some numbering over 100. This is by far the most I have ever seen in this region, having only seen them once before at my place locally. The day of my observations was very windy and had some intermittent storms which is ideal for the species, which often tends to follow strong winds and storm fronts in late summer and autumn. Sometimes they can mix in flocks with the White-throated Needletail, our other local swift species. In contrast, Needletails are larger, with a square tail, white lores, a bold white throat, vent and pale back saddle. Pacific Swifts also fly light more buoyantly and slower than Needletails, with erratic turns and flutters. They are a fast and difficult to observe bird, so your eyes to the skies for this scarce species over the next few weeks. (Photo from Google Images)

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Rocks versus Wollies

In 1994 *Wollemia nobilis* 'Wollemi Pine' was discovered in a temperate rainforest area of the Wollemi National Park, NSW. In 2005 the species became available as a garden plant around the world. So in 2006 I made the exciting purchase of 3 plants. I re-potted them into self-watering pots and placed them on the northern side of our house under the protection of the eaves and in an alcove that gave them some western protection. Besides watering I would apply the occasional native plant fertiliser. But that was all I did for them. I'm not much into TLC — It's the survival of the fittest out here.

But guess what, the plants didn't die! As they grew I continually found the need to repot them into larger pots, until eventually they began to nudge the eaves of our house. So in 2020 my husband Ron and I decided to put them out in the ground. OMG, wouldn't you think we'd know what we were in

for! Hadn't we forgotten that not one introduced plant on our property was planted without the use of at least a crowbar if nothing more.

So we began the task of preparing the ground for planting. But rather than plant the Wollies directly in the ground we decided to use raised garden beds, hoping to provide some drainage. Our plan was to break up the soil to about one metre deep, but the crowbar didn't cut it. Ron then resorted to the jackhammer and finally with the help of our tractor we managed to dig up enough rocks to make 3 holes for planting. We filled the holes with soil from the excavations, plus a product called Landscape mix from a local rural supplies store, as well as sand. We then positioned the raised garden beds, each about 900cm square x 900cm high and filled them with more sand, soil and native potting mix and then finally planted our 3 Wollies. That was in 2020. All 3 survived the trauma of transfer and continue to grow.

Our plan also included planting shrubs around them. So in 2024 we began to prepare the ground once again. But there were so many rocks, rocks we couldn't even lever out, let alone lift. Eventually Ron used an excavator and going by the photos you can see just how big the rocks were — some a metre long. Eventually we managed to dig up the ground surrounding our Wollemi Pines. most of it to a depth of about 300—500cm. The Wollies continue to grow, one about 4.5metres tall while the shortest is about 3.5m. Not bad in 19yrs for a Wollie. They can survive temperatures from -5 to 45°C) and are expected to withstand even cooler temperatures. Go to <http://www.wollemipine.com/> for more information. Thus is the tale of rocks versus Wollies - Gail Ritchie-Knight

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How the Whisper Gets Into Your Mailbox Each Month

Without the month by month donation of time by the residents listed below, it would be impossible for Wamboin, Bywong and other residents in the newsletter's catchment area to have The Whisper. Please remember all residents listed below, as they do what they do in order to make their communities a little bit friendlier and more sociable. Without the businesses that pay to advertise in The Whisper we could not pay for printed copies. Finally, each article, invitation and notice you read in each Whisper is only there because you or others in the community took the time to write it.

174: CO-ORDINATED BY CHRISTINE REIBER: phone 6238 3518

Fay Kelly	Norton West Area from Cmpbl Pl	20	Christine Rieber	Cooper Rd	27
Dave Power	Fernloff Rd	34	Vicki Still	Canning Cl	15
Andrea Sadow	Poppet Rd	32	Alan Rope	Sutton Rd	47

181: 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(Weero2Hilltop+Wimdra)	25	Phil Leeson&C Fogarty	Norton Rd (Campbell to Bingley)	27

235: 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 Lorimer	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 DOMINICA LORIMER dlorimer@internode.on.net

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	Harriott Rd	28	Barbera.Wilkins	MacsReef 670,622,618,568,566	5
Sandra Favre	Newington Rd	23	Darrin Lincoln	MacsReef 538,565,587,623,625,649	6
Chrystal Earle	Snowgum Road	26	Carol&Clive Boughton	Macs Reef (BankersTo FedHwy)	34

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

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

150: CO-ORDINATED BY DAVID FEATHERSTONE ph 0413 074 619 bushranger_au@hotmail.com

Chris Fowler	Millynn Rd	22	David Featherston	B'doreRd SmHill to&nclldgCrkBRd	31
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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Tony Bond	HoganDr/OranaDr/Yuranga Dr	52	Mary & Paulo Beneforti	Dnly Dr frm MacsReef to Birchmans	12
Janey & Paul Pedersen	BirchmansFrmDenleyUp2SaraRf	16	Helen Longdon	SarahReef&BrichmansFrmSarah2End	11
Murray Goodridge	B'dore Rd (McsRf to&nclSmrhl)	40	Diana Griffin	Majors Close	19
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Bastard Box

By David McDonald david [at] dnmcdonald.id.au

In late March this year there was an engaging discussion on the largest of the local Facebook groups, the Bywong & Wamboin Hub, which has some 3,600 members—more than the all-ages combined population of Bywong & Wamboin! The discussion revolved around the intriguing term ‘Bastard Box’. It began when Ray Ahern, one of the early residents of Wamboin’s Yalana Estate subdivision (the area stretching east along Norton Road, and its tributaries, from Weeroona Drive), wrote ‘I wonder if any of the local botanists can tell me the proper name of the tree known locally as b@stard box’.

For reasons that will become clear, in discussing the word’s meanings I will use it in full, hoping that *The Whisper*’s editor, and readers, will not take offence.

Several members of the Facebook group provide useful insights, although none was confident as to what specific local native tree has, or had, this appellation. Most took the view that it was some form of eucalypt with very hard timber, making it difficult to cut and split, but providing good firewood once it was burning, although needing an extended period in a hot fire to reach that point.

My response highlighted historical usage: ‘Bastard Box was a colonial era word for eucalypts generally, particularly for rough-barked species. It is not the official name for any eucalypt species. The term is used in different parts of the country to refer to different rough-barked species of eucalypts.’

The Australian National Dictionary¹ defines ‘bastard box’ as ‘any of several rough-barked *Eucalyptus* trees’. The Dictionary gives its earliest documented Australian usage as dating from 1804, with a colonial writer stating: ‘Differing from Box properly so called in having its bark less smooth’. An 1845 source states that ‘The principal trees are the six kinds of Eucalyptus, namely, the white gum, the red gum, the bastard box or peppermint, the box, the stringy bark, and the iron bark.’ Other citations provide various eucalypt species’ names, almost all being rough barked species, unlike the bark of the eucalypts that we now refer to as ‘boxes’ which generally have tessellated bark.

The 1804 citation gives us a lead into the etymology of ‘bastard’, as used in this context. Of course, in other contexts the word can be highly pejorative, or the opposite, a term of affection.

The word bastard is a borrowing from French, and has been used in English since the 1330s, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED)². Its etymology is messy so will not be canvassed here. That said, two of the numerous definitions provided by the OED are highly apposite to this discussion. It states that, in Botany and Zoology: ‘In the names of plants and animals: resembling or similar to that named.’ More generally: ‘Designating something which is considered to resemble, or be an inferior kind of, that which is properly denoted by the noun being modified. Now only in the names of animals, plants, etc.’.

To the British settlers of Australia, a ‘box’ was the European box, or boxwood *Buxus sempervirens*. It is well-known in Australia today as a plant used for hedging, topiary, formal gardens, etc. One source states that ‘Slow growth of box renders the wood (“boxwood”) very hard ... and heavy ...’³.

So, in Australia, the bastard box is a eucalypt with dense, sometimes twisted, grain, making it difficult to cut, split, and get burning. It is (or was) ‘something which is considered to resemble, or be an inferior kind of’ European box, to reprise the OED’s definition.

Returning to our Facebook discussion, Christina Steele and others wondered if the local species of tree to which Ray Ahern referred was the Apple Box *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*, the Long-leaved Box/Bundy *Eucalyptus goniocalyx*, or the Mealy Bundy *Eucalyptus nortonii*? Or perhaps the Red Stringybark *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*? These hardwood species have dense wood, usually twisted grains, and are hard to cut and split, making them worthy contenders for the title ‘bastard boxes’!

References

1. Moore, B, Gwynn, M, Laugesen, A & Robinson, JR (eds) 2016, *The Australian national dictionary: Australian words and their origins*, 2nd edn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, Vic., pp. 98-9.

2. ‘Bastard, N., Adj., & Adv.’, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP, March 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1064157389>.

3. Wikipedia contributors, ‘Buxus sempervirens’, *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Buxus_sempervirens&oldid=1277760090 (accessed March 28, 2025).

PS: what about sending an email to the Editor (whisper@wamboincommunity.asn.au) sharing your thoughts about the meaning of the term ‘bastard box’, and how it is used locally?

Wonderful Women of Wamboin meeting commemorating ANZAC Day

All are Welcome. The Wonderful Women of Wamboin invite everyone to a special ANZAC Day event. CAPT Bruce Legge, CSC, RAN retd, a resident of Wamboin, will deliver an ANZAC themed speech. Bruce has served more than 37 years in the RAN. Following his presentation, morning tea for all will follow. We look forward to seeing you at the Wamboin Community Hall on Monday 14 April from 10am to 12pm. – Gail Ritchie Knight

St Peter’s (Sutton) Annual BONFIRE NIGHT Saturday 24th May 2025 St Peter’s Church grounds
Middle Street, Sutton 5pm start (we will light the bonfire at 6pm) Live music, fun around the fire, hot food and drinks to purchase (soup, curry and BBQ), toasting marshmallows for the young and young at heart. All proceeds to the church hall building fund.





Wamboin Golf

Sunday 2 March 2025. A group of 16 golfers ventured out to play in the Wamboin Golf competition on a warmer than wanted Autumn day. The sponsors this month were the Baileys and the Gordons and we thank them for the refreshments and prizes. We welcomed Chris Reynolds and Nick Taylor this month and hope they are able to join us again. We thank Tony Bond for his recruiting efforts with 3 new players encouraged along in the last two months.

The competition was played using the Western course this month. In something of a repeat of the previous month and destined to keep the handicapper busy again the winner of the 18-hole competition was Stephen Miners (85/62) from Tim Barter (72/63) and Col Urquhart (85/63) in third place. The 9-hole competition was taken out by Tony Bond (39/28) from Brad Dawson (55/33) and Pete Harrison (48/34). The handicappers wrath is likely to have the dummy remain firmly with Col for another month!!

Ball winners for longest drives and nearest the pins went to: Tim Barter (2), Glenn Crafter (2), Col Urquhart, Nick Taylor, Stephen Miners, Brad Dawson, Tony Bond and Ken Gordon. The googly ball was shared around several golfers this month. It started with Chris for hitting his shin instead of the ball but was then passed to David who somehow managed to bend his putter. The dummy spit was initially awarded to Col for the expletives uttered regarding his new handicap (with more expected next month when he sees another new handicap), but was swiftly moved to Vicki who accepted without explanation and with playing partners sworn to secrecy. The Ted Evans Joke involved an Irishman determined not to give up drinking.

Next month, the competition will be on Sunday 6 April and is the annual Wamboin Mini Masters sponsored by the Wamboin Community Association. This is our traditional 12-hole competition followed by the novelty golf shots back at the Hall.

We hope you can join us at the community hall at 12.15pm on Sunday, 6 April for a 12.30pm start. – **Ken Gordon**



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2025 Wheels of Wamboin – 17 May 2025

2025 celebrates the 100th anniversary of Skoda. Although only a recent presence (since 2007) in the Australian market, Skoda has marketed some quality and much underrated cars. Skoda has sold over 50,000 cars on our shores beginning with the Octavia (sounds a little like a roman emperor but actually means eighth as it was the eighth new model since WWII when the nameplate was launched in 1959).

So, Skoda traces its origins back to 1895 when Vaclav Laurin and Vaclav Klement established L&K in Mlada Boleslav Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic). They started to dabble in automobiles and in 1925 they merged with Škoda Works, a larger engineering and armaments company (owned by Emil Skoda). In the 1930's the flagship model was the Superb with a reputation for comfort, space and reliability. During WW11 Skoda was absorbed into the German Reich and made tanks and vehicles for the German war effort.

After the war it was nationalised under the Soviet eastern bloc era and was named the Vladimir Ilyich Lenin Works. In 1965 the name reverted to Skoda but stayed under eastern bloc rule until 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down. In 1990 the government of Czechoslovakia formed a partnership with the Volkswagen Group and in 1991, the Škoda-Volkswagen entity is launched and Škoda becomes a brand within the Volkswagen Group. By 2000 Volkswagen AG takes over full ownership of Škoda Auto, making it a wholly owned VW subsidiary. In 2001 the first of the new generation Skoda's is launched with the new Superb model.

So you might pick up that Skoda's look a lot like their VW family equivalents. Well, many Skoda's share their VW underpinnings in technology platforms, chassis, engines and transmissions components the same as other VW other brands like Audi. They do this to keep costs down and are usually a year or two behind Audi and VW models as a more value offering similar to another VW brand SEAT.

In Australia, Skoda now offers 11 models including the Elroq, Enyaq, Kodiaq, Octavia, Fabia, Karoq, Kamiq, Scala and Superb. Now you might wonder where these odd names come from. It's all a bit random, Karoq, Kamiq and Kodiaq are from Atutiiq which is an indigenous Alaskan Language, Fabia, Scala and Octavia are Latin. Elroq is the electric version of Karoq, and Enyaq is from the Irish word Enya meaning source of life in Gaelic. Superb is of course English to say the car is, well Superb!

So, as to the Wheels of Wamboin, due to the large numbers of cars the Wamboin RFS has asked us to make their job easier. Please be in and parked by 9am (if you are later, you may not get a space and will need to park outside the display area).

Please also try and stay put until about 12 so as to minimise the interaction between spectators and your automotive marvels. This will make the day safer and more enjoyable for all. See you on Saturday May 17th. – **Peter Evans**



11TH ANNUAL

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