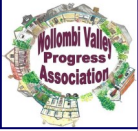


Our Own News



Wollombi “The Meeting of the Waters” MARCH 2022





WOLLOMBI VALLEY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

"Wollombi Community Certainly Greeted the Mayor"

Wow! What an excellent turn out from the Wollombi Community last Friday evening at the "Meet the Mayor" meeting hosted by the Progress Association.

The attendance by approx. 70 community members clearly communicated to the Mayor and Councillors that Wollombi Valley is indeed a community that wants to be involved in decision-making that affects us.

What was evident is that the Wollombi Community still really cares about the Wollombi Valley and surrounds and definitely made it clear to our newly elected Mayor, Jay Suvaal that we need to be a part of the decision making process when it comes to "our local".

A big thank you to all those who took the time last Friday evening to attend the meeting on the fabulous Tennis Club verandah.

Wollombi Valley Progress would like to sincerely thank Mayor Jay Suvaal and Councillors Paul Dunn and Jessica Jurd for accepting the invitation to attend the meeting and more importantly for giving so much time to answer community questions and concerns both at the meeting and in the hour following.

The meeting was an excellent opportunity for the Wollombi Community, collectively to recognise the outstanding contribution from Melissa Boucher Community Recovery Officer for Cessnock City Council.

Regards,

Simone Smith

President, Wollombi Valley Progress Association

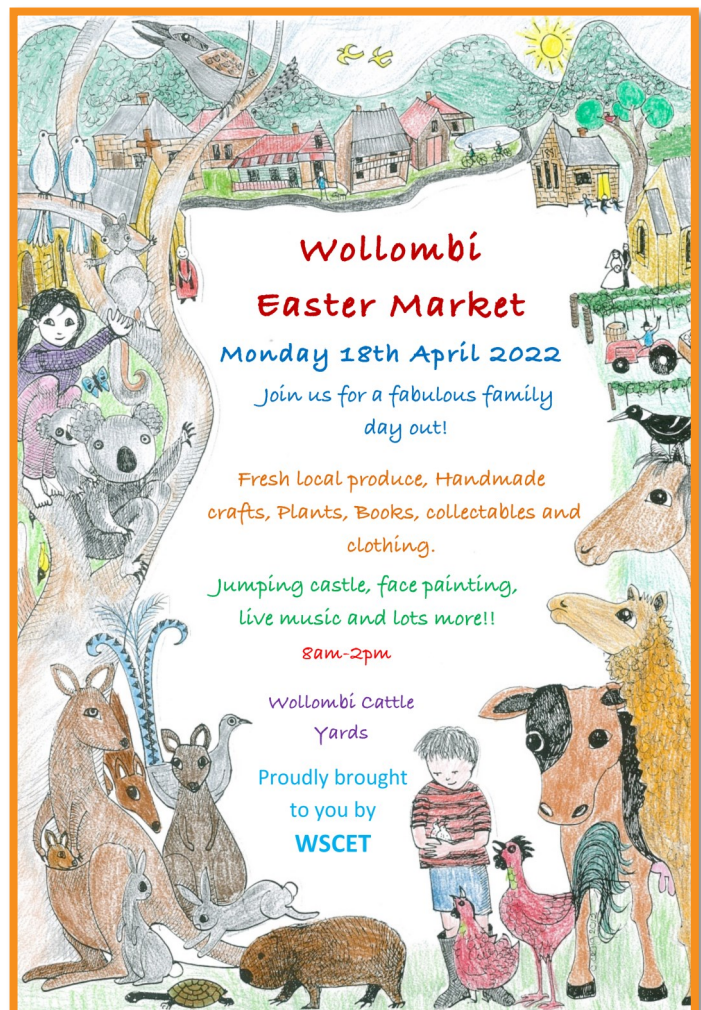


Left: A packed house for the Progress AGM and following 'Meet the Mayor' meeting

Lower Left: President Simone Smith presenting Melissa Boucher with a Thank You gift



L-R : Councillors Paul Dunn, Jessica Jurd, Mayor Jay Suvaal
and Progress President Simone Smith



ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE

Monday
25th APRIL 2022
5.45AM

ANZAC RESERVE WOLLOMBI

Followed by breakfast
courtesy of the
Wollombi Tavern

BURLESQUE

**Hallelujah! Praise be! It's time we
reunited, came TOGETHER, joined hands
& thanked The Heavens!**

Brother, did The Wollombi Burlesque
Troupe have THE BLUES! BUT- They are getting
"the band back together" to breath some LIFE back
into the ARTS! You won't want to miss their LIVE
JAM with The J-Man Blues Band.

**Join these talented folk March 26
at The Wollombi Hall.**

Come dressed in your Sunday best & enjoy nibbles
& a Funk DJ on the deck from 5pm!

Blues Bros Burlesque show at 7pm.

VIP tickets guarantee front 2 rows, a glass of
champas & plenty of action!

Let's REVIVE each other! It is BYO & camping
available at The Wollombi Pub

if the weather permits!

Tickets available at reverendlegs.com

CONCESSION: ARTIST TICKET AT \$45

Valley Artists Inc

by Hugh Whitmore

PACK OF LIES

LAST CHANCE!
Hurry and book your seats now!
Performances selling out fast

directed by Annette Rowilson

How well do you know your neighbours?

★ **April 2022 at Laguna Hall**
1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9 at 7.30 pm
(matinee Sun 3 April at 2.00pm)

★ Tickets: Adult \$30 Concession \$25
Online: valleyartists.org

An Amateur Production by ARRANGEMENT WITH ORIGIN™ THEATRICAL, ON BEHALF OF SAMUEL FRENCH, INC





MEDIA RELEASES

Have you been impacted by the recent flood?

Cessnock City Council, with the support of Resilience NSW, are coordinating 3 pop-up Community Recovery Hubs at Wollombi Tennis Club, to provide assistance & advice to residents impacted by the recent flooding event.

It is also an opportunity for residents to connect with each other after the isolation of the floods, share your stories and your recovery needs moving forwards.

Tues 22nd March: 10am-2pm

Wed 23rd March: 3pm-7pm

Friday 25th March: 10am-2pm

Additional day: Tuesday 29th March 3pm-5pm

Venue: Wollombi Tennis Club (2979 Paynes Crossing Road, Wollombi)

Residents are encouraged to drop by at any time, to have a cuppa & a chat and find out what is available to support them.

Cessnock Lions Club is generously providing sustenance (sausages, drinks, tea/coffee) at each hub.

The following agencies will have representatives available at each hub to speak with residents:

- * Council
- * Resilience NSW
- * Services NSW
- * Red Cross
- * others to be confirmed

No RSVP required. Just drop in if you can.

There will be plenty of friendly faces & ears waiting.

Melissa Boucher

Community Recovery Officer
Cessnock City Council

CESSNOCK LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA DECLARED NATURAL DISASTER ZONE

Cessnock Local Government Area has been declared a natural disaster zone following the recent flooding event which impacted local communities and damaged infrastructure.

Cessnock Local Government Area is one of 57 LGAs to be included in the declaration which will unlock funding and support for businesses and individuals under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

Cessnock City Council Mayor Jay Suvaal said the repeated impact of flooding and other disasters had taken its toll on the community.

“We are a resilient community, but this is the second flood in less than 12 months and that came on the back of the Black Summer bushfires of 2019/2020,” Mayor Suvaal said.

“Government support is essential to assist with the costs these events are having, not just to our community, but all communities in flood and disaster prone areas.

“Anyone who has been impacted by the recent weather event should visit the council’s website to see if they are eligible for assistance.

“Council will now turn its attention to assessing the damage and begin the recovery process.”

Council will be able to access funding for repair to essential infrastructure damaged in the storm and flood event. An array of grants and loans are available under the package for individuals, businesses, primary producers, not-for-profits, and sporting and recreational clubs.

Further information is available on the Cessnock City Council Website: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/assistance

DRFA is a jointly funded program between the Australian Government and state and territory governments to provide financial assistance to support state governments with disaster recovery costs. Eligible costs include assistance measures for individuals and families, businesses, primary producers, non-profit organisations and local and state governments.



COUNCIL CREWS OUT IN FORCE AS FLOOD RECOVERY EFFORT CONTINUES

Cessnock City Council crews have been out in force as they continue to assess the impact on the road network and repair damages from the recent flood event.

Council crews have been out clearing roads and undertaking grading works to ensure the road network is safe for residents.

A structural engineer has undertaken an initial inspection of the local bridge network to ensure its safe to reopen to the community. Council will also act to engage a geotechnical engineer to assess some of the landslips that have occurred.

Cessnock City Mayor Jay Suvaal thanked Council crews, SES, Rural Fire Service and volunteers for all their hard work, and the community for its patience as the recovery effort continues.

"There is a lot of time and effort that goes into the recovery phase of a disaster and the primary concern will always be the safety and wellbeing of our community," Councillor Suvaal said.

"It was encouraging that Council's application to Resilience NSW to have the Cessnock LGA declared a disaster area was approved. This has opened up additional support for affected communities."

Council will be able to access funding for repairs to essential infrastructure damaged in the storm and flood event.

An array of grants and loans are available under the package.

For more information and to see what support is available, visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/assistance.



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FLOOD RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

The Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) has been declared a natural disaster zone following extreme weather events throughout March 2022. This means residents of the Cessnock LGA impacted by flooding are eligible for financial support under the jointly funded Federal and State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) program. DRFA assistance is available to individuals, businesses, primary producers, community groups and non-profit organisations.

Assistance for individuals

- Immediate assistance: This assistance is intended to meet the essential emergency needs of people who are directly affected by the disaster and have no other means of meeting their immediate needs (such as evacuees who are unable to access their personal finances or arrange alternative forms of assistance). **State administering agency:** Resilience NSW, **Enquiry contact:** Service NSW on 13 77 88.
- Grants for essential household contents: These grants will assist with the cost of replacing household items essential to maintaining a basic standard of living. Examples of essential household contents include bedding, furniture, clothing, and essential electrical items (e.g. refrigerator, washing machine, stove). **State administering agency:** Resilience NSW, **Enquiry contact:** Service NSW on 13 77 88.
- Grants for essential structural repairs to homes: These grants provide a contribution toward essential structural repairs to low income home owners who have no other means of restoring their homes to a safe and habitable condition following the disaster event, and who are not covered by insurance. **State administering agency:** [Resilience NSW](#), **Enquiry contact:** [Service NSW](#) on 13 77 88.

Assistance available for primary producers

- Grants of up to \$75,000 are available to primary producers that have suffered direct damage to help cover eligible clean-up and reinstatement costs. The grants can be used for a range of activities including removing debris, cleaning-up, repairing damaged fencing and equipment, replacing livestock, salvaging crops and restoring fields. **State administering agency:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority, **Enquiry contact:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.
- Freight subsidies for primary producers: Transport freight subsidies of up to 50 per cent on the carriage of livestock and fodder, and 25 per cent on the carriage of fodder for dairy cattle, are available to help primary producers. The maximum subsidy available is \$15,000 per annum. **State administering agency:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority, **Enquiry contact:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.
- Loans of up to \$130,000 at a fixed concessional interest rate may be available to small businesses and primary producers (subject to certain eligibility criteria) that have been directly impacted by a disaster. These loans may be used to meet carry-on requirements or to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance. **State administering agency:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority, **Enquiry contact:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.

Assistance available for small businesses and non-profit organisations

- Grants of up to \$50,000 are available to small businesses and non-profit organisations that have suffered direct damage to help cover eligible clean-up and reinstatement costs. The grants can be used for a range of activities including removing damaged goods, cleaning-up, repairing damaged fittings and equipment and replacing stock. **State administering agency:** Service NSW, **Enquiry contact:** Service NSW on 13 77 88.
- Loans of up to \$130,000 at a fixed concessional interest rate may be available to small businesses and primary producers (subject to certain eligibility criteria) that have been directly impacted by a disaster. These loans may be used to meet carry-on requirements or to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance. **State administering agency:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority, **Enquiry contact:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.
- Loan assistance is available to voluntary non-profit organisations for the restoration of essential facilities that have been damaged or destroyed. Assistance is only available to those organisations that do not have the financial capacity to meet restoration costs from their own resources or insurance and are unable to obtain assistance through normal channels. Advances are subject to a maximum of \$25,000 at a concessional interest rate per annum. **State administering agency:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority, **Enquiry contact:** NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593.

Take care and stay safe,

Tony Chadwick

Economic Development Team

Wollombi Valley Pony Club

Unfortunately the recent flood waters inundated the Wollombi Pony Club causing significant damage to the contents of the Clubhouse and a loss or relocation of jump equipment to weird and wonderful places downstream!

It was great to see so many Wollombi Pony Club members (of all ages) assist with an initial working bee to clean up and retrieve equipment as soon as the grounds were accessible.

There will need to be quite a few more clean up sessions to get the grounds back on track for the riding activities scheduled for the upcoming school holiday break.

Wollombi Pony Club will be looking to fundraise in the near future, to replace important items such as a fridge, water pump, freezer, stove, uniforms, saddle cloths, stop watches, sporting and jumping equipment. All assistance from the Wollombi community will be greatly appreciated.

Simone Smith

Wollombi Valley Pony Club.



Photo credit: Justine Hallows



WOLLOMBI VALLEY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Thank you Melissa Boucher

The placement of a Cessnock Community Recovery Officer at Cessnock Council has been critical to the success of immediate, medium and long-term projects designed to build recovery and resilience for the individual resident, for the community and for the fire brigades after the 2019-2020 bushfires in our area. We in the Cessnock LGA have been very fortunate to have Melissa Boucher as our Recovery Officer.

To initiate the recovery process Melissa held community forums to get to know the local communities and their recovery/resilience issues. From that point Melissa has supported:

- individual residents with links to obtain support from Bushfire Recovery Case Managers, for financial and mental wellbeing support
- successfully obtaining grants from NSW EPA to support impacted residents in the post fire clean-up process
- Outreach Mental Health service in Wollombi with a regular Lifeline counsellor
- Seasons for Growth and Resilience Wellbeing programs for children and youth
- Mental Health First Aid training for 60 residents, First Aid/CPR training for 90 residents, Chainsaw Training for 40 residents
- and the installation of outdoor exercise equipment at Wollombi Tennis Courts

Melissa has enabled our community to:

- reunite by facilitating community connection events -the highly successful Recovery on the Green, the community -building Christmas Fair, and the nurturing Murray's Run Workshop
- breaking the daunting grant-writing process with support to 9 local community groups to successfully obtain approx. \$500,000 in external grant funding for 7 local projects
- providing 18 community grants from Council for local recovery/resilience projects
- facilitating risk mitigation improvements to local community halls, particularly Laguna Hall
- Distributing Co-vid PPE masks, sanitizer and wipes provided by Resilience NSW

Melissa has supported our local RFS brigades for they have the critical role of risk mitigation. Melissa has supported Brigades to:

- Successfully obtain from the BLERF grant, \$1 million to upgrade 11 local RFS brigade sheds providing for larger trucks, more volunteers, and more efficient, safer facilities (I spring from the volunteer era of the lamington drive and this gaining of funds is breathtakingly awesome.)

- Facilitated RFS involvement in the successful Black Summer grant application for the Cessnock Airport RFS Aviation Fire Base Project of \$1.6 million
- Improve emergency navigation with the Laguna RFS project of clearer, more comprehensive sign posting/rural addressing
- Facilitated pro-bono sealing of the long awaited Bucketty RFS driveway
- Supported Millfield RFS Brigade to progress plans to secure a new Brigade shed on Council owned land, Wollombi RFS Brigade's installation of water tanks and pipes for extra water specifically for village fire-fighting,

For the future, as this journey to resilience is ongoing, and there is a need for continued focus on support, Melissa with community have planned for this year:

- A Cultural Burning Workshop for the Wollombi Valley Community in May
- Working with SES, RFS, Fire and Rescue and Red Cross to have a Seniors Disaster Preparedness workshop in April and
- A Community Resilience Network With Key community organisations in the Cessnock LGA to ensure a co-ordinated recovery effort following future disasters.

And all of this has been done in only 18 months with Co-vid complexities!

Melissa, on behalf of our community and community groups that have worked with you, thank you for your warm and engaging approach, your openness to diverse needs and ideas, your care, your making grant funding accessible and relevant, your attendance at events you have supported, in Simone Smith's words, President of Progress, "thank you for going the extra kilometre!" With your guidance we have truly seen community-led recovery.

Chris Davey
Secretary
Wollombi Progress Association



Community meeting at Laguna Hall last month welcome Cessnock Mayor Jay Survall and Community Recovery officer Melissa Boucher.



WOLLOMBI VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL INC. ARTS NEWS

What's on at the Old Fireshed Gallery, Wollombi Cultural Centre

March – April 2022

The Wollombi Valley Arts Council encourages and fosters all kinds of artistic and cultural expression within the Wollombi Valley in order to support and promote artists and our community.

Please visit our website www.wollombi.org

'PAINTINGS and MOSAICS'

An exhibition by

**MARILYN MILLER, JULIE ELLER,
KAYE LOVIE, MARY FRANCIS
and CAROLE McDONALD**



Paintings&Mosaics

Open 10am to 4pm

Saturdays & Sundays 26 & 27 March, 02 & 03 April, 09 & 10 April, 2022
OLD FIRESHED GALLERY
Wollombi Cultural Centre, Wollombi Rd, Wollombi, NSW CONTACT: 02 4998 1093 or 0409 041 833



26 March - 10 April

Open weekends 10am - 4pm

Coming up next...

'COUNTRY'

A solo exhibition by

JUDITH FRANKLIN

Open 14 – 19 April, 22 – 25 April, 30 April & 1
May, 10am – 4pm

You are invited to the exhibition opening at
3pm, Saturday 16 April. There will be a smoking
ceremony, drinks and light refreshments.

Judith is a contemporary artist from the
Darkinjung people, whose experiences of
culture and stories are told in her artwork.

LITTLE YENGO GALLERY

Open on weekends and public holidays, the
gallery displays a large range of Aboriginal art
in an exciting array of styles, also available for
viewing on our website

<https://www.wollombi.org/little-yengo-gallery>

Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc

Email: artscouncil@wollombi.org

yengogallery@wollombi.org

Web: www.wollombi.org

F/B: <https://www.facebook.com/artscouncilwollombi>

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THE LAST SUPPER

A farewell tribute to legendary residents BRUNO & VICTORIA

A few years ago, a restaurant came to town in the form of PANINO'S. Wollombi was now, lucky enough to have a 5 star restaurant of our very own.

I first met Victoria when she came into our shop and introduced herself as Victoria Giagu, "Giagu, you know like 'jar of glue'. A friendship was formed that has lasted for nearly 20 years. Daily we, Steve and myself, enjoyed the serene Wollombi Village with a morning coffee and chat with the one and only Bruno, a unique character and a more loyal friend you could not have.

To go to Panino's for dinner was to immerse yourself in fine dining and an evening of culinary delight. Bruno was a true professional and nothing was more important than a perfect meal.

We enjoyed many dinners there, many lunches and many catch-ups of "gossip". All good things must come to an end though and so it is that Panino closed and the "Jar of Glue" are now expecting their 2nd grandchild south of the border.

We wish them all the best in their very well-deserved retirement.

Steve and Sally Sullivan

Photo credit: Sally Sullivan



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CURIOS**

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FRI 10:00 - LATE
SAT & SUN 10:00 - 16:00

FORTNIGHTLY SHOPPING BUS (WOLLOMBI CONNECT) FROM THE WOLLOMBI VALLEY TO CESSNOCK

The service will operate every second Thursday commencing on

Thursday 31st March and will depart from

Laguna – the Community Hall at 9.30.

Wollombi – the Tennis Club, departing at 9.45

there will be a couple of stops in Cessnock

departing Cessnock 1.30 with drop offs at Wollombi and Laguna

\$7.50 one way, \$15.00 return

The Regional Seniors Travel Card is a debit card and can be used on Wollombi Connect.

Applications can be made online: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-regional-seniors-travel-card>

To access the service registration is required initially, and then booking for each trip a few days ahead on

0499 359 659 or getconnected@nccca.com.au.

A one-off trip for Seniors Week to an event held by NCCCA will take place on Friday 25th March with operating times and registration as above.

This is a 12 month trial so we seek patronage in order to continue into the future.

This service has been achieved by William Crowley and Anthony Layton of the Northern Coalfields Community Care Association (NCCCA) with Melissa Boucher from the Cessnock City Council and a small group of residents from the Wollombi Valley. It is supported by the New South Wales Government and funded under the Transport Access Regional Partnerships Grants Programme.

See you on the bus! **Gael Winnick**



Wollombi Connect

Is a new transport access service for residents of the local Wollombi region operating every second Thursday of the month commencing on 31st March 2022.

Anyone can use the service to the Cessnock CBD and if you're older and need assistance we can help.

Be part of the inaugural service on Friday 25th March.

- ▶ **Departs Laguna Community Hall @ 9:30am**
(via Wollombi Tennis Club @ 9:45am)
- ▶ **Departs North Ave Cessnock (near Westpac) @ 1:30pm**
(via Wollombi Tennis Club @ 2:15pm)

Bookings are essential and fares are only \$7.50 one way, or \$15.00 return. Contact us on **0499 359 659**, or email getconnected@nccca.com.au to register for the service.

Your support & patronage will help us to continue the service beyond the year long trial.

The Wollombi Connect project is supported by the NSW Government and funded under the Transport Access Regional Partnerships Grants Program.



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The latest floods were certainly spectacular, and road closures meant that our school was non-operational for three days. We had some families who were stuck at home for a week, many without power, phone and internet for extended periods. However it was great to see all of our students returning to school safe and sound, and we now look forward to the school grounds drying out!

Luckily our swimming team for the Regional Carnival did make it out in time to compete, and our relay team have now qualified for the State Swimming Carnival to be held in early April! A terrific achievement!

We have been moved by the plight of the school families up in Lismore, who have suffered devastating losses in the floods. In league with all the schools in the Cessnock LGA, we are holding a fundraiser at school to raise money to buy vouchers for food and clothing to support those in need – Vouch for Lismore.

Our P&C are off to a flying start this year and have already booked in a date for this extravaganza – 25th – 27th November 2022; keep your eyes peeled for more information about this wonderful fundraiser! We are looking forward to an innovative and fruitful partnership with the P&C in 2022!



P: 0249 98 8251 E: laguna-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

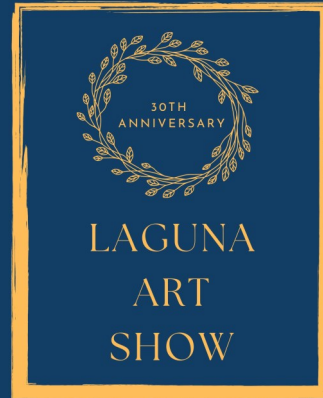
W: laguna-p.schools.nsw.gov.au F: LagunaPS



Education

**"The purpose of art is
washing the dust of
daily life off our souls"**

Pablo Picasso



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ENTRIES OPEN: 1st May
ENTRIES CLOSE: 19th June
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Emerging Artist **\$2,000**
2325 Local Artist indoor **\$1,000**
2325 Local Artist outdoor **\$1,000**
Artist in Residency Prize **\$1,000**
(in kind)
Young Sculptor Prize **\$250**
(vouchers for materials)

SCULPTURE NEWS | 2022 is the 20th Anniversary of Sculpture in the Vineyards.

Despite having to cancel the Valley Festival last year due to the pandemic the online event we created was a great success. We sold nearly \$100,000 worth of sculpture and as we reduced our commission the sculptors made more from the sales.

The festival has already helped launch the sculpting careers of a few locals and with big prize money on offer it may be time to get down to your studio and start creating.

We are planning a huge celebration for 2022 and look forward to welcoming sculptors and sculpture lovers back to our beautiful valley to help celebrate our 20th Anniversary Festival.

Sculpture IN THE VINEYARDS

Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival
10th – 25th September 2022

Above: Amanda
Lockton working on
her 2021 entry,
Actinotus Helianthi
- photo by Nick Glover

www.sculptureinthevineyards.com.au

f /sculptureinthevineyards **@** sculptureinthevineyards **e:** sinthev@gmail.com



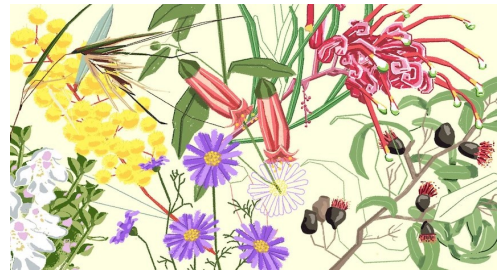
BUILD A GARDEN PLANT A TREE THE BIRDS AND BEES WILL BE HAP-HAPPY

Create a garden, plant a native, especially a flowering one, the bees will love you and the birds will love you too. Even better, native plants (hence the name) are well suited to our environment and weather conditions and need little attention once established.

Encouraging birds to your garden will be an endless source of enjoyment as they visit and sing to you, the number of different birds in our area is amazing. Your veggie patch will flourish as many visiting bees will be unable to resist all your flowers and dinner time will include your yummy fresh homegrown produce.

After the devastating bushfires our bushland can do with a hand to re-establish and if you have the room, why not plant trees. You'll breathe easier knowing you've done something good. OON can help with koala loving gum tree varieties from a previous issue of OON including an article from Bill Hicks. I have been missing the Wollombi markets as I usually buy my plants from Sustainable Natives, so I look forward to things getting back to normal.

I found a great website titled "Keen to plant natives? Start with these seven" on abc.net.au (see picture attached)



Get planting, it's therapeutic for mind and body.
Sally Sullivan

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As well as we order in: Meals for Mutts, Meals for Meows, Ivory Coat, Supercoat, Advance, Optimum, Fancy feast, Chicken, Bird, Fish & Rabbit food.

Some stocks of pet toys, grooming products, horse rugs & accessories.



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Notices and advertising in Our Own News

Payments for Advertising and notices are what keeps the OON going and we are happy to provide a rate sheet.

If you are interested in advertising in the OON or placing notices please contact us to assess what costs are involved.

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WEED INFORMATION SHEET

WILD PEACH

A wild peach is a wild growing form of the Peach (*Prunus persica*).
Common Names- flowering peach, peach, peach tree, wild peach
Origin- Native to eastern Asia (i.e. northern China).
Peach (*Prunus persica* var. *persica*) is regarded as an environmental weed in New South Wales and as a minor environmental weed in Victoria and South Australia.



Alternative arranged leaves. Elongated leaves with finely toothed margins

Wild peach are becoming a serious environmental weed, with large stands forming monocultures in many riparian zones along creek lines and also along road reserves.

This introduced garden plant has escaped cultivation and is readily dispersed into natural areas by fruit-eating (ie frugivorous) birds, and other small mammals. It is spread by humans in dumped garden waste, the fruit and seeds by slashers, and in contaminated mulch and soil.

The fruit can float in water and spread along the banks of watercourses.

Once the fruit or seeds are deposited into bushland areas, the seedlings quickly grow in thickets to become an invasive plant. It is a weed of rainforests, open woodlands, forest margins, urban bushland, gardens, roadsides and riparian vegetation.

The fruit tend to be small, hold no economic value and are mostly damaged by fruit fly, a type of fruit tree disease or other pests.

These largely unmanaged pest and disease problems pose a huge threat to local fruit growers.

- Seedlings have a long tap root which makes hand pulling difficult unless the soil is quite moist.



Greyish bark on main trunk



- Hand pull seedlings and young plants holding the plant close to the ground to remove the whole plant along with its roots. Plants can also be dug out using a digging tool, taking care to remove all roots and runners.
- Do not leave the pulled plants on the moist ground and destroy all plant material to prevent rooting and reinfestation.
- Monitor frequently and remove any new plants. Mowing large patches of Peach seedlings will not prevent the plants re-sprouting and will increase stem density.
- Aggressive mechanical tillage is also effective. However, soil disturbance may stimulate seed germination from the soil seed bank.
- On large plants applying herbicide by cut stump, or scrape the bark on the trunk and apply chemical methods are effective.
- The glossy leaves require a wetting agent to make the herbicide stick on the foliage.
- Several systemic herbicides move through the plant to the roots when applied to the leaves or stems and have been found to be effective.

MOSQUITO ALERT!

As well as widespread flooding and chaos, the recent rain has brought another issue - mosquitoes!

The first cases of Japanese encephalitis in humans have been discovered and sadly some deaths have also been recorded. NSW Health has alerted the community that they should protect themselves from being bitten.

Simple strategies include using an effective insect repellent containing DEET, installing insect screens where possible and ensuring these are in good repair. Also remember to cover up with light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing and closed shoes when outside.

It's also particularly important to remove any standing water outside your home to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. This includes pot plant bases, drains and guttering but don't forget to flush out the leaves of water-holding plants such as bromeliads - mosquitoes only need a 1cm of water to breed in!

As always if you have any health concerns you'd like to discuss, call our friendly receptionists on (02) 4249 2450 to make an appointment or book online at

<https://www.bellbirdmedical.com.au>

Diane Lyons

Bellbird Medical Centre

384 Wollombi Rd

Diane will be offering regular, short general health interest pieces. Keep a lookout here for her next health update.

More information can be sourced from Government Health websites.



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What's Happening at Kawalang

management and when we go shopping. Dani will also explore with the group whether beekeeping might be of interest...practical things to think about when you are enjoying bees!

Dani Lloyd-Prichard is a lifelong bee lover, an experienced and qualified beekeeper, researcher, educator and trainer, co-author of the AgGuide on Australian Native Bees and a wonderful, engaging presenter.

This workshop includes morning tea and lunch with food organically grown at Kawalang. Bring water bottle, sun and rain gear!

With special thanks to the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF), Cessnock City Council and the Wollombi Valley Progress Association, for supporting resilience in our community....

We are delighted to be offering three free community workshops at Kawalang for the Bucketty / Laguna / Fernances Crossing / Burralong / Will O'Wynn / Upper Yengo and nearby communities, based on feedback from our community event last November.

Our first workshop for the year is....



Dani Lloyd-Prichard will talk with us about native and European bees, their habitats, how to attract them, how we can support local beekeepers through land

The workshop is free to the community. Registration is required. RSVP by April 25. Space is limited. For further information yum@kawalang.com 0404 896 396

Food & Country at Kawalang

Sunday, March 27, 12-3pm

Menu by Chef Nathan Cooper
inspired by organically-grown produce from Kawalang

On arrival....

Bites inspired from the garden, served with Sparkling wine

1st

Pumpkin three ways
Hunter Valley Fromage Blanc Stuffed Pumpkin Cannoli,
Warm Roasted Honey Pumpkin, Sweet Chilli Pumpkin Sauce,
Almonds & Pickled Spring Onions

Paired with 2021 Stockhausen Chardonnay

2nd

Duck, Elderberry & Pistachio Terrine, Rocket leaves,
Spiced Fig Compote & Keith's Sourdough Wafers

Paired with 2019 Tempranillo Shiraz

3rd

Seared Yellowtail King Fish, Braised Leeks, Shaved Zucchini,
Citrus Butter, Garlic & Turmeric Spiced Yellow Tomato

Paired with 2021 Stockhausen Semillon

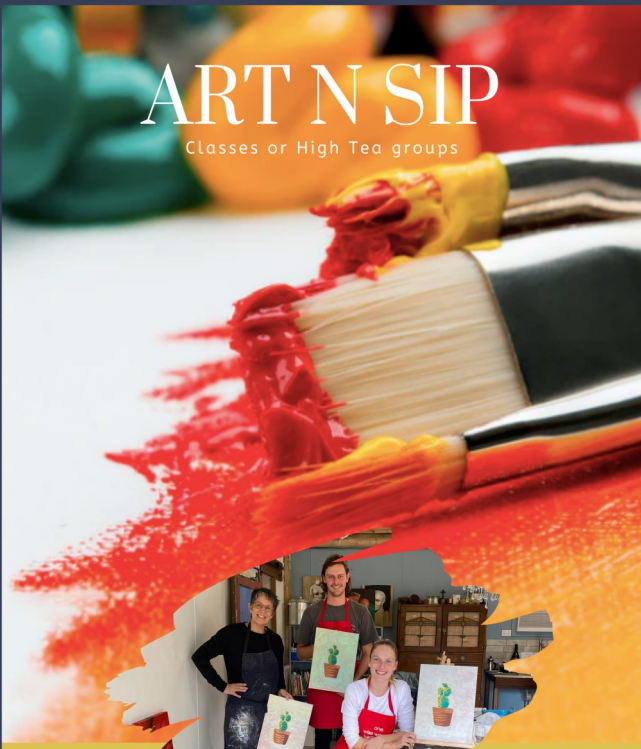
Full vegetarian options available.
Please let us know when booking.

4th

Organic Rhubarb Parfait with Dark Chocolate
& Hazelnut Crisps

Meal \$135pp • wine package \$40pp • RSVP by March 20 2022
yum@kawalang.com • 0404 896 396
Wines by Briar Ridge Winery, Hunter Valley





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HELP WANTED....

Join one of our many community groups and help make a difference. Make new friends, make a difference or make a change. Check out the back page of the OON to see the list of organisations or clubs that could use your help. If we all help a little, it would mean a lot.

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I would like a 12month Subscription to OON via ☐ **Email (Free)** or ☐ **Post (\$60)** Renewal ? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____ PH: _____

Postal address: _____

Email address: _____ DATE: _____

Post this form and a **cheque** payable to WVPA Inc./OON to OON Subscription C/- Wollombi General Store, Wollombi NSW 2325 or enclose this form and **cash** in an envelope and pop into the OON box at the Laguna or Wollombi General Stores.

Wollombi of Old

Wollombi April 30th, 1863.

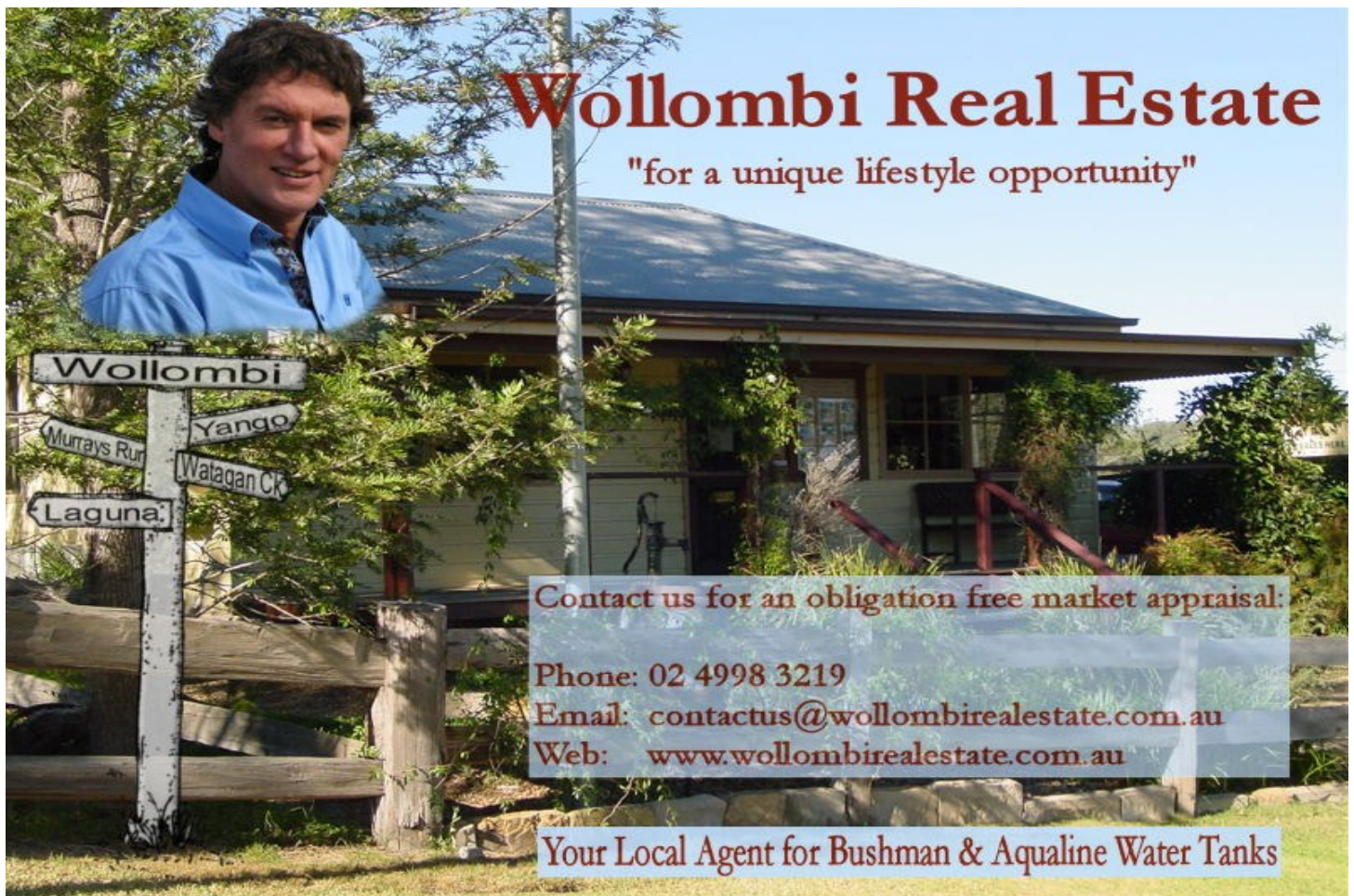
There is little at present to communicate. Nothing whatever in the police court of late. Our quiet township is rarely troubled with any such stirring events, which figure so frequently in the reports of your up-country correspondents having no Gardiners, or other desperadoes to alarm our peaceable and orderly township. But, by the way, we have three most efficient and resolute troopers stationed here, who would give such fraternity a warm reception, and doubtless "treat them with a ball or two."

The returns of the Registrar for this district, for the quarter ending 31st March, shew the Births, 26, Deaths, 8, Marriages, 2. So unusually small a number of marriages is a little surprising, particularly in a district proverbial for the beauty and fascinations of the fair sex.

The steam flour mill of J. W. Cobcroft Esq. J.P., which has very recently been enlarged, is in full work; and from this gentleman's well-known liberality, the settlers around are enabled to obtain the same price for their wheat (within a shade) as they would do in Maitland, besides the excellent quality of the flour always demands a ready sale. This mill, originally erected at great expense by Mr. Crothers, has proved a real boon to this district.

The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser.

Sourced through Trove by Steve Sullivan.



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The 2022 Carp Cleanout Competition

The recent floods, strong current and a spattering of rain made for some challenging fishing over the weekend 19 - 20 March.

Some great tales have surfaced from the event and it was clear that many memorable moments were had.

The overall winners were;

ADULT section - Most Carp Caught - Steve Olsen

- Heaviest Carp Caught - Steve Olsen

JUNIOR section - Most Carp Caught - Stratton Reilly

- Heaviest Carp Caught - Stratton Reilly

Under 10's section - Most Carp Caught - Tex Kidd-Sobol

- Heaviest Carp Caught - Elrod Vella

Thanks to the Wollombi Tavern for hosting the weigh-in and to the sponsors; BCF and Singleton Bait & Tackle.

Stephanie Vella



"Growing up I thought that governments would always do the right thing. Now I know they don't. Our voices are needed. Every voice counts."



Craig Browne
CoFounder



Want to help shape the future of The Hunter?

Join in a Voices for The Hunter **Kitchen Table Conversation** to share your views, concerns and what's important to you.

Kitchen Table Conversations are currently being held over Zoom on **Wednesdays and Thursdays*** throughout March and April.

(*Other times can be organised over a cuppa!)

VOICES FOR THE HUNTER

voicesforthehunter.org/events

Bird of the Month

Azure Kingfisher *Alcedo azurea* and for those who quickly look, like me, to see if the bird is named by ... Latham, 1801!

I recently spied two perched motionless on the same fallen, dead wattle-head 1m above the dam staring into the water for fish, crustaceans or water insects, their staple diet. They always flip their catch to swallow it head first. They are most active in the mornings and afternoons.

The azure has a long black bill, a deep blue head and back with a cinnamon brown belly, it is this latter colouring that makes it easy to distinguish from the other kingfisher in our area, the sacred. The azure, despite its red legs and feet, is monogamous, mating from October to March. It lives from Tasmania and along the east of Australia all the way to Papua New Guinea.

The azure has the typical Australian veneration for waterfront real estate where a mating pair keep permanent territory, along a creek or near a dam usually overhung by trees. With those red legs and feet they dig, from 3-7 days, a tunnel nest approx. 1m long and lay 5-7 glossy white eggs. Their threats are human activities near waterways and stock trampling, this being one of many reasons why riparian zones need to be fenced. Our recent floods will have impacted kingfishers if they were still nesting.

Chris Davey



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Wollombi Pilates
Life is easier with Pilates.

Mat Class — Wed 9.30am
Chair Pilates — Fri 9.30am
Mat Class — Fri 10.30am
in the Wollombi Community Hall

For more information contact Susan
0403 270 365 or leithsu@bigpond.com



James Milson

James Milson had some land grants on Sydney's North Shore, where he ran cattle, plus a business restocking ships with food prior to them leaving harbour. This was done in Neutral Bay, where his home still exists as the Sydney Yacht Club premises at Kirribilli.

In 1822, he joined with John Marquet Blaxland and Andrew Murray in taking a herd of cattle to the Wollombi District which Blaxland knew about from earlier exploration. The three were the first to get land grants on the South Arm.

The Parish Maps show him with 1080 acres in 3 lots. These ran from what later became the southern boundary of Wollombi Township down to Milsons Arm Rd, and over to include some of the best land in Narone Creek. Others in the family added more later. They may well have acquired more land from other early settlers, as the family retained the property until the 1920s. The Byora homestead was built on a flood prone site, and later moved to its present location.

The Milsons explored shorter routes to Sydney, settling approximately on the current route through Kulnura, Peats Ridge, Calga and Mount White. Sometimes they met a boat by arrangement in Mooney Creek. One incident was outstanding. Having taken a herd of cattle to the ridgetop on the north side of the river and setting up camp for the night, the cattle got frightened and escaped in a stampede. David Milson fell down a rock face and broke a leg. In the morning, it was decided that he should catch a passing boat to Sydney, and the others recover the cattle and go back to Wollombi. Martin Regan, a trusted convict was left with him on the river bank. On the second day there they managed to stop a small 14 ton vessel, and during rough weather at sea, David was tied in place on the deck.

Around the 1880s David Milson was a community leader, owning the flour mill, and leading the attempt to get a railway routed through Wollombi.

Carl Hoipo Jan. 2022

Thank you to local historian, Carl Hoipo, for providing a series of historical articles on 'who were these people whose names are still used to identify parts of our district?'

We look forward to the next series of articles.



Finding guidance during a difficult time is comforting.

That's why people turn to us.

MB

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Diary & Events

Church Services

St John's Wollombi 2nd & 4th Sundays:

10 am Holy Communion.

During Covid the messages can be viewed later on YouTube. Search: 'rev.john.west'

Contact: 0481 269 653 or

info@parishofthewollombivalley.org

Other regular Anglican church events

Suspended during Covid

St Michael's Wollombi, Mass will be on 2nd and 5th Sunday of the month at 4:30pm

Crafty Yarns

10am 3rd Monday monthly. Wollombi Cultural Centre

500 Cards—Wollombi

commence at 6 pm on last Monday in the month.

Wollombi Tennis Clubhouse

Cattle Sales—Wollombi

12pm 2nd Saturday monthly, Wollombi Sale Yards

Wollombi

Chamber of Commerce - Wollombi Valley

General Meetings held every 2nd month. See

www.wollombivalleytourism.com.au for venue.

Fire Brigade—Laguna

Training 3rd Saturday of the month with breakfast at 8.30am followed by training from 9am to 11am. Laguna Fire Station. Members meeting 11am after training in March, June, September and December.

Fire Brigade—Wollombi

Training 3rd Saturday monthly 8.30am Wollombi Fire Station. Members meeting 11am following training in even months, All welcome. Enquiries to

brigade@wollombibushfire.org.au

Fire Brigade - Bucketty and District

Training 3rd Saturday monthly from 9am - 12pm commencing with breakfast at 8.30am.

Members meeting 1pm on the even months. All welcome.

Garden Group

1st Monday monthly.

Contact Marilyn Miller 4998 1562

La conversation francaise dans

Wollombi 17h/5pm le deuxième samedi dans le mois.

Contact: Gwen Lansbury, glansbury@gmail.com, 4998 3141/ 9918 9827

Landcare Group - Wollombi Valley

Meets regularly at the Brook plus special events

Contact Chris Jackson 4998 8660 or

Wollombi.landcare@gmail.com

Meditation at the Tipi Temple

Thurs nights bookings essential through

Facebook page cost \$15

Museum—Wollombi

6pm summer – 5pm winter, 1st Wednesday monthly except January, Wollombi Cultural Centre

Pony Club—Wollombi Valley

Every 3 weeks contact President Simone 4998 8214 for details

Pencil Orchids Writers Group

2nd Tuesday every month. Contact Kerry Lannoy 4998 8343

Playgroup (all kids 5 and under welcome)

10.30am every Tuesday, at Slacks Park Wollombi

Scrabble Group

commence at 6 pm on last Monday in the month. Wollombi Tennis Clubhouse

Stitch N' Bitch

11am 1st Saturday monthly. at Great Northern Trading Post

Talking History

series: 4th Sat/month at Wollombi School 3:00pm

Toastmasters—Every Monday 6.45pm - 9pm. Cessnock

Supporters Club

Contact Black Crow 4998 1475

Theology in the Pub discussion group: 2nd Sun/month at Wollombi School 2:00pm

Wollombi Valley Progress Association

10am, Last Saturday bi-monthly, Wollombi Hall

Wollombi Tidy Valleys

11am, every 2nd Thursday Bi-Monthly Wollombi School Meeting Room. All welcome. Contact—Bernice 4991 1688

Transport

Grape Experience Tours	0414 457 956
Wine country taxis Cessnock	(02) 4990 1111
Wollombi Local Transport (new business name logged)	0414 457 956

Sport and Fitness

Croquet—Sunday 3pm and Monday 3pm

Pilates Classes

Mat Classes are held Wednesday 9.30am and Fridays 10.30am. Chair Pilates is held at 9.30am till 10.15am - Wollombi Hall

Phone Susan 0403 270 365

Tennis—Thursday evenings at 4 pm & Sunday to 9 am

Eureka Taekwondo Thursdays 4pm – 5pm

Wollombi Hall Phone Steve Turner 0400 002 951

YOGA

Wollombi Community Hall

Chill Flow + Yin Thursday 5.30-6.30pm

Morning Flow Saturday 8.30-9.30am

Contact Helena - elmswoodhidden@gmail.com or on Instagram @wollombi_yoga

Zumba Classes:

Fitness With Milly Ph 0414435576

Monday Wollombi Hall

7:45am HIIT

9:00am Zumba Gold

Friday Laguna Hall 8:30am Zumba

Services

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 Kawalang Studio 0404 896 396
 Laguna Cottages 02 4998 3219
 Little Valley Farm - Alpaca Farm 0407 224 150
 Twin Pines Cottage 0403 083 381
 Valle Laguna 0408 809 471
 Valley Field Escape 02 4998 3312

Millfield

Bellbird & Swallows Cottages 0414 786 705
 Neudorf Country Retreat 0414 920 013

Congewai

Brown Muir Cottage 0409 416 416

Wollombi

Applegums 0419 416 416
 Blair Athol Estate 02 4998 3323
 Capers Cottage 0409 305 285
 Cedar Creek Cottages 02 4998 1576
 Cowboys Cabin 0423 109 558
 Dilly Dally at Wollombi 0416 039 081
 Friar Jurds @ Wollombi Tavern 02 4998 3261
 The Farm @ Hunter Escape 0418 114 303
 Grays Inn 02 4998 3483
 Gypsy Willows 02 4998 3404
 Hollybrook Hunter Valley 0411 968 873
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 Wild Edge Retreat 02 4998 3304
 Wollombi Barn Stay 02 4998 3221
 Wollombi Brook Family Farm Stay.... 0422 515 905
 Wollombi Bush Retreat 0432 156 396
 Wollombi Farm Country House 0416 039 081
 Wollombi Stays 0416 039 081
 Woodcutters House 0416 039 081
 Yango Creek Farmhouse 0416 039 081

Restaurants, Pubs and Stores

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 Laguna Village Providore 02 4038 5004
 Laguna Luxe
 Millfield General Store 02 4998 1263
 Myrtle House Cafe 02 4998 3220
 Twine Home Store 02 4498 3331
 Wollombi General Store 02 4998 3230
 Wollombi Tavern 02 4998 3261

A NOTE FROM THE OON TEAM

Our Own News is a Wollombi Valley Progress Association (WVPA) initiative co-ordinated by volunteers.

Articles or advertisements must be emailed as a **word file** with photos attached as a separate **jpeg** file to **oon_news@hotmail.com** no later than the 15th day of each month for publication in the following month's edition. Articles are not edited but printed as received unless otherwise agreed and there is no guarantee of publication. Articles must be no longer than 200 words.

WVPA and the OON Team accept no liability for statements made or opinions expressed and are not responsible for the veracity of articles or advertising material.

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We welcome your comments by email. We hope you enjoy reading your copy of OON and thank you for supporting our community.

OON Team