

Our Own News

**LOCAL BOYS
GO ALL OUT FOR
VARIETY BASH**



Local adventurers sign up for the QLD Variety National Bash event.

Local lads, Nick Brooke & Brett McMullen, have decided to set out on an adventure to join the iconic **Variety** charity race 'The Bash', while raising valuable funds for sick and disadvantaged kids.

With the focus on kids and a cuddly, friendly image: the big Bear image was born and the old Landcruiser renamed Balooo! complete with fun bear images and paws. The bear suits will be a fun addition to the many events planned!

Throughout their journey, the event is co-ordinated to take the fun and frivolity into the community and our boys have a boot-load of Teddies (taking the Bear image to the max), ready to be donated to local schools. All knitted by generous volunteers of the Australian Red Cross, and a big bag knitted by Brett's mum, Eunice!

Want to support and make a donation? It's not too late... Just use the QR Code, this will take you to their Bear Network fundraiser page and follow the prompts.

We thank you for your generous support!



ABOUT THE BASH

The Variety Bash in 2025 will celebrate its 50th anniversary, featuring a National Bash event that supports children in need through a colourful convoy across Australia.

The Variety Bash is Australia's longest-running charity motoring event combining adventure with philanthropy.

The Variety Bash event is an 8-10 day event that takes participants across the country in a colourful convoy. The route is always jam-packed with iconic Aussie tourist destinations, offroad adventures and includes stops at schools and small towns to show some love along the way.



The Itinerary



In addition to the grants presented en route, the Variety Bash is welcomed by regional communities as spending on fuel, food and tourism often resulting in their biggest trading days of the year.

Each car entered is required to be at least 25 years old and decked out in a unique theme. Entrants fundraising efforts directly benefit kids and communities through grants, scholarships and assistance provided along the journey.



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.

oon_news@hotmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

Mon 4—Garden Club—venue TBA

See back pages for contact

Tue 5—Business Owners Event at The Trading Post
Laguna, Free event, organised by Wollombi Valley
Business Network

Thurs 7 - Trivia Night at Myrtle & Stone

Sat 10th - Free Koala Workshop 1-4pm Laguna
Community Hall

Mon 12 - Wollombi School Community Centre -
AGM—10am see P11 for details

Fri 15 Laguna Art Show Dinner
The Trading Post, Tickets see P7

Sat 16/Sun 17 Laguna Art Show, Laguna
Community Hall Sat10-4pm / Sun 10-2pm

SEPT

Fri 12th—TAINTED- A Burlesque Tragic Opera
Wollombi Hall, Doors 7:30pm Tickets available

Shout out for anyone who is super
savvy with CANVA and could help
out the OON team with some advice?

Contact: oon_news@hotmail.com



LAGUNA COMMUNITY HALL
SATURDAY 10TH AUGUST 1 PM - 4 PM

*Scats, Scratches and Screams - The
Science, Technologies, Programs and
People helping to find and protect Koalas*



For more information and registration pl
email environment@cessnock.nsw.gov.au



OON Subscription form, complete below or email to oon_news@hotmail.com

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.

CELEBRATING THE WOLLOMBI GENERAL STORE come take a journey through its past and present

Wollombi General Store

This building was originally the Harp of Erin Hotel . Licensing records show John Musgrave in 1842, John Kenny in 1843, and J. F. Summers in 1865.

Apparently the Hotel offered better accommodation for the public than the court house of the day, which was a crappy timber affair, and Inquests and other matters are on record as being held in the Hotel.

1852 Inquest at the Harp of Erin, a customer of the hotel had died from burns. He had gone to sleep in a back room of the hotel with a pipe in his coat pocket, and his clothing had caught alight.

1854. Inquest –death of 6 year old child from burning --her clothing had caught fire from a burn pile.

1859 Transfer of licence of Harp of Erin.

MM 23rd December, 1872 For Sale a COMFORTABLE WEATHERBOARD HOUSE, formerly the "Harp of Erin" Inn, with detached Kitchen, Stables, &c, and is one of the most eligible sites in the town for business *I assume that George Chapman was the purchaser. While Stan Williams does not mention it, it is definitely the case that the property was "The Harp of Erin" at an earlier time.*

Stan Williams, an old local resident wrote the following as part of a broad description of Wollombi township in the 1970s. His own recollections went back to around 1920, with older info being passed down by family and other residents.

"The next is the old store and dwelling now owned by Joe Kerr. The first occupant was George Chapman storekeeper and general merchant. He would buy from possum skins to bullock hides and had a hawkers van which travelled the district fortnightly. It carried groceries, drapery and general supplies. They used to buy eggs and poultry. Sugar and flour were bought by the by the bag. Tea was bought by the chest, 12 and 20 lbs from Edwards and Griffith who had reps touring the district every three months. *Chapman enlarged the building on the eastern side where the gable end faces the street in the 1880s.*

C. Morley followed Chapman. He was a chemist, and the first and only chemist to live in Wollombi. Richard Owens followed, he was here for a few years, then selling to W. Cherry. R. Owens went to Newcastle and founded the Owens chain store groceries (known as Savemores today). This is when the hawkers van ceased to run. Some of the drivers were Bob Daley, Albert Jurd and Jack Walker.

When Cherry left the store closed for a period. It was opened again by J. Hawkins who later sold it again to Joe Kerr, the present owner."

By local historian *Carl Hoipo*



The General Store today under new management



WOULD ANYONE HAVE MORE HISTORY ON THE GENERAL STORE?

We would like to hear from you
Send to oon_news@hotmail.com

General Store Photo Credits : @WollombiValley

CELEBRATING THE WOLLOMBI GENERAL STORE come take a journey through its past and present



Friendly service with a great sense of community pride, Emma, Steve & Sally Sullivan

Steve and Sally Sullivan

General Store from December 2006—June 2014

Memories by Steve & Sally Sullivan

I thought we knew most people in town, but we met so many more when we took over the shop.

We took on the role from previous owners Cheryl and Tony O'Donohue and we tried to continue their great service. It was a full-time job for Steve and myself, exhausting at times but I loved meeting new people and chatting with many a visitor to town, hopefully they went away happy, having enjoyed Wollombi.

The best part of the day for me was sorting all the mail that Darren brought, tagging all the parcels making it all neat and tidy, knowing all these people would soon be coming to town.

We tried to be an information centre as well with whatever information people might needed at the time, "where is the closest fuel?", "which way is quickest to Gosford?", I remember answering the phone more than once being asked "is it raining there?"

It was a little bit like the wild West too, we would see a car pull up into town and have their mail ready for them before they even walked in the shop.

We always tried hard to help our local community and feel very privileged to have been a part of Wollombi General Store's history.

An Honourable Treat

What a privilege to be part of the history book, of Wollombi General Store

The stories and history held in the original walls and wooden floor, Circa 1850, twas a hotel and watering hole, where travellers rest, have a nice bite,

It has been told, also housed here were Ladies of the Night!?

Where once sat sacks of flour, rice and the carrying horse and cart

We mapped out a theatre, a space for the arts,

From Shakespeare to poets, comedy to plays, song and wine in your cup

There was even Burlesque and suddenly the sleepy town of Wollombi woke up!

A scantily clad chap, wearing just a jock strap, Boy what a ripper When he swung from the rafters on a burnt out whippa snippa, (to be honest I thought the place was going to come down).

One night a past spirit arrived, spooked, banged and rattled the door post,

Dash off would most, but I stayed over and slept with a ghost??

Eleven years pass with so many memories to hold with pride and embrace

Love and happiness to staff and customers, who make this shop a special place.

Cath, Steve and Harley Patterson



Wollombi Valley Pony Club

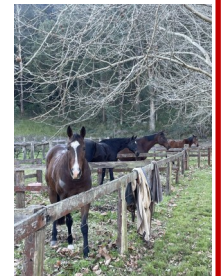
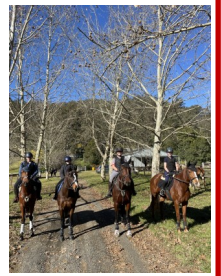
Wollombi Pony Clubbers revelled in the glorious riding weather during the recent school holidays and enjoyed an opportunity to train over a cross country course, close to home. "Fernances Creek" is a beautiful local venue and also has the added attraction of riding areas with sandy soil, providing some safe, fun, jumping opportunities for our horse and rider combinations. Owners, Sharon and Paul are always very welcoming!

We will return to the Wollombi Pony Club Ground for our next training day, when members will be treated to a tour of the fabulous, brand new Pony Cub Shed.

A huge thank you to the wonderful women who recently gave up their Saturday to assist with the Bunnings BBQ Club fundraiser. Sandy Thomas mustered together an excellent team, supported by donations of drinks from members and bread from Cessnock Bakers Delight.

In excess of \$2000 was raised and will be well used to purchase some new equipment, shelving and a fridge for the new shed.

Simone Smith
Wollombi Valley Pony club.



Fair Dinkum Builds Topline Sheds is proud to announce the completion of a brand new clubhouse for the Wollombi Valley Pony Club is just around the corner, delivering a modern, functional space that will support the club's future growth and community involvement.

Constructed using skilled local trades and suppliers, the project reflects a strong commitment to quality workmanship. From initial design, groundwork to final fit-out, every stage of the build was handled with care and attention to detail—ensuring a clubhouse that is not only practical but built to last.

The new facility provides a central space for club meetings, rider training, offering shelter and storage, amenities, and a warm, welcoming environment for members, families, and visitors. It's a major upgrade for the club, giving riders a place to gather, learn, and grow in a supportive setting.

This project is more than just a building—it's a symbol of local collaboration and dedication to equestrian sport.

Fair Dinkum Builds Topline Sheds is honoured to have partnered with Wollombi Valley Pony Club and Cessnock City Council on this meaningful project, and we look forward to seeing the clubhouse become a key part of the club's future for many years to come.



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LAGUNA ART SHOW

15-17TH AUGUST 2025

LAGUNA COMMUNITY HALL
GREAT NORTH ROAD, LAGUNA

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

Friday 15th August

Bar Open 6pm. Seated Dinner 6:30pm .

Exhibition opening at 8pm

Dinner Tickets Sold Out | Exhibition Tickets Still Available

GENERAL EXHIBITION

Saturday 16th 10:00am - 4:00pm

Sunday 17th 10:00am - 2:00pm

*Onsite Cafe *Marimba Painting Workshops & Kids Art

Activities * 2pm Sunday Raffle Draw

* Fine Art * Sculpture *



Feature Artist: Julianne Ross Allcorn
"Intertwined Songs of The Valley"

Laguna P&C
Association



www.littlefacesbigfuture.com



Cessnock! Let's talk health!

HOSTED BY HUNTER NEW ENGLAND AND
CENTRAL COAST PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK (PHN)

The PHN is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the Commonwealth government to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the primary health care system.

The PHN is looking to understand the current gaps in primary health care delivery within the Cessnock LGA (including the Greater Wollombi Valley) with the aim of commissioning services to fill these gaps. For example: provision of a local health service in Wollombi on a weekly/fortnight/monthly basis as determined by need.

Some local community consultations were held by the PHN during drop-in café chat sessions held in Cessnock, Wollombi & Laguna in June.

Two community forums are now being held in Cessnock, to build on the conversations had during the café chat sessions.

Wednesday 6th August 2025
2pm-3pm and 5pm-6pm
East Cessnock Bowling Club

The forum sessions will be facilitated by a consultant so the conversation will have more structured questions and small group/individual opportunities to have input. This is an opportunity to help shape local health and wellbeing in Cessnock and particularly the Greater Wollombi Valley, so if you are passionate about gaps in health service delivery in the Greater Wollombi Valley, please consider attending a session or completing the survey.

Register now!



Can't make it?

Take the Health Insights Survey



HORSE FOOD IN LAGUNA

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Beet & much more!

Chicken feeds, Sheep, Cattle & Alpaca pellets

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.



Apptrak home grown
horses: bred, raised
and trained at
Laguna!



THE LITTLE YENGO GALLERY



The Little Yengo Gallery was built and is maintained and run by volunteers to celebrate the rich Aboriginal history and culture of Wollombi and surrounding areas. The non-profit gallery displays an extensive range of Aboriginal paintings, artworks and artefacts. The proceeds from the sale of the works, minus a small administrative fee, go directly to the artists.

Wollombi means 'meeting place', our totem is the waterhen. Please come and learn the waterhen story and meet the artists. New volunteers and artists are welcome.

Visit <https://www.wollombi.org/little-yengo-gallery> for our online gallery



WOLLOMBI GARDEN GROUP

July's Garden Group outing was to Loris & Lindsay's garden in Laguna. We had a fabulous afternoon eating, socialising

and wandering around Loris's large & interesting garden.

It is a lovely mix of natives and exotics interspersed with a collection of sculptures, all with views over the lower paddocks.

The stone outbuilding in the entertaining area is fabulous and the slow combustion heater came in handy later in the

afternoon. We also enjoyed looking through their original settlers cottage which has been lovingly restored.

Thanks again to Loris & Lindsay for hosting our afternoon at your lovely property. I don't have a garden for August yet,

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JUDY ZIEREN – 0405 281 845
or barryandjudy1@bigpond.com



LOVE OUR LIFESTYLE?

JOIN ONE OF OUR LOCAL GROUPS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS, SHARE YOUR SKILLS OR JUST LEND A HAND ... YOUR COMMUNITY WILL BE GRATEFUL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED NOW

See our back page for all organisations



WOLLOMBI VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL INC. ARTS NEWS

What's on at the Wollombi Cultural Centre

July – August 2025

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

'TAOTOC'S' : THE ARTISTS OF THE OLD CHURCH STUDIO

12 – 27 July in the Old Fireshed Gallery

This exhibition brings together the diverse work of a collective of artists who share both a studio space and a deep passion for art. Each artist brings their own voice to the exhibition, landscapes, abstracts, miniatures & drawings. Open Thurs - Sun

'METAL STONE PAINT'

An exhibition by **GILES TESTER, ROSS FLETCHER, SHEREE ROBERTS**
2nd - 17th August 2025

Opening 2pm 2nd August, light refreshments, all welcome

Exhibition open 10am – 4pm Fri – Sun



EXHIBITION of PAINTINGS by JULIA SELWOOD

22 August – 7 September 2025

Open 10am – 4pm Fri – Sun

WVAC EMERGING ARTIST AWARDS

We invite entries in the 2025 Emerging Artist Awards, with three new categories, and increased prize money.

Please visit our website for details
www.wollombi.org



Total award money now \$8,000
Exhibition Opening and Awards
Presentation: Friday 3rd October at 6.30pm
Entries close 5pm 28th September 2025

Judges: JOSEPH TURRIN (Curator Performing Arts Centre, Cessnock), MANDY DAVIES, GREG MAJOR (2325 Australian Flora Award)

OPEN SECTION: (Painting, Sculpture, Photography, etc)
Emerging Artist Award \$1,500, Highly Commended \$1,000, Commended \$750

WVAC 2325 Wollombi Award \$500 (Local artist or Wollombi subject matter)

2325 Australian Flora Award \$500 (Australian flora subject matter, local artist)
Sponsored by Greg Major, Future Harvest

Photography Award \$500

Portrait Award \$500 *new*

Sculpture/3D Award \$500 *new*

Indigenous Artist Award \$500 *new*

WVAC Performance Art/Video Art Award \$500 (Entry via a maximum 3 - minute video)

Youth: Under 18's: Highly Commended \$250, Commended \$100, Under 12's: Highly Commended \$100, Commended \$50

The Les Elvin People's Choice Award (announced at the close of EAA)

Most popular \$500

Runner Up \$250

LIFE DRAWING at the OLD FIRESHED GALLERY

1pm – 4pm Wednesday 30th July and 20th August 2025

Phone Mandy 02 – 4998 8686

THE LITTLE YENGO GALLERY

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Visit <https://www.wollombi.org/little-yengo-gallery> for our online gallery

Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc.

Email: artscouncil@wollombi.org or yengogallery@wollombi.org

Web: www.wollombi.org

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

<https://www.facebook.com/littleyengogallery>

Wollombi Pilates

Authentic | Gentle | Effective

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



Vaudevillian Legs 11.11 presents...

"The most Tragical Tragedy, that ever was Tragediz'd by any Company of Tragedians"...

TAINTED- A Burlesque Tragic Opera

To 90s LIVE GRUNGE music

The Wollombi Burlesque Troupe explore a tragic Victorian tale of family, love & death to an epic 90s soundscape.

Expect: Pole, magic, sexy slap stick, clowning, comedy, song, burlesque, stilt walking & very little opera.

At The Wollombi Hall September 12
Doors open a 7 30PM, show starts at 8PM

Dress code: Morbid

Ticket cost: \$35 Concession/\$45 General/\$65 VIP
(inc drink + front row)

Love Sophie/Legs_1111

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Open to everyone - info & bookings: hollybrookhuntervalley.com/art



Chamber Chatter August 2025

Here's an Update from **Your** WVCC

Community Meeting: T-Intersection at Wollombi

WVCC recently hosted a well-attended community meeting regarding the proposed changes to the T-intersection at Wollombi. Over 20 residents and business owners joined the discussion, showing strong engagement and support. A special thank you to **Sean Wardman**, Project Manager from **Cessnock City Council**, for his time and detailed explanation of the project.

We're grateful to our community for participating in this important session. Due to high interest, another meeting has been requested—stay tuned for details.

Promote Your Business on Visit Wollombi

Want to spotlight your business to over **9,000 followers** on our social media channels? Here's your chance! Send your **images and details** to **secwvcc@gmail.com** to be featured. Let's spread the word together and showcase what makes your business shine.

WVCC Business Network Coffee Catch-Ups

Reconnect and share ideas with fellow business owners at our next community coffee sessions:

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday, 5 August	The Trading	10:00am
Tuesday, 2 September	Myrtle & Stone	10:00am

Come for the coffee, stay for the collaboration.

Save the Date: Next 90-Day Planning Workshop

Our next strategic planning workshop is scheduled for:

Tuesday, 14 October

Stay tuned—more details will be announced shortly.

WVCC Annual General Meeting

Save the date: Monday, 25 August at 6:00pm

Join us at the **Dance Hall in Wollombi** for the WVCC AGM, followed by dinner at the **Wollombi General Store** (*booking details coming shortly*).

It's a wonderful opportunity to get involved and connect with others passionate about our Valley's future.

If you're interested in supporting Wollombi Valley businesses by donating your time and expertise, we'd love to hear from you!

Email secwvcc@gmail.com or eventswvcc@gmail.com to express your interest.

We're seeking **new ideas and fresh energy** to ensure WVCC continues to thrive and stay relevant. Your voice matters.

Thank you for your support!

WVCC

Deb, Trish, Annie, Graham & Sharon



WOLLOMBI SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTRE

Just a reminder about our imminent AGM and that you are being encouraged to sign up as a continuing or a new member. Whichever category you are most welcome.

As previously advised, our AGM is on 12 August at 10 am at the front building (Principal's cottage) on the corner of Crawford Street and Wollombi Road, Wollombi (or just opposite the Wollombi Cemetery if you want to be precise!). We would love to see you there.

Join up either by our website wollombischool.com.au/ membership or by contacting our Secretary on secretary@wollombischool.com.au. (You need to be a member to vote).

We have recently heard that we are in the running for a national Grant that has many benefits for our local Valley Community. More about that after September when it is judged. Fingers crossed for our community.

Please give thought to supporting your group of local residents working to continue to keep the Wollombi School in local community hands. We have been doing it since 2014 when the school closed. It is part of our beautiful Wollombi Village precinct. We don't want to lose any part of it. Once it goes it will be lost to us forever.

YOU can do something about it now. Don't look back in regret.

Wollombi School Community Centre Committee.

WOLLOMBI GARDEN GROUP

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JUDY ZIEREN - 0405 281 845
or barryandjudy1@bigpond.com





Wollombi Valley
Landcare
Group Inc.

Little Wallabadah Visit



In July, Landcare members enjoyed a walk and talk with Little Wallabadah property owners, Godelieve, Dirk, Rosie and Don as they discussed the process of returning their properties to nature.

Annual General Meeting

The 2025 Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday 13 July at 2804 Paynes Crossing Road, Wollombi. It was a great turnout on a gorgeous winter day. We heard about the projects in place this year and some of the plans for the next year. Michael Winnick tendered his resignation from the committee and he was thanked for the many years of hard work as our treasurer.

Your new committee is:

President - Anna Yerbury

Vice president – Eliza Hoyland

Treasurer – Dirk Hofman

Secretary – Simon Geraghty

Public Officer – Patrick Jury

Committee – Patrick Jury, Andrea Lang, Alister Wilkinson, Meg Berg

The new committee will be meeting very soon to plan the activities for the year. If you have any suggestions please send us an email to wollombi.landcare@gmail.com

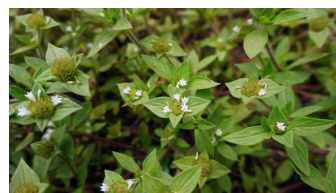
Follow us on [Facebook](#) to find out about upcoming activities.

Weed of the month:

Richardia brasiliensis (White Eye)

A smothering invader that needs to be fought off!

Photo credit: Lawn Solutions Australia



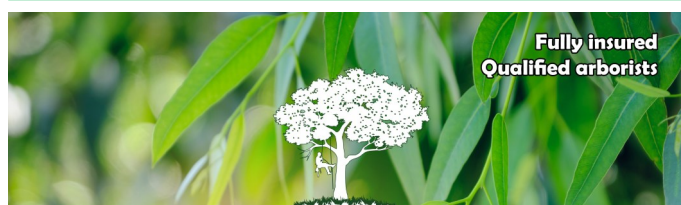
First appearing in the Wollombi Valley less than ten years ago, *Richardia* has quickly spread from being an unwanted guest to an invasive pest. Like many weeds, it favours disturbed soil and thrives on tracks, roads and in lawns. But it can quickly spread through bushland and over-grazed pasture, smothering all before it.

Essentially a prostrate plant that spreads out up to 40cm, it quickly outcompetes native ground covers. Leaves are ovate with a blunt point. In warmer months, small white flowers cluster at the tip of each stem. The hairy nutlets produced by the flowers are easily spread by water, birds, tyres, and our feet!

Hailing from South America, *Richardia* favours warm weather so winter may well be the time to try digging it out. To do so entails digging down to unearth the tap root. Established plants also send down roots from laterals. If any part of a root is left in the ground, the plant will re-grow. One seasoned valley weeder has had some success applying ammonium sulphate granules onto the plant.

Sources: Atlas of Living Australia: www.ala.org.au and YouTube video on www.dlium.com

For a chemical control: Lawn Solutions Australia:



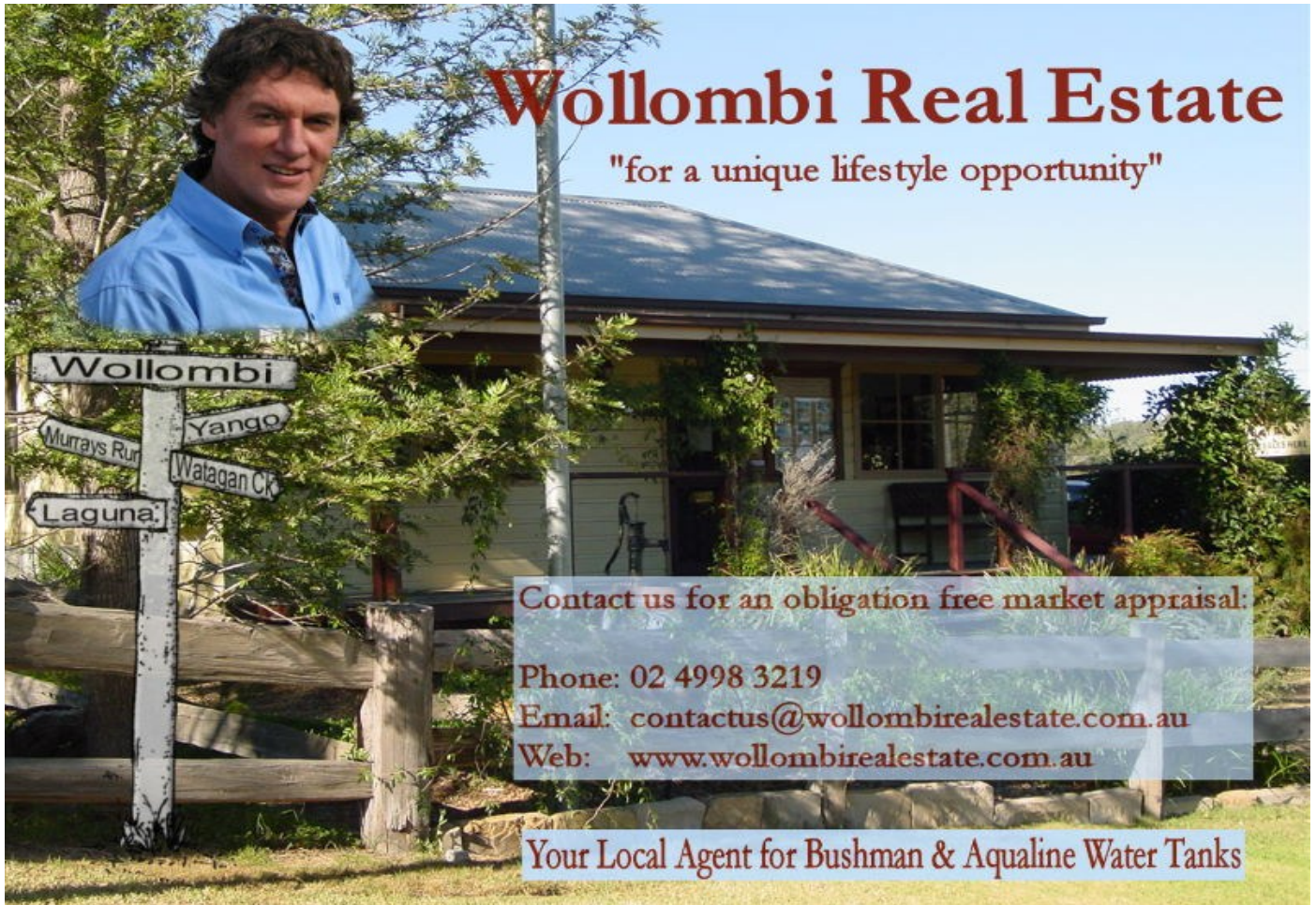
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Qualified arborists

Wollombi Valley Tree Services

Contact us for a free site
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Web: www.wollombirealestate.com.au

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We're Getting Married! Why Do We Need an Authorised Celebrant?

by Llynda Nairn Civil Celebrant

Getting married is fun, it's romantic, it's an opportunity to celebrate your love and commitment with family and friends. There's lots to think about. A few guests? Elopement? Hundreds of your nearest and dearest?

The last thing you might consider are the legal processes. An authorised celebrant will help you with that.

In 2022-2023 a Melbourne man, too embarrassed to tell his friends that he didn't complete his studies in Celebrancy, officiated their wedding. Others were so impressed by him that they booked him to officiate their wedding.

He illegally performed five marriages. Each of the couples applied to BDM for a marriage certificate, and learned that their marriages had not been registered. The couples were not legally married, and the man was found guilty of fraud.

Finding an authorised celebrant, and lodging the Notice of Intended Marriage is the first step towards ensuring that your wedding is everything you want it to be, and that your intention to marry is realised.

An authorised celebrant will make sure that that the most important element of your wedding - your commitment to each other in marriage - is in safe hands.

All authorised celebrants - civil and religious - are listed on the Attorney General's web site, so if you have a celebrant in mind, it's a good idea to check that they are on the list..



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Wollombi of Old

WOLLOMBI. 1950

The aborigines, "meeting of the waters"

It is the name of a village to the south-west of Maitland.

There, two streams meet. A visit to the Church of England cemetery at Wollombi will revive memories of the greatest maritime tragedy in the history of the colony. This was the disaster in which 119 lives were lost on the night of August 20, 1857, when the vessel Dunbar, from England, crashed into the cliffs to the south of Sydney. In that disaster perished the full ship's company with the exception for one young seaman James Johnson. He married and settled in Newcastle, where he was employed till his retirement in the Lighthouse Service. He reared a family. One of the sons married a Hawkesbury native, who died at her home in Cessnock in 1938, aged 82. She lived for 70 years at Wollombi and is buried in the cemetery there. She was Mrs Luvenah Ameila Green Johnson.

Newcastle Moring Herald and Miners' Advocate.

Sourced Through Trove by Steve Sullivan.



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Council Notifications which may be of interest to the community

MAYORAL COLUMN

Cost shifting is one of the most serious challenges facing the local government sector, undermining financial sustainability. I raised the issue as a Mayoral Minute at our July Ordinary Council Meeting in the hope of raising more awareness about some of the challenges it puts before us, as a council. The latest research commissioned by Local Government NSW (LGNSW) reveals that \$1.5 billion of expense has been imposed on NSW councils in 2023/24 alone, and this continues to grow.

On average, cost shifting has reached a level of \$497.40 for each ratepayer. If like me, you pay your rates in quarterly instalments, that means more than one of your four rate bills is effectively going straight to another level of government.

It's wrong and it needs to be addressed. Why?

Because it means our communities get less or go without. They go without safer roads. They go without parks, while instead we are effectively paying hidden taxes to other levels of government – and to put it in perspective, at levels exceeding our annual budget for road maintenance.

The Hunter Joint Organisation will now write to the Premier, NSW Treasurer and NSW Minister for Local Government on behalf of all Hunter councils, calling on them to urgently remedy this situation.

In other news, we adopted a Villages Strategy following community consultation. The Villages Strategy seeks to establish local character statements for five villages - Greta, Kearsley, Mulbring, North Rothbury and Wollombi/Laguna - in terms of their character, both now and into the future.

A range of actions are identified within the draft strategy to embed and support the character statements, create a sense of community, and enhance the environmental, social and economic prosperity of the villages. Important behind the scenes work like this helps preserve our wonderful communities. We've started with these gateway villages and will continue to expand to the strategy to include other villages in our LGA.

Finally this week, I'm excited to report that it's almost time to pop the cork on Stomp Festival. Our dedicated team of organisers has been working hard to deliver a day of fun on the grounds of TAFE NSW Cessnock between 10am and 8pm on 2 August.

Entry is free for the festival that promises to be a vibrant celebration of world-class wine and artisan produce. Back by popular demand is the crowd-favourite grape stomping competition, for both the individual and corporate team categories. Visit www.stompfestival.com.au to secure your tickets in the grape stomping competition and for more event details.

Stomp Festival postponed due to adverse weather conditions – new date announced

Due to forecast weather conditions this weekend, Cessnock City Council have made the decision to postpone Stomp Festival, originally scheduled for Saturday 2nd August.

The safety of festivalgoers, vendors, artists, and staff remains a top priority, and the decision to reschedule was made following careful consideration of the weather outlook and discussions with event partners.

Council is excited to announce Stomp Festival has been rescheduled and will now take place on Saturday 30 August from 10am until 8pm.

All tickets purchased for the grape stomping competitions on the original event date will remain valid for the new event. For those unable to attend, ticket holders will be offered a refund option.

Further details on the rescheduled event, ticket information, and refund processes can be found on the official website at stompfestival.com.au

The festival team appreciates the ongoing support from the community and looks forward to delivering an exciting experience once weather conditions improve.

James Hawkins elected as Ward A Councillor by countback

Cessnock City Council welcomes back former Deputy Mayor and three-term councillor James Hawkins, who was officially sworn in this morning as the newly elected Ward A Councillor.

Elected to the position via a countback election conducted by the NSW Electoral Commission following the resignation of former Mayor Jay Suvaal, Councillor Hawkins embarks on his fourth term serving the Cessnock community.

A lifelong local, Mount View High School alumni, former Chair of the Local Traffic Committee and two-time Deputy Mayor, Councillor Hawkins expressed enthusiasm returning to Council.

"I'm honoured to have the opportunity to serve our community once again," said Cllr Hawkins.

"There's a lot of exciting work ahead, and I look forward to continuing to advocate for the needs of Ward A and the wider Cessnock area."

Cessnock City Mayor Dan Watton congratulated Councillor Hawkins on his election and acknowledged the contributions of former Councillor Jay Suvaal.

"We're pleased to welcome back Councillor Hawkins," said Cllr Watton.

"James brings a wealth of experience and I look forward to working together to continue to address the priorities of our community. I also sincerely thank Councillor Jay Suvaal for his contributions and service to our city during his time on Council."

Cessnock City Council meets on the third Wednesday of each month. Members of the public are welcome to attend in-person or online via the live stream on Council's YouTube channel.

A full schedule of meeting dates is available here: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/meetings



'Wealth of historical treasures': Cessnock Library displays unearthed photographic archive

Cessnock Library is hosting a free photographic exhibition throughout July featuring images captured by a local photographer decades ago – and only discovered after her death.

Cessnock in the Sixties: Laurel Rudd Photography Exhibition will give observers a captivating glimpse into the past through the lens of Rudd, who operated a photographic studio with her husband Phillip in Cumberland Street, Cessnock, in the 1960s.

After Rudd died in Orange in 2021, her niece discovered a vast collection of her photographic work, which had been meticulously archived and preserved. It was generously donated, through Brisbane Water Historical Society, to Cessnock Library.

Library Services Co-ordinator Rose-marie Walters said her team immediately recognised the importance of the archive.

"It includes a wealth of historical treasures – proof sheets, thousands of negatives, and a selection of physical prints," said Ms Walters.

"While some of the images are identified, others remain a compelling mystery waiting to be solved. The library is undertaking a significant project to identify, digitise, and preserve these invaluable images."

The collection will ultimately be established as the Laurel Rudd Collection in the library's extensive local history photograph archive, ensuring Rudd's remarkable contribution to Cessnock's history is preserved and shared for generations to come.

Visit the exhibition in the foyer of Cessnock Library between 1 July and 31 July.

Diary & Events

Church

St John's Anglican Church Wollombi is a festival church. There is a service at Christmas and Easter. Baptisms, weddings, funerals and other services are by arrangement. Please contact the Parish on 02-4991 4761 or 0418-269 892 or email: stjohnscottage@bigpond.com

Other regular Anglican church events

Suspended during Covid

St Michael's Wollombi, Mass is on the 2nd and 5th Sunday of the month at 2pm

Wollombi Valley Home Church

Meets at Tennis Club
1st Sunday of the month at 2pm, followed by afternoon tea.
Contact Keith 0409-909 971 or Pastor Neville 0467-210 478

Crafty Yarns

Knitting/crochet group meets in Wollombi.
For more information contact Jane 4998 8158
or Jillian 0477 519 996.

500 Cards—Wollombi

commence at 6 pm on last Monday in the month.
Wollombi Tennis Clubhouse
Contact: Jan Harrison
janeceharrison08@gmail.com

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
Members meeting 1pm on the even months.

Garden Group

1st Monday monthly.
Contact Judy Zieren 0405-281845

Conversations en francais à Wollombi

Rencontres detendues pour ceux qui veulent parler francais a Wollombi. Nous nous reunissons les samedis une fois par mois vers 17 heures chez des particuliers. On discute l'art, l'histoire, la politique, la France – avec un bon vin et fromage bien sur.
Contactez: Gwen Lansbury, glansbury@gmail.com
Ph: 02-4998 3141, 0451 693 376

Landcare Group - Wollombi Valley

Join us to learn more about caring for the land and the wildlife on it. We meet regularly for workshops, planting days and other events. New members are always welcome! Contact us at www.wollombilandcare.org.au or wollombi.landcare@gmail.com

Monthly Historical Ghost Tours

Newcastle Ghost Tours & Jo Potter Ph: 0411-357 519

Museum—Wollombi

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

Pony Club—Wollombi Valley

Every 3 weeks contact President Simone 02-4998 8214 for details

Playgroup (all kids 5 and under welcome)

10.30am every Tuesday, at Slacks Park Wollombi

Theology in the Pub discussion group:

4th Sun/month at Wollombi School Residence 2:00pm

Wollombi Valley Community Association

Community meetings held during the year. Please see OON for advertising of these.

Wollombi Tidy Valleys

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

Wollombi School Community Centre:

Committee meetings held 10am on 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Transport

Grape Experience Tours 0414 457 956

Wine country taxis Cessnock (02) 4990 1111

Sport and Fitness

Pilates Classes

Mat Classes are held Wednesday 9.30am & Fridays 10.30am.
Wollombi Community Hall
Contact: Susan 0403-270 365

Wollombi Tennis

Wednesday from 5:30pm
Sunday 8:00 am
All welcome.
Contact: Julia Brooke 0403-500 381

Eureka Taekwondo

Thursdays 4pm – 5pm
Wollombi Community Hall
Contact: Steve Turner 0400-002 951

YOGA

Wednesday 7:30-8:30pm Vinyasa
Thursday 5:30-6:30pm Yin
Saturday 8:30-9:30am Hatha Flow
Wollombi Community Hall
Contact Helena 0412-369 291

Zumba Classes:

Fitness With Milly Monday Wollombi Hall
7:45am HIIT
9:00am Zumba Gold
Friday Wollombi Tennis Club 8:30am Zumba
Contact: Milly Ph 0414-435 576

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<http://growls-hisses.com>
houndsfelines@mail.com

Local Accommodation**Bellbird**

Tabitha Hill Cottage 0429 657 166

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Byora Farm House 02 4998 8227
 Ipakey Cottage 02 4998 3219
 Kawalang Studio –Bucketty/Murrays Run 0404 896 396
 Laguna Cottages 02 4998 3219
 Twin Pines Cottage 0403 083 381
 Valle Laguna 0408 809 471
 Valley Field Escape 0488 436 001

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
 Corrabare Cottage 0409 416 416
 Cowboys Cabin 0423 109 558
 Cranky Rock Cottage 0438 757 442
 The Farm @ Hunter Escape 0418 114 303
 Grays Inn 02 4998 3483
 Gypsy Willows 02 4998 3404
 Hollybrook Hunter Valley 0411 968 873
 Hunter Valley Escapes 0409 416 416
 Ironbark Cottage 02 4998 3427
 Maggies in Wollombi 0416 039 081
 Mystwood Retreats 02 4998 3234
 Myrtle Cottage Accommodation 0409 416 416
 Pepper Tree Cottage 0416 039 081
 Redleaf Hunter Valley 0412 566 637
 Somewhere Unique 02 4998 3257
 The Studios 02 4998 3182
 Tiny Escape 0426 891 870
 two8seven5 Boutique Stays 0437 977 798
 Undercliff Settlers Cottage 02 4998 3322
 Wild Edge Retreat 02 4998 3304
 Wollombi Barn Stay 02 4998 3221
 Wollombi Birdhouse 0423 376 804
 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

Laguna Village Providore 0478-712613
 Millfield General Store 02 4998 1263
 Myrtle & Stone Cafe 02 4998 3220
 The Trading Post Laguna 02 4998 8244
 Twine Home Store 02 4498 3331
 Wollombi Café—Next Door 0408-599177
 Wollombi General Store 02 4998 3230
 Wollombi Tavern 02 4998 3261

A NOTE FROM THE OON TEAM

Our Own News is a Wollombi Valley Community Association (WVCA) 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.

Opinions expressed in OON are not those of WVCA or the OON Team, although they have the final word on content. If you are mentioning someone in an article please check details and facts with them and obtain their permission prior to submitting any articles for print.

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The OON Team