

UPCOMING EVENTS

DEC

- 21st—St Johns Christmas service 4pm
24th—Christmas Eve
24th—St Johns
 Cessnock—Christmas for all ages 10:30pm P1
 Wollombi—Christmas at Midnight 11:30pm P1
24th—The Trading Post –family event, Santa and dinner avail. Ring for reservations and information.
25th—Christmas Day
 Christmas Day Mass at St Michaels Church
 At 12:30pm see P1
31st—New Years Eve—Tavern Fireworks

JAN

- 1st—News Years Day
11th—The Artists Market, The Firedash Gallery P4
13th-15th Feb—"Day & Night" Exhibition, Firedash Gallery P4
17th—Wollombi Tennis Club Bunnings BBQ—come & support us
24th—Cinema under the Stars at Grays Inn garden.
Bookings
—Life Drawing —see Arts News P4



CHRISTMAS in WOLLOMBI



If you think crib is a card [game](#) you need to visit St Michael's church. Bring the kids and show them a real crib. The church is open most days.

Also

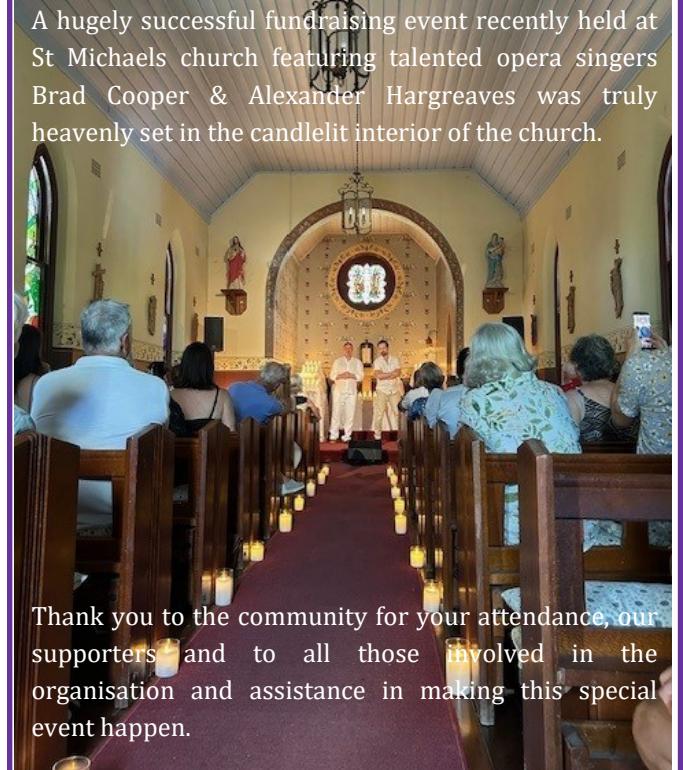
Christmas Day Mass will be celebrated at 12:30pm on Thursday 25th.
You are all welcome

Preserving the Church of St. Michael the Archangel Wollombi (circa 1840)

OPERAS IN THE VALLEY

St Michaels Church, Wollombi

A hugely successful fundraising event recently held at St Michaels church featuring talented opera singers Brad Cooper & Alexander Hargreaves was truly heavenly set in the candlelit interior of the church.



Thank you to the community for your attendance, our supporters and to all those involved in the organisation and assistance in making this special event happen.

Christmas

SERVICE TIMES

ANGLICAN PARISH OF CESSNOCK

DECEMBER 21 4pm St John's Wollombi

6pm St John's Cessnock
 Christmas for all ages

DECEMBER 24 10.30pm St John's Cessnock
 Carols Sing-a-long

11.30pm St John's Cessnock
 Christmas at Midnight

DECEMBER 25 9am St John's Cessnock
9am St Luke's Millfield



Wollombi Valley Community Association

**The committee would like to Thank You
for your support during 2025 and look forward
to another successful and collaborative year supporting the Wollombi Valley.**

Wishing all our readers a Happy and Peaceful Holiday season



WOLLOMBI ROAD UPGRADE

What a great sight to see our Wollombi intersection and footpath in front of Endeavour Museum coming to completion and cleared to provide safe access for our community and visitors during this busy season.

Also the start of leveling out the ruts along the Forge side of the road, most appreciated, along with the planter tubs organised by Wollombi Valley Chamber of Commerce, being integrated back into the new landscaping.

#visitwollombi



Four Letters to Santa

#4

Santa

Well pony and I have practised, and I'm really sad to say,
we won't be flying with you this coming Christmas Day.
It's not because he can't jump, or worried he might fall
Pony doesn't want to let you down at all.

You see when we were practising, I thought he got a fright,
the jump was pretty big and it seems he's scared of heights.
Tell Rudolph not to worry though, we have plan B,
dog can do some awesome stuff he'd like you to see.

Frog sends his love, "ribbit" says the note,
he's off on a cruise aboard a lovely boat.
It seems he has a lady friend who loves to holiday
At the moment they're enjoying life in the Whitsunday.

Well Santa I've nearly put up all the Christmas lights,
And only have a couple of cards left to write.
I'm looking forward so much to this coming Christmas day,
to celebrate a very special persons birthday.

By Sally Sullivan Nov'13

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Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc.

What's on at The Wollombi Cultural Centre

December 2025 – January 2026

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

Wollombi Valley Arts Council wishes all members, artists, volunteers and supporters a very Merry Christmas and a wonderfully Happy New Year.

Our current exhibition: THE ARTISTS MARKET

A wonderful selection of works by sixteen local artists in a market atmosphere.

The OLD FIRESHED GALLERY, Wollombi
Open DAILY 10am – 4pm
Until 11th January



Our next exhibition: 'DAY & NIGHT' by Peter & Katie Williams

13th January - 15th February 2026

Open DAILY 10am – 9pm
You are warmly invited to the exhibition opening on 13th January from 6pm, there will be traditional dancing and light refreshments.

The OLD FIRESHED GALLERY



2026 exhibitions in the OLD FIRESHED GALLERY

We have an exciting array of exhibitions booked for 2026...

'Day & Night': Peter & Katie Williams
Wollombi Ceramics Group
Paintings & Mosaics
Bhret McIntyre
Wendy Black
Laguna Collective
Fibre Artists Plus
Taotocs
Fiona Bateman & Michael O'Sullivan
Wayne Munce
Sculpture in the Vineyards
Family Ties
Susanna Chen Chow
Jodie Usher
Glenda Mellows
The Artists Market

LIFE DRAWING at the OLD FIRESHED GALLERY

We are continuing the Life Drawing classes, with a different tutor on every occasion. We will be creating a 2026 calendar. If you are interested in participating, please contact us by email to arts council@wollombi.org

Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc.

Email: arts council@wollombi.org yengogallery@wollombi.org

Web: www.wollombi.org

F/B: <https://www.facebook.com/arts councilwollombi>

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



A Christmas Message from WVCC

The Wollombi Valley Chamber of Commerce wishes our community a joyful Christmas filled with connection, generosity, and celebration. Thank you for being part of the vibrant spirit that makes our valley so special.

Trading Post Toy Drive & Christmas Eve Gathering

Wednesday, 24 December 2025

Celebrate Christmas Eve at the Trading Post while supporting local families. Bring along a wrapped gift for a local child and share in the festive cheer.

Contact Rosa for more details about donating a gift and to book dinner 02 4998 8244

New Year's Eve at the Wollombi Tavern

Wednesday, 31 December 2025

Ring in the New Year at the Wollombi Tavern with a fireworks display second to none. This beloved tradition lights up the valley skies and brings our community together in celebration. Don't miss the chance to welcome 2026 in true Wollombi style! Contact 02 4998 3261

Cinema Under the Stars – Noyce Brothers Grays Inn Garden

Saturday, 24 January 2026

Join us for a magical evening under the stars as Priscilla, Queen of the Desert takes to the big screen at Noyce Brothers Vineyard. A night of laughter, music, and community spirit not to be missed! Contact 02 4998 3483

WVCC General Meeting – Myrtle & Stone

Monday, 23 February 2026

Our next General Meeting will be hosted at Myrtle & Stone.

Two-course meal: \$55 plus drinks

Special Guest Speaker – details to be announced soon

Booking information will follow. Questions?

events@wollombivalleytourism.com.au

This is a wonderful opportunity to connect, plan, and enjoy a delicious evening together while hearing insights from our guest speaker.

Dates for Your Diary

24 December 2025 – Trading Post Toy Drive & Christmas Eve Event

31 December 2025 – New Year's Eve Fireworks at Wollombi Tavern

24 January 2026 – Cinema Under the Stars (Priscilla, Queen of the Desert)

23 February 2026 – WVCC General Meeting at Myrtle & Stone with Guest Speaker

From toy drives to fireworks, cinema nights to chamber gatherings, there's plenty to celebrate together. WVCC thanks you for your continued support and wishes you a safe, joyful festive season. Here's to a vibrant 2026 filled with community spirit and celebration!

Brett, Dani, Deb, Michael, Julia and Nick



The Wollombi School Community Centre (WSCC) Committee members send you all warm Christmas Greetings and wish for our Valley safety from fires and floods in the coming year.

We will not be meeting again formally until Tuesday 10 February 2026 at 10 am (all welcome to attend) although we have scheduled in some informal planning meetings in the interim.

Those who wish to use the building for craft or other community matters, or the Art Studio, are invited to make contact with Suzanne on secretary@wollombischool.com.au Those wishing to support continuing to keep our historic school in community hands can become a member by following the steps on our website at www.wollombischool.com.au.



The WSCC Committee

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



WOLLONBI VALLEY TENNIS CLUB

What a fabulous year we've had. Thank you to all our members and the community for supporting us.

In between the fun and frivolity we are enjoying good playing and continuing to welcome new players. The Club House has also been well patronised for weekly and various events.

This past month has been busy - supporting local tennis camps, children's tennis coaching, Sculpture in the Vineyards Community Picnic and of course our own annual Xmas Party!

A huge thank you to our members and guests for their contribution of time for setting up and bringing a delicious plate to share and the Tennis Club providing the Xmas Ham & Turkey, along with the legendary group, the 'Runaway Cabbages', a terrific night was had by all.

January will see our Bunnings BBQ 17th January come and support us!

It's now time to take a break, put the feet up and enjoy a relax over this festive season.



WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS, GUESTS AND THE COMMUNITY A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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2025 in Review – Laguna Public School

2025 has been a wonderful year for Laguna Public School, marked by strong community spirit, student achievement and meaningful learning experiences.

Our students demonstrated pride, resilience and commitment across the year. Highlights included a highly successful bake sale that supported *Where Pigs Fly* and funded a whole-school excursion, strong results in the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition, a Runner Up in the Regional Spelling Bee, and outstanding representation at State level in swimming and athletics. Two students also attended the Creative Arts Camp, gaining valuable exposure to specialist instruction.

We expanded our High Potential and Enrichment opportunities in 2025, with an extension art group producing impressive work alongside local artist Gillian, and the successful trial of coding lessons. These programs will continue to grow in 2026, alongside expanded opportunities in sport, technology and Japanese.

Our connection with the wider community remained strong. Through our partnership with Landcare, students engaged in hands-on environmental learning, including water testing and large-scale planting. We also proudly hosted our first Zone Public Speaking event and celebrated the return of the Laguna Art Show, supported by the Imaginaturalist program — a highlight for students and visitors alike.

We extend our sincere thanks to our families, P&C, volunteers and community partners for their ongoing support, and acknowledge the dedication of our staff who continue to place students at the heart of all they do.

As we farewell the year, we also say goodbye to valued staff member Angela, whose warmth, care and commitment have left a lasting impact on our school community. While she will be greatly missed, we wish her every success in her next chapter.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are excited about the opportunities to come and remain committed to providing rich, engaging learning experiences for every student.

We wish our entire community a safe and joyful Christmas season and thank you for your continued support of Laguna Public School.

Jaclyn Zoneff
Principal



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



Hunter Mobile Preschool

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Wollombi School Community Centre
Thursdays and Fridays
9.45am—3.15pm

\$30 enrolment fee is the only charge for the whole year

Please call 02 49346725 or email lhactivityvan@bigpond.com to enrol your child

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Highly Recommended and Now Local to the Hunter Valley

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With over 12 years in healthcare and a strong background in the NDIS, Lewis Drinkwater has recently relocated to the **Hunter Valley** and is proud to support the local community through his work with **sirv**.

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"I'm Lewis. I am an experienced and motivated manager and Registered Nurse with a passion for developing teams and optimising outcomes for our participants. I live a purposeful life – at home with my family and at work. I bring a sense of meaning and purpose to everything I do, and I strive to instil these values in those around me. Along with this sense of meaning, I possess a wealth of leadership and management experience gained over the last 12 years in and out of the NDIS sector. Myself and my team all share one thing in common – we believe in the work we do."

Location: Hunter Valley, Newcastle, Port Stephens & surrounds
Email: Lewis.Drinkwater@sirv.com.au
More info: sirv.com.au/lewis-drinkwater



SCAN HERE

WOLLOMBI GARDEN GROUP

Monday 1st of December saw us having a Christmas lunch at Myrtle & Stone in Wollombi. Luckily the weather wasn't too unpleasant & a lovely afternoon was had by all.

As it is just too hot at this time of the year, our next garden group outing is not till March 2026, when we are off to Sonia's garden in Wollombi.

Don't forget to try and keep up the water to your most precious plants. I have been using my hose on the jet nozzle to make sure the water is going into the soil and not just running off the surface.

I have also put up temporary frames and thrown shade cloth over some of the gardens. Doesn't look good but it certainly helps until we get some decent rain fall.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.

If you would like to join our mailing list or have us visit your garden, please contact me, as below.

Regards

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

WOLLOMBI GARDEN GROUP



Wollombi Valley
Landcare
Group Inc.

WEED OF THE MONTH

Broad-leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*)

Coming into flower in the valley now



Photo credit: weeds.org.au

In November we featured narrow-leaf privet, an introduced species that escaped from gardens to infest moist soils and riparian zones. Its near relative, broad-leaf privet, is not typically as invasive but you may find it lurking near old homesteads and stockyards in the valley.

Broad-leaf privet grows much taller than its narrow-leaf equivalent, reaching 4 to 12 metres in height. It has larger, ovate leaves which are glossy and not unlike those produced by a camellia bush. Its cream-coloured flowers emit a similar sweet-sour aroma and set round fruit, or drupes, in winter. The seeds can be spread by birds, wind or water and the plant may also spread by roots and suckers.

Like all privet, the broad-leaf variety prefers rich moist soil. It is impervious to frost (though may lose its leaves in winter) and can outcompete native flora for habitat. The fruit and leaves are poisonous to stock and to people while the flower scent can cause respiratory problems.

For effective control measures, refer to the following sources:

NSW WeedWise: <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov/Weeds/Details/110> and

weedsAUSTRALIA: <https://weeds.org.au/profiles/broad-leaved-privet/>

Alister Wilkinson

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The image is a promotional collage for 'ART N SIP'. It features a hand in a yellow glove holding a paintbrush with red paint, applying it to a large brush stroke on a canvas. In the foreground, three people (two women and one man) are standing in a studio, each holding a small painting of a cactus. The background is a blurred indoor setting with art supplies and a painting on the wall.



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Great Northern Trading Post, Laguna

Wollombi of Old

Wollombi. January 11th. 1855.

The despondency which generally prevailed from the long-continued drought, has been dispelled by that unspeakable blessing moisture. The grateful sound of pattering rain on the shingles was a joyous ushering in of the new year, continuing for three or four hours.

On Monday last, about 2 p.m., the peals of heaven's artillery commenced in the south-west and passed to the north-east. Soon after the wind suddenly rose and blew with extreme violence for upwards of half-an-hour, when the rain commenced, and soon after fell in torrents, saturating the earth to a considerable depth and the effect is already visible in the slight mantle of green that is now covering the earth. Some of the maize that was in tassel has been eaten off, but the rain that has fallenBottom of Form will save a considerable portion of that crop, and green food for stock during the ensuing winter and thus the losses expected from death of cattle may be averted.

The heat during the past month has been much greater than the average of previous years. On to the 29th, it was unprecedently so, the thermometer being at the very high range of 108 in the shade. The water in the creeks and waterholes has sunk with unusual rapidity. During the month of December in previous years there have been frequent falls of rain during thunderstorms too often to the loss of the husbandman, who has had his stacks of wheat suddenly saturated but this season it has been placed under cover in prime order.

The Sydney Morning Herald.

Sourced through Trove by Steve Sullivan.

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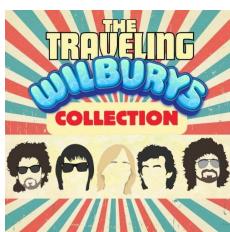
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MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Rock's Greatest Supergroup Comes to Life on Stage - The Traveling Wilburys Collection

Harrison. Petty. Orbison. Dylan. Lynne.

Five legendary artists. One iconic supergroup. And a live experience that music fans have waited decades to see.

There has never been a group in rock history quite like **The Traveling Wilburys**. Formed by some of the most influential songwriters and performers of all time, the Wilburys released just two albums over four short years — yet produced a remarkable string of hits, earned a Grammy, and secured a permanent place in music history. Despite their immense popularity, one thing never happened: **they never toured**.

Until now. **The Traveling Wilburys Collection** brings the spirit, sound and excitement of this legendary supergroup to the stage in an electrifying live performance. This must-see show captures the magic of the Wilburys like never before, celebrating their unforgettable catalogue while honouring the individual brilliance of each member.

Audiences can expect all the beloved Traveling Wilburys hits, alongside classic songs from the extraordinary careers of **George Harrison, Tom Petty, Jeff Lynne, Roy Orbison and Bob Dylan**. From **The Beatles** to **ELO, The Heartbreakers**, and Dylan's timeless songwriting, this performance is a journey through some of the greatest music ever recorded.

More than a tribute, **The Traveling Wilburys Collection** is a high-energy, heartfelt celebration of friendship, creativity and rock 'n' roll history. Packed with singalong anthems, rich harmonies and iconic melodies, the show promises a night of nostalgia, fun and unforgettable moments for fans of all ages.

Whether you grew up with these songs or discovered them later, this is your chance to experience the music of the Traveling Wilburys — **live, loud, and larger than life**.

A night of legendary songs. A celebration of rock history. One unforgettable show.

Location: PACC | Performance Arts Culture Cessnock | Sunday, 8 February 2026 | 07:30 PM For more information and to book visit:

<https://www.mypacc.com.au/Whats-on/25-The-Traveling-Wilburys>

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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

Diary & Events

Church Services

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

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 4 times per year
Enquiries to: bucketty@lowerhunterrfs.com.au

Garden Group

1st Monday monthly.
Contact Judy Zieren 0405-281845

Conversations en français à Wollombi

Rencontres détendues pour ceux qui veulent parler français à Wollombi. Nous nous réunissons 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 sûr.
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 2:00.pm

Wollombi Valley Community Association

Community meetings held 3rd Thursday of the month,

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. Venue is the Principal's Cottage on Cnr of Crawford & Wollombi Roads, Wollombi. Interested persons welcome.

Transport

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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

Thursday from 4:00pm
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 7:30-8:30am Vinyasa
Saturday 8.30-9.30am Hatha Flow
Wollombi Community Hall

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

Services

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Restaurants, Pubs and Stores

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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

Local Accommodation**Bellbird**

Tabitha Hill Cottage 0429 657 166

Laguna

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
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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

Fernances Crossing

Willows Retreat	0249 988623
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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.

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The OON Team