

WOOTTON VALLEY NEWS

APRIL - MAY 2013 NO 83

DISTRIBUTION 450 WOOTTON COOLONGOOK
BUNGWAHL BUNYAH BULAHDELAH

Platypus: *Ornithorhynchus anatinus* The platypus is considered to be one of the world's most unusual animals. It is often described as a living fossil - a furry, warm-blooded, egg-laying mammal which retains some features of reptiles. Their webbed forefeet aid in swimming and although the hind feet are also webbed, these are folded back against the tail, except when used for steering and as brakes. The flat tail is used as a stabiliser during swimming as well as enabling quick diving. On land the platypus carries itself on its knuckles. The fur is fine and dense with about eight hundred hairs per square millimetre. There are two layers, a woolly undercoat and a long guard fur on top of that. Together, these two layers trap air, therefore keeping it dry even after long periods of being under water.



A female platypus produces a clutch of one to three eggs in late winter or spring. Rich milk is secreted from two round patches of skin midway along the mother's belly. It is believed that a baby platypus feeds by slurping up milk with rhythmic sweeps of its stubby bill. Male platypus do not help to raise the young. Juvenile males are equipped with a conspicuous cone-shaped spur (initially about 1 centimetre long) on each hind leg; females have tiny spurs, 1-2 millimetres long, which they shed leaving only a small pit to mark the spot.

Platypus have been spotted in Wootton, especially in the Coolongook River. The recent flooding may have been a danger to them. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some platypus may die in severe floods. Young platypuses may be washed out of their burrows and few survive. However, flooding may also benefit populations by temporarily expanding the size of the area available for foraging.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- 6 April: Combined working bee at cafe and hall
- 7 April: Fire Brigade Training 10am Fire Shed
- 13 April: Movie and Supper night 6pm Brush Turkey Cafe: The Intouchables
- 27 April: Community Dinner 7pm Brush Turkey cafe: Vegetarian
- 27-28 April: Wootton Cattle Dog Trials
- 28 April: "Beef, Cheese & Bocce" luncheon at Great Lakes Winery. Bookings essential
- 4 May: Wootton Community Network Meeting 4pm Brush Turkey Cafe
- 5 May: Fire Brigade Training 10am Fire Shed
- 11 May: Movie and Supper night 6pm Brush Turkey Cafe: Life of Pi
- 12 May: Mother's Day Music Day at Great Lakes Winery
- 25 May: Community Dinner 7pm Brush Turkey cafe: Curry Night

Published by Wootton Community Network Inc
Editors Pat Tate 49977292 and Caro Badcock 49977337
brushturkey@live.com.au Visit our website @ www.wootton.org.au

**Central Wootton Working Bee Saturday 6th April
9am onwards. Lunch provided.**

Anyone is welcome to a working bee at the Wootton Community Centre, Café and Hall. Your help would be very much appreciated. Come for an hour or all day.

WOOTTON COMMUNITY NETWORK

Community Dinners

January: The dinner was actually on Australia Day this year and was very popular as usual.

February: The dinner was an interesting challenge with half the dinner not being able to make it across the bridge in Possum Pie Road and numerous cancellations due to being flooded in! However, for those that made it a fun night was had by all. Thanks to Pat for organising and all those who contributed in any way.

The **movie** was The Sapphires and was very well attended including a large group who holiday in Bungwahl every year and like to make the Brush Turkey cafe one of their holiday destinations.

March: The movie, "Salmon Fishing in the Yemen" also saw a good number of attendees, all of whom enjoyed this light hearted, feel good comedy.

April: Dinner will be on April 27th in the Brush Turkey cafe and will have a vegetarian theme.

May: Dinner will be on May 25th in the Brush Turkey cafe and will be our highly regarded Curry Night.

Thanks to Judy Hammond for doing some weeding, Geoff Freeman for killing weeds, Julie Williams for her generous donations of food, prizes and decorations and Peter Auriac for repairing the door and a table. Also to Leanne and Peter for regularly mowing and whipper snipping around the cafe (How does Leanne find the time?) And thanks to all the other helpers who regularly help at dinners and the Sunday volunteers who keep the cafe running. New volunteers are sought after and always welcome. Welcome to Morgan Parry who is volunteering at the cafe as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award training.

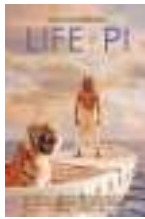
Wootton Valley News

Recently there has been a lot of positive feedback regarding the Wootton Valley News which is wonderful to hear, particularly for Pat and Caro who contribute many hours to writing and collecting articles, laying out and printing the document and distributing it to the mail centre and other outlets such as the Bulahdelah Tourist Information Centre, Bulahdelah Post Office and Bungwahl shop. Along with the positive feedback there have been requests for the distribution area to be increased. We are investigating the feasibility of this particularly in relation to the costs involved in printing and distributing the newsletter. The costs of the newsletter are predominantly underwritten by the income from the Brush Turkey cafe and community dinners. So, if you are looking for somewhere to meet up with friends on a Sunday or even just to get out for a coffee please consider the Brush Turkey cafe. The same goes for an evening out. Please consider joining us at the community dinners that occur on the last Saturday of the month either in the cafe or the hall.

Supper and Movie Nights
6pm Supper, 7pm movie \$10
Brush Turkey Café Wootton Way Wootton
Bookings 49977323 or 49977292



April 12: The Intouchables After he becomes a paraplegic from a paragliding accident an aristocrat hires a young man from the projects to be his caretaker.



May 11: Life of Pi A young man who survives a disaster at sea is hurtled into an epic journey of adventure and discovery.

Please book (for catering purposes)
Call 49977323 or 49977292

Wootton Sustainable Farming Group

The March meeting was held on the 15th at the Wootton Hall. We were asked by Council to complete a group questionnaire capturing feedback on the activities of the group, the support provided by Council and suggestions for future talks. There was a good turnout with several new members mainly from smaller landholdings. This resulted in the group deciding on a list of topics that will ensure something of interest for all members of the Wootton community regardless of the size of their property. This feedback has been sent to Council. The next meeting will be held on the 22nd June. Topic and venue to be announced in the next Wootton News. Anyone interested in joining the group please contact Karen Bee on 6591 7305 or Karen.bee@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au

Wootton Cattle Dog Trials: April 27 –28 2013

105 Wattley Hill Rd.
Enquiries Neil Ede 0407 787 920; Zac Ede 0428 293 024

Farewell to:

Bruce Peachey who passed away 17th February. Best wishes to Anne, Cinnamon and Floyd, his extended family and friends.

Walter ("Wal", "Wally") Cheal who passed away 15th March. Best wishes to Pat, Craig and Taz , family and friends.

Congratulations to:

Annie Breedon on her recent marriage.

Amanda Graham on her recent marriage to Paul Bonnick

SHAME ON:

Those vandals who have been defacing the Great Lakes Winery signs and even more so, those vandals who have STOLEN the sign, the open and closed sign and the poles anchoring the sign! Anyone with information please contact Great Lakes Area Command 6555 1299

Date for submission of articles for next edition: 15 May 2013

Wootton Under Water

Wow, what a few weeks we had with the weather over the last weekend in February and then the first few days of March!

Those out on Possum Pie and Alma Roads were cut off for 3 days with the bridge going under. Judy was supposed to be providing a substantial part of the February dinner but was unable to get there! Judy has provided the photos below showing the bridge underwater and then a few days later from almost the same spot.



Possum Pie Bridge 2 March 2013



Possum Pie Bridge 10 March 2013

Out on Newmans Rd the water was up to the bridge approximately 6km down the road, the majority of which appeared to be coming from Peter's, Martin's and Trent's properties, running through the Cooper's property, over their entrance roadway and into the creek flowing into the Badcock's and then into the Coolonglook River, through Wootton and down to flood the winery! The photos below show the water running through Wayne's alpaca shed and then over the driveway (at least a 4 foot rise in water level)



Wayne's alpaca shed



Wayne's driveway!

At the Guest House the water came half way up to the pump shed. The place was full with quilters who were given 20 mins to all have showers before Pete was turning the pump off so he could undo the electrics! The next day they not only had no water, there was also no power to run their sewing machines! After twiddling their thumbs for a while they decided to call it a day and rescheduled. Here's hoping their next visit will all go well.



Looking back from the Guest House to the bridge over the Coolonglook River



Pump shed and Water Tank at Back of Wotton Guest House

The photos below were taken at the Great Lakes Winery of the back paddock where the music days, functions etc are held and the view across to the vineyard showing the flooding before the wild Friday night. On Saturday morning the back paddock was flooded up to the car park, Herivels Road under the highway was underwater . . . most of the time you don't even realise the river is there!



Wootton RFS

On behalf of the Wootton Brigade I was presented with the Mayor's Award for the Brigade's service to the community on Australia Day. It was a moving ceremony evoking the true meaning of Australia's commitment to mateship, a fair go and helping each other to make a better Australia for us all.



With the recent rain fires have been minimal but all this growth will be dry next spring and summer so please consider joining the brigade. We are short of special peoples so that training courses can be run. The next basic training course will be during school hours rather than the usual weekend.

An on-going rat problem left us without a response vehicle in January. Both vehicles are now back in the shed but we need to address the rat problem.

Many thanks to the members that cleared the fallen branches after the storm.

Training: Sunday April 7 and Sunday May 5 at 10am at the fire shed

Meeting: Sunday May 26 at 10am at the fire shed.

Roger Albans (Captain) 4997 7166 after hours

Great Lakes Catchment Management Meeting

The over-riding plan that covers the Great Lakes is the Great Lakes Water Quality Improvement Plan. Then there are sub-plans that look after specific sections of the local government area. In the past there were two plans for Wallis Lake: one relating to the lake itself and corresponding coast and estuary and the other relating to its catchment. The Great Lakes Coast and Estuary group oversaw the implementation of the estuary plan and the Catchment Group oversaw the implementation of the Catchment Plan. As the activities in both plans were generally similar the Council has decided to produce an overall plan for Wallis Lake, its estuary, coast and catchment to replace these two plans. I think this makes a lot of sense.

At previous meetings we have worked with Prue Tucker from Council to assist in defining values, objectives and so on. Prue had also held similar meetings with the Estuary Group. However, in February she organized for the two groups to have a joint meeting where we would focus on work-shopping actions to meet the agreed objectives for the new plan.

Objectives focus around water quality (point sources, groundwater, landuse, acid sulphate soils, erosion, unsealed roads, urban pollutants, septic waste, gross pollutants), ecosystem health (biodiversity, locally significant native vegetation, wildlife corridors, fish passages, terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, riparian vegetation, aquatic vegetation, wetlands, climate change) and community wellbeing (recreational and commercial fishing, ecological sustainability, aesthetic and cultural values, recreational waterway use, oyster aquaculture, public foreshore areas, dredging, sustainable landuse).

I was lucky enough to be in a group where we looked at the community wellbeing objectives where I had my eyes opened to the challenges of the commercial fishers and tourism operators on the lake. Did you know that when you are boating on Wallis Lake you should be very careful about anchoring? When anchors are allowed to shift you will damage the seagrass beds that are important for the fish nurseries and of course, therefore for the sustainability of both the commercial and recreational fishers. Obvious when you think about it!

Caro Badcock , (Chair, Great Lakes Catchment Management Group)

Wootton Hall Happenings

Upcoming events for your diaries:

6 April 2013—join us for a combined working bee at the hall

29 June 2013—\$5 per person, bring a plate dinner

28 September 2013—**Come (Back) to Wootton Day.** If anyone has contact details for those that have left Wootton please share the information with them.

Grants: The windows have been ordered.

I attended the grant presentation ceremony at the Council chambers in February for the new sign. There were 30 applications, 14 successful. It was interesting to hear what other groups obtained funding for. Groups ranged from fire brigades wanting audio visual equipment for training purposes to community kindergartens for safety fencing.

Thanks to Robyn Cheers for donating two heritage table cloths and Michael (K) and Alex for slashing the horse paddock and removing rubbish..

Caro Badcock (Chair): 4997 7337



Coolongolook Wootton Action Group (CWAG)

Groundwork has been set down over the past year towards achieving recognition and future goals as in the local Strategic Plan. The Plan, developed by locals and assisted by GLC representatives allows for desirable outcomes for our Environment, Economy and

Communities. Although the wheels of Government move slowly we have those who make the decisions working with us on issues we wish to pursue.

With our area covering three of the four main rivers feeding into the Wallis Lake system that run off from several Forests and areas of National Parks, our community is mostly environmentally conscious that we are an invaluable part of the Great Lakes system that I feel in the past has not received the recognition and support the area deserves.

Working with Local, State and Federal Government representatives is important but our greatest resource for achieving our goals and maintaining our position comes from the people within our community.

Over the past year CWAG's contribution to the area has been;

- The Community Information Brochure funded by local business owners and delivered to all mailboxes in the area.
- Community Strategic Plan for the "Coolongolook, Wang Wauk & Wallingat Rivers Catchment Plan" (This can be viewed on G.L.C's website),
- Christmas Party at Coolongolook Hall,
- Considerable time given to the Coolongolook Oval: mowing, maintenance and tree planting sometimes assisted by Coolongolook School children.

We are presently collecting information for a page on the GLC tourism website after having workshops with Richard Old and also information on local public transport availability and timetables.

Many meetings were not very well attended but those who have shown an interest or attended meetings and events are greatly appreciated. If our work is to carry on we need to have the support of the community by better meeting attendances. Your interest and input is the stimulation for successful outcomes.

The A.G.M has been rescheduled for Thursday 16th May 2013, Please come along to the meeting . Everyone is welcome, refreshments are provided and it's free!

Wootton School History

In June 1919, Mr H Always, secretary of the Wootton Progress Association starts communicating with the Under Secretary of the Department of Education asking for a larger school and a teachers residence. Attendance is up over 50 but still in a room 20' x 9' (approx 6.5m x 3m)! The Department is skeptical, thinking the settlement is temporary so Mr Dun, Manager of Allen Taylor & Co Sawmills sends a letter stressing the stability of the region as regarding workforce and stating that they are planning to expand the sawmill. Subsequent communication takes place indicating how frustrated the community and teacher is with the progress of getting approval for the new building. Finally in December 1921 the Progress Association is informed that erection of the new building has been placed on the Building program for that financial year. The new building was finally completed mid October 1922, still a single room but could seat 52 with classes starting in November but no teacher's residence yet! Mr Higgins of Coolongolook successfully tendered to remove the old school building at a cost of £12.10 (12 pounds, 10 shillings) whereas Mr Arch Worth, Wootton only offered £10.

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Bulahdelah Tue 5:30pm/Fri 9:30am
janinesyoga@bigpond.com **0413 596543**

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Yoga with Janine in the Wootton Hall is proving extremely popular. Why don't you come and join in with the fun. Janine provides pose options suitable for the extreme novice through to those that wish to attempt poses with a much higher level of difficulty.

Yoga is held in the Hall during term time.
For more details see the advert above.