

Merry
Christmas

Happy
New Year!

WOOTTON VALLEY NEWS

DECEMBER 2012 - JANUARY 2013 NO 81

DISTRIBUTION 450 WOOTTON COOLONGLOOK
BUNGWAHL BUNYAH BULAHDELAH

Superb Bluewren *Malurus cyaneus*

(Also known as Fairywren or just Bluewren)
The male in breeding plumage has a striking bright blue forehead, ear coverts, mantle, and tail, with a black mask and black or dark blue throat. Non-breeding males, females and juveniles are predominantly grey-brown in colour; this gave the early impression that males were polygamous, as all dull-coloured birds were taken for females. It can be found in almost any area that has undergrowth for shelter,



grasslands with scattered shrubs, moderately thick forest, woodland, heaths, and domestic gardens. 14 cm long, it mainly eats insects, supplementing its diet with seeds. Recent research has found that the Fairy-wren chicks don't get fed unless they learn a password call from their mothers while still in the egg. They begin making their incubation call about 10 days after the eggs are laid and stop when the first hatches. When a cuckoo egg is laid among them it is exposed to the call - but they are not exposed to it as long as the wren eggs so it is harder to learn the signature call. Females also teach their mate and any helpers their unique password by singing it to them away from the nest. Parents and others attending the nestlings will only feed them if their begging calls contain the learned password. Otherwise, the parents simply abandon the nest and start again. (Information from the Daily Telegraph and Wikipedia)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday 8th December	Supper & Movie "Joyeux Noel" Brush Turkey Cafe 6pm
Friday 21st December	CWAG & Coolongolook School Xmas Party 5.30pm Coola Oval
Saturday 22nd December	Wootton Community Xmas Party Community Centre 4pm
Saturday 12th January	Supper & Movie "Ghost Town" Brush Turkey Cafe 6pm
Thursday 17th January	CWAG Meeting 6.30pm Coola Hall
Sunday 20th January	Wootton Fire Brigade Meeting 10am
Saturday 26th January	"Australia Day" Community Dinner Brush Turkey Cafe 7pm
Saturday 2nd February	Wootton Community Network Meeting Brush Turkey Cafe 4pm

'Wave on Wootton Way'



Wootton Community Christmas Party

4pm, Saturday 22nd December 2012

To be held outside on the
Community Centre Grounds
Bring a plate, BYO, BBQ provided
(bring something to BBQ)

Children's activities, tennis, music, Santa
Everyone welcome!!! No charge!!!

Hosted by the Wootton Hall Committee, Wootton Community
Network, Wootton Fire Brigade and the Wootton Weeders



Brush Turkey Cafe is Open again on Sundays

9am for breakfast to 4pm. Thanks to all the volunteers. If anyone would like to help call Fran on 49977323

Wootton Community Network

"Wave on Wootton Way" At our last meeting it was agreed that we could promote community and 'friendliness' in Wootton by waving to each other as we drive along Wootton Way. Many already do this but how about waving to people you don't even know?

Community Dinners

The Oktoberfest was another fantastic meal

with some delicious German fare. Thanks to all the cooks, Pat, Pam, Fran, Robyn, Stuart, Lynne, Jim and everyone that came in the kitchen and helped clean up!



Bernard in the kitchen

The Pizza and Lasagne night was another great community turnout with Jim manning the pizza oven brilliantly. Thanks to Craig for the garlic bread, Jim for the pizzas, Fran, Pat & Ella for the delicious lasagnes and cannelloni, Leanne for the trifle and beautiful fruit salad and Craig & Pat for the orange and Grand Marnier dessert pizzas.

Also thanks to all that helped in the kitchen (too many to mention), with salad making and washing up.

Saturday 26th January, 7pm "Celebrate Australia Day"

\$20 per person Bookings: 49977323, 49977292

Movie & Supper Nights In November we had a big roll up for "The Best Exotic Mari-gold Hotel" and enjoyed some wonderful Indian food. Thanks to Karen, Fran, Jim, Pat, Julie, Peter for the food and everyone who helped clean up. Please make sure you book!

Thankyou Dennis & Margaret Dobson, Fran & Jim O'Connor, Craig & Pat Tate, Judy Hammond and Ian Dobson for all the jobs achieved at the working bee at the cafe.



Keith, Karen, Bernard and Mike enjoying the trivia at the German night

'Wave on Wootton Way'

Congratulations

Sylvie and Patrick Riviere on the arrival of their new grandson, Oliver, born on the 10th November 2012, a brother for Alexander. Also Congratulations to the proud parents, Sylvie's and Patrick's son Peter and daughter-in-law Athena.

Robyn Lamond on her appointment as chair of the Karuah/Great Lakes Landcare.



Supper and Movie Nights

6pm Supper, 7pm movie \$10

Brush Turkey Café Wootton Way Wootton

Remember to book: 49977323 or 49977292

8th December "Joyeux Noel" A film about the World War I Christmas truce of December 1914, depicted through the eyes of French, Scottish and German soldiers

12th January "Ghost Town" Bertram Pincus is a man whose people skills leave much to be desired.

When Pincus dies unexpectedly, but is miraculously revived after seven minutes, he wakes up to discover that he now has the annoying ability to see ghosts. A romantic, fantasy comedy starring Ricky Gervais, Greg Kinnear & Tea Leoni



Wootton Rural Fire Brigade

Next meeting: Sunday 20th January 2013, 10.00am at the Fire Shed in Squires Road.

Permits issued on Thursdays by Mike (4997 7337) so you can give Fire Control and your neighbours the required 24 hrs notice. If Mike is not available contact Keith on 4997 7336.

By now most people would have either watched on TV or heard on radio the "Planning to make a plan is not a plan" advertising campaign. So did you make your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**, how about you go and do it now? After all nobody that is reading the Wootton Valley News could answer NO to these five questions.

- Do you live within a few streets of the bush?
- Does your area have a history of bush fires?
- Do you have many trees or shrubs around your home?
- If you need to leave your home, would you need to travel through bushland?
- Is your Bush Fire Survival Plan more than one year old?

Two great resource are:

http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/file_system/attachments/Attachment_BushFireSurvivalPlan.pdf

http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/dsp_content.cfm?cat_id=1150

Many thanks and I hope to see you all in the New Year having survived another Australian Summer.

Roger Albans (Captain, 49977166)

'Wave on Wootton Way'

Wootton in the 1950's

I recently met up with Gaye Houkamau and her two brothers Glen and Mark McDean, who were staying at the **Wootton Guest House**. They had come together from interstate and overseas for a trip down memory lane, visiting Wootton, Coolongolook and surrounding areas. They had lived in Wootton and Coola as kids. Their parents were Ken and Elsie McDean.

Gaye started her schooling in Wootton, her teacher was Bob Allen and she remembers that it was his first year of teaching. The principal at the time was Mr Reynolds. There were two classrooms of children. The

younger siblings were all christened in the Wootton Church.

Gaye remembers Fancy Dress Parades at the Wootton Hall, where she dressed as Little Bo Peep when she was about eight. Glen was dressed as a pirate and another time as a baker. This was in the early 1950's. They lived in a house in the village in what is now Worth's Lane and her Dad and Uncle Herbert ran the mill in Wootton. Their grandmother, 'Ma', had 2 families, a Squires family and a McDean family living in Boolambayte. After her first husband's death she married John McDean and had 6 children. Gaye's father, Ken, grew up in Boolambayte. The old house at Boolambayte had a well in the yard and Gaye remembers the kids were always told not to go near the well. Of course the first thing they did was head to the well, the second to the chook house to collect the eggs. Ma was not happy when they collected the china eggs and sent them tramping through the paddock to put them back.

The family moved to Coolongolook in the mid 50's where their Dad worked for Engels and then Nosworthys. When the family moved to Coolongolook they lived in a mill house down by the river, where all the kids who were old enough learnt to swim and swing from the trees on Midge Island. Ken had a logging accident at Ken and Ern Newman's sawmill in Bulahdelah when Gaye was 12 and as a result spent a long time in hospital in Newcastle, where the family finally settled in the early 60's.

Glen said he would often stay with his Uncle and Aunt, Herbert and Doris McDean, in Wootton. He remembers one time, when he was a young boy; he sold mushrooms on the side of the highway, opposite the church in Wootton. They made up a sign and Doris dropped him off and picked him up. Glen loved it and made some money to boot.

Gaye can remember sitting on the bank on the side of the road in Wootton, near the school, watching the "Redex Trials", the cars flying by. It was 1951, 1952.



The main road through Wootton in 1953
(Dept of Main Roads - Trove website)

'Wave on Wootton Way'

She said it seemed like Wootton was full of either Squires or McDeans. Mayberry's shop was in Worth Street. When they moved on Ivy and Owen Ireland bought the shop. Squire's shop was on the highway. Her great Auntie Ede and Uncle Bill McDean had the Post Office. They also had the telephone exchange and it was said that you could always tell when Uncle Bill was plugged in because you could hear him breathing. Their Dad's Uncle Albert lived near the school, where they would cut through the paddock to get to school. His son, Ernie(Rudd) lived next door to them. He had a wooden leg and a glass eye and Gaye can remember sitting on the verandah watching him change his leg and put his eye in. The lasting effect of that was that she never went into nursing. Another of Uncle Albert's sons, Cedric, lived by Mayberry's shop and he had identical twins Gary and Trevor. So there were many siblings and cousins to get into mischief with. The Squires' shop had little buildings behind it with dirt floors where the tramps and swaggies used to stay. The little sheds had slatted benches where they would sleep. There were lots of tramps, and gypsies as well, and the kids were continuously told 'not to go near them'.

Gaye vaguely remembers a young girl was burnt to death in Wootton when she stood too close to an open fire in her dressing gown. It was the early 50's and she seems to think the girl's name was Avril someone.

There were lots of dances in the Wootton and Coola halls. They had a beer tent and when the men sometimes drank too much the young boys danced with their mothers. "Things in those days were so simple. We had a kerosene fridge. Our house (the mill-house) had no ceiling, you could see the trusses, which would send shadows at night from the kerosene lamp. Washing was done in the copper. On Saturday we would have a bath with water boiled in the copper in the back yard. Dad put up a piece of masonite as a door. Mum had a clothes' prop to hold up the washing and with 7 kids there was plenty of washing and it was always breaking. When you went to the dunny you went down with a stick and hit it in case there was a snake inside."

Gaye and Glen thought Wootton village had changed quite a bit from when they lived there in the fifties. Mark was only a small child when they left so had no memory of Wootton at all, but found the history quite interesting. Whilst all the houses remain and Gaye can still remember who lived where, the one distinct change was the beautiful trees by the bridge. 'One used to be able to see right through to Aunty Bertha Newman's place'. It had been decades since any of the family had visited the village but said they would certainly, in the future, make it a necessary stop whilst travelling in the area.

'We look forward to the wonderful hospitality of Leanne and Peter at the Wootton Guest House in the future.

Who would have thought in the 50's that Wootton would have such a wonderful attraction.'



Pat

Attis Squires outside her shop on the highway in Wootton.

'Wave on Wootton Way'

Great Lakes Catchment Management Group

The November meeting of the group was held in Bulahdelah and started with a working group session to comment on the wording of some sections in the new Wallis Lake Management plan that combines the current catchment and estuary plans.

The draft Catchment Action Plan developed for the Hunter-Central Rivers CMA of which we are a part of is available at http://www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?section_id=58 . Unfortunately comments were to be provided by November 30 but I am sure if you find anything you feel strongly about you can still submit them.

The other item that was discussed at some length was the changes being made to the CMA, the DPI and the LHPA. By January 2014 these three groups will be combined into the new Local Land Services who are tasked with delivering locally prioritized services including agricultural advice, plant and animal pest control and biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency and disaster assessment and response. Obviously in the short term this means job losses and movement of staff but, as usual, we are being told that in the end it will all be worth it! There is also talk that the current LHPA levy will be expanded!

There are interesting discussions on the creation of this body on the internet, eg a story Local Land Services on the ABC <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201211/s3638783.htm> and Have your say on Local Land Services model in The Land online <http://theland.farmonline.com.au/news/state/agribusiness/general-news/have-your-say-on-local-land-services-model/2635155.aspx> .

The most important website is <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/locallandservices> where the new service is described and there is a link to the Have your say website if you want to comment. Please feel free to do so as it was determined by our group that we could not provide any group response because of the conflict of interest by the agencies; we would need to provide individual comment.

Caro Badcock (Chair)

Coolongolook Wootton Action Group (C.W.A.G.)

Initiators of the " Wang Wauk , Coolongolook & Wallingat Rivers Catchment Communities" Strategic Plan that can be viewed on G.L.C. website.

The Christmas Party for 2012 will be a little bit different. CWAG and Coolongolook School will be having their celebration on Friday 21/12/2012 starting at 5.30 at Coolongolook Oval. In the spirit of Christmas it will be a fundraiser for 'LOOK GOOD--FEEL BETTER' an organisation supported by Kerryanne Kennelly to assist with the cosmetic appearance of cancer sufferers. Everyone is invited and bring your friends. Activities will be:

- Five Coolongolook Primary students will be relinquishing their long hair on the night to donate to make wigs for cancer patients.
- Christmas songs performed by Coolongolook School children.
- Hunter Valley Zoo will generously be the major attraction with a reptile display that will include an alligator. The Zoo will also have some children friendly farm animals.
- Barbecue/Chocolate Wheel/Raffle

Santa will attend and bring lolly bags for the children but his usual gifts will be delivered on Christmas morning. Watch for posters closer to Friday 21st.

CWAG is actively pursuing items on our Strategic Plan and have attended meetings with NSW State member Steve Bromhead and G.L.C management.

'Wave on Wootton Way'

Wootton Hall Happenings

Since the September dinner the hall has been hired out for a weekend of martial arts training.

Another activity has seen me visiting the NSW State Archives to view and copy various documents pertaining to the school. It is a fascinating exercise and I plan to provide copies of these documents in the hall and excerpts here.



In February 1912 the formal application to create a school in Wootton was completed by the Department of Public Instruction. The school was to be a half-time school with Mayers Flat. To be a half-time school each school was required to have at least 10 students and the teacher would split their time between the two sites. Can you imagine travelling between Wootton and Mayers Flat twice a week in 1912?

The Wootton children guaranteed to attend were William, Vira and Elsie Poynter, Clarence French, James Schlemert, Alexander and Herbert Worth, May Wilmot and Nellie Worth (who was only a baby at that time). Ages ranged from 5 to 14 and they lived at least 6 miles from the nearest school. Wootton School would be 1/8th mile or 1 furlong away (ie approximately 200m). In March 1912 four acres of land was obtained by the Department from one of the Worth brothers on a peppercorn lease and 40.00 granted to build a school. In May 1912 the building of 20'x 16' (approx 6m x 4.8m) was completed and the school appeared to open in September with the appointment of the first principal, Chas Harrison. Unfortunately the Admissions Book starts at 1921 so we cannot confirm the students that attended prior to that. However, the Punishment Book reports that Vira Poynter was the only child in 1912 to receive one stroke of the stick for telling lies and refusing to tell her letters. She was only 10 years old! In 1913 Leslie Poynter and Clarence French each received 6 cuts of the ruler for inking each other's face – they were 6 and 7 years old!

What we have missed is the opportunity to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Wootton School site! So, next year we plan to have a special Back to Wootton Day where we will have a belated birthday celebration.

Caro Badcock

C.W.A.G cont. I am impressed with G.L.C'S encouragement for community members to be involved and proactive in Council's decisions affecting local communities but surprised that very few people choose to show any interest and attend the meetings of GLC Managers that come to our local areas. Our communities have access and assistance from various Council departments but seldom take advantage of access to the higher level decision makers. Become aware of your community's Strategic Plan. Nabitac / Wang Wauk, Coolongolook & Wallingat Rivers Catchment Communities/ Bulahdelah and Stroud Strategic Plans are on the Council Website. One initiative available at present is: "Council is seeking feedback from the community on review of the community strategic plan Great Lakes Council 2030" info on http://www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au/Hot_Topics_Directory/Community_Participation.

CWAG 's next community meeting will be Thursday 17th Jan 2013 6.30 Coola Hall
Brian Parry[Pres] 65591671 Jeni Locke [Sec] 49977334 Ola Murtagh [Treas] 49977402

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We are changing from financial year to calendar year so when you pay you are paid up to 30.12 2013 (6 months free!)
\$50 for Non-members,
\$40 Members - per 4 line ad space
(Please note we are no longer registered for GST)
These businesses support this newsletter. Please support them wherever possible.

**New advertisers welcome
contact the editor.**



The Noisy Friarbird
singing the praises of Wootton