

WOOTTON VALLEY NEWS

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BUNGWAHL BUNYAH BULAHDELAH

FEATHER TAIL GLIDER *Acrobates aculeatus*

The feather tail glider is the world's smallest gliding possum and is named for its remarkable tail, long and flat with stiff fringed hair growing horizontally either side all the way to the tip. The size of a very small mouse (65 to 80 mm and 10 to 14 g), it can leap and glide up to 25 metres. Being so small they have trouble staying warm when cold or when food is short and enter a state known as Torpor, where their breathing slows down and body temperature drops. Their fur is grey/brown above with light cream to white abdomen. Like all gliders they have a skin fold known as the gliding membrane. In Feather tails it extends from the elbow to the knee, fringed with long hair along the edge, the body surface is increased. When stretched out, the glider can float long distances, like a falling leaf. To become airborne, they hurl themselves from a tree with legs outstretched, the flap of skin between front and back feet extending like a parachute. The flattened tail helps this tiny possum to glide, steer, brake and anchor itself on landing. Their feet resemble a frogs with fur, allowing them to climb just about anything. They are found throughout all of Eastern Australia. They will build their nests in anything from abandoned bird's nests to banana bags and line the nest with leaves, feathers and shredded bark. It feeds on insects, pollen and nectar. Their life expectancy is 4 years in the wild. The feather tail glider was featured on the Australian 1 cent, until it was withdrawn from circulation in 1991. The 1 cent coins, along with the 2 cent coins, were later melted down to make bronze medals for the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Friday 1st February	Art viewing 'H.Fish', wine & nibbles Brush Turkey Cafe 6pm
Saturday 2nd February	Wootton Community Network Meeting Brush Turkey Cafe 4pm
Sunday 3rd February	Wootton RFS Training Fire Shed 10am
Thursday 7th February	Yoga classes start Wootton Hall 9.30am
Saturday 9th February	Movie & Supper Brush Turkey Café 6pm
Saturday 23rd February	Community Dinner "Mexican" Brush Turkey Café 7pm
Sunday 3rd March	Wootton RFS Training Fire Shed 10am
Saturday 9th March	Movie & Supper Brush Turkey Café 6pm
Saturday 30th March	Community Dinner "Bring-a-plate" Wootton Hall 7pm

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WOOTTON COMMUNITY NETWORK

Next meeting of the Wootton Community Network will be Saturday 2nd February at 4pm. Come a little earlier for afternoon tea, provided. All are welcome. This is primarily a *community* organization and the more people involved the more it can reflect community needs. The Brush Turkey Cafe is its main fundraiser and meeting place. It is open every Sunday from 9am to 4pm. Thanks to all the volunteers who run this. Welcome to the new volunteers, Mandy, Peter, Megan and Brian and Robyn who bring their expertise direct from running the popular Wallambah Cafe in NABIAC. Come just for a cappuccino, a full breakfast, lunch or to sample the home made cakes. The lemon myrtle cheesecake is still on the menu, thanks to Caro and Judy.

The movies for the next couple of months are "The Sapphires" in February and "Salmon Fishing in the Yemen" in March. These are on the second Saturday of every month, 6pm for a light supper and 7pm for the movie. If you have any suggestions for a movie (and have the DVD at home) let Jim know on 49977323. Also, if you would like to help with some food, let us know.

The community dinners are always on the last Saturday of every month, 7pm. January's dinner is an Australia Day feast at the Brush Turkey Cafe. February's dinner will be Mexican at the Brush Turkey Cafe. Book by calling 49977323 or 49977292.

March's dinner will be organised by the Hall Committee, a 'bring-a-plate' (with food on it) and held in the Wootton Community Hall (the old school). Book with Caro on 49977337.

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

9th February "The Sapphires"

It's 1968, and four young, talented Australian Aboriginal girls learn about love, friendship and war when their all girl group The Sapphires entertain the US troops in Vietnam. Stars Chris O'Dowd, Deborah Mailman, Jessica Mauboy



9th March "Salmon Fishing in the Yemen"

A fisheries expert is approached by a consultant to help realize a sheik's vision of bringing the sport of fly-fishing to the desert and embarks on an upstream journey of faith and fish to prove the impossible possible. Stars Emily Blunt and Ewan McGregor

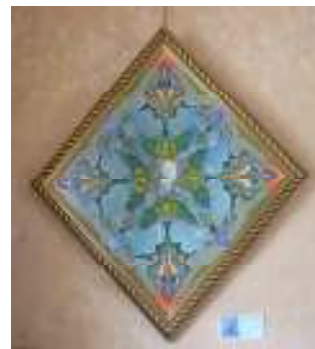
Wootton Community Christmas Party

The Xmas party was a lovely night with lots of wonderful food and people. The atmosphere was festive and friendly and it is hoped to make it a regular event on the last Saturday before Christmas every year.



Brush Turkey Cafe exhibits artwork of Wootton local and international artist H.Fish

Wootton is privileged to be able to view the artwork of 'H.Fish' at our local community run cafe, the Brush Turkey Cafe. Australian Artist Barry Pressing, known as "H.Fish" was born in California in 1948. "When the cutting edge of Art shifted from Europe to New York in the late 1950's I was still young, but from my earliest memories I have been passionate about art and it's place in my life. My early influences came from Abstract Impressionism and beat poetry. Jackson Pollock, who instigated American abstract expressionism along with Ginsburg and Kerouac, through the written word, fed "a need to know".



During the 1950's and 60's I was fortunate enough to be involved in the early mix of American counter cultures of surf art, chopper and Hot Rod fabrication and illustrating underground comics. I count Ed Roth as an inspiration, Von Dutch as mentor and Rick Griffin as a friend. In 2003 I re-located to Australia and am now proud to call Australia 'home'. The results of this move has produced a huge body of work in a wide range of styles. To define my style is difficult, but suffice to say, it is a body of two and three dimensional work which ranges from life size bronze sculptures, paintings, murals and Tromp L'oreil to detailed pen and ink line drawings." Contact Lotus Retreat for viewings of major body of work on 0422 977 977 The community is invited to view the artwork and enjoy some wine and nibbles on Friday 1st February, 6pm at the Brush Turkey Cafe.

New Yoga Classes Start at Wootton

(Wootton Hall, 9.30 am Thursdays starting February 7, \$10 per class)

Janine Lee moved to Bulahdelah in July 2011 with her husband and two young children. They moved from Sydney for a "tree change" and are enjoying living in a small country town with a strong sense of community.

She currently teaches 2 classes per week in Bulahdelah and occasionally also teaches in Hawks Nest and Nahiack. She's looking forward to starting a new weekly class in Wootton to be held on Thursdays at 9:30am. Classes will be suitable for all experience levels, including beginners. Janine teaches Purna Yoga which aims to integrate pranayama (breathing techniques), asanas (physical positions) and mindful relaxation. Classes focus on improving strength, flexibility, balance, joint mobility, breathing and relaxation....and having fun and feeling good!

Janine loves teaching yoga and how yoga offers something different to each individual. Some people come for exercise, some for a social outing, some come for savasana (relaxation). She loves seeing people walk out of a yoga class glowing and re-energised, and hopes that the Wootton community will embrace the opportunity to practise yoga together.

Wootton Hall Happenings

Upcoming Events for your diaries:

30 March 2013 – \$5 per person, bring-a-plate dinner. (We know it is Easter so bring your visitors)

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

28 September 2013 – Come (Back) to Wootton Day. In the past there have been Back to Wootton Days where current residents and those who have moved on join in for a day of festivities. This year we would like to extend and encourage visitors to Wootton to help us celebrate. Stay tuned for further details of the event as the day gets closer. If anyone has any ideas of what could happen on the day or would like to volunteer to assist in any way please contact Caro.

Grants:

We have successfully obtained two grants. The first is under the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal that has a Small Grants for Small Communities programme. The grant provides funds towards replacing the windows in the wall of the hall facing Wootton Way. The rest of the costs will be met from the funds raised through the bring-a-plate dinners. Volunteers have offered to remove the old windows, install the hardware, hang the new windows and then paint.

The second is through the Great Lakes Council's Community Grants Program where we submitted a proposal, with supporting letters from the Wootton Community Network and the Wootton fire brigade, to construct a large sign where each group would be able to advertise their events and other information. A cheque presentation ceremony will be organized by the Council during February.

Wootton Hall Happenings cont.

Wootton School History

In November 1916 the report from the inspector to the Chief Inspector notes that Wootton had 25 students enrolled with 17.1 in attendance on average across the previous two quarters; Mayer's Flat School had 14 enrolled and present and Violet Hill 10 enrolled with an average of 8.4 present. His recommendations were that Wootton School, currently a Half Time School with Mayer's Flat, be made provisional and Violet Hill be reduced to a half time school with Mayer's Flat. The recommendation was approved the same month and so Wootton became a Provisional Public School from January 1917. The Department of Education website describes a Provisional School as one, from 1867 that could be established with at least 15 children but fewer than 25 that were required for a Public School. Although the Department provided some or part of the cost of the building, parents often met most of the cost. The Department paid the teacher and supplied books and equipment. Gradually they became simply small public schools and in 1957 the remaining ones were converted to Public Schools.

Isabel Martin was the Principal or main teacher at the time; she was the fifth Principal in the short time the school had been open. The other principals had stayed for six months to two years (Chas Harrison September 1912 to April 1914, Arthur Lean May 1914 to April 1915; J Sullivan April 1915 to June 1916, John Shepherd, July 1916 to January 1917).

From 1914 to 1916 there were a number of students punished, some being repeat offenders! In July 1914 Vira and Elsie Poynter and Clarence and Percy French, all around 10 years old were given 1 stroke of the stick by Arthur Lean for indecent manners. No incidents were recorded for August or September. In October Elsie and Leslie Poynter, Peter and Clarence French and Alex Chauncey were given 1 stroke of the stick for refusing to answer questions. In 1915 Percy French was given 1 stroke of the stick by J Sullivan for drinking out of the top of the water tank; Leslie Poynter was given 2 strokes for impudence in August and 2 strokes for disobedience in November along with William Bussey and Clarence French; Clarence was also given 2 strokes for indecent language in September, and 1 stroke in December, along with his brother Percy for playing on the road until very late for school! In 1916 the same culprits surfaced with Percy French getting 2 strokes in January for indecent language, Clarence French getting 1 stroke in February for scribbling on the slate during a reading lesson, William Bussey and Clarence French getting 1 stroke in March for fighting with bread at the lunch recess. Clarence also received 2 strokes in September for playing down at the store one afternoon in school hours. The following day Leslie Poynter was given 1 stroke for impudence. In 1917 under Isabel Martin's tenure an inspector found that no corporal punishment had been required which was 'very creditable'.

Caro Badcock

Why I came to Wootton by Judy Hammond

I was very content living in Perth. I enjoyed swimming and surfing during the weekends over summer at Trigg Beach which is well known for its big waves. I also enjoyed gardening to the point where I was planting lobelia in the cracks of the paving. Rogaining weekends took me to various parts of the countryside in WA where I could hike through countryside that I would normally not have access to – farmlands and state forest areas not open to the general public. (Rogaining is a bit like orienteering, but harder) However, I began to have a yearning for something more than a life in suburbia and decided in 2007 on a five year retirement plan so that I would be prepared when that time came.

I thought that I would enjoy living much closer to the beach in our retirement and thus spent several weekends looking at houses with ocean views, because what's the point of living near the ocean if there is no view. But, upon returning home each evening I noticed the car was covered with a fine salt spray. So I crossed ocean views off my wish list. Next I decided that I would like some acreage to satisfy my gardening urges. There were quite a few six and 7 acre plots available on the outskirts of Perth suburbs but they were very barren looking and a bore needed to be sunk with water use monitored and the licence revoked if too much bore water was used. Not for me. A holiday was required so that I could drive inland to check out properties in the wheat belt (too dry and isolated), then on south to Esperance and Albany (stunning places but too cold in winter) and then up the west coast (way, way too expensive – because of the likes of Margaret River, Busselton and Mandurah being so popular for Baby Boomers, surfers and wine buffs).

Where to now? Having once lived in Sydney my mind drifted across to the delights of the east coast, the Blue Mountains, the beaches and the lush, green countryside. After much discussion with family I decided to have a look at properties north of Sydney where the winters wouldn't be too cold. At last, a real reason for using the internet! There were lovely places on the internet - Coolongolook, Dyers Crossing, Lake Cathie, and others on the outskirts of Wingham and Port Macquarie.

Another holiday was in the making – just to look, NOT buy, as I was nowhere near ready to retire let alone move interstate. Airfares were booked, Real Estate Agents booked and a car and unit in Forster provided by friends made my next holiday an adventure of a lifetime.

Jeff Carrier was my first agent as I decided to work my way up the coast. He showed me a very beautiful 5 acre property in Wootton (never heard of the place and it was not on my itinerary) with terraced gardens, fenced vegie patch, and lots of wildlife, particularly birds. Magnificent, I thought. This must be the tip of the iceberg. Let's move on and find something even better. Jeff showed me a couple more lovely properties around Coolongolook and Dyers Crossing and up Markwell Road but none were as attractive as my first stop in Wootton.

And so I looked further north, up near Port Macquarie, with a different agent each day. Some places had lovely homes but undeveloped land, others had quite lovely land but old, musty homes. Back to Wootton for another look at what I realised was not the tip of the iceberg but rather the whole iceberg as far as I was concerned. As I wandered around the property again, looking at the blueberry bushes, the fruit trees and rather lovely looking dam I had a radical change to my five year plan. It became my five minute plan. I had to have this property and have it now. Deposits were made, contracts signed and planes were boarded, all in five days. This happened in May 2007. Over the next couple of months my house in Perth was sold and the furniture packed. On August 23 2007 I resigned from work, jumped in the car and began my early retirement by driving across the countryside. On my way across the Nullarbor I stopped, took out a golf club and hit a couple of balls as far as I could into the scrub and drove on.

Judy's story cont.

I arrived in Wootton at about 9pm on August 30, 2007. The furniture arrived two weeks later. The previous owner, Angela Mason had left a bed and a small table and chairs so I 'camped out' in the house. Angela and her late husband had done a fantastic job with the landscaping and tree planting on the property so all I had to do for the first few months was enjoy the place.

I visited the Brush Turkey Café one afternoon a couple of weeks after I arrived where I met Fran and Jim O'Connor who were volunteering there. They were ever so friendly and, as I discovered over time, very typical of the many Wootton folk I have since met. John and Sue Smith organised a get-together at their place so that I could meet a lot of the locals. Names and faces were all spinning around in my head until I thought it would burst with information overload.

Then a month later I was invited to Eric and Monica Wilkes' place to celebrate Eric's birthday. Everyone was so friendly and welcoming. This was really paradise.

Wootton is a beautiful place with rolling green hills, meandering creeks, wonderful wildlife and friendly people. It feels like one big, long holiday. I have had a terrific 5 years here so far and plan to have many more.

Wootton RFS

What a dry summer we have been having compared to recent years! The brigade has been called to three major fires this summer where we provided crews for multiple shifts. The three major fires were Coomba Park/ Ferny Creek, Lockett's Crossing and Booti Booti/ Green Point. These three fires all threatened houses, property and live stock and many of the homes were only saved when the fire was extinguished at the back fence! Luckily there were no casualties.

With the continuing dry and hot summer there is a distinct possibility that serious fires could occur right up until mid March. So, please keep your properties prepared and update your fire plan.

On a happier note, the fire brigade attended the Wootton Community Christmas Party where the truck was the centre of attention delivering Santa and providing entertainment for the children i.e clambering all over it and having a go with the hoses.

We are always on the lookout for new members. Anyone interested should contact the Captain, Roger Albans on 4997 7166.

Training: First Sunday of each month, 10am Wootton fire station, Squires Rd

Meetings: Third Sunday of every third month, 10am; next meeting April 21.



The billowing smoke of the Ferny Creek Fire, photo taken from Wattle Hill Road by Leanne.

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COOLA' & WOOTTON SINGING FOR FUN

I am trying to get a group of people together who like to sing. You don't have to be good. It would be singing for fun, health and wellbeing. If you can play the piano we want you too. If you are interested please ring Pam on 49977156

