



Bulletin

COUNTRY LIVING in Queanbeyan and Palerang

Bless the animals and goodwill to all

We are delighted to salute a lovely tradition at some churches in the area to bless the animals at a ceremony that speaks to the kind child in all of us. These images come from the blessing ceremony at St Phillips Anglican in Bungendore in mid-November.

Our pets, perhaps most particularly dogs, but for some it's a cat, a horse, a bird, a sheep or a pig are our close companions and staunch supporters. We often think of them as our add-on children and grieve hugely when they pass away much sooner than we are likely to. This recently happened, so unexpectedly, with much-loved Kula seen below making friends with visiting pig Priscilla at Maria Taylor's place.

Seen also at St Phillips, Felicity Brown of Bungendore with Merlin the horse; also the Morris family: Pete, Becc, Kristi and Cinda with furry friend Kozi; and Anne Elder with new rescue dog Tilda and, coming in for a look, George the sheep.

The Koala is one of the amazing pastel portraits from artist Catherine Lidden now showing at the Bungendore Fine Arts Gallery (more inside).



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OPTOMETRISTS and CONTACT LENS PRACTITIONERS

SHOP LOCAL and why it will make you smile this Christmas by Robin Tennant-Wood

THE arrival of another Christmas season is a good time to review how and where we spend our consumer dollars.

While online shopping is fast, convenient and allows for quick price comparisons for the thrifty shopper, it often comes with hidden drawbacks, such as postage or delivery costs and the question as to whether goods will actually arrive in time for Christmas.

Heading to the mall, for many, is about as appealing as taking a dip in the shark tank at Sydney Aquarium – and possibly less safe – but the advantage of finding everything under one tinsel-decked roof is undeniable.

Research is showing, however, that increasingly, shoppers are turning to their local high streets.

The economic benefits of shopping locally are well documented. While multi-

national chains write their own rules and often have negative impacts far beyond the sight of the individual consumer, local businesses can generate wealth in ways that are both equitable and sustainable.

Research in 2010 found that for every hundred dollars spent in a local bookstore, \$45 stayed in the local economy. Conversely, for every hundred spent at a chain bookstore, only \$13 stayed in the local community. The key differences are that local shops are owned and managed locally, are more likely to use local banking, accounting and legal firms, and local suppliers. Small businesses create local jobs and

this, in turn, puts more money back into the local economy.

When you shop locally, the person serving you at the counter is often the person who owns the shop. Their children go to the local school, they pay rates to the council and taxes to the government.

>> p4



via 9GAG.COM



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THE DISTRICT Bulletin
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Send letters and enquiries to:
media@districtbulletin.com.au
PO Box 302, Bungendore NSW 2621
Editor: Maria Taylor 0418 731 691

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Online Editor: Helen Hunter

Design, advertising and production:
Sue Van Homrigh
sue@graphicgesture.com.au

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New life for Turallo Creek

How regeneration on one property has turned dry watercourse around by Judith Turley



'Chain of ponds' watercourse rehabilitation of Turallo Creek undertaken by Dimity Davy and started with her late husband Bill. This was once a dry and eroded gully. Seen here, Mrs Davy with Lou, who came from Parramatta as a 'rescue dog' and loves the country.

ABOUT 200 visitors swarmed over the banks of Turallo Creek at 'The Gib' just outside Bungendore, when the Davy family opened their farm to the public on a Saturday in early November. People travelled from as far as the Southern Highlands, Sydney and even the US to this farm at the foot of Mt Gibraltar.

Many Bungendore villagers took advantage of a rare opportunity to explore the upper reaches of Turallo Creek, which trickles out of 'The Gib' and under the Kings Highway, then winds across paddocks before flowing through Bungendore and disappearing into Lake George.

Until recently the creek held water in only the wettest months. Most of the time it was a dry, barren gully.

Today it flows through Bungendore most of the year, thanks to creek regeneration work undertaken by Dimity Davy and her late husband Bill. Dimity has been carrying out erosion control works and tree-planting for most of her life.

Inspired by landscape thinker Peter Andrews' work in the Bylong Valley and nearby at Tony Coote's farm at Mulloon Creek, Mrs Davy set about repairing the eroded creek by slowing down run-off that rushed through her property after heavy rain.

using readily available and low cost materials: concrete, rocks, grass seed and water plants

She hoped to re-create the original healthy ecosystem, by building simple leaky weirs to slow and de-energise floodwaters, using readily available and low cost materials: concrete, rocks, grass seed and water plants.

Leaky weirs are part of the natural process of landscape formation. You can see them on a micro-scale if you observe water running over bare ground, such as a

garden path, during rain. The water carries debris (such as leaves, twigs and sediment) which is deposited at regular intervals, creating obstacles that the water must flow around thus slowing its pace. A pool and riffle pattern is established.

Today the creek is lush with thick swards of pasture grass, while thriving water plants such as reeds and rushes filter impurities from the water, and provide habitat for all kinds of creatures. Hundreds of trees have been planted in the rich alluvial soil.

Open Day visitors could see ducks, swallows and other native birds, hear the frog chorus and avoid the odd snake. They could ponder the ripples appearing in the ponds and muse on whether they were caused by fish, or by the resident water rat, or whether it could be a platypus.

Sharp-eyed observers have found the shells of freshwater mussels along the creek. Swallows have built mud nests on a steep bank.

The transformation of Turallo Creek at 'The Gib' has come about through hard physical work and a strong belief that our degraded landscapes can recover if we employ low-impact small-scale techniques that utilise natural resources such as rainfall, soil, biomass and solar energy. ■

Men's violence:

The only thing to forgive is the unforgiveable

by Graham Franklin-Browne

FIFTY-TWO [52]. It's a small number on a printed page isn't it? Two digits, almost insignificant against the daily billions of numbers our modern brains have to deal with – dollars spent fighting terrorism, tons of polluting carbon, et cetera.

Currently, it is a depressingly huge number, representing the number of Australian women who die each year at the hands of their so-called intimate partners – a figure that exceeds the annual casualty rate of our armed forces serving in combat zones.

Put another way, it represents the number of men each year who choose the death of their partner, and/or their children, as a final solution for the failure of their relationships.

Australian policy makers tend to blanket this darkness as 'domestic violence', which tidies it up a bit, and kind of puts it in a basket with football violence, or maybe a punch-up in the street.

Now that we are talking more freely about men's violence, we need to keep it in the open, and call it for what it is. It is about

Australian men abusing, and sometimes killing Australian women and children.

There is no doubt that we should be putting more funding into protecting our families. We need to properly resource programs and infrastructure for women and families escaping violence, and work to change malingering negative gender attitudes amongst young people.

However we also need resources for programs to assist thousands of men who wish to change their abusive behaviours, ways of being that are simply not going to go away unless negative established patterns can be modified.

Waiting lists on waiting lists for men's programs

Unfortunately, as for their victims, there are not many programs available, and they all have extensive waiting lists. David Lane, of the Men's Referral Service in Victoria confirms that they have over 700 men on their waiting list, and Clint Berry of BaptistCare acknowledges that there are similar queues in NSW.



STOCK PHOTO

assess the motivation, and likelihood of men continuing to cause harm to their families while in the program.

So what types of programs are available, and what approaches offer the most hope? Certainly, successful programs are not about anger management, and it is widely agreed that men's violence against women is more about power and control.

Whole-of-family best approach

Therefore, programs focussed on bringing about behavioural change, particularly through a whole-of-family approach, may offer the best outcomes, and Relationships Australia has conducted a number of recent studies confirming that successful outcomes for the family are not possible without first protecting the partner and the children.

Men typically enter with negative gender attitudes, extremely low self-esteem, issues around 'mastery' (the extent to which they feel in control of their lives), and psychological distress – often including post-traumatic disorders, depression, and alcohol or substance abuse. Conditions that mirror the traumas they are already inflicting on their families.

Most programs emphasise the primary importance of supporting and protecting the family, while getting men in groups to challenge their usual behaviours >> p5

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For love or money

AS THE YEAR rolls on to December and the Christmas season looms up I find myself in a contemplative frame of mind. The news of a Russian plane going down and recent events in Paris is enough to make me shake my old grey head in wonder.

What is the world coming to?

Closer to home Braidwood residents recently celebrated the *Reclaim the Night* campaign and more recently the PM encouraged us to honour the bravery of the victims of domestic violence.

To make sense of the direction in which we seem to be headed Braidwood can offer examples primarily prompted by the need to offer the gift of care and love on one hand and the lust for money on the other.

The many not-for-profit organisations set up over the past and more recent years allow our residents to benefit from a wonderful lifestyle full of interest, generosity and safety. And we still find reasons to establish new ones.

The Lions Club, Apex and Returned Soldiers, long established groups, look after, in the main, men's well-being and health. The Men's Shed and the Life Centre are relatively new but the *raison d'être* is the same.

Braidwood ROUNDS



with
Jill
McLeod

National theatre restoration

Ex-Seeker, Keith Potger's December 5 concert was the launching pad for the new National Theatre Restoration Fund. This follows the first attempt by six enthusiastic women to save the theatre from demolition in 1995.

But, recently, a tendency is creeping into the well-ordered calendar to take advantage of the successes of organisations that have worked hard over many years to provide entertainment, cultural activities and the celebration of our heritage values.

This unseemly activity falls into the category of both *Love and Money*. Arranging to hold a festival on the same day as a long-term successful event is conceived as a method to gain an increase in success. The usual result is the depletion of both.

Back in the days of the Tallaganda Council a record book was kept to avoid double-ups of weekend events. Perhaps Palerang Council should be encouraged to

re-instate it.

Money and amalgamation talk

And this brings us to Palerang Council and the amalgamation dilemma, a fairly good example of money governing the main game rather than what is the most satisfactory solution for ratepayers.

Palerang Council is one of 87 across NSW that have been declared 'Not Fit for the Future'. I am at odds with the Braidwood community in my belief that the best result would be for us to go with Queanbeyan.

Unfortunately Queanbeyan Councillors don't believe it would be a good fit either. I argue what council would knock back the opportunity of having a famous heritage listed town on their patch?

Our population rate base is too low, our road and plant maintenance costs are too high. There is not enough money to seal the deal.

My fortnightly radio interview with a Legislative Councillor in the NSW Parliament has led to a frustrated declaration that all the NSW LGA boundaries should be totally abandoned and we should start again from scratch!

But let's not dwell too much on our current dilemmas.

The joys of family Christmas gatherings are just around the corner and I wish all *District Bulletin* readers a relaxing and happy holiday. ■

SHOP LOCAL from p2

Personal contact also means that if they don't have what you want, they are more likely to be able to source it quickly through their local supply chain.

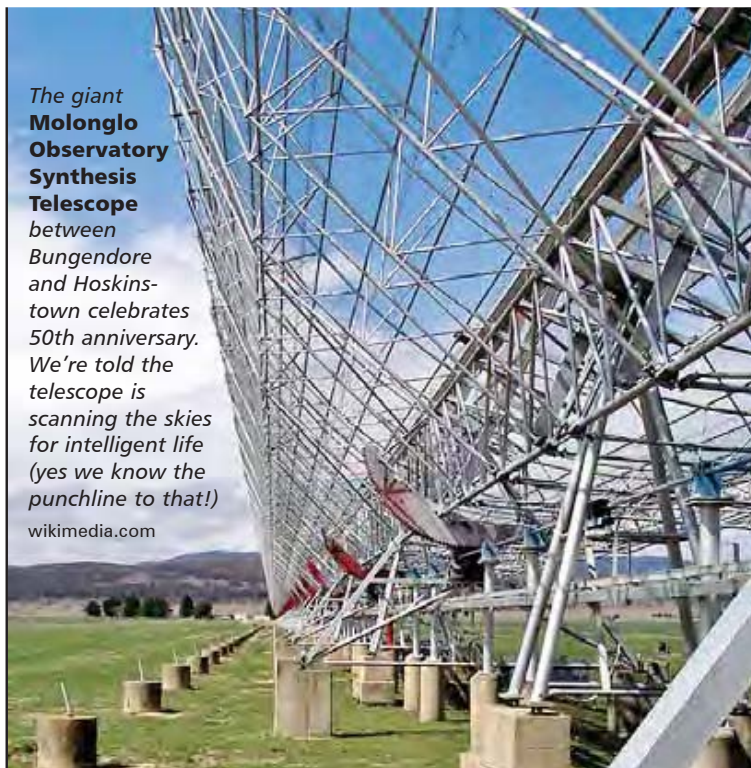
British economist and local economics advocate, Helena Norberg-Hodge, describes the difference between local and global consumption by saying that, "in the global economy it's as though our arms have become so long that we can't see what our hands are doing, but when the economy operates on a more human scale, we can see the impact of our choices".

Making a purchase online, while it has the advantage of convenience, will not create a single local job. The taxes paid by the online business will not provide schools or medical facilities in your area nor will you know whether the product has been sourced ethically or sustainably.

That trip to the mall might net you a car full of Christmas goodies in a single morning, but most of those goodies will be from stores with offshore parent companies that pay little or no tax in Australia. You'll also have *I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas* and/or *Frosty the Snowman* in your head for the next two days. Is it really worth it?

This festive season get with the growing local trend: farmers markets, local craftspeople, high street retailers. Shop local and have a great holiday season. ■

The giant Molonglo Observatory Synthesis Telescope between Bungendore and Hoskins-town celebrates 50th anniversary. We're told the telescope is scanning the skies for intelligent life (yes we know the punchline to that!)
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Changes to federal electorate boundaries

Palerang back intact; Gundaroo, Sutton under Eden-Monaro

The *Bulletin* asked the Mike Kelly campaign for confirmation that at the next federal election there would be boundary changes affecting our region. **Mike Kelly** responded with a few additional comments.

LAST month the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) published details of proposed boundary changes for electorates around NSW. Under the proposal, the electorate of Eden-Monaro will lose Batemans Bay and Moruya on the south coast and extend further west with the addition of Western Palerang, Gundaroo, Sutton, Murrumbateman, Yass, Tumut, Batlow and Tumbarumba.

A pleasing aspect of this redistribution is that all of Palerang is now included in Eden-Monaro ending the situation where areas of West Palerang sat in the Federal Electorate of Hume.

Having worked closely with communities on the western slopes I formed a real connection with that area and I have very much enjoyed engaging with people in the Yass Valley. There is no doubt, though, that the redistribution will make it harder to campaign with its sheer size and divided as it is by the ranges.

People in the Yass Valley are already telling me they are looking forward to the change because they feel they have been neglected by the Coalition at both state and federal level, being taken for granted as part of safe seats.

The Yass Valley is also facing similar issues to other parts of Eden-Monaro due to the Abbott/Turnbull Government cuts to the public service and the flow on effects to our local businesses.

What the proposed changes mean in terms of margins and electoral success are purely mathematical. I hope that people will vote for the candidate they believe will best represent them in the next term of government and who will earn their vote.

The AEC will finalise the electorate boundary changes in early 2016. For further information go to www.aec.gov.au/media/media-releases/2015/10-16.htm ■



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December 2015 *Bulletin*

Palerang going ahead with rate rise exercise

by Maria Taylor

WHILE waiting to hear the NSW verdict on forced amalgamation with Queanbeyan, (verdict promised before Christmas), Palerang councillors resolved 7-2 at their December meeting to proceed with the special rate variation exercise.

According to every councillor who spoke for going ahead, proposing some level of rate rise is required for Palerang's ability to 'stand alone'. That is, Palerang was assessed as financially fit subject to raising rates. The 'stand alone' stance was voted by Palerang at its November meeting.

Sample comments, reflecting the majority: Cockram: "If we don't follow the process we jeopardise the chance to stand alone."

France: "Fifty-one percent of the survey respondents think we should 'improve' (ie willing to raise rates). I don't like the idea of large rate increases but we're stuck with what we planned."

Hicks: "We only have two options, be financially viable or merge."

Harrison: "A rate rise (3-6%) will be inescapable in a merged council too. To change now would be suicidal. The big problem is lack of funding from bodies at other levels of government."

Councillors Marshall and Morrison dissented arguing that Palerang should wait and see on amalgamation first. A fear is that any rate rise might then be swallowed up by Queanbeyan projects. (See below for more on that).

SRV process from here on

The special rate variation (SRV) process from here is outlined on the facing page. In brief NSW requires that council notify IPART

(Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) by 11 December of its intention to apply for an SRV.

Council in its business paper said it would notify its intent to apply for the highest SRV option of 9.5% (normal annual increase 2.5% plus 7% special rate increase ongoing). This raised a small storm of social media outrage as people took it to mean that council just made a decision for a 9.5% rate increase.

However, council assured its members and anyone listening (as it happened only the *Bulletin*) that this is just procedural talk of intent to stay in the game, with a final decision on if and what rate increase to ask for not happening until the council meeting of 4 February.

Ratepayers have the opportunity between now and then to give further input to council on what their preferred level of rate increase is (from none to 7%). Also on what projects should be prioritised for spending the money if it goes ahead. A delivery plan has to be developed and it is monitored by IPART. An amalgamated or 'administered' council has to honour the plan, said the Palerang general manager.

The figures are in on the postal, phone and online survey of residents preferences regarding the SRV. Close to half the respondents wanted no rate rise at all and of the others, the preference went to a smaller than 7% rise. It breaks down as:

Phone survey 43.8% for nothing, 28.1%

for the smaller (4% plus 2.5%) rise and 9.5% for the proposed (7% plus 2.5%) rise, and the rest undecided. The mail-in results were 49.1%, 27.5% and 15.3%, respectively. The on-line results 50%, 19.5% and 18.3% respectively. ■

Where is the Member for Monaro on this?

Councillors who should know in both Palerang and Queanbeyan have told the *Bulletin* that they have not heard anything of late on the merger issue from the Member for Monaro John Barilaro, who pledged when he was re-elected (because it was a big issue at the time) that he would stand by any council that wants to stand alone. ■

Queanbeyan council: 'stand alone' but not unanimous

Concerns about job losses and financial impact on Queanbeyan if it embraces Palerang

by Maria Taylor

A MAJORITY of six Queanbeyan councillors voted in early November to stand alone and tell the state government that a merger is bad for Queanbeyan ratepayers. They have now joined neighbouring Palerang and other local councils in saying 'no' to the state government.

"What was clear," said Deputy Mayor Jamie Cregan, "is that it is lunacy to consider mergers or boundary adjustments, when there is no evidence whatsoever this is in the best interests of Queanbeyan residents or staff especially given Palerang staff positions would be protected and more staff cuts would come from Queanbeyan".

He reported that "90% of the community voted for a stand-alone option".

Mayor Tim Overall and three other councillors proposed instead of stand alone to take only parts of Palerang rather than a full merger, that was not supported.

Further motions to push back against state desires for a merger are set for an extraordinary meeting of Queanbeyan Council. Reasons are given in the background material for the mid-December meeting, which ratepayers can peruse on the council's website.

A big concern is the impact on the Queanbeyan economy of staff cuts in any merger with Palerang. Rural staff is protected under the Local Government Act which means a merged council would on the face of it cut Queanbeyan staff.

Councillor Cregan noted that Bungendore and Braidwood would all have to keep the same number of council positions as presently, being centres of less than 5,000 people. Job losses would have to come from Queanbeyan under the rules in section 218 of the Local Government Act. This could be as high as 60 jobs.

According to the business paper back-

grounder, Queanbeyan needs its local workforce more than many other local government areas (LGAs) because of the effect of Canberra: "with approximately 70% working in Canberra and therefore shopping in Canberra.

"Queanbeyan will be extremely negatively impacted by [council] job losses and [related] \$4.8 million dollars from the Queanbeyan economy plus the flow on effect from spouse and family losses. This will have a disastrous impact on peoples' lives and family, the Queanbeyan's business sector and other organisations like sporting groups in Queanbeyan."

The backgrounder also raises the concern that on amalgamation an administrator is first appointed for a year or more. "The community cannot be appropriately represented by a single individual elected or unelected ... Democratic process would be lost and communities cannot be afforded any consistent procedural fairness in decision making." ■

Your Say...

It's what Council doesn't tell you that tells you the most!

CityLIFE magazine is produced by Queanbeyan Council and distributed to all households with the council's official point of view on matters. In response, the following article by Peter Kontis summarises the perspective of citizens concerned about the impact and shortcomings of the proposed EDE roadway.

QUEANBEYAN Council's CityLIFE November newsletter is enlightening because Council openly back-flips and admits that Dunns Creek Road (DCR) will be needed after all. What the article doesn't say is even more enlightening.

The restricted table of traffic flows at just five points in town shows how DCR and the proposed Ellerton Drive Extension (EDE) would each reduce traffic by 2,031 on Cooma St, Queens Bridge (marginally), Tomsitt Drive and Old Cooma Rd, compared to doing nothing.

What Council leaves out is that the \$100m EDE would significantly **increase** traffic at other critical locations in town eg Yass Rd, Lanyon Drive, Canberra Ave, etc. In stark contrast, DCR would spread the traffic benefits across the network and would not bring 11,010 vehicles into town that do not want to come here.

Googong traffic would continue to use Cooma Street, Jerrabomberra

Council's justification for the EDE is "traffic studies show that 40% of Googong residents will travel into Queanbeyan", yet Council's own figures show only a fraction of those would choose the EDE - most would continue to use Cooma St.

Council can't reconcile its statement with its own survey of **actual people** (not simulated modelling) that shows a strong preference to use DCR to get to the ACT via Monaro Highway/Majura Parkway. If Council's statistics are right, where can the other 60% of Googong/South Queanbeyan residents go? They will be forced

through Jerrabomberra adding to Jerra's peak hour stress.

Council's own data show Jerrabomberra traffic would **double** to nearly 30,000/day by 2031 with the EDE. If DCR is built instead, Jerra would get 12,000 **less** vehicles. Inexplicably, those previously published figures were changed in early November on Council's website to add 10,000 more vehicles going through Jerrabomberra with the DCR option. Why? If this isn't adequately explained, heads need to roll in Council.

EDE will hardly reduce traffic on Monaro St, what about the Northern Bypass?

Council acknowledges there are two separate traffic streams to address ie East-West CBD/Monaro St traffic and Googong/South Queanbeyan traffic. Council admits the EDE would reduce Monaro Street traffic by only 5% and would not force trucks out of the main street!


Data from the 2009 *Googong and Tralee Traffic Study* found the best two-road solution for Queanbeyan is DCR (Googong/South Queanbeyan traffic) and Northern Bypass (CBD East-West traffic). So, why did Council's 'advisory group' recommend the EDE?

The 'advisory group' (Googong developers were key members) also decided what percentage of costs developers and ratepayers should pay for roads. The EDE forms no part of the 'two road' solution and wouldn't even provide access to Tralee in spite of the aim of the Traffic Study.

Jumping Creek development

The EDE would, however, provide the only road access into a small proposed development site at Jumping Creek for which the Googong developers are also the proponents. A cynic might suggest that motives other than the best interests of Queanbeyan residents and ratepayers may be at play. If the EDE is built, we'll **all** be paying for this ineffective and destructive road through substantially increased rates and rents.

— Peter Kontis, Queanbeyan



Ellerton Drive Extension —

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Queanbeyan City councillors will vote this month on whether to spend almost \$100 million to build the proposed Ellerton Drive Extension.

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Dunns Creek Rd — and a sustainable transport plan for our community.

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Find phone numbers at www.qcc.nsw.gov.au

Queanbeyan Conservation Alliance, December 2015

Palerang Update *with Mayor Cr Pete Harrison*



Local Government Reform

As indicated last month, Council did indeed resolve to reject the IPART assessment that while both Palerang and Queanbeyan Councils were financially viable, neither had the *scale and capacity* to effectively operate independently. The rumours relating to the consequences of not agreeing to merge cover the full range of possibilities, but while there is a commitment from the NSW Government to make an announcement before Christmas, to date nothing formal has been forthcoming.

Special Rate Variation

As you will read elsewhere in the *Bulletin* this month, the SRV process continues. The next stage is the exhibition of a Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program that would apply if a rate variation were to be approved. The primary purpose of this exercise is to ensure that the community is aware of the programs that would be funded by a rate variation, or that could not be funded without one.

While the process might appear to be somewhat drawn out and repetitive, I would encourage readers to review the plans and provide any additional feedback that might help Council identify the most appropriate way to proceed.

While Council will continue to improve its operational performance, the savings to be gained as a result are only incremental, and not of the magnitude needed to meet the State's financial benchmarks. In this regard, it's important to recognise two related facts.

The first is that in setting the rate peg each year, the State assumes that Councils will achieve an improved level of efficiency year on year, so it is very difficult to get ahead of the game with incremental improvements alone. The second is that Council already runs a very lean organisation. As has been noted, Palerang is below average for councils of comparable size in terms of both staffing levels and the proportion of its revenue stream that is consumed by administrative and governance functions in general.

Supplementary Revenue Sources

Council makes no small effort to retain

skilled staff and to deploy them as effectively as possible. As a prime example, our works department is currently engaged in a major RMS project on the Kings Highway, east of Braidwood, worth \$12 million over the next two years.

This project is entirely funded by RMS and injects funds directly into Council's revenue stream. It enables us to employ crews and purchase plant that we could otherwise not afford, and provides experience for our engineers and crews that can then benefit other Council projects.

Our Environmental Services section is also earning a reputation for leadership and innovation. Council has been funded as lead agency for the regional Weeds Action Program across south east NSW. Successful investigations into the use of high resolution aerial images from drones for weed mapping will also see Council shortly have CASA certification to commence formal operations, generating interest and potential contract work from other Councils.

Council Recognition

For many years now, Palerang Council has consistently taken out industry awards for excellence in environmental management, and this year has been no exception.

Palerang's role in creating weed management maps for SE NSW has won it the award in both its division and the overall category for Weed Management at the NSW Excellence in Environment Awards sponsored by LGNSW.

This follows the announcement that Palerang Council was also recognised at the 9th International Water Sensitive Urban Design Conference in Sydney. The WaterNSW project, *Evaluation of Councils' Sewage and Stormwater Management Practices*, to which Palerang contributed, took out the Policy and Education award in the 2015 NSW Stormwater Awards for Excellence.

These may not be the sorts of things that get many people excited, but thankfully, because these are very important parts of Council's business, we have a very dedicated team within our Council that do get out of bed every day to pursue excellence in their profession.

Season's Greetings

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone all the best for the festive season. If you are travelling on our roads, please drive safely, and if you are celebrating with your friends or family, please drink responsibly.

Proposed Special Rate Variation

Update

Background

The process that Council must follow in preparing an application for a Special Rate Variation is fairly precisely defined by IPART. Most residents will be aware of Council's recent efforts to communicate the intent of this process and, perhaps more importantly, the basis for Council's application. Community feedback has indicated varying levels of support for the options being proposed.

In October 2015 the state government released the *IPART Assessment of NSW Council Fit for the Future proposals*. Within this context, Palerang Council has been assessed as financially sustainable on the condition that it is able to successfully prepare an application for a Special Rate Variation, and Council has resolved to progress such a proposal.

Council resolves to progress its proposal for Special Rate Variation

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 3 December 2015 Council considered community responses received to date and resolved to continue the preparation of an application. As part of this process, Council resolved to present a Draft Long Term Financial Plan and a Draft Delivery Program, which had been amended to reflect the proposed Special Rate Variation, for further public comment.

Purpose of the proposed Special Rate Variation

The purpose of the proposed Special Rate Variation is to provide a permanent revenue increase in support of Council operations. This would allow Council to deliver on your Community Strategic Plan, to provide new, and to maintain existing infrastructure and facilities. It would also allow Council to address the financial benchmarks defined under the *Fit For the Future* (FFtF) program.

Public Exhibition of a Draft Long Term Financial Plan (as amended) and a Draft Delivery Program (as amended)

reflecting proposed Special Rate Variation scenarios

The Draft Delivery Program (as amended) and Draft Long Term Financial Plan (as amended) reflect the proposed Special Rate Variation scenarios and provide detail on the works priorities that are proposed under each scenario (Note that Scenario 2 has been amended from earlier proposals to ensure that this scenario meets all FFtF benchmarks).

Scenario 1: Base Case ("Deteriorate")

provides for an annual increase to general rates that is limited to the estimated 2.5% Rate Peg as determined by the State Government. Scenario 1 is a "benchmark" position to indicate the long term financial implications if council continues to operate within the same policies and practices as currently employed.

Impact: Scenario 1 results in a year-on-year increase to the median residential rate of around \$23-\$26 per annum. After five years the cumulative increase is 13.1%,

equivalent to an extra \$121 per annum in the fifth year.

Scenario 2: Financial Sustainability through a Proposed Special Rate Variation ("Stabilise") provides for an annual increase to general rates by a proposed 7.5% Special Rate Variation (comprising the estimated 2.5% Rate Peg plus 5% special rate) per annum for five years 2016-17 to 2020-21, compounding over the five years and to be held permanently in the rates. Following this five-year period (ie from 2022) the annual increase to general rates would be limited to the estimated 2.5% Rate Peg. The additional revenue stream raised by the proposed SRV would be applied to loan repayments and seed funding for identified community priority projects and services as reflected in the Draft Long Term Financial Plan for this scenario.

Impact: Scenario 2 results in a year-on-year increase to the median residential rate of around \$69-\$93 per annum. After five years the cumulative increase is 43.5%, equivalent to an additional \$402 per annum in the fifth year.

Scenario 3: Financial Sustainability through a Proposed Special Rate Variation ("Improve") provides for an annual increase to general rates by a proposed 9.5% Special Rate Variation (comprising the estimated 2.5% Rate Peg plus 7% special rate) per annum for five years 2016-17 to 2020-21, compounding over the five years and to be held permanently in the rates. Following this five-year period (ie from 2022) the annual increase to general rates would be limited to the estimated 2.5% Rate Peg. The additional revenue stream raised by the proposed SRV would be applied to loan repayments and seed funding for additional community priority projects and services as reflected in the Draft Long Term Financial Plan.

Impact: Scenario 3 results in a year-on-year increase to the average residential rate of around \$87-\$126 per annum. After five years the cumulative increase is 57.4%, equivalent to an additional \$530 per annum in the fifth year. This is \$409 greater than the estimated rate peg only increase of \$121 after five years, a difference equivalent to around \$8 per week.

Have your say

Council is seeking further community input in relation to the projects that are proposed, in the Draft Long Term Financial Plan, to be funded through the proposed SRV. As in earlier rounds of consultation, several options are being provided. Property owners and residents within the Palerang Council area are again encouraged to provide feedback via any of the following:

Fill out the survey

- Return the reply-paid survey that you received in the mail in October 2015 (or get a copy from any Council office)
- Online www.palerang.nsw.gov.au/srv

Make a written submission

- Send your submission to: The General Manager, Palerang Council, PO Box 348, Bungendore NSW 2621, or
- drop your submission in to the Council offices located at 10 Majara Street,

Bungendore, NSW 2621, or 144 Wallace Street, Braidwood, NSW 2622
• Email srv@palerang.nsw.gov.au (link sends e-mail)

Telephone Council

on 1300 735 025 (within Palerang area) or (02) 6238 8111

Public meetings

Seven public meetings were held in October 2015, and another two in December 2015.

The various aspects of the Special Rate Variation process were presented and discussed in these meetings, most recently the impact on the Draft Long Term Financial Plan

(LTFP) and Draft Delivery Program (DP), each as amended to reflect the impact of the proposed SRV Scenarios.

Following the December meetings, Council has decided to extend the consultation period to allow residents and ratepayers to review and comment on the revised LTFP and DP.

Submissions closing date: 30 January 2016

Council will consider submissions received by 30 January 2016 at its **Ordinary Meeting in February 2016** in determining whether to proceed with a formal application for Special Rate Variation.

For more information

If you have any questions about the rate variation, please **phone** us on (02) 6238 8111 or email us at srv@palerang.nsw.gov.au



Merry Christmas and goodwill to all!

AS *Bulletin* readers can see again in this issue, we are very animal friendly here. Our fellow creatures, like the planet that supports our lifestyle, need our active engagement now, as thankfully ever more people realise.

Watching the negotiations in Paris at the climate change summit, what can we do at the local level?

Helping with positive solutions is the most energising thing we can do and the *Bulletin* is committed to focusing not just on detailing urgent issues like climate change or domestic violence or (gulp), amalgamation, but on avenues for change.

How international business people, ‘ordinary people’ and governments elsewhere are rapidly affecting change was showcased in an excellent ABC Foreign Correspondent program about renewable energy transformations and innovation from Costa Rica, to Germany to San Francisco. (Check out iVIEW for 30 November Foreign Correspondent *How to Save the World*.)

But Australia just lives in an information bubble.

We’re hostage to narratives spun by key politicians in tandem with powerful mainstream media outlets, in Australia lopsidedly owned by the Murdoch franchise.

(Cue a plug for supporting independent and local media that can sift the facts from fiction serving big corporate interests that dominate our politics and too much media!)

We see that a small and less wealthy country like Costa Rica can achieve almost 100% energy supply from renewables; Germany is showing the way with community-owned wind power with everyone winning; and Australians move to San Francisco to set up highly successful solar companies. It dawns again that we are still being kept in a solution-poor fog with taxpayer-funded diversions (Direct Action) and political blather from Canberra and most state capitals.

There is little time to just wait and hope

that things might improve eventually. As we approach this Christian festival, Pope Francis again spoke out, telling reporters that he believes “We are at the limits of (global) suicide.”

So what to do locally? Disregarding Bill Shorten’s need for the charisma wand, we can support solution-focused policies and the political party that moves in the right direction now. Federal Labor has made that move with its 45% emission reduction goal and related clean energy proposals. The target was advised by the taxpayer-supported Climate Change Authority.

A good example of blather is when PM Turnbull says in response to this Labor initiative, ‘ha ha nice, but we can’t afford it’. Media reports then ignored economic analysis that cost is not much different between 25% reduction and 45% reduction in emissions. This hip pocket narrative, that always



ignores the cost of not taking action, has been leading us around for 20 years. (See Jenny Goldie this page on all talk and same old in-action).

Labor may have finally persuaded itself and the powerful mining unions that jobs can also be created in new energy industries and not just in digging up the countryside and farmland for fossil fuels.

A positive change would also see Labor and the Greens stop mutual attacks: on environment and many issues the parties should be allies in the public interest.

As many are already doing, we can vote with our dollars and business and install solar panels and now storage batteries, on farm small wind installations, or consider developing community power companies and buy energy from green power companies. Energy efficient construction is a winner. Or consider an electric car, like our colleague Graham who proclaims himself very pleased.

The *Bulletin* will continue publishing ideas and solutions like the great land care story on ‘The Gib’ creek reclamation (p3). And support the volunteers and community groups that make our region so liveable. This issue we salute the Country Muster, White Ribbon, our arts community, Wildcare and the RFS in the background.

This holiday season, meat lovers please think carefully about cages and animal suffering before buying standard issue ham, chickens or turkeys. There are differently-raised, free-range meats offered by Caroola Farms and Food Lovers as well as Coles in our area.

We’re grateful for your support of independent, local media in 2015 and look forward to a continuing path.

For the festive season we send you a gift designed by our so creative production designer Sue Van Homrigh. Go to page 12 for a colouring-in pattern, the latest trend for focusing the mind away from worldly challenges! Enjoy!

We’ll be back in February.

— Maria Taylor

A bad case of schizophrenia

THEY say that when Malcolm Turnbull replaced Tony Abbott as Prime Minister, a sigh of relief was heard around Australia. Within the climate change community, it was more like a dull roar. But then came the disappointment as Turnbull announced he was sticking to Coalition policies on climate change: the post-2020 renewable reduction targets, the reduced Renewable Energy Target, and to Direct Action.

It’s been up and down since then. Turnbull promised ‘innovation’, yet further cuts to CSIRO were mooted in the week prior to the critical climate talks in Paris. His government had already cut \$110 million from the CSIRO budget in the 2014 Budget leading to the loss of 1,400 jobs.

Then Foreign Minister Julie Bishop failed to commit to the international community’s target of limiting global warming to 2°C, only to have Turnbull at the recent G20 meeting make that very commitment.

The Paris talks are taking place as the world passes a critical milestone: levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are

400ppm (as measured at Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii), up from 280ppm in pre-industrial times.

If the world is to stay within 2°C warming, we cannot go past 450ppm, yet emissions are currently increasing by 2.11ppm a year. If they don’t accelerate further then we have 23 years before they have to stop, completely.

Put another way, we have a carbon budget of 550 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide that we can emit before the 2°C threshold, yet we have more than five times that amount in known reserves of fossil fuels in the ground.

South Pacific leaders call for ban on new coal mines

Recently, South Pacific leaders, fearing the loss of their island homes to rising sea-levels, called for a ban on all new coal mines. Sixty-one prominent Australians made the same call.

Turnbull, either cleverly or disingenuously depending on your point of view, responded by declaring a moratorium on Australian coal exports “would make not the blindest bit of difference to global emissions” because importers would buy it from elsewhere. That, of course, was not what they were talking about; they wanted a ban on *new* coal mines, on the assumption that some coal exports from existing coal mines



Hundreds of thousands of people marched worldwide and tens of thousands in Australia at the end of November to insist that politicians take action on climate change and get away from reliance on burning fossil fuels linked to climate change. Seen here, some of the 6,000 who marched in Canberra.

would continue, at least for a while.

Indeed, it is coal that is Turnbull’s Achilles’ Heel. His government persists with approvals for the massive Carmichael coal mine in the Galilee Basin, despite the fact the burning of coal from it will emit 120 million tonnes of CO₂ a year, three times what the entire passenger fleet of cars in Australia emitted in 2014.

These emissions, of course, will be counted by another government – probably India. Nevertheless, Australia has to take moral responsibility for supplying it. It doesn’t of course. Rather it attempts to take the high moral ground with arguments about relieving poverty, ignoring the fact that New Delhi has as bad air pollution as Beijing and that too many Indians are too far away from the grid to make coal power feasible or affordable.

Turnbull fails on emission reduction

It is Turnbull’s failure to strengthen Australia’s emission reduction targets, however, which is the most frustrating. In response to a question by the Greens MP Adam Bandt in Parliament, he said: “What the Honour-

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Fires, floods, crazy weather

Stop Press: On 25 November, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced the global average surface temperature in 2015 is likely to be the warmest on record due to a combination of a strong El Niño and human-induced global warming. The years 2011–2015 have been the warmest five-year period on record, according to the WMO.

Stop Press: On 27 November, Labor committed to reduce emissions by 45 percent on 2005 levels by 2030 and to have no net emissions by 2050.



Small to medium arts companies benefit from ministerial shakeup

Crikey arts reporter Ben Neutze reported at the end of November that George Brandis' "controversial NPEA was finally killed off".

He wrote: "Former Arts Minister George Brandis intended to make his National Program for Excellence in the Arts a defining feature of his time in the ministry. But after six months of concentrated campaigning by an arts community who understood the full impact of Brandis' changes, the program has been drastically revised and renamed by new Arts Minister Mitch Fifield.

"Overnight, Fifield announced that he would return \$8 million a year to the Australia Council, almost a third of the funding cut from the body to create the NPEA. The NPEA will be renamed Catalyst — Australian Arts and Cultural Fund and will only distribute \$12 million of funding per year as opposed to the planned \$20 million.

"The NPEA was announced in a budget night shock in May this year and after six months of delays has not distributed any funding.

"The Catalyst Fund has a substantially different remit to the NPEA — gone is the word 'excellence', and the fund promises to support innovative projects from arts companies, recognising the role of the small-to-medium sector, which has been at the very centre of this debate. Fifield released the guidelines which state that Catalyst will 'give priority to projects involving small to medium organisations'."

For more on this topic check out the *Crikey* reporting by Neutze, and other metro press reports.

Burrnju Gallery celebrates spirits of place

THE Burrnju Aboriginal Arts Gallery on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin (west of the ANU) is one of the region's better kept secrets, something the Huddleston family would rather were not so.

Michael (Garmarroongoo) Huddleston, resident of Queanbeyan, whose paintings are in international collections, has just held a major exhibition of his latest works there. Some remain on the wall.

Huddleston and his niece Linda, also an artist and coordinator of the gallery's arts and culture program, chatted with the *Bulletin* about the gallery and how it came about.



Michael (Garmarroongoo) Huddleston with one of his recent exhibition works.

"It was my father's dream to open an art gallery in Canberra run by Aboriginal people," said Linda. Bob and Margaret Huddleston realised that dream in 2008 with the assistance of the ACT government and arts grants funding.

The gallery now exhibits 40 artists and also uses the space for art workshops for young people. The next exhibition will be

the work of Karen Riley from Sydney. She is related to the Wiranjuri group from the Dubbo area, one of the biggest in NSW.

The ACT government owns the site and the Burrnju Aboriginal Corporation leases the gallery part (there is also an under-used theatre and a function/conference centre in the complex).

In the downturn of arts funding, this gallery and its endeavours like others are finding life harder. Commissions from the sale of paintings "just pay the rent" and grants have paid the minimal staff, says Linda.

Mick Huddleston draws his inspiration for his paintings both from his mother's and his father's art traditions. Linda's work also tells stories.

"Wave Hill in central Australia was Mum's side where they practiced more dot painting," says Mick. He mentions the strike. His father's tradition was from south-east Arnhem Land with cross-hatching and stylised forms of animals.

The Wave Hill strike: a central historical event

An 11-year strike and land rights struggle by Gurindji Aboriginal pastoral workers at Wave Hill was a major step to Indigenous land rights in Australia. The strike educated a generation of Australians. The traditional arts blossomed with the return of land and other rights in recent decades.

The Vestey family's Wave Hill station showed how bad things were for Indigenous

people after Europeans came. The cattle station was stocked in 1883 and Gurindji and other groups found their waterholes fenced-off or fouled by cattle which also destroyed fragile desert plants such as bush tomatoes.



Linda Huddleston, with one of her paintings at top behind her, will have an exhibition next year.

"Dingo hunters regularly shot the people's invaluable hunting dogs, and kangaroo, a staple meat, was also routinely shot since it competed with cattle for water and grazing land. Gurindji suffered lethal 'reprisals' for any attempt to eat the cattle — anything from a skirmish to a massacre. There was little choice but to move onto the cattle stations." (source: Wikipedia)

Aboriginal people became the backbone of the cattle industry, working for little or no money, minimal food and appalling housing. Gurindji lived in corrugated iron humpies where the occupants had to crawl in like the dogs, without floors, lighting, sanitation, furniture or cooking facilities. (Think *We of the Never Never*.)

The Whitlam and then Fraser governments legislated the start of land rights as a result of Gurindji and other acts of resistance. ■

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A retrospective look by book reviewer **Nick Goldie** who writes: "twelve of the dozens of books which crossed my desk last year, all from smaller Australian publishers, and all worth reading".

Wild Boys, Helena Pastor, UQP.



First time is learning, the second time is stupid. This useful motto is the theme of *Wild Boys*: moving, exasperating, and a great yarn.

It's in three intermingled strands: the story of Helena's immigrant family, especially her father, as they come to terms with Australia; the story of Helena's troubled relationship with her teenage son; and the story of a gang of delinquents called the Iron Man Welders and their charismatic mentor, Bernie – not only a youth worker but a dog-whisperer.

There's a variegated collection of dogs (wagging and panting and having a ball); proud boys with prizes from country shows; and the increasing involvement of the local Aboriginal youngsters and their dogs too.

The Naked Surgeon, Samer Nashef, Scribner.



Other peoples' shop-talk is often fascinating, and even more so when it is about the consequences – life or death – of heart surgery.

As surgeon Nashef observes, there are two kinds of doctor: those who can count, and those who can't. He would definitely be among the category of those who can, and he has a deft way with statistics. He has a complex mind, so it's no surprise to learn that he is also one of the fiendish compilers of cryptic crosswords for *The Guardian*.

He manages to make himself unpopular, but highly readable, by applying mathematical risk-management to modern surgery. (Avoid having

12 of the best Australian books of 2015

You'll find the first six here and go to www.districtbulletin.com.au for the full list



an operation on certain days, such as the dangerous day before the surgeon goes on holiday.)

The Economy is Not a Society, Denis Glover, Black Inc.



This is a fine angry book. Economists and management consultants will probably hate it.

Can an economic theory exist in the absence of a moral position? "This is more than just a quantitative change in our economy – it is a new economy without a heart or conscience."

Productivity, he says, is devoid of all moral content.

The Unseen Anzac, Jeff Maynard, Scribner.



We've all heard of Charles Bean and Frank Hurley – but Sir Hubert Wilkins? He was born in rural South Australia in 1888, ran away to join a vaudeville act, was an early war correspondent,

and an Arctic explorer. In 1917 he was employed by Charles Bean, official Australian war correspondent and historian, along with Frank Hurley (himself a polar explorer) as photographer on the Somme.

In the final months of the war, Wilkins worked at a frenetic pace, creating the record that Bean wanted. He was shelled, buried in mud, carried out the wounded, was wounded himself, accepted the surrender of some bewildered Germans, led a group of (equally bewildered) American GIs into combat, and was twice awarded the Military Cross. After the war

he moved to America, and was largely forgotten in Australia, though his photographs are held by the War Memorial in Canberra.



Not Just Black and White, Lesley and Tammy Williams, UQP.

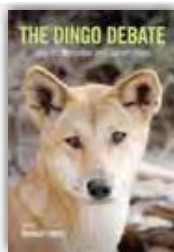
This takes the form of a conversation between two remarkable indigenous women: mother and daughter.

As a child, writes Lesley, she didn't see the poverty and overcrowding all around her. Her father was removed for five years to a leper colony. Tuberculosis was common, but knowing no better, she did as she was told by the tribal elders and by the white officials who ruled the lives of the community. She was put into domestic service, but her wages were withheld by the authorities.

Meanwhile, her seventeen-year-old daughter Tammy enters an essay competition, and wins a trip to a conference at Michael Jackson's Neverland Valley Ranch and is selected to report on the 'Rights of the Child' to the United Nations. "Have you had media experience?" she was asked. "I spoke to the *Gympie Times*" says Tammy, and on that basis was offered

to the world's media.

And eventually, after Lesley's years of campaigning, there's an out-of-court settlement for \$55.4m as the community's withheld wages, the return of her withheld bank pass-book, and an apology from the Queensland Government.



The Dingo Debate, ed Bradley Smith, CSIRO.

The dingo is not a dog. Dingoes may look like Indian pariah dogs, or Indonesian Singing Dogs, but modern molecular biology tells a different

story. Along with wolves and Siberian breeds, dingo origin is east of the Himalayas. Despite their doggy relatives, the dingo has been isolated for long enough to be, quite simply, a dingo.

A dingo's brain, says Smith, is sharper than its teeth, and he has no doubt that Australia's native canid deserves to be protected and conserved. However, he says, their presence evokes "a most entrenched form of vilification." There are no easy answers, especially on the sheep-breeding Monaro. We've probably all seen the "dog-trees" where corpses of marauding hybrid dogs are hung as a grim warning, especially in the vicinity of the National Parks.

Dingoes, says Smith, have their own essential role in the natural environment. It's time we learned to live with them. ■

[Nick also reviewed these books for the Cooma-Monaro Express]

Now showing at Bungendore Fine Art Gallery

Catherine Lidden



DETAIL: Owliness

CATHERINE Lidden, well known wildlife artist will be exhibiting her latest works, 'Australian Made' at the Bungendore Fine Art Gallery throughout December 2015 and January 2016. Using pastels as her preferred medium and painting what she is passionate about – animals and the natural world of wildlife.

Catherine's close up and personal animal portraits exquisitely painted have earned her an enthusiastic following among animal and art lovers alike. She features in both national and international publications and has won many awards and commendations in various shows. ■

Seeking expressions of interest in drawing classes

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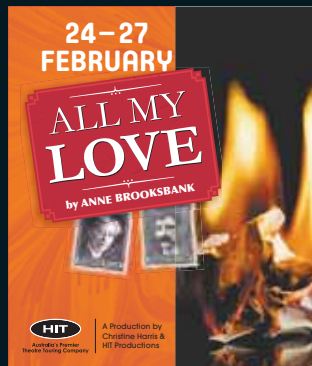
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A poignant and unsentimental family drama from one of America's brightest playwrights



The story of Henry Lawson & Mary Gilmore's lost love



An insight into the earliest days of the appearance of women on London stages



The nuanced manner in which Alcorn channels Bette Midler is outright clever!



A lyrical tale of adversity, survival and the environment



A thoroughly hilarious romp



A thrilling contemporary work of love in a time of revolution



A striking program of precision and impressive athleticism



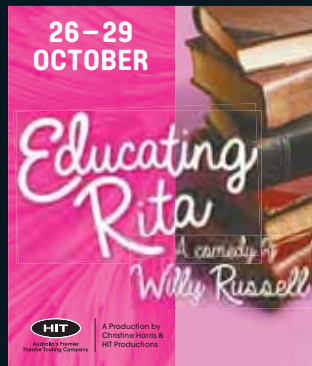
An elegant, classical addition to a diverse theatre program



Noni Hazlehurst performs this haunted and confronting work



Come and see why audiences worldwide can't stay in their seats!



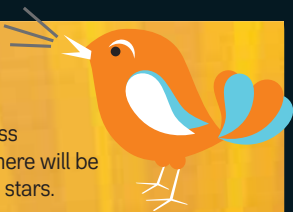
A comedy classic full of the wit and passion



Ferrante's Groucho is a tour de force

MORNING MELODIES

What better way to spend a weekday morning than enjoying some top class entertainment in the welcoming ambience of The Q. Following the shows there will be a complimentary cuppa and biscuits in the foyer and a chance to meet the stars.



**BRING BACK
the BARITONE**
Wed 9 Mar, 10.30am, \$25

Seth Drury brings the baritone voice to life



**Carlotta
LIVE & INTIMATE**
Fri 3 Jun, 10.30am, \$25

An insight into the ruthless entertainment industry

**THE DIVINE
Miss Bette**
Fri 22 Apr, 10.30am, \$25

A selection of songs from the full-scale show



**WAYNE
HORSBURGH**
Wed 3 Aug, 10.30am, \$25

Australia's international country entertainer is back

FOR THE KIDS



A raging success, this play is pitched perfectly at discerning children aged up to 8. Parents will enjoy it too, but be warned: it doesn't Panda to grown-ups.



After sellout seasons throughout the world, including the West End, Broadway, and Australia and New Zealand - The Gruffalo returns in 2016!

FIFTY SHADES OF GREY NOMAD #9

Sombre visits to WWI memorials

by Mavis Davis with 'the Princess'

OUR group of pious pilgrims again fortified themselves with a hearty buffet breakfast; secreting bread rolls, brioches and fruit into handbags and backpacks. This was just as well as we had a very poignant heart-wrenching day touring World War I sites ahead of us – requiring all the strength we could muster.

With our local guide, Suzanne, our first stop was Villers-Bretonneux. The Aussies arrived there three years after Gallipoli and successfully pushed back the Germans. Decades later, children from Victoria raised funds to rebuild the school and there are many mementoes of the town's enduring fondness for Australia in evidence including the ubiquitous kangaroo and, of course the Australian Flag.

Next stop was the War Memorial at Hill 104 (the height of the hill) where more than 11,000 lost their lives. The Dawn Service is held there every year.

Our helpful guide assisted the 'Quiet Achiever' to find her uncle's name on the wall of the impressive War Memorial nearby. The differences between the little cliques in the group were cast aside and all participated, as one, in a very emotional scene as she had her photo taken proudly wearing his medals, standing against the wall bearing her uncle's name. This brave man had

fought in the battle near Mouquet Farm, near Pozières. 'Chatty' remarked how interesting it was to see so many little forests dotting the acres of farmland. The guide explained, to a very solemn group that these were planted by farmers. The trees were planted in respect to ensure more soldiers' bones are not disturbed by farmer's ploughs.

The sombre mood was temporarily lifted by a visit to a lovely little town called Albert, the focus of which was a beautiful cathedral topped with a golden Madonna holding the baby Jesus.

The 'Quiet Achiever', the Princess and I had the living daylight's scared out of us at a museum of the trenches (as 'Shop-til-you-drop' and the others in our group preferred less esoteric pursuits such as wandering aimlessly and shopping for knick-knacks). A medieval tunnel deep

underground that had been used as an air raid shelter included a hauntingly realistic simulation of the terror of the trenches mid-battle. The experience was harrowing. We were emotionally drained and suddenly felt famished, seeking out some hearty fare to quell the emptiness in our hearts.

Somehow, we three were drawn irresistibly to a tiny café, Chez Paulette and Marie, on our way back to the bus. Through sign language and broken high-school French we were rewarded with the most delicious omelettes. Each omelette must have contained a dozen eggs. The lack of any other accoutrements was made up for by three stacks of pommes frites, hot and crispy.

We devoured this comfort food under the watchful motherly gaze of both Paulette and Marie as if re-enacting those poor young soldiers eating their first meal home cooked by their mothers should they be lucky enough to return home.

The tour continued to several more grand monuments and neat cemeteries. White crosses in formidable rows almost to the horizon, were grim reminders of the staggering loss of lives on the Somme in WW1. Other sites were a Franco Anglo memorial at Thiepval, an Ulster tower commemorating the



Trekking for girls, Nepal

by Christina Taylor

EARLIER this year, a group of women and men signed up to trek the Annapurna Range in Nepal and fundraise to support girls' rights.

Funds raised were directed to Plan International's *Because I am a Girl* Campaign. I accompanied the Trek for Girls group as they travelled and trekked Nepal.

Throughout our stay in Nepal we were treated to incredible kindness and hospitality, delicious food (Dal Baht power!) and great music ("You are a monkey and I am a donkey, Resham fiririii"). While trekking the Annapurna Circuit the views of dramatic white-capped peaks were awe-inspiring.

After completing the trek, we visited two community projects

supported by Plan International and spent time meeting with students and community members.

The Trek for Girls group raised an outstanding \$90,000 which will directly support girls to realise their rights, and to assist with the Plan-supported earthquake recovery efforts in Nepal. For anyone thinking about an adventure abroad, don't think twice – get going! Here are some photos from the trip to get you inspired.

Registrations are open for Plan International's Cycle for Girls Cambodia in 2016! Learn more here <https://inspiredadventures.com.au/events/plan-cycle-for-girls-2016/>.



Waking at 4am to ascend Poon Hill – with head torches on we wound our way up in the dark to reach the summit – just in time to view the spectacular sunrise! At 3,200m it's the highest point we reached in Nepal and it was a truly incredible experience for us all. Right: We drummed up some local support for the trek!

lost Irish soldiers, Mouquet Farm and a German Bunker near Pozières.

Only FIGJAM, the Tour Director, seemed untouched by the sombre mood. He regaled us with stories of the many prospective girlfriends back home – the smorgas-

bord from whom he would choose a companion, on his return. Not surprisingly, he was met with few reactions from a less than talkative 'Chatty'. The 'Tippler' appeared more keen than usual to crack open a bottle of the local vintage. ■



What dog for a semi-rural lifestyle?

with advice from our dog and pet expert trainer **Heike Hahner**

WHETHER as a lovely Christmas gift or another time, taking a dog into the family comes with a whole host of necessities, expense, and a long-term commitment.

Many dog breeds, particularly working dogs, need a lot of exercise to remain content so ask yourself are you ready with time and space for that.

There have also been queries from new residents about the best breeds for a rural residential environment. Good question.

There are very few dogs that might not chase wildlife, or closer to home domestic stock including chickens, if untrained. Some dogs are more inclined to roam and seek adventure.

Chasing or roaming is related to the individual dog's inherited traits. With a new pure-bred dog you may have more guarantee in terms of consistency of behaviour than with a cross-bred dog. With these you may have to observe first and train accordingly.

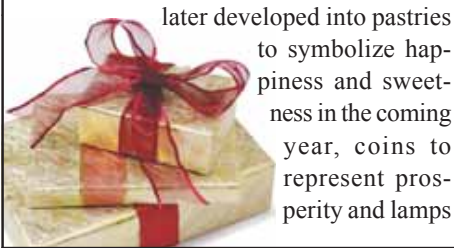
Hunting and pig dogs while lovely with people, and may be relatively easy to train, are bred to chase and fight other animals so may be a challenge to control near other animals. Working breeds such as Border Collies, Shepherds, terriers like Jack Russells and even Labradors may go looking for animals to chase or round up but not all do.

Some working breeds or cross-breeds act as guard dogs for their owners (ie stay put) as do guard breeds such as Rottweilers, Maremmas as well as Ridgebacks. Again many dogs independent of breed or gender will guard. Whippets and Greyhounds are about the only ones that don't.

The giving of gifts

GIVING gifts has been a tradition among human beings since ancient times. Many historians believe that this practice led to the development of the barter system, which was the economic basis for many societies.

In the ancient Roman culture, people would exchange gifts during a celebration held during the Winter Solstice which occurred on the first day of January. The gifts were originally evergreen branches, and



later developed into pastries to symbolize happiness and sweetness in the coming year, coins to represent prosperity and lamps

However guard breeds may also chase other animals when out and about or if an animal strays onto their territory. As well as chasing many may grab and kill if given the opportunity.

This puts a lot of pressure on dog owners to restrain and train their dogs to accept wildlife, livestock and possibly neighbouring dogs as part of their normal environment. Dogs need ongoing training at least until they are 2- to 3-years-old to learn to be obedient to the owner even when 'prey' is close by.

Testing a dog for chase instincts

Testing for chasing instinct is quite easy by presenting the pup or dog with a toy, some fur and feathers, even better take it somewhere where there are chickens, kangaroos and sheep. Observe what the dog's reaction is. If he is keen to go after the toy or the animals, you can be pretty certain he is also going to be keen on chasing animals any other time. Even if the dog appears fearful that is not necessarily a good sign, some dogs may chase animals to "get rid of them".

to provide light on one's journey through life.

In ancient cultures, tribal leaders would give one another gifts in exchange for peace, protection, food or just simply to maintain the status quo.

The idea that gift giving and love are closely associated developed alongside the growth of the Christian religion. The main theological basis of this religion is based on the fact that God himself gave humanity "His only begotten Son", Jesus Christ, who was a "gift" to mankind.

Even at the time of His birth, Jesus Christ was associated with gift giving. When He was born, the three Wise Men brought gifts to the newborn babe to honor Him. These gifts were gold, frankincense, and myrrh, gifts that would normally have been given to a king. Frankincense was a base element used to make fragrances and perfumes, myrrh was

used in anointing oils, and gold was as valuable then as it is today. The idea of giving gifts to newborns may have started with this Bible story, as well as the giving of gifts at Christmas.



The idea of gifts at Christmas developed differently as Christianity spread into various countries. In England, Father Christmas was responsible for delivering the gifts, while in France this was the work of Pere Noel. In Italy the gift giver was named La Befana. The belief was that La Befana became lost on her way to deliver gifts to the Christ child and began delivering gifts to all youngsters. In Holland, where I was born, Sinter Klaas rides a white horse and gets help from numerous Zwarte Pieten (Black Petes) handing out gifts and candy.

Today, while gifts are given for a variety of holidays and special occasions, the largest of these gift-giving occasions is and will probably remain to be Christmas. The tradition of selecting and exchanging gifts with people we love and care about has, to me, more significance at this time of year as family members come together and reminisce about Christmases past, and more importantly, those people with whom we shared those Christmases.

I like to choose gifts which create memories – or even start collections. Of course I can help you to do that too when you drop in to see me at 'Annie's'.

David and I wish you, your families and special friends a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas.

Till next year, Annie

Annie's Collectables
39 Cooper Rd, Wamboin
OPEN weekends, public hols 10.30am–4.30pm
And by appointment ph 6238 3284
www.anniescollectables.com.au

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Pixie Jenkins



Laura Downing



Peter Coad and the Coad Sisters

Festival of Australian Country Music



Bungendore Showground 6th and 7th February 2016

— Entry \$30 per day —

Campsites available after 12 noon Monday 26th January

Saturday from 1 to 7.30pm concert featuring well known entertainers. 8.00 Stan Coster Memorial Bush Ballad Awards and presentation concert.

Sunday from 10am to 6pm concert featuring the best of Australian Bush Balladeers.

Pre Muster Entertainment Tuesday – Friday

Walk ups will be held at various times for all categories with special times for poets.

Entertainment around the Village

Entertainment at Hotels and Bowling Club.

Busking Saturday 9.30–12.00 in the village streets

www.bungendorecountrymuster.com.au
Email bungendorecountrymuster@yahoo.com.au
Phone 0458 896 180

Bungendore Post Office December / Christmas Trading

Wednesday	9/12/2015	9am-5pm
Thursday	10/12/2015	9am-5pm
Friday	11/12/2015	9am-5pm
Saturday	12/12/2015	9am-12noon
Sunday	13/12/2015	CLOSED
Monday	14/12/2015	9am-5pm
Tuesday	15/12/2015	9am-5pm
Wednesday	16/12/2015	9am-5pm
Thursday	17/12/2015	9am-5pm
Friday	18/12/2015	9am-5pm
Saturday	19/12/2015	9am-12noon
Sunday	20/12/2015	CLOSED
Monday	21/12/2015	9am-5pm
Tuesday	22/12/2015	9am-5pm
Wednesday	23/12/2015	9am-5pm
Thursday	24/12/2015	9am-5pm
Friday	25/12/2015	CLOSED
Saturday	26/12/2015	CLOSED
Sunday	27/12/2015	CLOSED
Monday	28/12/2015	CLOSED
Tuesday	29/12/2015	9am-5pm
Wednesday	30/12/2015	9am-5pm
Thursday	31/12/2015	CLOSED
Friday	1/01/2016	CLOSED
Monday	4/01/2016	RESUME NORM HRS

Normal out of hours collection arrangements still apply.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patronage and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

PLEASE BE AWARE: AUSTRALIA POST ONLY ALLOW US TO HOLD PARCELS FOR 10 WORKING DAYS. If you cannot get here within the 10 days from the first notification please ring us on 6238 1399. If we do not have instructions from you we will have to return the parcel to sender.

Bush Balladeer Place gets financial boost in Bungendore



by Winston Masters

THE Bungendore Country Music Muster has expressed appreciation for a generous grant from Bungendore Community Bank Service to allow for the construction of Bush Balladeers Place in the Bungendore Park. A cheque for \$31,500 was presented recently to the Muster Committee by board members.

The construction plan drawn by Fresh Landscape Design, takes into consideration the nature of the area, recognition of contrib-

Bungendore Community Bank board members with members of the Bungendore Country Music Muster at the presentation at the almost complete Bush Balladeers place.

utions of the bush balladeers to Australian folk lore, environmental aspects, aboriginal and European ecological remains, and suitability to the village. It will occupy a mostly unused area, will be easily accessed and close to parking and amenities.

The facility is planned as a focal point for tourists, outdoor concerts and is a user friendly area with shade and seating.

The construction of Balladeers Place is being funded by the Bungendore Country Music Muster, Braidwood and Bungendore Community Banks, Veolia Mulwaree Trust, and with over \$12,000 donated in kind by local individuals and businesses. ■

Behaviour change for men involved in domestic violence

Programs thin on the ground but here are a few for referral

THE NSW Government is investing over \$19.5 million over the next two years into mandated behaviour change programs throughout the state, and there is a promise of \$5.3 million over the next three years towards four pilot behavioural change programs that will involve 1,300 men and their families.

However men in this region will probably still have to travel to Sydney

for some time yet to access behavioural change programs.

For those seeking more information, the following contacts are a starting point.

• **Relationships Australia** – ‘Taking Responsibility’. No referral is required. Call 1300 364 277, website: www.nsw.relationships.com.au.

• **Men's Behaviour Change Network** – Accredited men's behaviour change programs offered through BaptistCare and Rela-

tionships Australia. Call 02 4624 8700, website: mbcn-nsw.net.

• **Men's Referral Service** – ‘Lifeworks’ Call 1300 766 491, website: www.mrs.org.au (based in Victoria but offers services for Australian men).

• **Corrective Services NSW** – EQUIPS Domestic Abuse Program (DAP). Program for medium to high-risk offenders in custodial and community corrections settings. Call 137 788 24/7, or 02 8346 1333. Website: www.correctiveservices.justice.nsw.gov.au.

— Graham Franklin-Browne

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PALERANG COUNCIL

NOMINATIONS – Australia Day 2016 Awards

Council is calling for nominations from throughout Palerang for community awards to be presented at celebrations in Bungendore, Captains Flat and Braidwood on Australia Day, Tuesday, 26 January 2016.

The categories for the awards in each town and surrounding areas are:

1. Citizen of the Year
2. Young Citizen of the Year (under 25 years)
3. Community Event of the Year

Nominations, closing 5.00pm on **Friday, 18 December 2015**, may be submitted by organisations, community groups or individuals.

Nomination forms are available from Council's offices in Bungendore (10 Majara Street) and Braidwood (144 Wallace Street) or by telephoning 1300 735 025 or (02) 6238 8111. They may also be downloaded from Council's website at www.palerang.nsw.gov.au under Community Services.

Completed nominations should be returned to Council in an envelope marked “Confidential – Australia Day 2016 Nomination”, Palerang Council, PO Box 348, Bungendore NSW 2621.

For further information, please contact Debby Ferguson, Manager Executive Services, on (02) 6238 8111 during business hours.

Going to Uni for the first time in 2016?

Braidwood and Bungendore **Community Bank®** branches

Scholarship now open.

Applications are invited from eligible students in the local district attending university for the first time in 2016.

Drop into your nearest branch at 1/33 Ellendon Street, Bungendore — 6238 0547 or 93-95 Wallace Street, Braidwood — 4842 1700 for more information.

Bendigo Bank
Bigger than a bank.

bendigobank.com.au/scholarships

The Braidwood and Bungendore **Community Bank®** branches 2016 Scholarship is a management account of Community Enterprise Charitable Fund ABN 12 102 649 968 (the Fund), The Bendigo Centre, Bendigo Vic 3550. Sandhurst Trustees Limited ABN 16 004 030 737 AFSL 237906, a subsidiary of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited ABN 11 068 049 178 AFSL 237879, is the Trustee of the Fund. S52345-1 (284716_v1) (4/12/2015)

with Dr David Weldrake

December 2015 *Bulletin*

During DECEMBER / JANUARY
Catherine Lidden – Australian Made
 Bungendore Fine Art, Ellendon St, Bungendore.
 Ph 6238 1640 or see www.bungendorefineart.com.au.

Thursday 10

Roberts Goes Rural – Free Information Session
 The Q, Crawford St, Queanbeyan, 10–11am. Presented by the Education Department of the National Gallery of Australia. The Tom Roberts exhibition showing now at the National Gallery of Australia. To attend RSVP by Dec 8, communications@starts.com.au.

Friday 11

Iron Bar & Goolabri Christmas Get Together
 Sutton. Live music and degustation tasting menu. \$50 from 6.30pm. For more <https://www.facebook.com/events/184774638532871/>.

Sunday 13

Santa Train
 Canberra Railway Museum. Take a Christmas train ride to Fyshwick and back. For more ph 6284 2790, email federalcityexpress@gmail.com or see www.arhsact.org.au.

Monday 14

Joey Fimmano's Piano Man
 The Q, Crawford St, Queanbeyan. Special Christmas edition of our Morning Melodies series. Musical tributes to Peter Allen, Neil Sedaka, Liberace, Andrew Lloyd Webber, classical hits with a twist and many more. For more www.theq.net.au or 6285 6290.

GIG GUIDE: December

First Friday of the month: Music and Poetry
 Royal Hotel, Bungendore, 7.30pm.

Friday 11

Addison Lane, 8pm–12am, Queanbeyan Kangaroos Club.
Bell & Wade, 8–11.30pm, Queanbeyan Tigers Club.

Friday 18

Wayne Ryder Duo, 8pm–12am, Queanbeyan Kangaroos Club.

Coming up in JANUARY 2016

Thursday 31 New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve Train Tour

Canberra Railway Museum. Take a trip to Sydney aboard the Federal City Express. For more ph 6284 2790, email federalcityexpress@gmail.com or see www.arhsact.org.au.

Friday 15 to Monday 18

Charlotte Pass Celtic Music Camp

If you would like to hone your skills in playing guitar, fiddle and mandolin or look at your accompaniment style this is the camp for you. For more charlottepasscelticmusiccamp.com or contact Jo Cresswell 0420 769 449.

Tuesday 12 to Thursday 21

Braidwood Summer Activity Program

Something on offer for both primary and high school age children in 3-hour workshops. For more Tom on 0404 301 950, Christina on 0414 385 051 or Merrilyn on 0419 556 169.

What's On – December 2015

Send announcements to whatson@districtbulletin.com.au

Pick up fresh regional produce for Christmas –
 veggies, meat, eggs, honey and much more...



December: Sat 12th (9am–1pm), Weds 23rd (3–7pm)
 at the Memorial Hall (opposite Food Lovers)



Southern Harvest Farmers Market at Bungendore

Friday 18

Burra Christmas in the Park

Free to enjoy a family celebration of Christmas at the Burra Park. Novelty events including cash prizes for the best decorated bicycle; treasure hunt; free sausage sizzle; cake stall; carol singing; musical items and more. Commencing 6pm through to 8pm. Make it a real Burra/Urila/Royalla family affair. (Inquiries to 6236 3207.)

Wamboin community Christmas carols

Wamboin Community Hall Bingley Way, 7pm. Everyone invited to join for carols, Christmas story presented by children of Wamboin, Giving tree for the Salvos, Santa arriving on a fire truck and free sausage sizzle and cold drinks.

Saturday 19

Night @ the Haunted Penitentiary

Queanbeyan, from 7.30pm. Walk through 330m² of deserted corridors, silent rooms, restricted areas and empty cells ... a place where your worst nightmares come together behind the barred windows. This one-off event is in aid of the Queanbeyan Children's Special Needs Group. Tickets \$25pp. For more <https://www.rotaryd9710.org.au/store/treehouse.html>.

Sunday 20

Carols in the Park

Queanbeyan Park, 5–9pm. All welcome.

Sutton Saint Peters church, Christmas carols

All invited to sing carols on the lawns or inside if weather turns wet, 7 pm. Bring a blanket. Light refreshments afterwards.

YOUNG ENTERTAINERS MUSIC CAMP 2016

When: 18th – 22nd Jan 2016, 10-3pm
Where: Bungendore Memorial Hall
Who: 9-15 years old
Cost: \$360/person

Contact Madi to find out more:
 0428 564 730
madi@madlinprojects.com.au



Dive into December

the market @ bungendore

Sunday December 20th 9am–3pm
 at the War Memorial Hall

Looking for Xmas presents?
 All your favourite stalls
 with gifts galore!

jewellery

giftware

soaps & lotions

local art & craft

garden products

toys & models

cakes & pastries

tea & fresh coffee

guitars & amps



textiles

preserves

hand knits

candles

cookies

mosaics

homewares

greeting cards

beads & findings

pottery & ceramics

local grown plants

prints & paintings

fruit & vegetables

clothing & footwear



A stunning evening of collaboration between highly accomplished musicians featuring bluesy originals and standards together with innovative and smooth jazz



DJ GOSPER & In2Deep-MIKE DOOLEY, RACHEL THORNE & Band

Blues in the Key of Jazz

3 Course Dinner
 & Concert
 Bookings in the Cafe
 or Phone 6238 1688

Saturday
February 20
6pm

Lyrical ballads to catchy duets
 with quirky lyrics
 From summery bossa novas
 to Latin classics and
 lilting jazz waltzes

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