

Bulletin

COUNTRY LIVING in Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Palerang



PHOTO: MARIA TAYLOR

The man who would be coach

The 2011 season might have ended on a low note for Canberra's rugby league team but the man who remains at the helm despite the inevitable angst is looking forward to charting the course for 2012. David Furner talks to Nichole Smith about his own illustrious playing career, growing up in a hotbed of sporting talent and the challenges ahead for the Canberra Raiders.

RUGBY LEAGUE is considered a hard game played by hard men but sometimes there comes a player who, while one of the toughest on the field, sees no need to bring that with him when he heads back to the locker room. David Furner is one such man.

Current head coach of the Canberra Raiders, himself a former player for the club, and also an international representative for the Australian Kangaroos, Furner was one of the stars of the game during the 1990s and at the conclusion of his first-grade career was the highest point-scoring forward in Australian rugby league history. It is his self-effacing nature that comes to the fore however, when he speaks of his considerable accomplishments.

"The biggest thing for me was always getting the most out of the opportunities that came my way," is the most he allows. "I've been fortunate enough to play with some of the greats, but I don't put myself in that class. I just tried to make the most of whatever talent I might have had."

The Furner football legacy: in Dad's footsteps

Football and family were always important to the boy born in the old Queanbeyan Hospital in the closing summer of 1970 and who spent much of his time shaping his skills on the same fields where

his heroes – including his own father – had set almost impossibly high standards.

In a town renowned for its champions, Furner potentially had something of an advantage, boasting as he could an impressive sporting pedigree. His dad, Don, was a nine-time league representative for Queensland, coached the Eastern Suburb Roosters to the 1972 Grand Final, became Australia's national coach in 1986 and, adding even more impact to the familial bond, was himself a Kangaroo – making father and son one of only three such pairs to achieve the distinction.

Furner senior was also the first coach of the Raiders and instrumental in the team's formation back when their headquarters and home ground, Seiffert Oval, were in their heartland of Queanbeyan.

Of his family's long-standing ties to the game, Furner agrees it was an exciting time for a boy with aspirations to wear the green and white team colours.

"It was great to be a part of it all when it first

started, and obviously Dad was quite involved. It was an important thing for the local identity of Queanbeyan and then Canberra, and so it is significant to have had an involvement from the very beginning."

Rugby league champion nursery

The game has long held an esteemed place in the culture and heritage of Queanbeyan and since first introduced here in the 1920s, the town has produced arguably some of the best-known names in rugby league.

Current NSW State of Origin coach Ricky Stuart, Glenn Lazarus, named amongst the nation's finest players of the 20th century, and 'teenage footballing sensation' Steve Darmody, who at 23 was selected in the inaugural Australian Kangaroos side that toured England, are only a few on a lengthy list.

As with these players, Furner has been inducted into the Queanbeyan Sporting Gallery and in 2010 made his appearance in the ACT Hall of Fame. He was also awarded the Australian Sports Medal for his contribution to Australia's international standing in rugby league.

Equal opportunity rugby enthusiast

League was not his only love, however, and it was rugby union where he would first make his presence known.

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Above: Dave Furner was in Queanbeyan Park with his family on Australia Day as the city's 2012 Australia Day Ambassador. More on Australia Day, p5.

Seen here with Dad is Kyle (on Dave's left), a highschooler keen to carry on the family footballing tradition and daughter Maddison who has chosen the theatre as her performance arena. She's thrilled to be appearing in the upcoming Canberra Philharmonic production of Fiddler on the Roof as second daughter Hodel. See more about Fiddler on p12.

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Contact The Bulletin

Send letters and enquiries to:

Managing Editor: **Maria Taylor**
0418 731 691

Admin: Christina Taylor
Editorial: media@districtbulletin.com.au

Contacts advertising:

Maria 0418 731 691

or email adverts@districtbulletin.com.au

PO Box 302, Bungendore NSW 2621

Associate Editor:
Sonja Chandler

Editorial Contributors:

Peter Davies, Heike Hahner, Di Johnstone,
Marcele Martins, Sarah Newsome,
Doug Palmer, Nichole Smith, Jo Walker

Editorial intern: Karen Lovatt

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

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IF YOU want to reduce your commute and have a job that could be done wholly or partly remotely, Sustaining Our Towns would like to hear from you at

www.sustainingourtowns.org.au/survey.

Sustaining Our Towns has a project underway aimed at reducing the number of people commuting from regional NSW into the ACT by increasing remote work opportunities. The project will also investigate

Work from home or from a regional hub?

COMMUTER SURVEY EXTENDED

the feasibility of one or more remote work or 'tele-hubs' in regional centres like Bungendore.

Such a hub would provide hire-able office space and equipment to employers, employees and local small businesses.

in 2006, 35% of Palerang's working-age population was commuting to work in the ACT

Despite the holiday break around 50 people from regions surrounding the ACT have answered most questions in the commuter survey, but project officer Mel Hillery would like to hear from more.

"We know that in 2006 about 35 percent of the working age population (3,200) in Palerang was commuting to work in the ACT and in recent years that would only have increased."

What's the chance of working a couple of days from home?

"The survey response will gauge how many of those people have jobs that could work a day or two from home, and how interested they are in remote working. To be able to argue for

these initiatives we need the numbers to present to policy makers and finance providers."

Initial findings from the project indicate that 40 of 53 (75.5 percent) of respondents drive to work and 8 of 53 (15 percent) work from home. The average commuter in the survey takes around 46 minutes to drive one way and spends \$64.61 on fuel driving to and from work each week (which is on average 403.8kms per week – think of the carbon emissions we could reduce!).

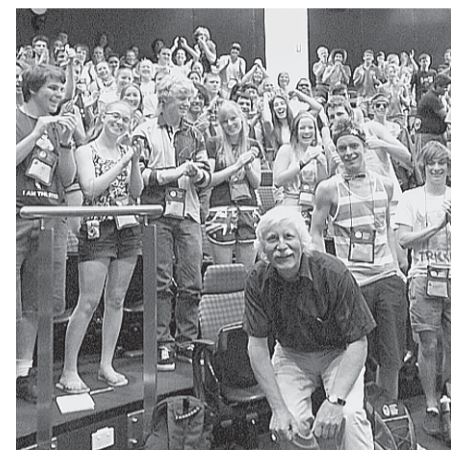
Of respondents, 90 percent indicated that they would like to work from home and 60 percent indicated that they were certain or very likely to use a tele-centre if there was one local to them. Not unsurprisingly the most popular option was for waged employees with centre fees paid for by their employer!

Preferred locations for tele-centres so far are Bungendore (28.5 percent with a significant number indicating Bungendore as a second preference), Braidwood (20 percent), Wamboin and Bywong (17 percent) and Yass (17 percent). Murrumbateman, Cooma, Jindabyne, Queanbeyan, Sutton, Mongarlowe, Gundaroo and Tarago all received votes, and two respondents nominated Bega!

Mel Hillery says the project has identified new "push" factors for increasing the level of remote work. "We will release our report in late March as well as hosting a public meeting in Bungendore with Local Member Mike Kelly to discuss potential options for remote work and the roll-out of the NBN – stay tuned!"

The *Remote Working around the ACT* project is a partnership between Sustaining Our Towns and the Palerang Local Action Network for Sustainability (PLANS). Both organisations are funded by the NSW Environmental Trust. For more information on the project, contact Mel Hillery on 0427 440 335 or email melophorus@bigpond.com.

PALERANG RESIDENT'S ORDER OF AUSTRALIA



Australia day photo of Hans Bachor with students of the NYSF.

Credit: Geoff Burchfield

BYWONG RESIDENT Hans Bachor was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in this year Australia Day honours list: the highest national accolade for achievement and community service. Professor Bachor retired last year from the ANU where he was an internationally acclaimed quantum physicist. He was also one of the ANU's most popular science teachers with a reputation for making science learning interactive and fun.

In recent decades he was a leader in the field of quantum optics and led an international team that developed a laser pointer machine for more accurate measurement of laser light beams.

Bachor says he is happiest to be recognised for his work with young people. This is continuing with the National Youth Science Forum (NYSF) a highly successful national workshop/seminar two-week program that gives young people a lot of good and fun reasons to consider tertiary science education.

Some figures wanted on Queanbeyan Hospital

by Maria Taylor

CONCERNS have again been raised about staffing levels at Queanbeyan Hospital and whether anything has improved since the Coalition government took power in NSW last year.

Former representative for Monaro Steve Whan told the *District Bulletin* that he has been unable to get questions answered in state parliament regarding nursing staff levels, vacancies and emergency room doctor shifts. Whan, a Queanbeyan resident, is now in the Upper House and serves as the Shadow Special Minister of State.

"Over the last few months, I have asked a series of questions on notice about staffing at Queanbeyan Hospital but have received answers from the Health Minister that can only be described as disingenuous and disrespectful of our community," he said.

Whan says he has always been a great supporter of the hospital which was upgraded on his watch, and says everyone should be confident to use the emergency services. His questions include whether nursing vacancies have gone up in recent months.

The Queanbeyan Local Health Advisory Committee, that takes community feedback to the hospital, is not aware that previous difficulties in filling rosters have improved in the last six months. But there have also been fewer resident comments, said Queanbeyan Councillor committee member Tom Mavec.

Improvements to the hospital, like the new renal dialysis unit were in train before the change

of government, said Mavec. He said he has also heard unconfirmed reports about increased nursing staff shortages, possibly due to the lure of better pay across the border.

A plan for more nurses, morale boost

However, the current member for Monaro John Barilaro who said in his campaign that "fixing" the hospital's problems was his number-one priority, rejected any suggestion that nothing positive was happening.

"Queanbeyan Hospital and healthcare across the Monaro region is my top priority as a local member," he said. "We announced a record number of nursing graduate positions in the region. We have a commitment to provide 2,475 extra nurses across the state over four years which will have a very positive impact on regional healthcare services.

"Under the previous government, morale at the hospital was a serious issue and we have taken measures to ensure recognition of the hard work being done by our healthcare workers which has lead to a significant increase in morale."

Day surgeries in Queanbeyan?

Queanbeyan Hospital was upgraded and beds were added under the former Labor government, partly in anticipation of a cross-border agreement with the ACT for distributing some of the ACT surgery load back to Queanbeyan.

The Queanbeyan Local Health Advisory Committee has been told the so-called "reverse

flow" of patients is "imminent" said Mavec, something that has been said before.

Barilaro said the NSW Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ACT Government. "We are also about to appoint a Cross-Border Commissioner who will work with both governments to achieve synergy on health services."

The eagerly-awaited cross-border agreement would cut not only hospital waiting lists but public costs, with the Canberra Hospital roughly 50 percent more expensive than NSW hospitals, said Whan.

Cross-border issues include having doctors registered in both jurisdictions and the question of which jurisdiction provides the nursing staff and related costs and awards. Day surgeries are the model for Queanbeyan in this agreement. But, says Mavec, what happens when a patient has a complication and has to stay overnight? He believes these are the sort of questions that have slowed down action on the agreement.

More generally, differences in award rates and conditions are suspected of being one reason Queanbeyan continues to lose nursing staff to the ACT. Administrative disputes with some visiting medical officers from the previous hospital era have not helped the staffing situation and it is not clear that anything has improved on that front.

Regional residents who want to talk to the Queanbeyan Local Health Advisory Committee can contact Tom Mavec on 6248 4182.

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THANK YOU

AS I FORMERLY held the secretary and assistant secretary positions during 2011, I sincerely thank you for your support given with advertising the Carwoola Community Association events in the *What's On* section of the *District Bulletin*. In addition, I am also aware that the Carwoola Community Association committee appreciated your assistance with publicising these events.

I always enjoy reading the *District Bulletin* as it offers unique content which makes it very informative and interesting. It is good to read about the various individuals who are profiled in our community and to learn about their achievements.

— Dee McArthur, Carwoola

Editors note: We received more pats on the back of this nature, by phone and in person, following the December issue. We encourage you write to us: praise is always lapped up but feedback of any kind is welcomed.

PLAN DOES NOT REFLECT WHAT COMMUNITY SAID

PALERANG COUNCIL has released the Draft Community Strategic Plan which came out of community consultation through the Council Community Forums earlier this year and telephone surveys conducted since then. A copy of the draft plan has been available for comment on the Council website over December and January but has unfortunately now closed.

The draft plan was generated through a process facilitated by Martin Bass from the

University of Technology Sydney, who along with Councillors and staff sifted through the more than 7,000 comments, divided them amongst pre-determined themes and debated, wrangled and compromised to distil them down into the statements that we now see in the draft plan.

Palerang Council held three community feedback forums in the week beginning 12 December in Bungendore, Braidwood and a separate meeting targeting rural community associations. I attended the Bungendore forum.

An early theme emerged when a community member asked where, in this plan, has Palerang stuck its head out and had a vision of something different than any other generic rural shire? It was suggested that the mechanistic way in which the comments from the forums and survey were processed has given a result where it is difficult for the Palerang community to look at the plan and see ourselves in it.

The community was engaged

The General Manager, staff and many Councillors have, I believe, shown a genuine interest and commitment to engage in the consultative process that the community forums, survey and development of the Community Plan have offered.

The conversations that have ensued out of this process have enlightened all of us – staff, Councillors and community members alike – and potentially shown us a way forward out of the often negative and reactive interactions that residents have experienced with Council in the past. The consultation we have experienced this year enables greater information exchange and a far more positive atmosphere and Council should be warmly congratulated on it.



Work on Braidwood's Flood Creek trail and bridge – see Council newsletter report, right.

PALERANG COUNCIL

Development Approvals

Notification in accordance with Section 101 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 Council approved the following development applications in January 2012.

Development Consents are available for public inspection free of charge at Council's offices during ordinary business hours.

Application No	Development Description	Date	Property Description
DA.2011.325	Demolish existing dwelling and construct new dwelling	4/01/2012	Lot 13 Sec 4 DP 75822313 Schardt Street CAPTAINS FLAT
DA.2011.326	Dwelling	6/01/2012	Lot 12 Sec 4 DP 75822313 Schardt Street CAPTAINS FLAT
DA.2011.367	Tree Removal	9/01/2012	Lot 2 DP 85256018 McKellar Street BRAIDWOOD
DA.2011.329	Telstra Monopole	11/01/2012	Lot 5 DP 703846194 Denley Drive WAMBOIN
DA.2011.313	Alterations & Additions and Indoor Swimming Pool	12/01/2012	Lot 53 DP 1018536300 Cartwright Avenue SUTTON
DA.2011.188	Two (2) Transportable Dwellings for Tourist Facility	13/01/2012	Lot 1 DP 7333581120 Urila Road TINDERRY
DA.2011.351	Dual Occupancy	13/01/2012	Lot 1 DP 1162965213 Wirreanda Road WAMBOIN
DA.2011.379	Tree Removal	18/01/2012	Lot 16 Sec 24 DP 75818352 Molonglo Street BUNGENDORE
DA.2011.380	Alterations and Additions to Dwelling	19/01/2012	Lot 12 DP 255514102 Radcliffe Circuit CARWOOLA
DA.2011.360	Fence	24/01/2012	Lot 4 Sec 1 DP 75818315 Turallo Terrace BUNGENDORE
DA.2011.359	Access Ramp	24/01/2012	Lot 4 Sec 1 DP 75818315 Turallo Terrace BUNGENDORE
DA.2011.366	Alterations and Additions to Dwelling	27/01/2012	Lot 6 Sec 21 DP 75863646 Red Hill Road MAJORS CREEK
DA.2011.357	Dwelling	27/01/2012	Lot 34 DP 1141290196 Birchmans Grove WAMBOIN
DA.2012.007	Tree Removal	31/01/2012	Lot 88 DP 754893631 Hoskinstown Road BUNGENDORE
DA.2011.353	Carport	31/01/2012	Lot 23 DP 77362764 Molonglo River Drive CARWOOLA

However...

Whilst it is difficult to not to end up with banal generalities when a document has many authors, it is also true that unless the community plan contains some clear goals that we can recognise as emerging from our comments then it will not be worth the paper it is written on. In this event the naysayers who said this process was a waste of time will be proven correct. If it really is to be a community strategic plan then we must argue for the feedback from the community to be reflected, in our own words, in the body of the document.

Some of the missing goals for Palerang From the community comments to the Bungendore and Burra forums that I attended earlier in the year, I would suggest that a non-controversial set of clear goals for this community in the next 10–20 years would include (though not be limited to):

An ambulance service and an aged-care facility (for west Palerang), an established set of heritage/bicycle trails, a community development officer, a study into the best solution for the Kings Highway route in relation to both Bungendore and Braidwood, a welcome kit for new residents, a streamlined DA [development application] process giving better timelines for small developments and wider consultation for large developments, a package of sustainability initiatives (including a DA package, transport strategies, and a carbon emissions reduction strategy), and an ongoing conversation between Council and the Palerang community.

Palerang News

Mick Sherd Oval Facilities

Bungendore residents and visitors are making good use of the new amenities building and carpark at the Mick Sherd Oval in Bungendore. The new multi-purpose building, opened in December, is affectionately known as 'The Shed' by the sporting groups who were involved in its development. It houses a canteen, a meeting and game day administration room, storage facilities for the various sports groups/clubs, an official's change room, and better toilet facilities, including a baby change room.

The new facilities are used by more than sporting groups that use the oval. Many community activities such as fairs and festivals use the site, as well as day-trippers and passing tourists.

This project has been the result of a very successful community and government partnership, initiated by the members of the Mick Sherd Oval S.355 committee who raised the seed money for the project. The committee also engaged local tradesmen and businesses to pledge in-kind works. Council contributed funds, facilitating the development of the project. This attracted other financial partners, including the Australian and NSW State governments, the Veolia Mulwaree Trust and the Bendigo Bank.

Flood Creek Walking Trail

The Flood Creek walking trail on the southern outskirts of Braidwood is nearing completion, thanks to a concerted effort coordinated by the Braidwood Urban Landcare Group (BULG) who secured funding from Southern Area Health, NSW Department of Lands and the Sydney and Southern Rivers Catchment Authorities. BULG volunteers, with Palerang Council staff, have constructed a scenic trail that commences at the point where Coghill Road crosses Flood Creek (Archers Bridge), adjacent to the Ryrie Street intersection and runs along the southern side of the creek. It leads into the Braidwood Common and past the community gardens, climbs up towards the golf course and ends at the turning bay at the end of Garvey Street. The trail is designed to be an easy grade and includes short level breaks in the climbing section to accommodate wheelchair access.

The Flood Creek bridge provides a focal point to the existing walking trail as well as the increasingly popular community gardens. This creek crossing presented a particular challenge, given the limited budget. The solution from Council's engineering staff was based on rock-filled wire baskets (gabions) and timbers from dismantled road bridges, which could be assembled by the BULG volunteers.

NEW QUEANBEYAN LOCAL PLAN

The Queanbeyan Local Environment Plan (LEP) is now on public exhibition until March 26 and submissions are encouraged. Councillor Tom Mavec noted that readers should be aware zoning names have changed as required for statewide consistency and readers might look for any usage changes from the previous zone names to the new ones. Proposed new development like Jumping Creek south of Greenleigh may also be of interest to residents and ratepayers.

I'm sure a similar set of clear goals could also be distilled from the other forums and I don't understand why these specific aspirations don't appear in the document, perhaps in addition to the more general statements.

I look forward to seeing an improved draft that better reflects the Palerang that we all know and love. Councillors and Council staff need to be patient with the consultative process and not cut it short at the last post – having given it fair hearing until now. I look forward to the continuation of the positive conversation that Council has initiated through this process, and encourage your readers to continue to be engaged by letting Council know what you think about the Plan and the process.

— Sincerely Melinda Hillery, Snowgum Rd, Bywong

The timber deck should be laid in the coming weeks, with the completion and opening of the path soon after.

Community Strategic Plan

The Palerang Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is in its final stage of preparation. The Plan involved extensive community consultation over the past six months. Mandated by the NSW state government, the CSP is aimed at bringing uniformity to local government planning processes across the state. Data collected from the community workshops held in May and June 2011, fed into the draft Plan that was outlined in public meetings, in Braidwood and Bungendore in December, and formally placed on public exhibition. The resulting feedback and submissions will be incorporated into the Plan, to be presented to Council at the March general meeting for formal adoption.

New Water Treatment Plants

Works on the design and construction of new water treatment plants for Bungendore (Currandooley) and Braidwood are underway. The appointed contractor, Water Treatment Australia Pty Ltd, is nearing completion of the design process and has recently taken possession of both sites to commence the civil works.

The works at Currandooley will supplement the capacity of the Bungendore system, to cater for the growth of the town. The plant will treat a bore water supply incorporating conventional sedimentation/filtration with pre-dosing, and the treated water will be pumped to town through a 200mm pipeline.

At Braidwood the new plant will address the long outstanding issue of town water quality. The water sourced from the Shoalhaven River will be treated using a dissolved air flotation and filtration model supplemented with powder activated carbon where necessary to counteract algae.

Both plants will incorporate disinfection and fluoridation, and are expected to be commissioned in August/September 2012.

Council gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance provided for both projects by the Australian Government under the Water Smart Australia Program, and for the Currandooley project by the NSW State Government, who provided a \$3M interest free loan from the Local Infrastructure Fund.

Information about council and community activities in Palerang are available from the Council website at www.palerang.nsw.gov.au

PALERANG COUNCIL

Seen at Australia Day in Queanbeyan Park and Bungendore



A: Queanbeyan Australia Day Ambassador Dave Furner echoed many speeches around the country that day: "How lucky we are to live in this great country."

B: Queanbeyan's Sing Australia Choir gives it their all.

C: Ngambri-Ngunnuwal Aboriginal leader Matilda House performed the Welcome to Country at Queanbeyan Park. She reminisced that football great and Australia Day Ambassador Dave Furner was "The guy who played on this oval against my son". And he replied in his address, "Yes and I remember he won most of the battles". All in good spirit. On a more serious note, House said she'd just come from a place "where we fought our battle since 1972" – ie the tent embassy in front of Old Parliament House in Canberra. She reminded her audience that the embassy was about how recently Indigenous Australians were completely dispossessed. "In 1967 I was not a citizen of this country. We have had to fight to acknowledge the land and the future for our people." Appearing ceremonially in her possum coat (inset) she also assured the audience that "not one of these possums suffered in Australia. They came from New Zealand!"

> Citizens of the Year, p15



PHOTOS: MARIA TAYLOR

D: Watching the Queanbeyan ceremonies, Margaret Whelan with son Michael.

E: A bush dance in Bungendore rounded out Palerang's three Australia Day ceremonies. Others were held in Captains Flat and Braidwood.

Seen here in the foyer of Council chambers (which makes an excellent party room): Citizen of the Year Sharon Rasker, in pink, following the lead of 'Dancing with the Stars' dancer and Palerang Council Australia Day Ambassador Carmelo Pizzino, who didn't blink and hopped right into the country steps. Palerang enjoyed two Australia Day Ambassadors this year. Also appearing (and dancing) was two-time World Champion endurance bike rider, Warwick Nowland. The two Ambassadors gave inspirational talks about sticking to your goals and also about staying fit. Bill Waterhouse from Majors Creek provided the musical entertainment.



Across the radar screen

You know you're Australian if ...

- * You believe that stubbies can be either drunk or worn.
- * You understand that the phrase 'a group of women wearing black thongs' refers to footwear and may be less alluring than it sounds.
- * You pronounce Melbourne as 'Mel-bin'.
- * You can translate: 'Dazza and Shazza played Acca Dacca on the way to Maccas.'
- * You believe it makes perfect sense for a nation to decorate its highways with large fibreglass bananas, prawns and sheep.
- * You believe all famous Kiwis are actually Australian, until they stuff up, at which point they again become Kiwis.
- * Beetroot with your hamburger... of course.

- * You wear ugg boots outside the house.
- * You believe that the more you shorten someone's name the more you like them.
- * You know it's not summer until the steering wheel is too hot to handle and a seatbelt buckle becomes a pretty good branding iron.
- * You know how to abbreviate every word, all of which usually end in -o: arvo, combo, garbo, kero, lezzo, metho, milko, muso, rego, servo, smoko, speedo, righto, goodo etc.
- * You know that none of us actually drink Fosters beer, because it tastes like piss. But we let the world think we do. Because we can.
- * You know that the barbecue is a political arena; the person holding the tongs is always the boss and usually a man. And the women make the salad.



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Household energy costs down mainly thanks to appliances

STOCKLAND has claimed its new homes can shave more than \$2,000 a year off the energy bill for an average four-bedroom suburban home in Sydney's outer-western suburb of Penrith. A new three-bedroom home can cost \$1,787 a year less to run, it says. But are these figures right?

According to leading Australian energy expert Alan Pears, there may be a few questions over methodology but in general it's true: the energy costs of running a comfortable suburban house have fallen dramatically if the house is fitted with the latest efficient appliances – even a 100cm flat screen television.

Professor Pears, adjunct professor at RMIT and director of Sustainable Solutions Pty Ltd told *The Fifth Estate* that the savings starting to come through on homes fitted with modern electronic appliances and fittings are "pretty impressive".

For example, "The best 420 litre family fridge is now rated 318kWh compared with about 1,200–1,400kWh in the mid-late 1980s," Professor Pears said.

"Efficient lighting is giving 80 percent savings. A good solar hot water service is cutting hot water bills by 70 percent plus. The latest Samsung 100cm TV uses 30 watts – older flat screen TVs that size use 200–450 watts.

"Even a large old CRT TV (say 76cm) uses around 130 watts. Also the best aircons [airconditioning units] are twice as efficient as 1980s technology. So if you put everything together, it all adds up."

The stunning turnaround in outlook is recent, professor Pears said. "I suspect [the energy efficiency of new appliances] are part of the reason for the decline in residential electricity

consumption, plus a bit of behaviour change due to the big price rises recently."

Stockland attributes its savings in part to inbuilt energy-saving appliances but also to better design which general manager corporate responsibility and sustainability Siobhan Toohill said have led to reduced need for heating and cooling.

Professor Pears said that the Australian Bureau of Statistics household expenditure survey in 2009–10 found average Australian household annual energy bills were \$1,690. "If we allow for say 30 percent increase since then, the average would be around \$2,200. So Stockland's

Table shows average energy consumption costs for suburban housing.

Location	Average energy (consumption) costs for a 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2 garage home			Average energy (consumption) costs for a 4 bedroom, 2 bath, 2 garage home		
	Old	New	Savings	Old	New	Savings
Sydney (Penrith)	\$2,277	\$490	\$1,787	\$2,775	\$578	\$2,197
Melbourne (Mernda)	\$2,032	\$753	\$1,279	\$2,460	\$886	\$1,574
Perth (Averly)	\$2,005	\$557	\$1,448	\$2,366	\$618	\$1,748
SE Qld (North Lakes)	\$1,535	\$629	\$906	\$1,744	\$670	\$1,074
North Qld (Townsville)	\$1,623	\$696	\$927	\$1,973	\$802	\$1,171

Source: Stockland

'standard' existing home energy bills sound reasonable."

Energy consumption versus total bill, and the effect of solar PV

However, he said that Stockland's figures probably related to consumption of energy rather than total costs including fixed energy charges. (Stockland has since clarified that this is the case.)

"For example, if the home is connected to both gas and electricity, the annual fixed supply charges could be \$200–\$280 for electricity and \$150 or more for gas – total \$350 or more before you use any energy. A pretty good household would use ... around \$300 or more for electricity and \$150–\$250 for gas."

Interestingly, however, he said that although it would be a challenge to get under \$800 for total energy costs it is possible with solar power. In a new home fitted with a solar photo voltaic (PV) system even total costs might fall within the ranges shown in the Stockland table and the figures might even be "on the low side".

"One kW of PV will generate 1,200–1,500 kWh a year. Even just offsetting actual usage would save \$300–\$400, and with the feed-in tariffs it would save even more. And most

people now install 1.5kW to 2kW." Stockland's study does not include PV systems in the homes.

Pears said a counterweight to the sharp fall in energy consumption of appliances, however, had been that energy companies were pushing up fixed price charges. "The big worry is the way the energy supply industry is cranking up the fixed charges, which you can't avoid without getting off the grid."

Stockland said modelling was based on "a sensible approach to operating household appliances, items including those that are either legislated or a necessity to occupy a home." Calculations are based on 2–3 occupants.

The Fifth Estate website, thefifthestate.com.au reports on and for the sustainable building, real estate and development sector. Current stories also include a compelling report from a green capital forum on communicating and why some current or ex politicians (Paul Keating comes up) can still make news by bagging climate change knowledge and response. That includes mocking citizens who don't mind bicycles, walking and generally living greener while saving money!

Funds for schools to save energy and water

CAPTAINS FLAT Public School and Queanbeyan Public School are two of six schools in Eden-Monaro that will share in \$190,000 under the latest round of the Gillard government's National Solar Schools Program.

Member for Eden-Monaro, Mike Kelly, said the program will assist schools to install

solar and other renewable power systems, rain-water tanks and to make a range of energy efficiency improvements.

Kelly said, "These schools will be taking practical action to reduce carbon emissions whilst saving water, conserving and generating electricity.

"In this round of the National Solar Schools Program more than 260 schools across NSW have been funded. The combined installation of

renewable energy systems will generate approximately 20 MW of solar power – equivalent to powering around 4,200 average households each day."

Applications from schools located in remote or low socio-economic areas received additional weighting to allow funding to be directed to schools most in need.

The final round of the program will open to applications on 13 February.

For more information about the National Solar Schools Program, including a list of successful grant recipients, visit: www.climatechange.gov.au/nationalsolarschools.

For more information about a clean energy future visit: www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au.

The Voiceless Writing Prize

Writers of fiction and nonfiction are invited to reflect on the ethical relationship between humans and animals. Submissions should be between 5,000 and 10,000 words and should focus on animals produced for food or found in the Australian landscape.

The Judging Panel is chaired by Nobel Laureate JM Coetzee, and includes Voiceless co-founder and managing director Ondine Sherman, Literary Editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* Susan Wyndham, and Dr Wendy Were, former director of the Sydney Writers Festival.

The best pieces will be released as a collection by Publishing Partner Allen & Unwin, and *The Sydney Morning Herald* is supporting the Prize as Media Partner.

There is over \$20,000 in prizes to be won, including \$15,000 for the winner chosen by the Judging Panel (sponsored by Australian Ethical Investment), \$5,000 for the People's Choice winner sponsored by Deborah and Peter Debnam and \$500 for each writer chosen for publication.

Hurry, entries close 16 March! For further details visit www.voiceless.org.au/Grants/Misc/The_Voiceless_Writing_Prize_sponsored_by_Australian_Ethical_Investment.html

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Richard Manning

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You can't stop the music



5



3



4



MURRUMBATEMAN 5 ELRINGTON CLOSE

This much loved and cared for home features space and light on two levels and open planned segregated living spaces. There are four carpeted bedrooms and study in the main residence - BIR's in three and a WIR and ensuite for the master bedroom. There is a spacious kitchen, appointed with quality appliances, that flows easily to the North-facing meals and family areas. There is also a fully self-contained cottage with a large bedroom & bathroom upstairs and kitchen, meals, & lounge downstairs. Immerse yourself in an inspection. **By Negotiation**

Richard Manning 0408 616 840

Land and lifestyle...



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Why pay big bucks for a postage-stamp size block in Canberra when you can build your dream home on a big freehold block and secure a relaxed village lifestyle which is highly sought-after, but difficult to find. Details of blocks:- Lot 17: 2000m², \$269,000+; Lot 18: 2000m², \$269,000+ **Offers over \$269,000**

Chris Dixon 0414 819 377

Rural stunner



5



3



2



CARWOOLA 34 BERNALLAH ROAD

Majestically sited, this stunning property combines the beauty of recycled timbers with modern vogue like finishes to create a spacious 5-bedroom home with approximately 360m² of living. Set on three levels, this double brick home sits on a 10 acre block and enjoys panoramic views over Canberra to the Brindabellas and is only 8 km from Queanbeyan and approximately 20 minutes from Canberra's CBD. An exceptional home on 10 acres of natural bush and only minutes to town on sealed roads. **By negotiation**

John Sneddon 0403 139 701

"You've got to be kidding!"



4



2



6



BUNGENDORE 8 EYRE STREET

Built by a master carpenter, the quality of this build is exceptional. The home boasts 4 large bedrooms each with a BIR and a WIR and exquisite ensuite in the master bedroom. There are spacious lounge, dining & family rooms with glorious, rich polished hardwood flooring. This home is equipped with the comfort of ducted reverse cycle heating & cooling. There is a very spacious 4 car garage on a concrete slab, with power and lighting with a two space carport under the same roofline and an extra 3,000 litre rainwater tank. View by appointment. **By Negotiation**

Richard Manning 0408 616 840



5



2



3



BUNGENDORE 12 DAY CIRCUIT

This expansive and beautiful home features 5 large bedrooms with BIR's & WIRs, and double head shower ensuite in the master bedroom. The spacious kitchen with gas cook top, electric oven also features a 'huuuge' walk-in pantry. There is also a full-size triple garage, 55,000 litre water tank, established gardens and glasshouse. Oh my! **Offers over \$740,000**

Richard Manning 0408 616 840

River frontage with great appeal



3



2



3



GUNDAROO 18 CORK STREET

Positioned on the banks of the Yass River, this immaculate 3 bedroom, ensuite home represents an excellent opportunity to secure a relaxing sought-after lifestyle. Inside you will find 3 spacious bedrooms, the main with walk-in robe and ensuite, a combined kitchen and meals area, formal lounge and a separate dining. Year-round comfort is assured with 2 reverse cycle aircons & slow comb fireplace. Cedar feature walls evoke the warmth and comfort that the country has to offer. There is also a large cedar-lined single garage under the roof line. **Offers over \$569,000**

Chris Dixon 0414 819 377



6



3



6



WAMBOIN 832 NORTON ROAD

The spacious 450m² two-storey house on 26 acres boasts 6 bedrooms, 2 massive bathrooms - each with spa bath, and a number of living areas. Other features include a wine cellar, woodfired pizza oven, huge kitchen, separate dining and a large balcony with views to Black Mt Tower. Arguably the "best value" property in Wamboin. **\$975,000**

John Sneddon 0403 139 701

Escape to the country



5



2



2



GOOGONG 277 FERNLEIGH DRIVE

This stunning home set on 5.3ha with creek frontage and outstanding views, is an impressive and versatile property. There are 4 good sized bedrooms, a study (or 5th bedroom) with private court yard, formal lounge, large family room, family dining area and separate dining. A large undercover deck gives unrivalled views over bush & crown land. A separate area - currently used as an artist's studio could be the perfect games room or private office space. Infrastructure is impressive and includes three dams, 2 fenced paddocks & irrigated gardens. **\$995,000**

John Sneddon 0403 139 701

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Gundaroo

Offers over \$265,000

23 Morning Street

Well proportioned half-acre block with the potential to site a house to the north 25mins to Canberra's inner city.

Chris 0414 819 377

Mullion

By Negotiation

Doctors Flat Road

80ha (200ac) bush block with creeks, wildlife and privacy. Ideal getaway for hunting, riding or walking.

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Bulletin January

White summer blooms

Article and photos by Jo Walker

MANY YEARS ago, soon after I moved to Wamboin, there was a cold snap two weeks before Christmas – and for a whole day the ground wore a blanket of snow. That certainly didn't happen this year, but so many of our local plants were adorned with white or cream flowers during summer that the landscape looked distinctly snowy in places.

White and cream flowers can be as attractive as more brightly coloured ones, proven true this Summer.

Acacia mearnsii (Black Wattle) started the trend in early December. So dense were the cream clusters of flowers that the leaves were hardly visible. The trees carried a heavy crop of seed capsules, but not much seed ripened. The Sulphur-crested Cockatoos feasted on the pods and insect larvae were feeding on the immature seed.

Stabiliser for creek banks and bird habitat



By Christmas, the Burgan (*Kunzea ericoides*) formed what looked like a snow-covered mountain range along my creek.

Burgan can be an unwelcome plant on properties destined for orchards, vineyards and similar projects as it grows sometimes rampantly on moist or heavy soils, but on my place it has formed a corridor along the creek, stabilising the banks and providing a food source for birds.

White-browed Scrub-wrens and Superb Blue Wrens spend a lot of time catching insects there and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters also find it a favourable habitat.



Pale-flowered Cauliflower Bush and Eucalypts

Cassinia longifolia (Cauliflower Bush) has been flowering for weeks now and the cream flowers are just beginning to get a tinge of brown. This hardy, drought-tolerant plant lives for only a few years but certainly brightens the dry hillsides during its short life.

Eucalypts sporadically put on an eye-catching display of pale flowers, and this year it was the

turn of the Scribbly Gums (*Eucalyptus rossii*). Not all of them flowered heavily, but two trees on Sutton Road and a few visible from my place looked like cream clouds.

Eucalyptus leucoxylon (not a local species, but often used in gardens and as street trees), mostly produces red flowers, but a proportion of those grown from seed have large cream flowers, seen on right.

Continued p10



— TOWN & COUNTRY PETS —

by Heike Hahner

New cats versus ninja-rats

IN JANUARY 2011 my cat Darwin died, aged 12, and I promised never to get another cat – EVER.

I had gotten 9-year-old Darwin from the RSPCA to keep the rats and mice under control. My older cat Oliver, now 18, was not doing his job anymore. Too old to mouse, but never too old to beat up strange cats. Oliver turned my house into a feline war-zone when Darwin arrived.

Ferocious fights

Fighting cats are never much fun to have around, but seeing things up close and personal is like watching a bad Bruce Willis movie. The sound effects are overwhelming and the visuals are reminiscent of a mad-house scenario.

Bloody scratches and bites, fur flying, drips of blood and cat urine sprayed everywhere, the crashing of cups and plates. Oliver is relentless when he hates a cat, but seeing it was my home and my new cat that he was trashing, I fought back just as vigilantly.

Even some of my dogs entered into the fray. Normally they couldn't care less about the cats. But for my cattle dog Till, this was a good opportunity for a little pay-back. For many years Oliver had ambushed him from behind bushes or car tyres, scaring the living daylight out of him.

Why have a cat at all?

So after this experience of warring cats in my home, getting another cat was an agonising decision. Straight back into the gates of hell as far as I was concerned. And, cats kill birds and small native animals, they roam and are generally far less controllable than dogs. But even worse for me is that they toilet in the

house. My pet dislike in owning a cat (apart from Oliver's relentless guerilla tactics) is litter trays, especially if the cat's aim is poor. But there is also the cat hair on my bed, scratched sofas, sprayed book covers and door frames. Aaaaaaaaah! So why do it, you may ask?



Well, more than fighting cats and missed litter trays, I dislike rats and mice in the roof, in the pantry and especially the ninja-rats on my kitchen table eating my fruit (I don't consider poison an option).

Within a month of Darwin dying, the rats and mice were back in full swing. Eating whatever and wherever they liked. My resolve to never own another cat eroded by September.

I was advised to deal with Oliver's dislike for other cats by getting a 3–4 months old, female kitten. After a lengthy, frustrating search on the net I eventually found, through the Animal Welfare League on the coast, close to what I wanted – a blue, male, 4-month-old kitten, Fieni.

Fieni has coped well with a couple of Oliver's attacks and they are now eating near each other. He comes, mostly, when he is called

Cont'd next page

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and he loves most of the dogs. I have taken him to friends' places to socialise him and get him used to car travel.

And the rats? Well, I am pleased to report, that they have become very quiet and have not set paw into the house since Fieni has joined us. Watch out rats, there is a new kit(ten) on the block.

Some hints to owning pleasant and 'relatively' obedient cats

Choose your cat very carefully to suit your needs; cats are not all the same. A very lively, independent cat may be fun to watch, but may also be a more determined hunter, one that won't return once it is out.

Teach your cat from day one to come on command by using food. Show your cat you are holding a treat, call his name while he is right in front of you and give him the treat. Your cat decides what is a treat not you – this may be cat bickies or a bit of roast chicken. Try different foods. Feed your cat small amounts randomly so he is always slightly hungry. **Never** leave food out for them to eat whenever they feel like it.

Trips outdoors are under your supervision as you would with a child or a puppy. If you can't supervise your cat, the cat stays indoors, in a cat playpen or enclosure. Dogs should not roam, nor should cats. If you are in an area that

has small native mammals, make sure your cat is not able to get out at all, unless you are supervising him.

Get a suitable reflective cat collar with several bells. One rarely works.

Provide cats with mental and physical stimulation, especially if you keep them mainly inside. They love to climb so make things interesting by hiding treats in high places. Provide treat toys and fluffy toys that resemble rats and mice; this should help teach your cat that these are preferred prey animals.

Always introduce the new cat or kitten to existing feline or canine household members while it is in a safe crate. Keep things calm and

pleasant, and if things go well, hand out treats. Give the new cat its own room to acclimatize. Spend time with him in the room and also give him time to explore the house without other cats or dogs harassing him.

Should the resident cat decide to attack, a water spray with a few drops of citronella or lavender oil can be helpful to stop a confrontation (this worked with Oliver!). Supervise any meetings between old and new members of the family for at least four weeks.

Aim to feed animals near each other; in order of arrival at your house from oldest to newest. They will associate the pleasant act of eating with each other's company and tensions should subside.

If your new kitten joins older dogs or cats, make sure that the kitten does not harass the older animals. Kittens (like pups and children) have their wild moments and need to blow off steam. Let them do that away from the oldies, unless the oldies want to join in.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE COACH

Cont'd from p1

By the age of 12 he was representing the ACT in that code, something he would do until winning a scholarship with the Australian Institute of Sport in 1989, as well as playing for Australia as a 16-year-old and again at 20.

In 1991, the talented goal-kicking back rower made the move to league, achieving his childhood dream and joining his hometown team, the Canberra Raiders.

"I played both union and league and of course as a kid I dreamed of playing with the Raiders, but if you are asking me if I thought it would work out that way – probably not," he laughs. "It's one thing to hope it might happen but in some ways it's hard to believe when it actually does."

The eight seasons he played with the 'Green Machine' were considered some of their best and included winning the 1994 Premiership in which Furner secured the Clive Churchill Medal for Man of the Match.

Sixth of eight Queanbeyan players to date to play for the Kangaroos

It was this performance that led to him donning the Kangaroos jersey for the '94 tour of Great Britain and France, becoming the sixth of eight Queanbeyan players to date to have achieved that honour. Before the end of his playing career in Australia, he would also step up eight times for NSW in the State of Origin as well as headlining with Wigan and Leeds in England, helping to secure a Super League Grand Final there.

While Furner looks like a former football player, all broad shoulders and a nose that is not quite as aligned as the new Kings Highway, it is his demeanour that suggests otherwise. He is quiet but firmly spoken, with an obvious sense of humour and a warm approach, making it easy to see why he is so highly regarded both amongst

his current players and those who were involved with him at his peak.

His own former coach, Tim Sheens, and club legend and once team mate Mal Meninga are both staunch supporters and have put their views of Furner's commitment on the record, something the Canberra coach welcomes as he embarks on preparations for the next season.

"It's always a challenge but it helps to have blokes like that in your corner as well as the support of your family and the wider community."

The coaching challenge ahead

With his earlier life in football filled with praise and glory, Furner's time at the helm of Canberra's national team has indeed been tumultuous. Since his appointment in 2009, a poor start to the last three seasons has garnered much criticism, muted to a degree with strong finishes including a semi-final berth in 2010.

The inconsistency of 2011 was the focus for detractors, but the issues with which he was dealing, not least of which the manifold injuries,

would have given ulcers to those with the most unblemished of coaching records. Unselfishly, he even stood aside as assistant coach to the Australian team so that he might better focus on his charges, a post he only resumed with the November tour to England in the Four Nations campaign, in which Australia largely dominated.

"It's a results driven job, and that hasn't changed," he admits. "The focus is trying to get results and making the team and the club successful and everyone is working hard to make that happen."

"I'm excited about next season, without a doubt. 2011 was tough with lots of injuries and losses build pressure, but I'm looking forward to 2012 and our pre-season is looking good."

He acknowledges that regardless of the tough times he continues to enjoy living in the town where he grew up and his own sporting ambitions were fulfilled. "The support from the community is tremendous. It's still great to walk down the street."



PHOTO: MARIA TAYLOR



Planning
Assessment
Commission

Notice of Planning Assessment Commission Meeting

Proposed Woodlawn Waste Expansion Project (MP10_0012)

The proposed expansion of the Woodlawn Waste facility has been referred to the Planning Assessment Commission for determination, under the terms of the Minister's delegation.

For this proposal the Commission comprises Dr Neil Shepherd AM (chair) and Mr Joe Woodward PSM.

The application and associated documents, including the Department of Planning and Infrastructure's assessment report and recommendation, are publicly available on the Department's website and via the Commission website www.pac.nsw.gov.au

Due to the level of public interest in the project, the Commission will be meeting to hear submitter's views on the Department's assessment report and recommendation, prior to determining the project.

The Commission meeting will be open to the public and scheduled to commence at **9:30am, Wednesday 22 February 2012** at the Tarago Hall, Tarago and continue if required.

Those who wish to comment on the Department's recommendation can register to speak at the Commission Meeting by contacting **Miss Stephanie Calderaro on (02) 9383 2112 before 4:00pm, Wednesday, 15 February 2012.**

Enquiries:

Anthony Witherdin (02) 9383 2102
NSW Planning Assessment Commission
GPO Box 3415 Sydney NSW 2001
Email: anthony.witherdin@planning.nsw.gov.au

Please note that all documents provided to the Commission are public documents and may be made publicly available on the Commission's website, unless you have clearly indicated that you do not wish your submission to be made public. For submissions made by individuals, the individual's personal contact details, other than their name, will be removed from the submission before it is published.



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THE MILD summer has stimulated germination of another batch of annuals like **Paterson's Curse** and **Storksbills**. It can be a difficult balancing act to effectively divide time amongst weeds that are highest priority (being noxious, toxic or invasive), urgent seedy weeds, and those that become harder work if left longer. **Seedy Serrated Tussock** and **African Lovegrass** are currently easy to spot and most urgent to chip and remove.

We have so many weeds I'm starting with those most likely to go to seed first, in parched areas with shallow soil. The leaves of those soon to flower become narrower and fold upwards. At this time of year the only way to make significant progress is to be persistent.

St John's Wort is a priority

If there's one weed that's most difficult to control if new infestations aren't nipped in the bud, it's **St John's Wort**. It spreads rapidly by prolific seeding and suckering and is extremely persistent. Tens of thousands of seeds per plant survive up to twelve years, so if let go for even one season it will keep coming back in large numbers for a long time.

This summer it's particularly bad – typical for a wet year after drought. Unfortunately it's too late to break the seeding cycle by spraying after the flowers turn brown and there're a lot in the region that've been left too late, but better late than never. My strategy for adjacent council land is to at least take off the pods each week.

Do read the full guide (www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/347995/bpmg-stjohn-wort.pdf) which says small infestations are best dug out, removing as much of the root as possible, but slashing or burning may stimulate suckering. However, to reduce seeding now it would be worth cutting to remove pods *this month* (perhaps slashing and raking up large infestations); then following up to kill the plants and suckers or suppress them by heavy grazing or phosphate (for more information, see pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/



WEEDS GALORE: Two February views of Molonglo Gorge park which is enjoyed by many local residents and maintained by ACT Territory and Municipal Services. While private landholders are being exhorted to eradicate weeds and particularly this season St John's Wort, the question arises whether some government agencies are doing their bit.

The ACT parks service has made much of preserving grasslands and is spending many \$100,000s on a controversial policy of "culling" wildlife, specifically the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, officially to preserve grasslands for other species. The weeds overgrowing many hectares of grassland habitat and recreational space in semi-rural and rural ACT parkland would do vastly more damage over the years.

Seen here at Molonglo Gorge picnic areas: a wildlife-unfriendly fence backed by a healthy crop of blackberry and other weeds. (R) St John's Wort overgrowing much of the grassland next to the Molonglo River. — *Maria Taylor*



WHITE SUMMER BLOOMS

Cont'd from p8

I have one of these and it flowered just as the blooms on the red-flowering trees were fading. It seemed almost weighed down by the profuse clusters of flowers – and by the hordes of squabbling Red Wattle birds and the occasional Noisy Friar bird, all of whom seemed to spend more time chasing each other than they did feeding on the nectar.

Creamy splashes in the landscape

Right now, the Blackthorn (*Bursaria lasiophylla*) has a froth of cream flowers at every branch tip and *Acacia parramattensis*, a suckering wattle that can develop into a miniature forest, is just beginning to bear fluffy pale flower clusters.



Years ago, I planted a *Lomatia* (left), apparently a hybrid, on the creek bank. It struggled during the drought, but, after the rains returned, it grew into a tall, robust shrub and the pleasantly scented flowers are presently adding another splash of cream to the landscape.

In the Tinderries at the moment, the local *Lomatia myricoides* is flowering spectacularly after recovering from the fires of two years ago.

64168/20080620-0000/www.weeds.crc.org.au/documents/s57_ofs_st%20johns%20wort.pdf).

And then there are others

Blackberries are difficult for similar reasons, plus they spread by runners. If cut back each year they don't produce fruit on new canes. Now is the time to cut back old canes, before fruit ripens, and preferably solarise or compost them to ensure breaking the seeding cycle.

Skeleton Weed, now an urgent priority as it releases seed quickly after flowering, is another perennial that spreads by suckers, but it can't be dug out because it's too deep rooted. The best way to suppress it without poison is

NSW poll tips Oscar winners; says viewers lurve *Bridesmaids* and George Clooney – (can they be the same viewers?)

BIGPOND MOVIES has done it again with a press release we couldn't resist for 'must have' info. The download movie giant has surveyed its customers and they are backing Stephen Spielberg's *War Horse* to beat *The Ides of March* and *Moneyball* for Best Picture at the 2012 Oscars later this month.

Telstra Area General Manager Chris Taylor, said the research also revealed NSW film fans "still go 'Looney over Clooney' with one in five voting his performance in *The Descendants* as Oscar worthy, ahead of Brad Pitt in *Moneyball*."

"BigPond Movies' all-time most downloaded movie, *Bridesmaids*, also is given a big Oscar chance, with New South Wales Bigpond customers voting star and co-writer, Kristen Wiig, to take out Best Actress in a leading role," said Taylor.

The *BigPond Movies Index* also found that among surveyed NSW residents:

- Home movie viewers favoured *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 2* as their favourite movie of 2011 with *Bridesmaids*, *The Hangover, Part II* and *Water for Elephants* tied as secondary favourites.
- Their favourite movie moment of all time was Keanu Reeves dodging bullets in sci-fi film *The Matrix*, followed closely by Rose trusting Jack to balance on the front of the ship in *Titanic*.
- NSW residents love to laugh, with the viewers voting comedy as their favourite genre followed by action and romantic comedy.
- *Grease* is the word with more than one in three viewers polled admitting watching the musical classic more than five times. Surprisingly, 25 percent of the state's surveyed men admitted having watched *Grease* five times.
- Chocolates anyone? One in five women voting chose "Life is like a box of chocolates" from *Forest Gump* as their favourite movie quote of all time. On the other hand, one in ten men chose beefed-up Schwarzenegger's "I'll be back" from *The Terminator* as their favorite quote.

DON'T LOVE THIS GRASS! IT'S NOBODY'S FRIEND

African Lovegrass has been increasingly encroaching upon farmland, bushland, and roadsides throughout southern NSW and the ACT over the past three decades. African Lovegrass has the ability to quickly take over native grasslands and introduced pastures forming a dense monoculture.

African Lovegrass:

- is a fast spreading weed that is invading much of southern Australia. It is arguably the most invasive weed in the capital region;
- is found in all areas – suburban gardens, lawns, urban parks, road verges, farms and nature parks;
- has many forms;
- crowds out native grasses, reducing native plant diversity;
- crowds out pasture, reducing good food for animals.

Most graziers are well aware of Lovegrass and ways to limit its impact.

People living in urban and peri-urban areas however appear to be unaware of its existence.

The greatest vector of African Lovegrass is mowing along urban and rural roadsides. Simple things like mowing so cut material is thrown back into the infestation area can help control African Lovegrass boundaries.

We need to act now with an effective, long-term and integrated plan to control the spread of African Lovegrass in our region. This starts by removing it from your backyard, street and neighbourhood to prevent it from spreading further, every single plant removed helps the cause.

Southern ACT Catchment Group has detailed information about African Lovegrass available on their website:
<http://sactcg.org.au/>



African Lovegrass growing along a median strip in an urban area



Mowing back towards infestation helps control the spread of African Lovegrass

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Around the house:

- **Act** – Learn to identify African Lovegrass. If you see a plant, always dig it, bag it, bin it.
- **Garden care** – if you have it in your lawn, mow it low before it seeds (it produces flowers and seeds from October to May);
- **Garden hygiene** – wash your mower to stop accidental spread;
- **Neighbourhood watch** – be vigilant, see that it doesn't grow in your garden, your street verge or your neighbourhood park;
- **Speak out** – let everybody know, tell it, blog it, tweet it, write it;
- **Report it** – tell the Government Agency responsible and ask your local Member of Parliament to initiate and support an effective, long-term and integrated plan to control the spread of African Lovegrass in our region.

Around the bush block and farm:

- prevent establishment by being vigilant and control any small infestations;
- control boundaries of African Lovegrass infestations;
- keep desired ground cover greater than 70%;
- ensure herbicide spraying equipment is calibrated correctly;
- practice farm hygiene – clean vehicles and machinery of weed seeds before moving from infested paddocks to clean paddocks;
- avoid moving livestock from infested to clean areas on the property;
- undertake any supplementary feeding in a smaller 'sacrifice' paddock to minimise weed seed spread;
- stop seed set through strategic rotational grazing – plant sets seed October to May;
- act to influence all levels of government for an effective strategic plan for African Lovegrass.

Control requires an integrated approach to be effective.

Recent good movies for home viewing

THE SKIN I LIVE IN is a film by Pedro Almodovar, which deals with the issues of grief, revenge, survival, beauty and identity.

Antonio Banderas plays a plastic surgeon, Robert Ledgard, who is experimenting with creating a synthetic ‘transgenic’ skin that is capable of resisting burns and insect bites. Banderas does a repressed sociopath incredibly well. When interviewed about playing the part he said that he thought Ledgard would move with extreme economy and show no emotion.

The main subject of Ledgard’s experiments is a young woman called Vera who is kept a prisoner at his home. At a scientific seminar he discloses that he has “only tested on mice” and is urged by an older colleague to stop the unethical experiments. This seems to be the end of his interest in transgenic skin. I found this a little confusing – it is almost as if the director got bored with this theme and just dropped it.

The focus is then on Ledgard’s past and his relationship with the captive Vera, played by the very beautiful Elena Anaya. Vera is imprisoned in a state of calm, clinical but constant observation.

Ledgard’s loyal housekeeper, Marilia, who is also Vera’s jailer, reveals many of the insights on his past. And it is quite a melodrama. Ledgard has lost his wife Gal who suffered terrible burns

MOVIE REVIEWS

in a car accident and the captive Vera eerily looks just like her (pre-accident).

Ledgard has also had problems with a fragile daughter who has suffered some serious mental health issues. This story seems to be linked to another captive story involving a young man – but this is not a female Frankenstein meets Frank movie; it has a surprising twist.

The housekeeper’s long-lost son turns up at the front gates during a carnival, clad in a tiger suit to escape the notice of the police and things start to get out of control for Ledgard, Marilia and Vera. The remainder of the film deals with the struggle for control and survival and it’s a ripping yarn.

I thoroughly enjoyed this movie. It was full of suspense and surprises. Highly recommended.

— * * * —

THE IRON LADY is about Margaret Thatcher, the first woman Prime Minister of Britain. Critics have said that it should be called ‘The Rusty Lady’.

The film stars Meryl Streep (up for the Best Actress Oscar for the role) as Margaret Thatcher and Jim Broadbent as her husband Denis.



Broadbent’s portrayal of Denis is pretty much his standard party piece of affectionate buffoon-like husband. This does humanise the Iron Lady but probably doesn’t do Denis justice.

Abi Morgan the scriptwriter and the director Phyllida Lloyd have approached Margaret Thatcher’s story in the film from a King Lear loss-of-power perspective, with Denis as the fool.

This is not a documentary

In his review, Alan Cochrane (Scottish editor of *The Telegraph*) reminds us that the film is not a documentary. It is theatre. He says that he watched the film as “a former lobby cor-

respondent and political editor of three of the major Fleet Street titles”, who covered Margaret Thatcher’s prime ministership and he unhesitatingly recommends it.

The film starts with Margaret Thatcher as a frail elderly woman suffering from dementia and having frequent imaginary discussions with her dead husband Denis.

Margaret Thatcher’s mind meanders through her past in flashbacks starting with her early life as Margaret Roberts the grocer’s daughter, her early relationship with Denis and the children and on to her political career.

The story fairly quickly covers the murder of Airey Neave, her Conservative party friend and supporter, the Northern Ireland hunger strikes, the miner’s strikes, the Brighton bomb, the poll tax riots and the end of the Cold War.

More time is given to her part in the Falkland Islands War – including her obstinate reclaiming of what she thought was rightfully Britain’s, her pride in the British armed forces and her letters to those families who lost their sons.

Continued p12



Dining, music and laughs at CAFÉ WOODWORKS

DJ GOSPER, now going by her full name as the Dorothy-Jane Gosper Band, makes a welcome return to the district with an evening of fine dining, music and laughs at the Café Woodworks on 2 March.

With acclaimed songstress and blues-harp player, Dorothy-Jane “DJ” Gosper at the helm, the band has been busy recording and touring the countryside at festivals and at smaller country venues playing to enthusiastic audiences and standing ovations.

Dorothy-Jane is feeling very positive about 2012 saying “I’m thrilled to be acknowledged in (recent) national awards, I love my backing band – I mean these guys really know how to groove! This means I can get down to the business of strutting my stuff! She adds that the band has been accepted to perform in some major music festivals this year, including the Fiji International Jazz and Blues Festival in May.

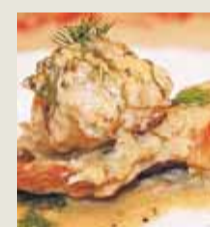
Comic performer and impersonator, Harry Laing, will add to the evening’s fun with his highly entertaining act.

For more information, check out www.dorothyjanegosper.com

Reviving the rabbit

RECENTLY, some of us at the *Bulletin* stopped to think about rabbits. Not solely as pests or as Easter ornaments but as a perfectly respectable and even politically correct meat. After all, if some local stores like Foodlovers in Bungendore can offer ‘free-range rabbit’, we’d be doing the landscape a favour. We’d be reviving a dish that many households had as a staple in years past but that more recently has been forgotten.

So here are a couple of rabbit recipes to whet your appetites!



Saddle of rabbit in mustard sauce [Serves 2]

• 250g saddle of rabbit – filleted • ¾ cup cream • 1 tbsp Dijon mustard • 1 tsp black pepper • 1 or 2 cloves garlic • small amount plain flour • small amount oil or butter

Method: Dredge rabbit in little plain flour. Saute in pan in oil or butter until browned. In another pan, heat the cream, mustard, pepper and garlic until boiling. Add the rabbit pieces, cook until rabbit is cooked through and the sauce has thickened, approximately 5 minutes.

Rabbit with rosemary and white wine [Serves 4]

• 2 (approx 2kg) rabbits • ¼ cup (60ml) olive oil • 1 medium (350 g) leek, sliced • 2 sticks celery, chopped • 2 clove garlic, crushed • ¼ cup (35g) plain flour • 2½ cups (625ml) chicken stock • ½ cup (125ml) dry white wine • 1 tbsp fresh rosemary leaves • 200g button mushrooms • 2 medium (240g) zucchini, sliced • 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

Method: Clean and trim rabbits, cut into pieces, rinse under cold water, drain on paper towel. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in pan; add rabbit, cook in batches until browned all over, drain on paper towel. Heat remaining oil in same pan, add leek, celery and garlic, cook, stirring until leek is soft. Remove vegetables from pan. In same pan, stir in flour and stir until mixture is dry and grainy. Remove pan from heat, gradually stir in stock and wine, then stir over heat until mixture boils and thickens. Return rabbit to pan, add rosemary, simmer, covered, about 1½ hours or until rabbit is tender. Add vegetables, simmer, covered 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in parsley.

Recipe can be made a day ahead. Store covered in refrigerator. It is suitable for freezing.

From the *Farmed Rabbit Industries of Australia* website (more recipes are available at www.fria.com.au/fria.php?page=Rec.htm).

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Fiddler returns to our region

CANBERRA PHILHARMONIC Society is set to delight old and new fans alike with the 2012 production of Jerome Robbins' hit Broadway musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Set in 1905 Tsarist Russia, the story centres on Tevye, the philosophical village milkman and father of five, and his attempts to raise his family of strong-willed daughters in the Jewish traditions while outside influences encroach upon their lives and life is as precarious as the perch of a fiddler on the roof!

This year's production is being directed and choreographed by Amy Fitzpatrick of Dance City in Hume, assisted by David Spence with musical direction under Nick Griffin.

Amy will bring the Russian village of Anatevka back to life at the ANU Arts Centre with such famous songs as Tradition, Fiddler on the Roof and If I Were a Rich Man.

Audiences will be awed by the depth of talent in local cast members including **Ian Croker** playing Tevye (*42nd Street*, *The Producers*, and over 200 productions to his credit), supported by **Fiona Hale** as Yente (*Fiddler on the Roof*, 1999; *Titanic*; *Nunsense*; *Chicago*), **Liz de Totth** as Golde (*42nd Street*,

1997; *Les Miserables*) and **Michelle Tisdell** playing Tzeitel (*Oklahoma*; *Jazz Garters III*).

The Canberra Philharmonic Society 2012 season of *Fiddler on the Roof* runs from 23 February to 16 March. Tickets are available online at www.philo.org.au/ticketing or by calling Canberra Repertory Society on 6257 1950. See ad below for more details or visit www.philo.org.au.

Windows on Europe Film Festival

RETURNING FOR its 7th season courtesy of the European Union Delegation and the European Union Member States in Canberra, the festival will showcase award-winning European films and talent from 14 countries.

During 10–16 February, audiences will have the opportunity to explore the versatility of European cinema through many genres including comedy, drama, thriller, romance and documentary.

Opening the festival is *Coriolanus* an adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy starring Ralph Fiennes and Gerard Butler. Coriolanus is out-manoeuvred and banished from Rome; offering his life to his sworn enemy he intends to march on the city to destroy it.

Also amongst the films programmed are *The Wedding Photographer*, a comical tale of clash of cultures from Sweden; *Kolorádó Kid*, a Hungarian film where a man finds himself under persecution for participation in the 1956 revolution; *Forbidden Fruit*, a coming-of-age film about two 18-year olds brought up in two repressive apostolic Lutheran families; *The Girl On The Train* from France, a psychological drama raising issues of race, religion and identity; and from Germany comes the dramedy *Run If You Can*.

For a full list of films and synopses, please visit www.dendy.com.au.

MOVIE REVIEWS Cont'd from p11

Some Russians loved her

Cochrane also says that he is disappointed that more time in the film was not given to her overseas success despite her unpopularity at home in Britain. Maggie Thatcher was a big hit in the Russian housing estates it seems.

The film portrays her as having sad relationships with her grown-up children. She is portrayed as unkind to her loyal daughter Carol and the favoured son, Mark, is unable to visit much. The film does not cover the notorious exploits and lifestyle of Mark. British

newspapers have also deplored Carol's lack of contact with her ageing parent.

Margaret Thatcher's treatment of her colleagues is presented as damning enough. However, Cochrane says that her humiliation of Geoffrey Howe was much worse and more prolonged than shown in the film.

The film raises interesting questions about her legacy and her policies. It has certainly piqued my interest in viewing a documentary about her life and career.

— Noni Plume



Please sir, can I have some more?

FOLLOWING SELLOUT performances in 2007, Miriam Margolyes returns to Australia for an encore national tour of her one-woman tour-de-force, *Dickens' Women*.

"Miriam Margolyes is just a little different to most actors. She has done Dickens and she has done porn. She has been a penguin, a sheepdog and a glow-worm. You may also know her as Professor Sprout from Harry Potter," said Andrew Denton when she appeared on *Enough Rope*.

With *Dickens' Women*, Miriam Margolyes brings 23 of Charles Dickens' most colourful female (and male!) characters to Canberra.

Part of the worldwide celebrations of 200 years of Charles Dickens in 2012, this show applauds Dickens for creating the most unforgettable characters in English literature; characters such as Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Oliver Twist, Fagin, Bill Sikes, Pip, Miss Havisham, David Copperfield, Mr. Micawber, Abel Magwitch, and Uriah Heep.

His characters spring to life through dialogue. "It's not hard to act it, because of the text that he gives you. It's there, just as he wrote it. That's what so exciting," Ms Margolyes points out.

"These marvellous characters that live inside us all."

Dickens' Women will be on at the Canberra Theatre from 23–25 February 2012.

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Music culture the Queanbeyan way **AND** The Beez are back in town!

by Ros Hales

BERLIN FOLK/pop/cabaret band, The Beez, are once again touring Australia and will be the headline act at The Shed Sessions for the launch of an Artsound FM radio program, *Art & Culture – the Queanbeyan Way*. The program will feature live recordings from The Artists Shed's fortnightly Shed Sessions and will go to air on the first and third Sundays during the *Meridian* program. This Artsound FM promotion is supported by Destination NSW and the Queanbeyan City Council.

Artsound FM will be broadcasting live from The Artists Shed from noon until 2pm during the launch on Sunday, 12 February. The Shed Sessions will continue into the afternoon with several local musicians performing, as well as The Beez.

The Beez are renowned for eccentric cover versions featuring accordion, banjo, dobro guitar, acoustic bass guitar and their trademark soaring four-part harmonies. With

German, American and Australian members, the band's musical influences are many and varied – audiences can expect anything from klezmer to punk, pop to bluegrass, country to rock and roll (including an amazing version of Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*!).

The Beez play an average of 120 shows a year, primarily in Europe but extending to major folk festivals in Canada and Australia. They've played to packed venues at Woodford, Port Fairy, the National Folk Festival, and the Adelaide Fringe and have also appeared on ABC TV's *Spicks and Specks*.

Shed Sessions' audiences are indeed fortunate that this charming, witty and very energetic group has found time in their busy schedule to bring to the region their own unique blend of music and humour with which they have enchanted audiences all over the world.

Continued p14

— CORALIE'S CORNER —

Return of brassy, classy *Chicago*, *Titanic* sinking and much more coming up

HAPPY NEW Year to all. The Year of the Dragon is now upon us and promises to be a bumper year.

Chicago and the Canberra Area Theatre Awards

The year ahead is full of surprises in the theatrical stakes, commencing with *Chicago* at The Q in Queanbeyan, 10–26 February. *Chicago* is the longest-running American musical in Broadway history. It has been honoured with six Tony Awards; two Oliviers; a Grammy; and numerous standing ovations!

Set in Chicago in the roaring twenties, Roxie Hart, an ambitious chorus girl murders her lover. She then convinces her gullible husband Amos that the lover was in fact a burglar. However, Roxie ends up joining another would-be famous vaudeville performer and murderess, Velma Kelly, in jail. You'll have to go see it to find out how it ends!

Chicago is what it has always been – 'the brassiest, classiest show in town'!

Also in February for one night only, the glitzy glamorous 17th ActewAGL Canberra Area Theatre Awards – Saturday, 25 February at 7pm at the Llewellyn Hall, ANU School of Music. Joining a fantastic lineup of guest presenters will be Frankie J Holden. Don't miss this night of nights.

Yes, Prime Minister

Bungendore's Barry Cohen, Member of Parliament for 21 years (with four years as Minister for the Arts, Heritage and the Environment), has just written and published his tenth book, *Bringing Down The House*. Barry was a great friend of the late Paul Eddington who of course appeared as the star of *Yes Minister* the TV show, which now has been turned into a stage play starring Philip Quast.

The stage production will be at the Canberra Theatre for a two-week season from 21 March and should prove to be most popular with our current as well as past Members of Parliament such as Barry.

And there's more!

Daniel O'Donnell well-loved and regular visitor to Canberra will be appearing on 8 March at the Royal Theatre and then we will have the

magnificent Dame Kiri Te Kanawa appearing at the ANU School of Music on 21 April.

The sinking of the *Titanic* still causes us to ponder "How could that have happened?" It will be remembered when Supa Productions mount the extraordinary and moving musical at the ANU Arts Centre. The actual night it ran into an iceberg was 100 years ago on 14 April and this is the night that *Titanic The Musical* will open in Canberra. A very moving, award-winning production – it is one not to be missed.

For any information, bookings or just to have a chat, please don't hesitate to call 6281 0250.

See you floating in a foyer somewhere next month — Coralie Wood

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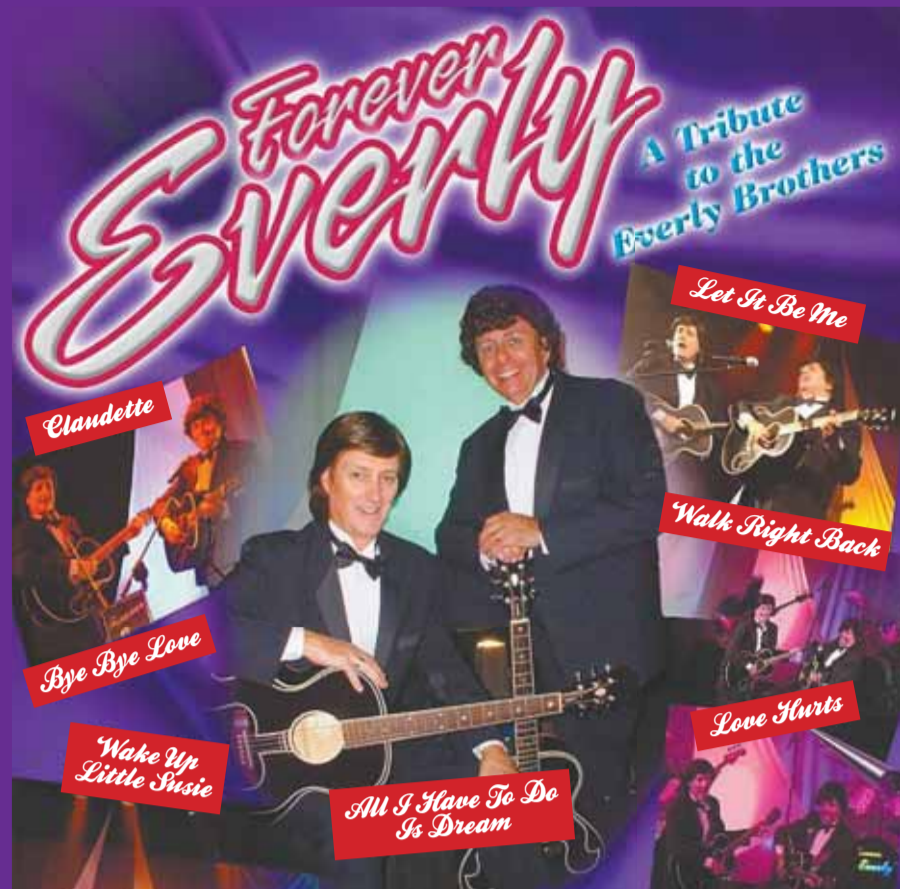
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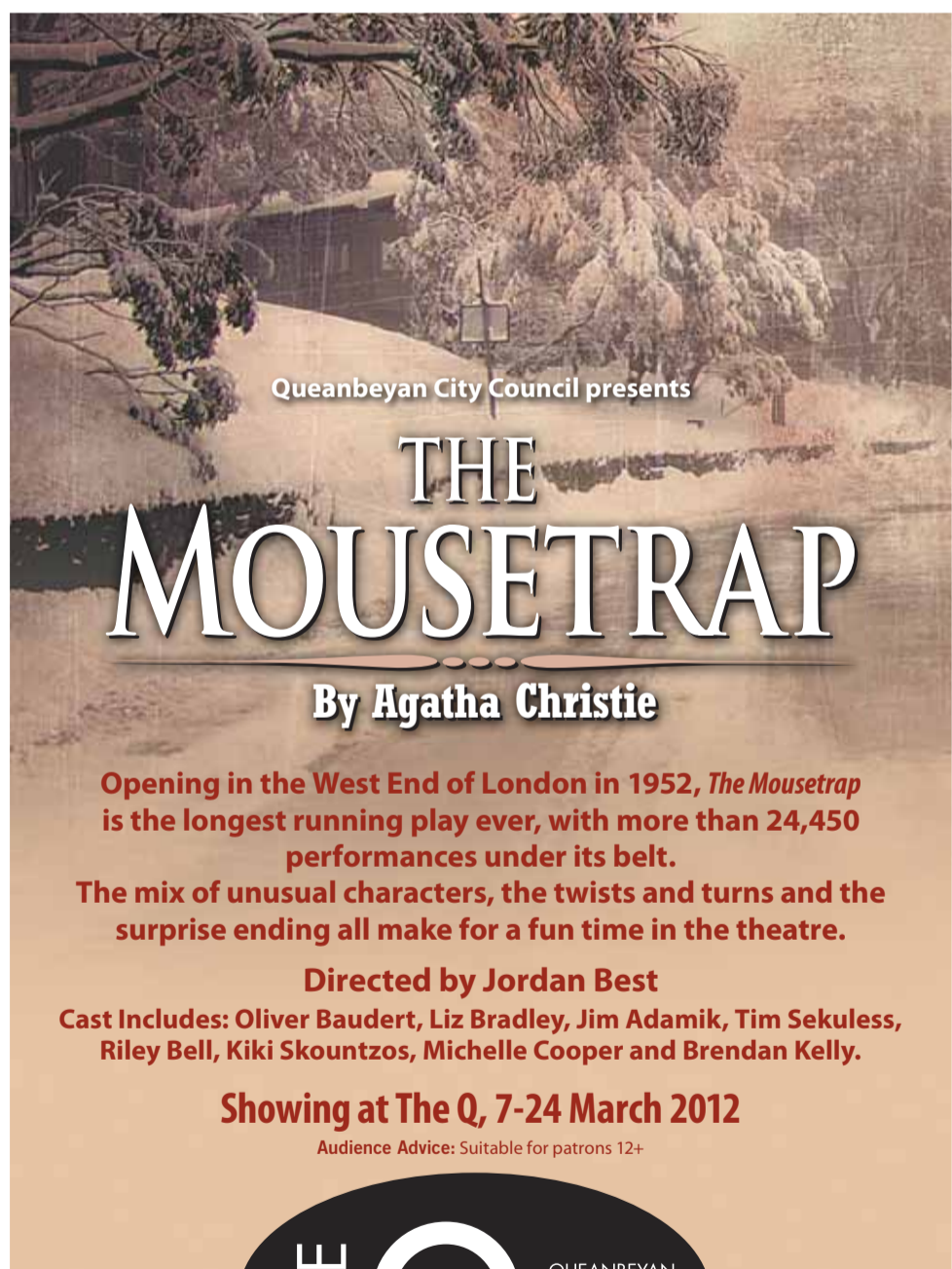
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A slick performance that has audiences enjoying an evening of nostalgia, with the wonderful music and soaring harmonies that made The Everly Brothers so famous.

Showing at The Q, 29 February-3 March 2012



Audience Advice: Suitable for patrons 12+



Bookings: 6285 6290 or www.theq.net.au



Fundraiser for Bungendore School

by Sharon Baxter-Judge

OUR FANTASTIC, growing public school will be holding a *Back to the Future* games and music night on Saturday 31 March. We are hoping for 200+ people and the '80s theme night will include some games, a little trivia, an auction and fantastic dance music.

This will be our major fundraiser for 2012 and our mission is to raise enough money to purchase two interactive whiteboards (IWB's). These IWB's cost nearly \$10,000 each and are not funded by the Education Department. We cannot possibly achieve this goal without continued community help.

We request your consideration with regards to the possibility of sponsorship and/or donations. Information regarding each of these ways to help is as follows:

\$200 Sponsorship: tax invoice supplied; prominent advertisement on the flyer distributed to all families at the school and displayed in local businesses; prominent advertisement on the night; and advertisement on the school website prior to the night.

Auction donations: crucial to success of the event will be our large auction. All sponsors of the auction donations will be acknowledged and advertised on the school website prior to the event and on the night.

Games and Pop a Prize Donations: no matter how small, donations for game prizes and *Pop a Prize* (balloon pop) will also be greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

Book a table

Tickets will be \$45 each and a table will seat



PHOTO: MARIA TAYLOR

Wildlife Rescue training

LEARN ABOUT wildlife, animal rescue, handling, first aid and risks. Training is being held on Saturday 3 March, 9.30am to 4.00pm at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club. No charge. Refreshments and notes provided. RSVP to Dianne, 6299 5737 and 0411 614 675 or Dianne.colman@marymead.org.au. The Native Animal Rescue Group (NARG) operates in the Braidwood/Nerriga region, but all are welcome.

10 people. Included in the ticket price are nibbles, music, plenty of laughs and a hoot of a time. More information on tickets will be available mid February. The students, parents, staff and teachers thank you for your consideration.

If you can assist in any way at all, please contact us prior to 24 February to be guaranteed prominent acknowledgement (there is a form we can send you). Contact me on 6238 0465 or 0419 025 533 or sbaxter@bigpond.net.au if you would like to discuss the event or require additional information.

Scholarships for medical students

THE ROAD to becoming a general practitioner is long and arduous but a local health organisation is making the path a little easier for the region's medical students.

The Southern General Practice Network (SGPN) is offering three scholarships, each valued at \$3,000, to support first-year medical students who are considering general practice as their specialty. SGPN will also arrange for a local GP to provide mentorship to the scholarship winners.

To be eligible, students must have completed their HSC at a school in the NSW south-east and have been accepted to study medicine at an Australian university this year.

SGPN CEO Kathryn Stonestreet says the scholarships aim to support and encourage aspiring doctors. "A strong GP workforce is crucial, particularly in small communities such as ours. In offering these scholarships, we hope to encourage young people from rural and remote areas to consider general practice as a career.

"We arrange for a local GP to mentor the students and we know these relationships are very beneficial, allowing the student to observe

an experienced GP at work while they practice new skills in a familiar setting."

The criteria and application forms can be found under the careers section of the SGPN website www.sgpn.com.au or contact Sue Berry on 4475 0812 for further information.

— PRESS RELEASE

'Landscan' skills training

THE NSW Department of Primary Industries is running a number of courses and field identification workshops in the coming months including this course which provides farmers with the skills to assess farm landscapes and land capability. 'Landscan' helps farmers

- learn how to conduct representative soil sampling
- understand soil testing and soil test results
- make informed decisions about nutrient inputs
- learn how to prevent and manage soil erosion.

The course starting on Friday 16 March runs over 4-6 months and includes: six workshops held on-farm, with five half-day sessions and one full-day session. The cost is \$100 property (normally \$420). This includes two free soil tests valued at \$200.

For more information or to book, contact: Susan Orgill on 6298 0806 or 0428 424 566, or email at susan.orgill@dpi.nsw.gov.au; or Dale Chalker on 4828 6636 or 0428 211 183, or email at dale.chalker@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Also contact these departmental officers for more information about seasonal farm walks and paddock plant identification workshops offered in February and March.

For these and other events and opportunities in the Upper Schoolhaven and Upper Dueda catchments go to www.upperschoolhavenlandcare.com.au. For events and news from the Murrumbidgee Catchment and Yass area landcare go to www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au.

Veolia Mulwaree Trust 2012 grant program

THE FIRST funding round of the Veolia Mulwaree Trust for 2012 is now open.

Applications for grants and donations will be accepted from local not-for-profit community organisations up until **Wednesday 15 February**.

The Veolia Mulwaree Trust is always looking for worthwhile organisations and local projects in need of funding assistance. If you or someone you know is involved in a sporting club, charity group, service club, school, preschool, rural fire brigade, community health group or any other community-based organisation which could benefit from funds to undertake a worthwhile project in 2012 please let them know about this opportunity.

For more information and to download the guidelines and application forms please go to www.mulwareetrust.org.au or call our Goulburn office on 4822 2786.

MUSIC CULTURE Cont'd from p13




And happily, unlike folk festivals with their necessarily strict programming time-lines, when the audience screams for more, it won't be disappointed!


This is one Shed Session not to be missed; however The Artists Shed will continue to provide local, national and international musicians with a delightfully rustic and welcoming venue in which to showcase their talent. The 2012 program will include jazz, blues, folk, bluegrass, singer-songwriters and – following on from the

recent wonderful performance from Irish-Canadian spoken-word artist, Jonathan Lynne – maybe even some comedy!

The Shed Sessions operate on the 2nd and 4th Sundays each month from 2pm at The Artists Shed, Forster St, Queanbeyan – but please note the special time of 12noon for the Artsound program launch featuring The Beez.

Local wines are available and entry is by paper note donations – for the musicians. For further information contact Ros Hales on 0438 768 754 or roshales@grapevine.com.au.







DIY Home Energy Monitoring Kits NOW at your library

Want to cut your energy bills this year?

Borrow our kit from Bungendore, Braidwood or Queanbeyan libraries to monitor your appliances and identify the costly ones. The kit includes a guide with sections on reading your energy bill and room by room suggestions for improving your home.

Also included: power usage meter, infrared thermometer and a compass.

For more info or to download the guide:
<http://www.sustainingourtowns.org.au/homes/library-kit/>

Sustaining Our Towns and PLANS Inc are funded by the NSW Environmental Trust

if the Sun were replaced by Canopus, all life on Earth would be quickly extinguished

FEBRUARY OFFERS a great opportunity to see the sights of the night sky in comfortable warm weather, although it doesn't get dark until quite late in the evening. Even so, there are some interesting constellations and objects to see at this time of the year, and only binoculars are required to see many different objects, both near and far.

After sunset, the most dominant constellation is Orion, north of overhead, with its characteristic 'belt' of three bright stars. Orion is one of the most famous constellations, and was named by the Ancient Greeks after a great mythological hunter. Try using the map in this writeup (showing the sky at 8pm in mid-February) to identify other stars near the belt.

East of Orion is the white star Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, and almost overhead is Canopus, the second brightest star in the sky. Canopus (in the constellation Carina) looks a little fainter than Sirius, but is 35 times further away from Earth.

If Canopus was moved to the same distance as Sirius, it would actually be 550 times brighter, and is 13,500 times brighter than the Sun. Its diameter is 65 times the Sun's. Clearly, if the Sun were replaced by Canopus, all life on Earth would be quickly extinguished.

Skirting the Northern horizon is Capella, the sixth brightest star in the sky, in the constellation Auriga. Capella is overhead from the UK in February, and is only visible from Australia for a couple of months. It is actually not one star but four, so close to each other that

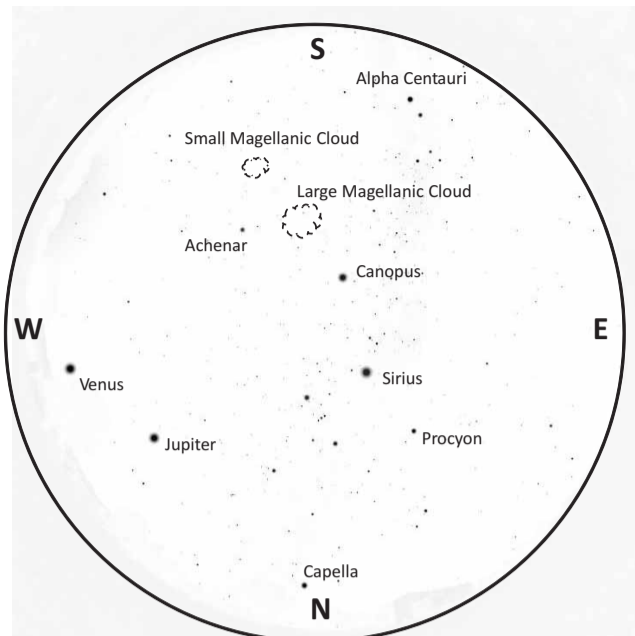


Chart produced using the Stellarium software package.

only one can be seen through even the most powerful telescope.

Also marked on the map are two galaxies, visible as fairly bright clouds with the naked eye if away from streetlights and easily seen in binoculars. They are two companion galaxies to our Milky Way Galaxy, called the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds. They are easily resolved into star clusters and nebulae (patches of glowing hydrogen in which stars are born) if looked at carefully through binoculars and are an impressive sight through a small telescope. They are seen at their best during February and March.

The planets this month

The planet Venus dominates the evening sky

after sunset, visible as a very bright white star. Through a telescope, Venus looks like a small white disk, and as it is closer to the Sun than Earth, it shows a phase which is currently between half and full. Venus moves more towards a half-phase and grows a little brighter during February. February 25th is a great opportunity for an astrophoto after sunset: the Moon will be a crescent and positioned near Venus.

Near Venus in the sky, although 60 times further away, is the planet Neptune. Although four times the size of Earth, it is so distant it is too faint to be seen with only your eyes, and looks like nothing more than a small bluish disk through a powerful telescope. Neptune is the outermost planet in the Solar System: beyond it lies rocky debris and mini-planets ('planet-esimals') such as Pluto.

Also near Venus and very bright is the planet Jupiter, which was at its closest to Earth and brightest for this season at the end of October last year. It is now moving slowly towards the Sun, and will pass behind the Sun in May. Through a telescope it is an impressive sight, showing its four main moons and cloud details clearly. The Moon is close to Jupiter on 26 February.

Later in our February nights, rising at around 10pm in the east is the planet Mars, looking like a fairly bright reddish star. Mars will be at its brightest and best for 2012 in March and through a telescope shows a pinkish disk with a white polar cap and dusky dark markings on its surface. The Moon is near Mars on 9 February.

The last Full Moon was on 7 February.

— What's the Big Idea? —

Chillies, corn and couch potatoes

Summer is moving right along and it is harvest time. Here are some recent quirky science items to do with things that are ripening in veggie gardens at the moment; and although not actually available or edible, the idea of a 'couch potato pill' does provide food-for-thought!

Add water for a spicy chilli

BIOLOGISTS know that the spiciness or pungency in chillies is due to a group of chemicals known as capsaicinoids; and these chemicals also help the chilli plant defend itself against the seed fungus *Fusarium*. However, not all chillies are equal in their hotness, and recent work by US researchers suggests that chillies make a biological exchange: opting for increased pungency (and its protection from fungus attack) instead of increased water-use efficiency.

Genetic factors seem to be acting here: besides protecting the chilli plant against fungal attack, pungency is also linked to higher stomatal (pore) density thus spicy chillies have more pores and lose water faster than non-pungent chillies.

To study this trade-off, scientists collected seeds from wild Bolivian chillies and grew them under identical conditions until they flowered and then divided the plants into two groups: either receiving plenty of water or being water-stressed. They found that under wetter conditions (with higher fungus attack) the pungent capsaicinoid-rich plants had an advantage but under water-stressed conditions (with lower fungus attack) the non-pungent plants produced twice as many seeds as the pungent plants.

Read more at www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2011/12/21/3395606.htm?topic=enviro.

Ancient Peruvians ate popcorn

LIKE THE potato and chillies, which both originated in Latin America, corn is also a new world plant – it's thought to have been domesticated in Mexico nearly 9,000 years ago. It is among the world's most important crops for both food and more recently, fuel. Now

researchers have found that people in South America were eating corn before they were making ceramic pots.



with
Sonja
Chandler

The multi-national group was led by researchers from Vanderbilt University (Tennessee) and Peru's Academia Nacional de la Historia.

Their investigations were done at two mound sites on Peru's arid northern coast and the materials dated from the middle and late pre-ceramic and early ceramic periods. They found corn cobs, husks, stalks and tassels dating from between 6,700 to 3,000 years ago and characteristics of the cobs indicated that the ancient people ate corn in several ways, including as corn flour and popcorn although corn was still not an important part of their diet at this stage.

Read more at www.pnas.org/content/early/2012/01/11/1120270109.

A couch potato pill that treats heatstroke?

IN 2008, when scientists published studies of a drug called AICAR showing that it boosted muscle endurance in completely inactive laboratory mice, it became known as the 'couch potato pill'. Now researchers have found that besides building muscles, AICAR also protects mice from a deadly condition known as malignant hyperthermia (MH).

MH, a genetic muscle disorder, shares many similarities with heatstroke including uncontrolled muscle contractions, dangerous increases in body temperature, and muscle breakdown leading to the release of toxins which may cause heart problems and even death. US scientists doing tests on MH mice (mice

engineered to have the genetic disorder) found that AICAR worked perfectly in preventing heat-induced sudden death or heatstroke. These results are promising, but more work needs to be done to investigate the effects of AICAR in humans; and in 2011 the use of AICAR was prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (the authority on anti-doping in sports).

While not a 'couch potato' remedy, AICAR could be one of the first drugs available to combat heatstroke – and that's certainly good news for hard-working firefighters, desert soldiers and those of us that don't know when to come in out of the noon-day sun!

Read about the research at www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/01/120108143553.htm.

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6297 0067

Citizens of the Year

Queanbeyan Citizen of the Year:
John (Jack) Sealey for wide-ranging community service with Queanbeyan Legacy. He served in the RAAF in World War II.

Event of the Year:

was the 'La Campana' Italian Community Festival that also raises funds for local charities. The City of Queanbeyan RSL Sub-Branch was feted as **Group of the Year** for its programs for senior and ex-service residents.

Palerang honours went to

Community events of the year:

Captains Flat Community Association, Community Garage Sale; Gundillion Recreation Reserve Centenary Celebration; Boer War Day in Bungendore.

Young Citizens of the Year:

Captains Flat, Ainslee Russell – off to train as an airforce pilot after rural fire service and other volunteer activities; Braidwood, Maddie Anderson, a "wonderful singer" for wide-ranging volunteering with amateur theatre, musical and other activities; Bungendore, Steven Osarek, for academic and sporting achievements.

Citizens of the Year:

Braidwood, Margaret 'Midge' Stalker, who recently celebrated her 101st birthday and still actively helps others in the community; Captains Flat, Alex Fry, for volunteer activities that include organising the rugby union Captains Flat Cup; Bungendore, Sharon Rasker, for major contributions to the Bungendore Scouts and BMX youth activities, as well as other community work.

– GIG GUIDE: February –

Friday 10

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

Al Green Trio, 8pm–12am, Queanbeyan Tigers Club.

Saturday 11

Wayne Ryder Trio, 7–11pm, Hotel Queanbeyan.

Sunday 12

The Beez, from 12 noon, The Artist's Shed, Queanbeyan.

Friday 17

Alan Neale, country singer, at the Summer Sunset Markets, Crawford St, Queanbeyan.

The Mighty Bluzicians, 8pm–12am, Queanbeyan Tigers Club.

Saturday 18

MLC, 7–11pm, Hotel Queanbeyan.

Friday 24

Hit & Run, 8pm–12am, Queanbeyan Kangaroos Club.

Saturday 25

Swizz, 7–11pm, Hotel Queanbeyan.

Sunday 26

Kellie Gray, from 2pm, The Artist's Shed, Queanbeyan.

Friday 2 March

Humbug, (Celtic band) and Queanbeyan Pipe Band, at the Summer Sunset Markets, Crawford St, Queanbeyan.

DJ Gosper, Café Woodworks, Malbon St, Bungendore.

CORINBANK:

3 days, 1 forest, 40 bands, no trace
Headlined by Josh Pyke, this sustainable music and arts festival is an ideal camping weekend for environmentally savvy music lovers. This intimate festival – one of Australia's greenest with impressive environmental credentials – is tucked away in the beautiful Brindabella Mountains. Grab your tent and immerse yourself in the natural environment and new sounds. **2–4 March**, 20 minutes from Tuggeranong, ACT. Tickets @ www.corinbank.com.

What's On – February

Send your announcements to whatson@districtbulletin.com.au

EVERY MONTH:

Every Saturday

Capital Region Farmers Market

EPIC grounds, Mitchell, 8–11am. A genuine farmers market offering a diverse range of fresh seasonal food straight from the producer to the consumer and an opportunity to discuss with growers. www.capitalregionfarmersmarket.com.au

1st Saturday of every month

The Captains Flat Country Markets

Community Hall, Foxlow St, Captains Flat, 10–2pm. Bric-a-brac, trash and treasure and local produce. Call 6236 6094 or email www.captainsflat.org

2nd Sunday of the month (except Jan)

Queanbeyan Cottage Markets

Queanbeyan River, on the corner of Morrisett and Collett Streets, 9–2pm. Craft, timber products, pottery, leatherwork, jewellery, toys, honey, jams, chutney, cakes, plants, food and refreshments. Call Kristen 6299 0219.

3rd Saturday of every month (except July/Aug)

Wamboin Produce Market

Wamboin Community Hall, Bingley Way, Wamboin, 9–12 noon. Fresh produce including cheese, eggs, honey, vegetables, nuts, seeds and plants.

3rd Sunday every month

Bungendore Markets

War Memorial Hall, Molonglo St, Bungendore, 9–2pm. Crafts, trash and treasure and general stalls.

Windy Hall Country Markets

Windellama Hall, 10–2pm, craft goods, Devonshire tea, deli delights and more. For more contact Bob Shaw on 4844 5001.

4th Saturday of every month

Braidwood Markets

Ryrie Park, Wallace St, Braidwood, 8am. Local crafts and cooking, plant and natural products. Call Geraldine 4847 5061.

More on regional and local events and local tourist attractions:

www.bungendore.com.au

www.visitqueanbeyan.com.au

www.visitbraidwood.com.au

dog show, sheep exhibits, sheep shearing, side shows and pavilion displays. For more contact Lou Alaimo on 4849 4222 or see www.tarago.org.au.

Clean Up Australia Day

Every year hundreds of thousands of Australians get stuck in and clean up their local environment by collecting and removing rubbish on Clean Up Australia Day. For more see www.cleanup.org.au.

Wamboin Golf Club Competition

Wamboin Community Hall. Monthly comp from 12.30pm. Tee off from the Clubhouse.

During February

Art Exhibition

Bungendore Fine Art. Showing the work of six new artists – Jacqui King, Vivi Palegeorge, Emma Rooke, Mary Sowa, Lesley Wallington and Margaret Turner. For more information contact 6238 1640 or see www.bungendorefineart.com.au.

Until Monday 27

Entries for *Weereewa Ephemera* sculpture prize and exhibition

For two days in March the stark and beautiful landscape of Lake George will again be the backdrop for *Weereewa: A Festival of Lake George*. Included in this celebration of the arts, history, music and the environment will be the **sculpture prize and exhibition**. Artists are invited to submit proposals for ephemeral works, which respond to the Lake George site, make only a light footprint on the earth and leave no trace of their presence when the Festival is over. For further information see www.weereewafestival.org.

Until Wednesday 29

Summerside Festival

Over 25 regional venues across Bungendore, Yass, Hall, Murrumbateman and the Canberra region, varying times. Celebrating everything good about summer in the capital, this month-long festival will be full of alfresco dining events celebrating local and seasonal produce, opportunities to taste the best of the region's wines as well as innovative and exciting performances, events and exhibitions highlighting local talent. For more information see www.visitcanberra.com.au.

Entries for *Weereewa* photography competition

Professional and amateur photographers alike are invited to enter. Three entries per person are allowed and there is no entry fee. Email entries in JPEG form together with a brief artist statement to xgallery@msn.com. For enquiries call Xanthe Gay on 6238 0550 or see www.weereewafestival.org.

Until March 26

Robert Simpson Exhibition

Bungendore Wood Works Gallery.

From Tuesday 7 to Saturday 25

Australia Wide Two

The Q, Crawford St, Queanbeyan. A touring exhibition by Ozquilt Network Inc, Australia's national organisation for art quilters. Stitched and layered works showcasing original and diverse interpretations of contemporary textile art from Australia's leading and emerging quilt artists. Opening 7 February, 5.30–7.30pm by Dianne Firth, Associate Professor and Head of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra.

Wednesday 8

Marks of Nature Exhibition – Marijke Gilchrist

FORM Studio and Gallery, Aurora Ave, Queanbeyan, 6pm. Please join the artist for the opening. Exhibition runs until 27 Feb. Ph 0430 359 776.

Thursday 9

Paddock plants identification workshop

Learn to identify important plants in your paddocks. Identify which plants are useful and which are weeds. Understand what plants tell you about your paddock or landscape. The workshop is free. For further information or to book in, contact Susan Orgill on 6298 0806 or 0428 424 566 or email susan.orgill@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Friday 10 until Sunday 26

Chicago

The Q, Crawford St, Queanbeyan. The longest-running American musical in Broadway history is set to hit the stage locally. For bookings call 6285 6290 or see www.theq.net.au.

Friday 10 to Sunday 12

National Multicultural Festival

The Festival celebrates the cultural diversity of the ACT by providing events that positively showcase cultural differences and encourage people to share in and celebrate these differences by enjoying arts and music, dancing, laughing and eating together. For more information see www.multiculturalfestival.com.au.

Saturday 11 and Sunday 12

4WD Spectacular & Outdoor Recreation Show

Queanbeyan Showground. Over 120 exhibitors, amusements and club demos. Cost: \$15pp, concession \$10, kids free. For more see www.4wdspectacular.org.au.

6-a-side Women's Soccer Tournament

High St, Queanbeyan. Local and visiting teams competing over two days. For more information contact Jason at qisc@niccweb.com.

Sunday 12

Seminar with Nicole Foss – A compass in turbulent times

Mulloon Creek Natural Farms, 3.30–9.30pm. The event includes dinner under the stars with a bounty of local organic/biodynamic produce prepared by chefs from Ginger Catering. Cost: \$50pp, \$90 per family (2 adults + up to 2 children under 12). Bookings are

essential. For queries contact Danny on 0418 561 528 or email danny@themullooninstitute.org.

Friday 17

Summer Sunset Markets

Crawford St, Queanbeyan. Come and enjoy the stalls, food and entertainment.

Saturday 18

Queanbeyan Art Society AGM

Trinculo Pl, Queanbeyan. For further information see www.qarts.com.au.

Queanbeyan Relay for Life

Seiffert Oval, Yass Rd, Queanbeyan, 9.15am. Fund-raiser for the Cancer Council NSW. Registrations from 11 Feb. Cost: \$20 per person. Contact Debra O'Neil on 6382 3426 or debraon@nswcc.org.au.

Monday 20

Free public lecture – Lesson from ecology for an uncertain world

Ann Harding Conference Centre, University of Canberra, 6–7pm. Dr Brian Walker is an internationally experienced scientist working on sustainability and resilience in social-ecological systems. RSVP by 16 Feb. Ph 6201 2795, or email IAEAdmin@canberra.edu.au.

Tuesday 21

Wamboin Community Association February General Meeting

Wamboin Community Hall, 7.30pm. All welcome.

Thursday 23

Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council AGM

Braidwood Serviceman's Club, 6–8.30pm. BBQ Dinner will be provided. All Landcare members are invited to attend. Please RSVP for dinner by Friday, 17 Feb. Call Kristy on 4842 2594.

Friday 24 to Sunday 26

Royal Canberra Show

Exhibition Park, Canberra. For more see www.rncas.org.au/showwebsite.

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26

Watercolour Workshop

Queanbeyan Art Society, Trinculo Pl, Queanbeyan. Beth Monahan, an artist from the coast will run this fun and free workshop. For more information contact 6297 8181.

Sunday 26

Mayoral Cup Football Tournament

Seiffert Oval, Queanbeyan. Mayor of the Queanbeyan City Council Cr Tim Overall will again host the Mayoral Cup, played for by the Queanbeyan Football Club and MPFC Premier League teams. In addition, the Mayoress' Trophy will be contested by a mixed Celebrity team and the Mayor's Shield will be played between the U16/18 Premier League sides from QFC and MPFC. The day will also include a masters' match (eg over 35s).

Wednesday 29 to Saturday March 3

Forever Everly – a tribute to the Everly Brothers

The Q, Crawford St, Queanbeyan. Enjoy an evening

of nostalgia with the wonderful, soaring harmonies that made the Everly Brothers so popular. For bookings call 6285 6290 or see www.theq.net.au.

– Plan ahead for March –

During March

Art Exhibition – Kate Lidden

Bungendore Fine Art. For more information contact 6238 1640 or see www.bungendorefineart.com.au.

1 March

Seasonal farm walks

Learn to identify the plants and weeds in your paddock. Discuss seasonal issues and relevant farm activities with staff from the Department of Primary Industries and the Livestock Health and Pest Authority. For further information or to book in, contact Susan Orgill on 6298 0806, or 0428 424 566, or email susan.orgill@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

2 March

Dinner Show

Café Woodworks, Bungendore. An evening of fine dining, music and laughs. The music will be by the Dorothy-Jane Gosper Band, playing their soulful ballads, swingin' blues and solid grooves. Comic performer and impersonator, Harry Laing, will add to the evening's fun with his highly entertaining act. For more information, enquiries or to organise an interview, please contact Dorothy-Jane Gosper on 0411 065 189 or dorothy-jane@dorothyjanegosper.com.

Summer Sunset Markets

Crawford St, Queanbeyan. Come and enjoy the stalls, food and entertainment.

Friday 2 to Sunday 18

Canberra Festival

For more see www.visitcanberra.com.au.

Saturday 3

Braidwood Show

Braidwood Showground, Braidwood. The show offers something for all ages including a wide range of classes to enter in the pavilion as well as sideshows, displays and entertainment events. For more see www.braidwoodshow.com.au.

Forks, Talks and Walks

Galong Retreat. A day of activities on sustainable country living – displays, presentations and guided walks. Enjoy local food, farmers' market, info on smart buying and preparation of food, composting, worm farming, renewable energy stalls, talks on natural farming, landcare, building materials, energy use, recycling through a mobile MRF (recycling plant), guided walks through the historic precinct of St Clement's Monastery, free children's activities and much more. For evening event bookings and to register as a stallholder, contact Cheryl Mongan on 6380 5222 or email manager@stclement.com.au.

Sunday 4

Tarago Show

Tarago Showground, Braidwood Road, Tarago. Local country show featuring horse events, championship



**1st & 3rd
Fridays
5-8pm**

The Sunset Markets offer enticing food stalls, live music and entertainment, a great range of markets stalls selling products by our local artists and crafts people, gourmet foods, collectables and much more!

**In the courtyard at 253 Crawford Street
adjacent to the Queanbeyan Library**



For more information contact:

Ros Hales 6285 6170

or ros.hales@qcc.nsw.gov.au

**The focus is on
high quality local handmade arts
and crafts, local produce and food suppliers as
well as local entertainment to enjoy as the sun goes down.**