The Palerang and District

Bulletin

JULY 2008

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Bond is back, p8
Olive quartet, p10

Capital region's unique musical satire duo at home in Bungendore, p5

Photo: Marcele Martins

BOLD WATER MOVES

PALERANG COUNCILLORS ARE being asked to face their obligation to safeguard threatened species and healthy waterways in a local test case that pits the interests of a native fish against perceived property rights to take water out of a creek.

At issue is the water of Feagan's Creek, a healthy tributary of the Mongarlowe River, with two related subdivision proposals partially fronting the creek. The community group, Friends of Mongarlowe, has made extensive submissions to Council.

"No-one is against subdivision but these proposals threaten to add nine more pumps along two kilometres of creek that already allow two pumps, and that's just too much," said Friend's spokesperson Di Bott. She added that Palerang would not be the first local government area to restrict water access in a bid preserve habitat and creek quality.

The NSW Department of Fisheries advised Council that concerns for the nationally endangered Macquarie Perch call for "robust" consent conditions to protect and rehabilitate the riparian zone.

Palerang's new planning chief Louise Menday is advising Councillors at the July 10 Braidwood meeting why, in addition to creekside (riparian) buffer zones and revegetation consent conditions already recommended, there should be a restriction on drawing water from the creek by any new lot-holders fronting this waterway.

The context is national concerns about excessive and unsustainable water extraction from rivers and streams – notably the whole Murray Darling Basin – which has raised government acceptance of limiting water use rights –once considered absolute.

Planning staff cite Clause 393 of the *Water Management Act 2000* No 92 which abolishes previously existing common law riparian rights, to be replaced by clause 52 of the same Act. Clause 52 does not automatically transfers water rights to new landholders. It states that "owners or occupiers of new landholdings that are created by subdivision of an existing landholding... must not take or use water... contrary to any prohibitions or restrictions imposed on them by or under the regulations."

In this case limits on the creekside lots would appear as title covenants – allowed under Section 88B of the *Conveyancing Act of 1919* according to legal advice to staff.

The staff document suggests that new lot holders can manage the same way as other rural residents – with rainwater tanks, licensed dams or bores.

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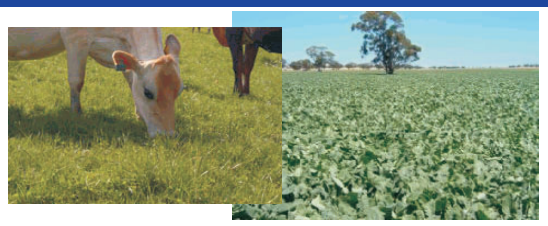

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Latest Business Plan for Capital Region

Focus on film and tv, logistics and defence contracts

NSW MINISTER FOR Rural Affairs Tony Kelly last month outlined a 'Regional Business Growth Plan' for the Capital Region that provides a blueprint for working collaboratively with the ACT Government, local government, the Capital Regional Development Board and other business stakeholders to achieve sustainable business growth in the region.

"There are opportunities for growth in the region's innovative creative industries, particularly in the areas of film and television production. The region also has excellent potential for further growth in the logistics industry, with major logistics business parks proposed for Goulburn. And there are opportunities to take advantage of contracts arising from the defence industry."

Cross-border planning the key

A step in the right direction is the acknowledgement that strategies for sustainable growth in the region – including infrastructure, proper land use and planning – require cooperation with the ACT Government.

Mr Kelly said work is also underway to ensure the availability of land for industrial and business purposes in the Sydney–Canberra corridor.

For more information go to
www.business. nsw.gov.au/regional

Federal dollars flowing our way

THE FEDERAL MEMBER for Eden-Monaro Mike Kelly in the past month has released a string of program initiatives of interest to the Palerang community. These include an injection of funds into legal aid and into lawyer training and development programs for rural law firms. In addition there are the following initiatives.

Parity for Commonwealth pensions

A review of the pension indexation arrangements for Australian Government superannuation, an election commitment.

Continued p4

THE DANGERS OF PRIVATIZING INFRASTRUCTURE

THE SPECTACULAR COLLAPSE in value of financially-stretched Babcock and Brown was a wake-up call for all those investing in equity firms that have been gobbling up privatised infrastructure facilities (on borrowed money) at home and abroad this past decade. New technology like wind farms become caught up by the same forces when related to these firms.

For example Babcock and Brown's wind investment vehicle was reported to have lost 11 percent of its value by mid-June. The potential impact of the losses on communities can be glimpsed when looking at the holdings of Babcock and Brown which 'acquired' (with investors' equity fund as downpayment) another European train system, just as its trusts were crashing in value, according to market analyst Stephen Mayne of Crikey.

Mayne reported that B&B is now saddled with over $50 billion in debt on top of maintaining infrastructure assets that include: Victoria's $1.4 billion Royal Children's Hospital redevelopment; Eircom, Ireland's equivalent of Telstra which sits inside Babcock & Brown Capital; WA's gas retailing monopoly; dozens of power stations and windfarms; more than $1 billion worth of British ports; $150m worth of NSW schools; the transmission cable under San Francisco bay; the giant Dalrymple Bay coal terminal in Mackay.

STOP PRESS

GREENING OF PALERANG

COUNCIL HAS SIGNED up to a new vegetation waste collection program for the villages and Councillors are being asked to greenlight a household energy efficiency drive that will more pro-actively offer householders energy-efficent lightbulbs and water-saving shower-heads as well as on-site advice (see *Eco-living* p4 why this might be a good idea).

Already agreed, a State government grant is funding the regional 'Groundswell' program which will collect household green waste in Palerang villages on a fortnightly basis, for composting and agricultural dispersal as fertiliser and ground conditioner. The program should commence early next year.

TOURIST NUMBERS UP FOR THE REGION

NSW MEMBER FOR Monaro Steve Whan who also wears the hats of Parliamentary Secretary for Primary Industries, Regional Development, Rural Affairs & Planning was pleased to announce a healthy increase in visitors to the region during the first three months of the year. This is according to the latest Tourism Research Australia figures released in June.

The Capital Country, which includes Canberra, Queanbeyan, Yass, Goulburn, Palerang, Young and the Southern Highlands, received more than 243,000 visitors in the March 2008 quarter, an increase of 27.9 per cent compared with the previous March quarter.

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SATIRE begins in Bungendore

by Maria Taylor

ANY WOMAN WHO can flawlessly sing five verses of a country love song with the words running backwards and without once faltering in the face of loud audience guffaws, has to be a major vocal talent. It's all part of a repertoire that tackles every musical genre with a truly global range of vocal embellishments.

And indeed, Moya Simpson – matched by partner John Shortis in talent, dedication to music craft and audience appeal – discovered one day back around 1979 that she was not just a pretty dancer and teacher but had mighty vocal chords as well.

Since that revelation and after teaming up in craft and in life, the pair has regaled countless cabaret audiences with their satirical reviews and musical wit.

Photos: Marcele Martins

John, the other half of Shortis and Simpson, in his studio.

The quiet Bungendoreans

It was the old fickle finger of fate, according to Moya, that brought them in 1996 to the village of Bungendore, where they have resided quietly ever since.

(It may have something to do with the lack of obvious performance venues locally that Shortis and Simpson seem to be better known in Canberra, where they keep an office at Gorman House, and in Queanbeyan cultural circles, than in their own village).

Moya sketches how they got here – facing the wintery sunshine entering the front room of their renovated cottage in central Bungendore behind a pair of outsize sunnies that wouldn't go astray on Paris Hilton.

"When I arrived in Sydney from London in 1978 I got three job offers: primary school teacher with emphasis on drama and dance, social worker with an abortion clinic and compere (and sometime dancing teacher) with an Eastern European folkloric dance company which toured schools". She took the latter and the rest is history as they say.

Her singing, starting with Bulgarian women's songs, has translated into a lifelong love affair with choirs and *A cappella* work. Being an outstanding mimic with a good ear for languages helped.

Meanwhile John Shortis had come out of school-teaching into a job with the ABC where he wrote childrens' songs for a radio program that played in every Australian school at that time.

In 1982–83 he found himself as composer in residence for Campbelltown Council – "if you can believe that" he says with his trademark infectious grin. There he met Moya who was working for a Community Centre in Fairfield. She had a project for which she wanted a musician who worked with children. She offered John the job which he took up a year later.

Creative carpooling

"Our romance blossomed in a brown Torana," says John of the time the couple spent carpooling and planning drama/music activities together.

From there they eventually embarked on a year-long caravan trip around Australia, leaving behind what John alludes to as 'a mid-life crisis'. Along the way they worked out the frames of a duo act that has distinguished them ever since.

That trip ended with a Christmas show in Queanbeyan at the School of Arts Café whose owners encouraged them to write political satire. They stayed at Mirramu centre and got acquainted with the region. "I said to Moya, why not settle here? and she laughed. But here we are", recalls John.

It proved to be an inspired choice. The Canberra region has more choirs per capita than anywhere else in Australia. Almost every government department has its own choir. This offered a lot of work with voice workshops and further encouraged Moya's love of choral groups. At the moment she runs two: 'Can Belto', a small *A cappella* group, and 'Worldly Goods', a community choir of around 50 open to anyone.

Compelling shift to satire

Their arrival on the regional stage in 1996 coincided with a suite of perfect targets for political satire with the ascendancy of the Howard era in federal politics. They never dreamed they would be doing it for 11 years.

Now they say they can't retire because, like so many small businesses, they still need to bank up some retirement funds. And so they find themselves working as hard as ever, and still loving it – most of the time.

Rudd the Musical has been the latest satirical project which played last month at the Street Theatre. This has been an expansion of their work into a more theatrical setting which they plan to build on. The political satire was staged as a musical within a cabaret setting and a story within a story and the whole show is called *Three Nights at the Bleeding Heart*.

So how are the Ruddites as satirical objects? "Not so easy," allows John who writes the music and lyrics which Moya performs and perfects with a punchline here, an accent there, and overall impeccable timing.

"We don't know them so well yet and they're not as colourful." But it's still early days. The couple say that some of their more left-leaning friends were horrified at the idea of lampooning the slayers of the Howard dragon. But for observers of the human comedy there are no sacred political icons.

So far they have tagged Rudd as a clever workaholic and a bureaucrat with a bunch of bright ideas. A show that played at the Bungendore Bowling Club during the Weereewa Festival light-heartedly explored the PM's convict antecedents – unearthed by Moya in a Russian accent and a trench coat.

More seriously, they fear the bottom will fall out of the live satire market as young people, wedded to electronic media, fail to make the connection between their work and what the Chasers or Rove do.

Creative housework

John is the disciplined one who puts in 12 hour days in the studio out back, cranking out a song or two before Moya is out of bed. She creates as she goes along, saying there's nothing like the soothing monotony of a bit of light vacuuming to jog into life the framework of, say, a Russian spy persona.

How do they know something will work for an audience? While their loyal following and their track record would indicate otherwise, the short answer is they don't.

Even after all these years, they find the funnybones on the other side of the footlights unpredictable. Which can be a bit unnerving and keeps the pre-performance adrenaline up, even for a couple of seasoned pros like Shortis and Simpson.

What's next on the agenda? Well there's the Festival of Voices in Hobart and a trip to Georgia, (the country), for an academic symposium on the choral work, perhaps another fellowship for John's historical research on Australian Prime Ministers ("I don't do academic papers, I do shows") and hopefully a grant for a Moya showcase or three. Then there are conference gigs, the new theatrical productions... it could get a bit much sometimes but there's always the caravan at the coast for a quick escape.

And really, you can tell they wouldn't have it any other way.

Coming up this month will be a rerun of their show *We don't need another Euro* with Moya singing in six languages inspired by well-known songs that began life in another language. Just a hint of Eurovision song contest adds to the fun.

(See* What's On*, p12 for 25–26 July.)

You may be assured nothing is sacred. Shortis and Simpson in rehearsal.

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Dear Editor...

BRAIDWOOD RATEPAYERS SHOULD BE REFUNDED

The refund cheque was nearly in the mail for Braidwood water ratepayers, had Councillors Raynolds, Horen, Hart and Moore had there way. It was great to see these four councillors teaming up to do the right thing for the water ratepayers of Braidwood who have been charged more than necessary, now that the State and Commonwealth grants for their sewer works were certain.

Listening from the gallery to the motion proposed by Cr Raynolds that the rate payers should be sent a $300 refund cheque soon after the water meters were read next week, seemed to me to be so obvious that I was stunned that it was defeated by a 5 to 4 vote. The five opposing councillors took the position that the money should be refunded over 15 years.

Cr Horen tried to convince the dissenters that by stretching out a refund over fifteen years simply depleted its value due to inflation. He pointed out by way of analogy that if Council refunded the money now, a ratepayer could purchase a few hundred litres of fuel, but if dribbled out over 15 years time its purchasing power will shrink to a fraction of that due to inflation.

From the gallery, it looked like those opposing were mixing up depreciation accounting principles with a simple overcharge refund. Cr Raynolds was even plainer speaking when he said that it's the ratepayer's money and it should be given back to them.

I know that the Council has worked hard over the years to move from being in a huge financial deficit after amalgamation to the balanced budget it now has. But recollection of those past traumas should not have stopped all councillors in this case from doing the right thing and giving back the money as soon as possible. It's at a moment like this where it's critical for all the councillors we elect in September to have a well grounded understanding of finance, accounting principles and economic fair play.

– Richard Graham, Bungendore

THE LEP MADE US DO IT

Over the life of Palerang Council there have been comments made in the press, and elsewhere, that Palerang is a pro development council. A well run council is neither pro, nor anti-development. Development is decided by the Community at the Local Environment Plan (LEP) stage, and implemented according to the relevant associated documents (Development Control Plans etc).

An LEP is the law, gazetted as such by the State Parliament. It is a councillor's duty to uphold the law, ie to pass the development, if it is legal under the LEP technically correct (a staff responsibility) according to the complimentary documents and policy already decided by the community.

For the record, I did not agree with the original Trucking Yard Lane Development (without town sewer) but voted for it for the above reason. I do not agree with the YLEP 80 ha policy but would vote for it.

If one does not like certain developments, change the LEP. As soon as a councillor, or worse, a caucus, starts deciding developments on a weekly, or monthly basis, the door is open to corruption, eg Wollongong. Those that do not like any developments passed by this council in the last four years, need to look at who wrote the LEP not they that uphold it.

– Walter Raynolds, Palerang Councillor

*(**Ed note:** Councillor Raynold's position is not uniform with pronouncements of some state authorities on land development and sub-division. In our May issue we quoted two of them. Justice Peter McClellan while Chief Justice of the Land and Environment Court noted that in almost every case coming before the court the form of development is technically permitted. The question, he said, would be whether it was appropriate at that particular site and in the public interest.*

And Steve Whan, who represents Palerang in the NSW Parliament, wrote that in addition to considering an application on technical grounds Councillors also needed to consider "all issues that might arise from its development including implications for the environment, infrastructure and service provision." These statements strongly infer that Councillors have a responsibility, where relevant, to consider factors that relate to a particular situation and that require interpretation of such general terms as 'ecologically sustainable development' that adorn a document like the Yarrowlumla LEP.)

COUNCIL *HAS* PROGRESSED: SPOTLIGHT NOW ON WHAT CANDIDATES OFFER

With the looming election, I felt some reflection on the role of a Councillor may be useful.

I have enjoyed my four years on Council and I feel some good has been achieved. There was some possibility in 2004 that the (then) Eastern Capital City Regional Council would not survive.

Now we have addressed the internal financial and staffing arrangements. We have staff permanently based in our shire at Bungendore and Braidwood. There is a 20 year plan for waste management. The water and sewer problems are being addressed. Work is being done to modernise our asset management and maintenance. The list could go on – for a little while at least.

On balance Palerang is shaping up better now, than it was in 2004. I am grateful for having had the chance to be involved. I have learnt a lot of good things and met some excellent people. Importantly however, more work still needs to be done.

Now, in all reality we will get the Council we deserve. Good people need to stand as candidates. We need to identify the good ones

Dear Editor... continued p7

Part of Bungendore Wood Works Gallery's 25th year celebrations will be five photo exhibits between now and October – part of the 'Vivid' National Photography Festival which comes to Canberra and region for the first time.

Three of the exhibitions feature Bungendore region photographers Sonia Turner, Lisa McKelvie and Stan d'Argeavel who will exhibit with Australian Living Treasure Don Burrows. Mr Burrows photo *Road Train* above.

The local exhibitions will be launched by the work of Sonia Turner on July 12.

> ***See* What's On *p12 for more information.***

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Enquiries and letters:
Managing Editor: **Maria Taylor**
Admin: Christina Taylor
0418 731 691
Editorial: media@palerangbulletin.com.au

Contacts advertising:
0418 731 691
adverts@palerangbulletin.com.au
PO Box 302, Bungendore 2621

Website:
www.palerangbulletin.com.au

Design and production:
Sue Van Homrigh
graphicgesture@bigpond.com

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20th of the month

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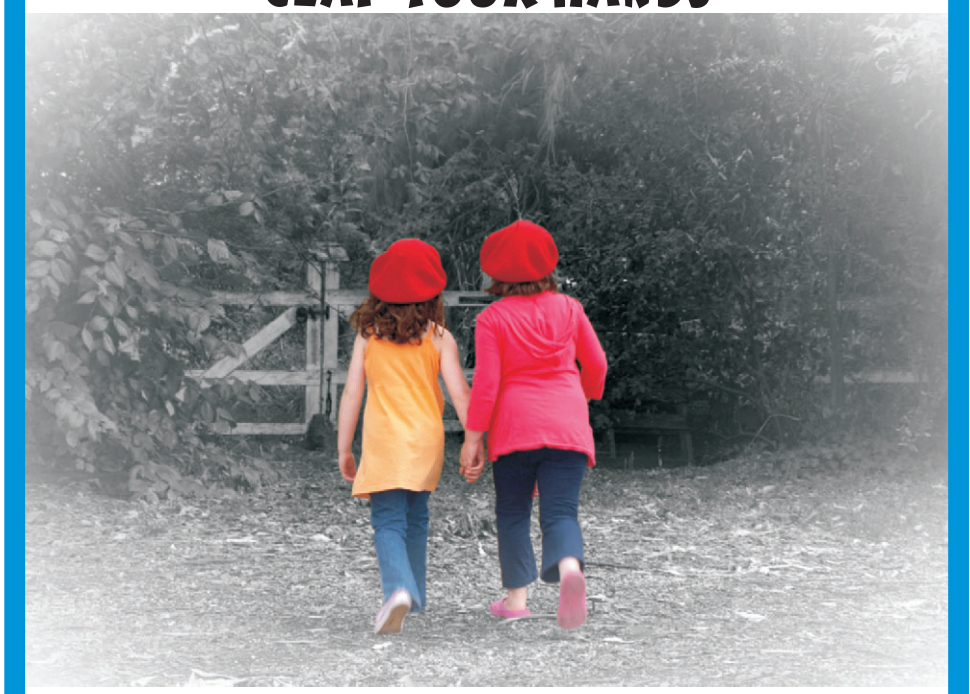

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Founder's Corner
from Maurice Barnes

For World Youth Day

This month brings us a temporary increase in our State population because of the gathering of many pilgrims for the (week-long) event, World Youth Day. The climax of that week is a Mass celebrated by the Pope at Randwick Racecourse.

No doubt the message from the Pontiff to the Catholic youth of the world will be to ask them to go forth and spread love, compassion and practical help to those less fortunate than themselves. Their mission would be spread throughout the world by the Roman Catholic Church according to its doctrine as ordained by the Pope himself.

One subject which is sure to be mentioned in the Papal sermon is the global food shortage and other damage caused by humanity's over-use of unrenewable natural resources.

But I'm sure that there'll be no mention of the biggest reason for the rapid increase of greenhouse gas emissions.

We're in charge of the universe

The church doctrine teaches that the universe was created for the benefit of humankind alone, so we are in a unique position of superiority over every living thing within a few billion light years' radius of here. Because of this unique position, it's our duty to refrain from doing anything to interfere with the reproduction of our species. Therefore artificial means of contraception and abortion are forms of murder and are forbidden.

The nominally Christian countries closest to the Vatican have educated populations of women who ignore church doctrine, so large families are relatively rare. Not so in other countries where the Pope's influence is strong. In Central and South America, parts of southern Africa, Southeast Asia and the Philippines the education of women on the reproductive system is minimal and population growth consequently is exponential.

Here comes 2050

Greenhouse gas emissions are caused by human activities. Although the adaptation of alternative means of energy production can reduce emissions of any country, it is also necessary to accept some lowering of living standards and of aspirations to acquire more things.

If each individual acts wisely in that regard the lowering of emissions by say 30 percent ***per capita*** is perhaps possible by 2050. That won't be much use if the ***capita*** spirals upward due to the current Vatican policy.

By all means let us welcome the pilgrims and the Pope to Sydney but let us remind them of the damage that church policy has done and ask the Pontiff to mend his ways.

DEAR EDITOR... *Continued from p6*

and vote for them (sounds obvious, but is it?).

For me, I will vote for candidates who listen carefully to the community. I expect them to be interested in my (our) concerns once elected – even if they don't end up agreeing! Importantly I want them to have a long term vision and plans.

So, my questions are: who will be standing? What are our new candidates offering?

– Matt Gardiner, Palerang Councillor

RECENT COUNCIL ISSUES

Some people seem to have been shocked by the idea that Council could impose a condition on a sub-division that would preclude any prospective new owners from pumping from a creek. This nearly happened at the June Braidwood meeting, when staff submitted a late amendment which used a section from the *Conveyancing Act 1919* to create a condition to prevent water being taken from the creek for any purpose. It was intended to replace the earlier, agreed motion which also seemed to concern some councillors. This motion, passed at a previous meeting, included some minor amendments to the DA to protect the water catchment and creek home to the threatened Macquarie perch by requiring a 100 meter buffer, as recommended by the Department of Primary Industries; ensure that all costs relating to roadworks would be met by the developer, not the community; facilitate easier passage for wildlife; and try to restore some of the vegetation that was there not so long ago, before it was cleared to make the area suitable for sub-division.

Apparently individual rights must be protected at all costs never mind that those rights would result in a potential 11 pumps in a 2km stretch, at a time when we are realising how past practices have resulted in severely dwindling water resources, dying ecological systems, salinity problems and the destruction of habitat. Surely water belongs to us all, not just those lucky enough to live next to a waterway.

The Braidwood community was presented with two options for sewerage charges as part of the Draft Management Plan. The first option, described as best-practice, proposed a reduction in charges spread over 15 years, to compensate ratepayers for the very large increase the previous year which was imposed to cover the cost of the new, much-needed Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP), before the grants for the STP were announced in the lead-up to the Federal Election. The second option (apparently not recommended, making you wonder why it was offered in the first place) would have seen a substantial refund by way of dramatically reduced charges this year, rising to slightly above those proposed for Option 1 for the following 15 years. A quarter of Braidwood residents, all of whom were ratepayers, supported submissions making it very clear that they preferred, not surprisingly, Option 2. And why not? The average income for those in the eastern part of the shire is substantially less than elsewhere, and many had found it hard to raise the funds for the increase. Furthermore, if it hadn't been for the community outcry, we wouldn't have secured the grants. But Option 2 was opposed by five out of nine councillors who criticised those who supported it, citing the imminent election as reason for their stance.

– Catherine Moore, Palerang Councillor

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Ed note: After much hand-wringing and anguished appeals, we're all abuzz that in recent weeks various candidates are stepping forward for Council election. In the public interest* The Bulletin *encourages these candidates to make themselves known. We will publish letters or advertisements on any candidate's reasons for running, their ideas for our community, for what is needed and for the future. An introductory letter should be no longer than 300 words and sent to* media@palerangbulletin.com.au. *Campaign advertisements to the same address, please.

WHY STAND FOR PALERANG COUNCIL?

I have the time to devote to the job (about 2 full days per week) and I have the skills needed. The current crew seems to have tossed in the towel; I'd like a go!

I think it takes at least the first four-year term to learn the basics. However, I am experienced on Council (*Tallaganda*) and also have 25 years in management positions in the Commonwealth Public Service as a Public Servant (NOT bureaucrat thank you!) with line management experience in the ACTION Bus network and ATSIC amongst others. We have lived in Braidwood for over 20 years, owned a 40 acre block for not long enough, run a business and served our community. I can offer to take your issues before Council; and listen to your problems and speak personally to you about them.

Palerang needs a new look and a new approach to the problems facing us all. We can not continue with the 'Us and Them' sniping that has bogged down the Council for over 4 years.

– Bill Bateman, Braidwood
kangabill@internode.on.net
(*shortened version of campaign letter*)

From the Editor...

STEWARDSHIP OR DOMINATION?

Speaking of Catholics and Christians past and present, I was reminded that no religion or human institution is uniform in its thinking – for instance in the belief that God created a human right to domination over other animal species – when reading Sy Montgomery's excellent book on human –animal relationships in a village setting 'The Good, Good Pig' (reviewed in the May *Bulletin*).

Montgomery (as have others who work with animals) quotes St Francis of Assisi who lived as a hermit in the12th Century Italian countryside and is the founder of the Franciscan monks. He called the birds of the air his brothers and sisters and wrote: *"If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men. Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission – to be of service to them wherever they require it".*

The famous Christian medical missionary Dr Albert Schweitzer linked a true humanitarian ethic to caring for all living creatures. *"We must never permit the voice of humanity within us to be alienated. It is man's sympathy with all creatures that first makes him truly a man."*

And this, from another world religion spoken by the great Hindu leader Mahatma Ghandhi: *"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."*

Stewardship for the earth within Christianity

There are interesting directions evolving or re-emerging within the Christian tradition to define 'dominion' as 'stewardship' of the earth and of our fellow species, not as 'domination': a distinction that goes to the heart of everyday human activities affecting many aspects of our environment and ecology – from the changing atmosphere to factory farming of livestock or the disrespect some show towards native wildlife and biodiversity.

The Power of Two

Priscilla and Elvis. I have written for the *Bulletin* about adopting Priscilla (*on the right*) as a shivering piglet who immediately captivated our family and dogs with her charm and playfulness. Really she thought she was one of the dogs but was the smartest of them all. At the time I wrote: "if Priscilla were a person, I couldn't help but like her for all her positive qualities. I like her as a pig as well."

The enduring lesson: there is nothing like individual contact to make us aware how other species feel and act like us.

Priscilla by sheer romantic luck was introduced to Elvis 18 months ago and moved in with him on the banks of the Murrumbidgee not much later. She may be (much) larger but she's still pretty with the same loving personality. Elvis is the strong silent type. If he sings it's in private. They're still happily together, along with their human benefactors and a cohort of alpacas, sheep, geese and two donkeys (when we last looked).

– Maria Taylor

The Olive, The Brigadier, The Interior Designer, The Banker and The Healer

Warren and Di West, and their dog Kaysha. Photo: Barbara Zingler

TWO COUPLES and two groves are intertwined by the long lived evergreen olive tree. Shingle Hill Estate, Gundaroo, is nurtured by David and Maryanne Webster, a brigadier and an interior designer. The Narranghi Olive Grove, Braidwood, is nurtured by Warren and Diane West, a bank manager and a healer.

The June olive harvest, the production of extra virgin olive oil and the year long nurturing of the trees has defined their lives, lifestyles, futures, dreams and aspirations. The olive tree and its fruit are fast becoming a proud talisman, thanks to these and other hard workers in our region.

The olive has been used for food, lamp fuel, preservative, healing, laxative, aphrodisiac, cosmetic and religious ceremonies. Homer sang its virtues and Hippocrates considered it as both a food and a medicine. The olive branch is a symbol of peace. Leafy branches used to crown victors. Olive oil is considered sacred by some cultures, used to anoint and a health tonic. The wood of the olive tree is veined, fragrant and valued by cabinet makers.

20kg of fruit from each tree, but each olive just a few drops

With my own Italian heritage and ancestors in the business of olive oil production, at times it feels as if olive oil is running through my veins. School friends who used to come and visit, picked fresh olives from the tree in the backyard, and then to my astonishment, put them straight into their mouths! While they tried to recover from the intense bitterness, I apologetically explained that olives are not to be eaten raw. My visit to Shingle Hill Estate and Narranghi Grove felt so familiar.

David and Maryanne Webster planted 500 trees in 1998 and then another 500 three years later on their property Shingle Hill Estate. They planted Leccino, Frantoio, Pendalino, Corregiola and Manzanillo varieties. They told me stories of their search for best varieties for our region, the search for fertilizers, about pests and diseases, soil and leaf testing, water and drought, and keeping kangaroos, rabbits and parrots at bay.

"You can normally get 20kg of fruit from each tree, 20 tonnes of fruit from 1,000 trees. Between four and 11 kilos of olives are needed to make one kilo of oil, each olive releases a few droplets," explained Brigadier David. "Our aim is to produce high quality extra virgin olive oil for the people of our region."

Maryanne emphasised the beauty, "I love the olive tree, it is a beautiful tree, much like our gum tree". What of the future? "We want something to pass on to our grandchildren, to pass on the knowledge."

New organic venture for old Braidwood property

Warren and Diane West planted 700 of the Corregiola and Frantoio varieties seven years ago. Connection to their property Narranghi, in Braidwood, is five generations old. The land originally belonged to Diane's great grandfather, John O'Toole, famous for being the oldest living man in Braidwood. The new chapter of this historic property is clearly documented by a descriptive and narrative photo album, telling a story of drilling in search of water, clearing land, planting and protecting trees, irrigation, pest control and the joy of the first fruit on the trees.

Today, with the assistance of Diane's sister Kerry and her husband Paul Moran, the Wests produce certified organic olive oil under the label *The Two Sister*. Warren explained that in the near future they will plant another 400 trees and will ultimately set up their very own press!

Genuine altruism seems to be a characteristic of our olive cultivators, "we want our olive grove to be a refuge, a place where people can come and recuperate". The West's wish is to produce an excellent olive oil that the region can be proud of.

PRESERVING OLIVES

There are many ways of processing olives for table use. Gather green olives before they are ripe (black); split the olives, without crushing them, by giving them a light tap with a mallet. Cover with cold water and leave them for one week, changing the water every day. Then put them into brine – 1kg of saltpeter, 8 litres of water, flavoured with bay leaves, fennel and coriander seeds. Experiment with your own selection of herbs and spices. Leave the olives for 8 days before eating them.

Green olives in water are repeatedly soaked in water to remove the bitterness. Green olives are then prepared stuffed with anchovies, bell peppers, chillies or almonds. Black olives can be washed and then dried in the sun, then preserved in salt.

Olive Oil

Oil is produced by grinding the olives whole and then pressing the resultant pomice. There are two main grades of olive oil; extra virgin and olive oil. Extra virgin is unique among cooking oils as it is made directly from the fresh juice of the olive fruit. The oil may be filtered to give a bright clear colour or it may be left unfiltered, when it may be quite cloudy. Olive oil varies in flavour; from light and delicate to strong and pungent. It may be sweet, bitter or peppery.

Olive oil can be used in any culinary application that requires fat. Salad dressings, cooked vegetables, frying, grilling, basting and pot roasting, fish dishes, and to finish soups and stews. You can use olive oil to preserve roasted vegetables, eg eggplant, or peppers, mushrooms and cheese with herbs for flavour. Olive oil can also be used in baking to make cakes and biscuits.

OLIVE OIL AND HERB TRIANGLES

A quick and easy accompaniment for Happy Hour, or most any time, has been perfected by Chrissy Taylor as follows:

Mix olive oil and crushed garlic to taste; baste on pizza bases (if commercial brand, a favourite in our house is Mosaic because it doesn't dry out); sprinkle with sea salt and Italian herbs and bake in moderate oven for 10 minutes or until golden.
Cut into triangles and Voila!

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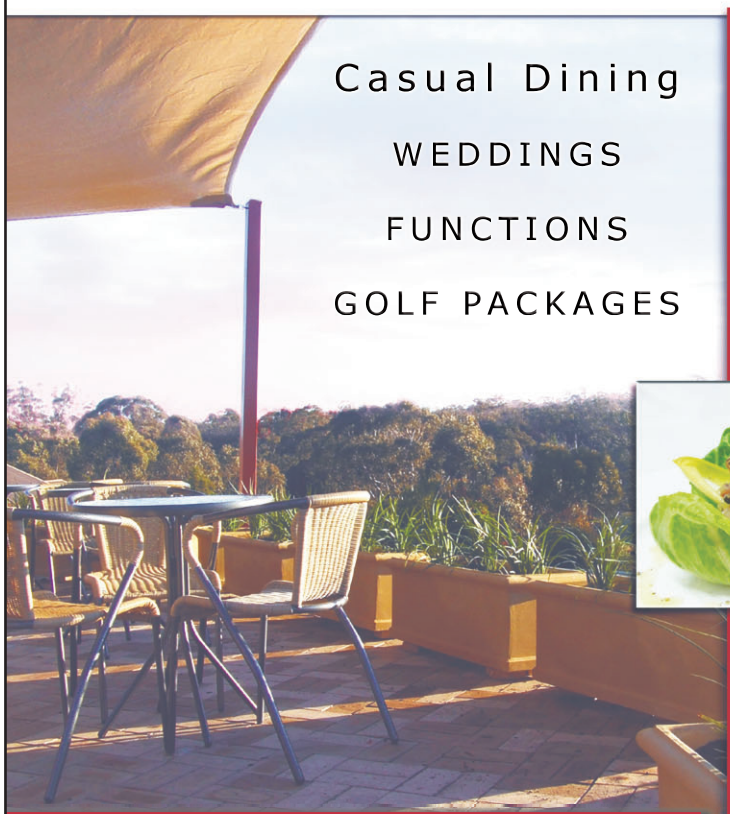

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What's the big idea?

explained by Amanda Beasley

Why we don't print on 100% recycled paper

http://sciencenow.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2008/609/1

Paper is generally pretty weak. But it won't be for long, if scientists in Sweden get their way.

To make ordinary paper, wood is pulped into its constituent cellulose. This is what the walls of the cells of the tree are made from.

Cellulose consists of long fibres which are woven together in the paper-making process. The problem is that these fibres are quite weak and can break easily.

Incidentally, this is why 100 percent recycled paper is generally only good for toilet paper. Once paper has been pulped again the fibres are really short and really weak – too weak to go through a printing press.

The Swedish scientists have taken a quite different tack. They have pulped the wood so that the cellulose fibres are amazingly small, at about 1,000 times smaller than normal paper fibres.

These nanofibres (so-called because of their size), are actually much stronger than regular paper fibres (microfibres) because they have no defects. And by treating the fibres with chemicals, atomic forces take over, causing the fibres to make an extremely strong material.

This strong paper could also be cheaper to produce because it dries more quickly. One day it may even be used to make scaffolds for growing replacement tissues for human transplants.

But it still comes from trees… and there's no word yet on whether *this* paper could be recycled.

Do aliens like Doritos with their beer? Stay tuned for 84 years

http://space.newscientist.com/article/dn14130-first-space-ad-targets-hungry-aliens.html

Scientists hoping to make contact with alien life have broadcast an advertisement into space. The EISCAT Svalbard Radar facility in Norway came up with the cosmic idea to raise some cash for research.

The half-minute advert for Doritos tortilla chips was replayed over and over for six hours, after the company made a donation to the facility. Its radars were pointed towards a solar system in the northern constellation of Ursa Major (the Great Bear, the Plough).

This solar system contains planets that are in the goldilocks zone around the central star. This means conditions may be 'just right' for intelligent life to survive there: ie not-too-hot and not-too-cold.

The researchers don't actually expect any aliens to understand the advert. But they hope anyone out there will realise it has come from intelligent life (intelligent may be a matter of definition here!).

Of course, TV stations and radio have been unintentionally broadcasting human babble into space for many decades. The EISCAT broadcast is different as it is much stronger and pointed in a specific direction.

Normally this radar station monitors the Earth's upper atmosphere. The station's Director hopes that this venture into the commercial world will help fund more pure research.

No-one expects a reciprocal advert to be received any time soon. Ursa Major is 42 light years away, meaning a round trip time for radar signals of 84 years.

You can see the advert here http://www.doritos.co.uk/.

Antimatter and gravity – upside down or not?

http://arxivblog.com/?p=450

Matter, otherwise known as stuff, is what everything like tables, trees and tonsils are made from. Matter is made from smaller bits known as atoms. And atoms are made from electrons, protons and neutrons which combine to make an electrically neutral lump.

Now, antimatter is the opposite of stuff. A table made of antimatter (an anti-table) would look just the same as a normal table. But it would be made of anti-electrons, anti-neutrons and anti-protons.

It could never be used on Earth though because when matter and antimatter touch, they destroy each other in an explosion. But that's another story.

Scientists at the European Organization for Nuclear Research in Switzerland (known as CERN) make antimatter atoms of hydrogen on a regular basis. And now they want to know 'what effect does gravity have on antimatter?'.

Surely, you're thinking, why don't they just drop the anti-hydrogens to the floor and see? Well, this is their plan, but it's hard to do.

Firstly you have to get hold of the atoms. But because they don't have any electric charge, you can't hold them in an electric field.

But now, a group lead by the University of Genoa has come up with a plan. The physics involved is stupendously complicated, but they are confident it will work.

If antimatter falls in gravity like normal matter, this will be extremely interesting to cosmologists. If it 'falls up' in gravity, then some old laws of physics will need to be thrown out. Watch this space.

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Compiled by Bungendore Community Aid Inc. Email – lmwill@alphalink.com.au or phone 6238 1359

– HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES –

Australian Breastfeeding Association
Contact community educators: Belinda 6236 9979 or Sharon 6238 0821. Or phone ACT & Southern Helpline on 6258 8928. Website www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Bagels in Bungendore/Palerang
Family and Carers Support Program for mental health. Phone 0428 434 407.

Bungendore Carers Group
Providing support to all carers. Contact Claire Mitchell on 0428 434 407.

Bungendore Outreach Program – Rehabilitation Service
Service for Bungendore residents. Includes home visits by therapists for initial assessment, provision of a home exercise program, advice about equipment and home modifications, fall prevention information and information regarding other community services. We also run a weekly exercise group for people whose health status prevents regular exercise. Phone 6298 9312.

Child and Family Health Clinic
Offers support and information on feeding, weight and developmental checks. For appointments phone Karabar Health Centre on 6298 9363.

Community Nursing
If you require nursing care phone 6298 9233 for information or help.

Home & Community Care (HACC) Voluntary Driving
Drivers are available to take anyone disabled or elderly to the doctor, specialists, or the hospital. There is a cost involved with this service and conditions apply. Contact the Community Transport Coordinator on 6298 0107. At least 2 weeks notice is required.

Home and Respite Care
Contact Home Care Service of NSW on 6200 7360 or through your doctor or the community nurse.

Immunisation Clinic
Phone 6298 9363 to book an appointment.

Meals on Wheels
A meal is provided and delivered to elderly or incapacitated people. Contact the community nurse on 6298 9233 or your family doctor.

Oxygen and Emergency First Aid
Contact Patti Dahlitz on 0412 964 567.

Parents Group
Guest speakers on a range of childhood topics. Contact Karabar 6298 9363 for details.

Queanbeyan Post Natal Depression Community Advisory Group – Pram Walking for Wellbeing
Mondays during NSW school terms in Bungendore and Jerrabomberra. Contact Community Health on 6298 9233.

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Please contact the editor telephone **0418 731 691** or **media@palerangbulletin.com.au**

CALLING RELATIVES OF JOSEPH DAVIES

CAPTAINS FLAT POLICE have put out the following call for help: Back on the 29th of May, an elderly long-time resident of Bungendore, Joseph Davies 85 years old of 31 Mecca Lane was found deceased by police in his house. He was never married and I have not been able to locate any relatives or next of kin. If any readers know Joe or any possible relative, please contact me at Captains Flat Police Station on 6236 6211 or Bungendore or Braidwood Police as I have exhausted all avenues of enquiry to locate someone.

– Senior Constable Peter Spence