

JORDAN'S CROSSING GAZETTE

JCCG

Edition 100 • March 2020



A Bundanoon Community Association publication
for the people of Bundanoon and Southern Villages

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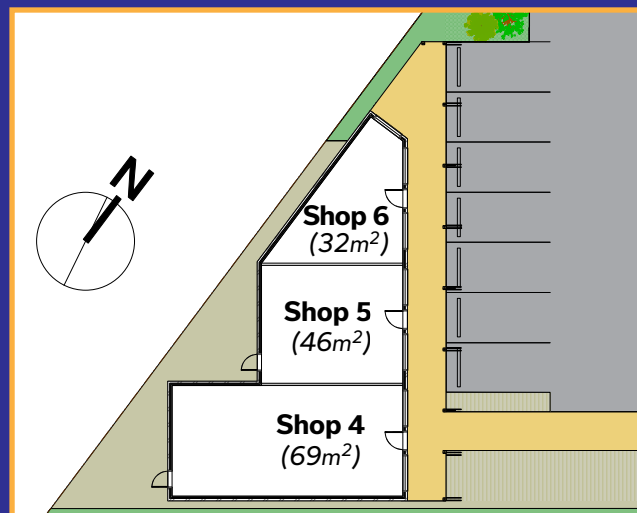


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Cover photograph: Riverview Road
Photographer: Jane Lancaster

Correspondence:
The Convenor
Jordan's Crossing Gazette
PO Box 12 Bundanoon NSW 2578

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Contributors

Donna Andrews	Hannah Halloran
Anton Baggerman	Jill Keyte
Bundanoon School	May King
Andy Carnahan	Petrea King
Peter Coad	Miranda Lean
Sam Costello	Bruce Marshall
Annie Crawford	Neil Mitchell
Pam Davies	Lyn Morehen
Tanya Dawson	Amanda Perrott
Barbara Eckersley	Sue Reid
Kerith Fowles	Ken Rooke
Lyndell Giuliano	Andrea Ward
Peter Gray	Penny Webb
John Grono	

Editor: Helen Clark

Photographs for each article were provided by the author, unless otherwise stated.

Convenor: Christine Janssen:
JCG.Advertising@bca.asn.au

Consultant: Pam Davies

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Contacts

Editorial:
jcg.editor@bca.asn.au

Advertising Sales and all enquiries:
JCG.Advertising@bca.asn.au

Design:
bella@beehivecreative.com.au



From the editor

25 years ago the first issue of JCG magazine was distributed. In it was a story dated February 1995 about firefighters, helicopters, water bombs and fuel drums massing on the oval.

This 100th issue again features firefighters and helicopters. I hoped that we could publish a few stories written by members of our community about their personal experience of the terrible few weeks of bushfires in January. That way each author could write without fear of an

interview question which might trigger something too painful or too difficult to respond to. I'm extremely grateful for each and every personal story in this issue and I'm in awe of those who stepped up to share with us what it was like for them.

I'm truly sorry for all those who lost everything.

On behalf of JCG and every one of our readers I also give heartfelt thanks to our valiant local RFS firefighters and their hard-working auxilliary, all the other firefighters tasked to our area including our local Fire and Rescue team, all the helicopter pilots, Kylie Phillips our local Policewoman and all her comrades, and every single community member who backed up this whole enormous effort to protect our townships.

You will find more about the early years of our village magazine on page 8, while regular columns and articles indicate most residents are returning to normal activities and interests.

—Helen Clark, Editor

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Hall Hire

For Soldiers' Memorial Hall
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email hallhire@bundanoon.nsw.au

Deadline for next issue:

Friday 1 May

Advertising information: page 51

BUNDANOON

Community Association Inc.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7.30pm Thursday 19th March 2020
Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall

All positions are declared vacant.

Nomination forms can be downloaded from
www.bca.asn.au and must be received by
5pm Wednesday March 11th
either at
PO Box 12 Bundanoon NSW 2578
or delivered to the BCA secretary in person.

Contact secretary@bca.asn.au
or 0410 173 093 to enquire further
or arrange delivery of your nomination.

BCA seeks to have a strong
representation of our community
in the members of the Committee.

You must be a member of BCA
to be nominated and
full support and information
is available to anyone who is interested
in standing for election.

Nominations are welcome
from the whole community.

PETER GRAY
President BCA
president@bca.asn.au



BUNDANOON

Community Association Inc.



Welcome to 2020. This greeting is, I believe, more appropriate than the usual "Happy New Year". For so many people in Bundanoon and the Southern Highlands villages,

the start to 2020 was not what we were hoping for.

Homes with family treasures and irreplaceable memorabilia lost to fire. People evacuating from their homes to a place of safety, worrying what was to become of their properties in their absence. A change in our routine - instead of relaxing with a good book or tidying up after a BBQ, we found ourselves removing flammable rubbish from around the house, cleaning gutters, plugging them and filling with water, checking on Fires Near Me or watching the direction of the wind and that menacing plume of smoke gradually getting closer. For some, it was a small increase in heartbeat as the sound of another helicopter passed overhead carrying another load of water, insidiously increasing levels of anxiety.

However on the other side of the coin, we have been witness to people's generosity towards their fellow villagers. They have shown community spirit, and gratitude to firefighters, Emergency Services and anybody else involved in the effort to contain the crisis.

There are those who worked tirelessly to rescue and treat homeless or injured animals.

Others collected donations of food and ensured it reached hungry wildlife without delay because overnight, food sources had disappeared and water sources became contaminated.

The list goes on but my favorite, slightly quirky, story is that of a tattoo artist from Wollongong. She had asked a friend for any outdated medical supplies from their clinic in order to contribute to animal welfare in Bundanoon. I met this colorful duo in Bundanoon as they were handing over their donation to John Creighton, our 'Wombat Man'.

BCA has been busy in the background, recognising that this event has both immediate needs and ongoing needs stretching into the foreseeable future. Hearing of the plight of the native animals the BCA made immediate payments to both Dimmock's Retreat for Wildlife and John Creighton's Wombat Care for the purchase of urgently needed food and supplies.

We facilitated a Bushfire Information Session held jointly with Police, RFS and Fire and Rescue NSW. A large crowd turned up (estimated by some at over 600) and spilled out of the Hall onto the pavement to hear the valuable information delivered by authorities.

The following weekend a Bushfire Preparedness meeting was organized by Andy Carnahan and Lyndell Giuliano, designed to help people understand the practical measures they could take to help protect their properties against fires and which sources to use to obtain reliable information. This event was well attended and it became apparent that a number of residents knew which radio station to listen to but not how to find it on their radio, or they knew which phone app to check but not how to download it or from where. A wide range of authorities and information, including RFS, Red Cross, Fire Plans, Apps for your phone, Trauma Resources, and Local Land Services were available for consultation and assistance. This gave everybody the chance to discuss their individual issues and gain answers to any problems.

Because it was seen as extremely helpful it may become an annual pre-bushfire season addition to our calendar.

Don't forget March is the month for our AGM. This is an important meeting and decides the leadership team for the next 12 months. Please try to attend, but if you can't make it your voice can still be heard by giving your proxy to another member to vote on your behalf.

The success of the BCA Depends on People.

- Peter Gray
BCA President



BCA meetings

Third Thursday of the month
(excluding January):

- ☐ 19 March 2020
- ☐ 16 April 2020
- ☐ 21 May 2020

7:30pm
Supper Room
at the Hall

100TH JCG ISSUE

JCG turns 25 - here's how it began

Twelve pages with twelve advertisers brought Jordans Crossing Gazette into being in May 1995. This first edition, sponsored by the NSW Department of Business and Regional Development, heralded 'a new community newsletter for Bundanoon.'

Peter Ellsmore, President of Bundanoon Community Development Association welcomed the publication as a way 'to foster *esprit de corps* in our community and to generate more visibility and support for our advertisers.' It was to be published quarterly.

Maybe some readers will remember Chris Dwyer who bought Ye Olde Bicycle Shoppe from long-time resident Jack Hepher (immortalised as the penny farthing rider in the mural on the shop's southern wall.) As Kate Perkins wrote in the 15th year anniversary edition in 2005: 'Chris was the driving force behind the project.... his initiative led to a collaboration with (the late) Paul Gleeson to produce the first issue.'

Paul had the expertise to coordinate the production of the publication, leading the small editorial committee of Chris Dwyer, Kate Perkins, John Royal, John Hartley and Carol Halstead. The newsletter format was used until 2002.

Looking back, it's interesting to see that Bundanoon Community Development Association (now BCA) used JCG to communicate information about local issues to every household in our area. Although this was successful, follow-up was difficult because of the three-month gap between newsletters. For the same reason, it also proved to be an unsatisfactory forum for discussion of conflicting views of local issues.

We are now celebrating 25 years. Editor Helen Clark and a team of writers; graphic designer Bella Gnecci Ruscone; photographer Peter Gray, and advertising sales manager Christine Janssen continue to produce a quality not-for profit, all-colour magazine. Christine is also the convenor of the JCG team, which is one of the many sub-committees



▲ Pam Davies
JCG Editor

▼ Chris Dwyer
JCG Co-ordinator

under the umbrella of BCA and is still regarded as the voice of the organisation. Advertisements for local businesses and trades continue to provide financial support while promoting local services.

Since its inception JCG has benefited from the contribution of many volunteers - editors, writers, photographers and advertising managers. The only paid team members have been the layout designers, and of those Ben Mawston needs special mention - he took over from Lyn Mulready in 2003 and continued in that role until 2019, when he and partner Thomas Andrew Baxter moved to Scotland where they run a lovely B&B. Many Bundanoon friends have visited them since.

David Morgan introduced one of the most significant changes in the magazine format: colour printing of some sections, which was made possible as advertising increased.

As a committee member during this time I worked with David to introduce an eight-page themed centre section which was reflected in the front cover.

When I became editor in March 2005 I could not have predicted that I would have that role for a further 10 years. Since 1999 I had learned something about putting an issue together but I was on a steep learning curve as editor. Committee member Harvey Grennan, a former SMH journalist, had the expertise to help develop the distinctive format we used. I hope the editions produced during my years as editor reflect the enjoyment I had during that time.

Our quarterly community magazine continues to be the voice of BCA while bringing to life the ideas and interests of people in this area.



▲ JCG covers (top to bottom):
June 2004, June 2010, March 2018

- Pam Davies

Jordan's Crossing Gazette

P.O. Box 12
Bundanoon 2578

The voice of Bundanoon Community Development Association
MAY 1995

POSTAGE PAID
AUSTRALIA

BUSH FIREFIGHTERS FLY IN

February 1995 in Bundanoon

I have just now come home from our football field a few hundred metres away, which for the whole week has been crowded with helicopters, fuel drums, firefighters and weird apparatus including the big red water bombs.

I watched two departures and one arrival. There is a temporary wind sock and a mobile control centre with two antennae. Men in orange suits are lying on the grass (reminiscent of fighter pilots, Biggin Hill, WW2) and in the midst of it, the County workman is mowing the wicket ready for the next cricket match!

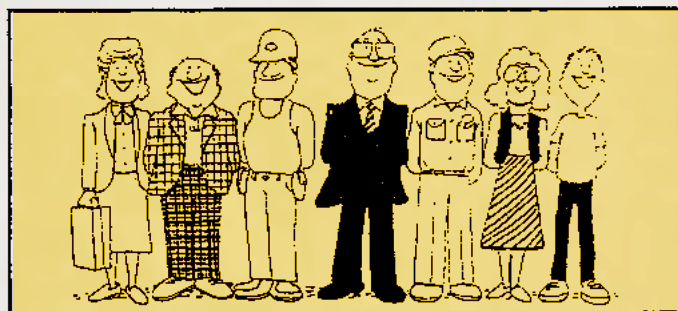
As one chopper arrived, four volunteer firemen waited at the perimeter until called by the co-pilot to board. He waved them to drop their apparatus such as knapsack sprays nearby. When all were boarded he threaded a rope through these, ready to be lowered at the fire site. Then he harnessed himself into a rope fitting, obviously he was to be first man out, either to supervise from the landing skids or at ground level. There are no roads in that forest, it stretches as far as the eye can see, for maybe 50 km. The settlements and the main Sydney-Melbourne rail route run along an escarpment.

Today 27 degrees is forecast and it is gusty outside, at 10 am. I have asked Mary to come and sit in the car at lunch time, so we may watch the operations.

Anon

OVER THE BACK FENCE

"Who are they, these new people? Coming into Bundy - only they like to call it Bundanoon - joining committees, starting up new groups, revitalising old. I hardly recognise any of the names on the community development association these days.



"Well, they can't be yuppies, otherwise they would have gone to Berrima or Burrawang or Burradoo. And they seem quite friendly, there's two in our street, and the old part of the village, and the shops, haven't changed too much. And some of the changes are for the better - that old railway goods shed is a great place for the history group to keep their archives, and I like the heritage colours."

"Doesn't the station look good since it was painted. It's hard to remember what that neglected strip of land near the railway line looked like before it became a little park with picnic tables. We'd talked about doing something there for years but it took that new bloke to get things moving."

"The information bay on the way into town - an arboretum they call it - has certainly come on, and the crabapples in the street are a picture. I hear Mr Perkins brought some compost from home to put around his, and up came some

new potatoes! That little area at the side of the hall has rosemary and sasanqua camellias and I don't know what else - something blooming all the year round."

"The garden club was certainly glad of some new members, and the CWA and the fire brigade too. I hear they're going to landscape the area all along the line, the Bridge to Bridge project. Skillshare's doing it. At least six months work for twelve local unemployed people. Where do they get all these great ideas?"

"There are new heaters in the supper room in the hall and they're painting it too. More heritage colours I suppose. I heard they're getting the old projectors back in working order. Saturday arvo pictures, just like in the old days. Nothing too modern, mind, more like the black and white movies on the tele. Remember when Ross Counsell was the projectionist - and wasn't Gwen Tarrant an usherette? That lady who runs Mildenhall - Pam Davies - gave some paper up at the University called 'going to the pictures' and she interviewed all the locals. We're famous! Pam got a grant from the government to do it."

"And because these new people know about applying for grants, there's money for a basketball court for the kids - up near the tennis courts they're going to put it. And the kids helped raise some of the money themselves. It'll be a good thing for them - there's not enough for the local kids to do, so that should help keep them out of mischief."

"This Jordan's Crossing Gazette is a real good thing - I hear more than 40 people showed up at the community development meeting. **The next meeting is on Thursday 17 August at 7.30 pm.** I'm going, Shir! - what about you?"



Above: Maria Lindsay, Josephine Allen, Heather Burney

Well, Bundanoon, that was an infernal summer, wasn't it? Our heartfelt sympathies go to all amongst us who suffered loss and damage attributable to bushfires. Many more of us had to evacuate on more than one occasion but were fortunate to be able to return to undamaged homes. We can hope for more normal weather from autumn this year.

For those who have recently come to Bundanoon, our community's artistic activity is fostered by the Bundanoon Community Association, of which Arts Bundanoon is proud to be a part. We gain so much through integration with other subgroups and from our appreciative audiences. Our overwhelmingly 'local' audiences give us useful feedback and provide the backbone of our volunteer group along with significant help from Tallong and Bowral - most appreciated. Arts Bundanoon provides around 13 well-attended concerts every year.

So, what lies ahead this year? We shall live up to the stratospheric standards that have been set over the last several years. As may be expected, our series includes some of Australia's finest pianists including Tony Lee, in October, and Gavin Zev, in September, as well as Alisa Yuko Bernhard in April. The programme for 2020 began in February with duo violinists Maria Lindsay and Heather Burney with Josephine Allen, piano. We shall again see Jeremy So, pianist, in March. The very popular violinist, Ben Adler, together with Will Cesta, pianist, will be back in May. We shall also welcome back the ensemble Nano Symphony in August, and meet the cellist, Miles Mullin-Chivers in November.

Our occasional Intimate Voices programme resumed in February with Arianna Odermat playing baroque harpsichord music in the lovely acoustics of the Uniting Church, Bundanoon.

Please note that we shall not offer a concert in December 2020 because, from 2021, we shall begin our Music at 10 series in January and conclude it in November of each year.

We hope that you will enjoy attending this year's concerts as much as the Arts Bundanoon team enjoys presenting it.

- Neil Mitchell



in 2020

Bundanoon Sings! is a lot about singing, but it's just as much about community. We send our love to everyone who has been affected by the fires, their loved ones and communities. Our heartfelt thanks to the RFS, Emergency Services, our local community leaders and all of their support people.

We think it's time to breathe.
And while we're breathing, why not sing?

The benefits of group singing are well known. Singing in a choir can:

- ♪ regulate breathing and increase deep breathing
- ♪ release endorphins (one of our feel-good hormones) and oxytocin (reduces anxiety and pain)
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- ♪ synchronise breathing and heart rates of choir members
- ♪ improve cognitive function (including memory)
- ♪ increase social connection and feelings of belonging.

In some studies, singing has been found to have positive effects on singers' immune systems. It may also improve the ability to understand speech in noisy environments (even for people with age-related hearing loss).

We love it. And you can be a part of it. Come along to the Hall at 6:45pm on Monday nights to sing, listen, or just to visit. Everyone is welcome. There are no auditions and no experience is needed. If you love to sing (and yes, in the shower counts), we'd love to see you on a Monday night.

For more information, follow us on
www.facebook.com/bundanoonsings
www.instagram.com/bundanoonsings
or email bundanoonsings@gmail.com

Dates for your diary:

🎵 **ANNUAL BUNDANOON SINGS! CONCERT**
Saturday 15 August 2020

🎵 **CAROLS BY FAIRYLIGHT**
Sunday 13 December 2020

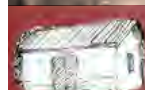




Bundanoon Bushfires 2020 Archive Project

Bundanoon History Group is compiling an archive of the recent bushfires.

If you have any interesting stories or pictures you would like to share, please email: bhghistory@gmail.com



Bundanoon History Group Inc

Dementia causes problems with memory. That doesn't mean we should forget about it.

Join us at **Café Connect**

Café Connect provides an opportunity for people with a diagnosis of dementia and their carers to come together over a morning tea, to enjoy social contact, make new friends and share information and ideas.

Where: Bundanoon

When: first Thursday each month

Time: 10:30am-12:00pm

Please call on **02 4869 5651** if you are interested in joining.

Facilitated by Dementia Australia | Funded by the Australian Government

DEMENTIA ADVISORY SERVICE: **WINGECARRIBEE**

For information and support for people living with dementia and their families, please contact:

Dementia Australia

Suite 1, Queen Street Centre, Queen Street, Moss Vale
T: 02 4869 5651 | E: NSW.wingecarribree@dementia.org.au



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It all began with a quilt...

In 2001 Jennifer Corkish, a fabric artist, initiated the Bundanoon Quilt project with the aim of creating a work of art that would represent the village, its history and natural environment. On 13 October 2002, a sewing and quilting exhibition was held to launch the Bundanoon Quilt project.

In June 2007 the Bundanoon Community Quilt won First Prize and \$500 in the 'Collaborative Quilt' category at the 25th anniversary exhibition of the NSW Quilters Guild held in Sydney. The quilt is now on permanent display in the entry foyer of Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

Needles and Natter group was formed following the completion of the quilt project because the women who worked on the quilt were very keen to keep together, enjoying the company, sharing skills and stories. Our sessions can become quite loud, with lots of laughter and chatter; very few world issues are not resolved at meetings and sometimes work even progresses on current projects.

Our group meets at 10:30am on Thursday mornings at the Bundanoon Club in Erith Street. Women gather to work on personal projects, as well as special projects to contribute to our own community and beyond.

The drought and lack of feed led to newborn lambs being abandoned by ewes. Sad news indeed, so the group knitted approximately 100 lamb jumpers to keep the lambs warm in those critical first days. We made the jumpers in an amazing assortment of colours, so there would be no chance that any lamb could be lost to view.

We have made 'comfort bears' which are supplied to First Responders to give to children in difficult situations. Sometimes,

when the world tilts a bit a small teddy bear to cuddle can make all the difference.

In September last year, in association with the sustainable planet event in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall, our group was asked to knit washable cotton dishcloths for sale to replace throw-away cloths. In just a few weeks we made 24 dishcloths and half a dozen DIY dishcloth kits complete with a pattern, needles and a ball of cotton. These were supplied for organisers of the event to sell.

We learned of the visits by doctors and nurses to the Cook Islands to provide medical services and to monitor breast health in particular. For this initiative we made about 50 comfort cushions and a number of shoulder bags to be used in the post-operative care of patients. A rewarding and worthwhile project.

On the weekend of 28-29 March this year, Needles and Natter Group will hold an exhibition of needlework, embroidery, knitting and other crafts to showcase the skills of our members. A range of lovely hand-made, locally produced goods will be available for sale. A feature of the exhibition is a sale of haberdashery, including, ribbons, buttons, embroidery threads, aida cloth, counted thread linen, fabrics, and so on. You can find a good bargain at very reasonable cost. Ever-popular raffles will also be available; prizes include baskets full of quality craft, chocolate to nibble on while you work, and all sorts of surprises as well. Don't forget Mother's Day is in early May.

Entry to the exhibition is by way of a traditional gold coin. Funds raised at the exhibition go the Bundanoon Community Association to support the work the Association does to enhance the amenity of our village.

- Andrea Ward



CRAFT AND TEXTILES EXHIBITION

2020



A display of textile craft, knitting, crochet, quilting, cross-stitch, tapestry, beadwork, etc, produced by residents of Bundanoon and surrounding villages.

There will also be many beautifully hand-crafted items for sale, just in time for that special Mothers' Day gift.

Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall
9.30am to 4.00pm
Saturday 28 & Sunday 29 March

We invite all residents of our local communities to exhibit their needlework at our show.

Registration forms are available, contact Andrea Ward on 4883 7513





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Serendipity

the choir

Serendipity: the choir had no idea when we added the song *We Rise Again* to our music for 2020 that the meaning of the song would so soon become personal to all Southern Highlanders. The choir was among many of the community affected by the fires (hopefully now a thing of the past).

The lovely barn in which we rehearsed during 2019, reconstructed by its owner over a period of five years and with all the wood sourced from the original old



barn on the property, was burned to the ground in the first wave of fires. Serendipity had enjoyed the use of this romantic old building as its rehearsal home, and its total loss has been hard to bear.

Serendipity this year will be presenting just one concert in Bundanoon for our mid-year series so we expect greater demand for the available tickets. Readers of JCG have advance warning ahead of Serendipity-followers in Bowral. As the Wingello shop users would say: "Ssh".

In May we present a programme entitled 'Down to Earth', and we are thrilled that the singing group Ecopella is joining us as guest artists. This ensemble sings all its music *a cappella* (unaccompanied) and focuses all its music on environmental issues. Their singing is lovely and the message is strong. Several of their members are Bundanoonians, ensuring a

powerful sense of togetherness between the two choirs.

Concert information dates & times:

- 2 May at 3pm
Uniting Church in Bowral
- 9 May at 3pm
Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall

Tickets are \$20.00, available through:

- trybooking.com via the Serendipity website: serendipitythechoir.com,
- the Brown Bookshop in Bowral,
- Hindmarsh & Walsh, Bundanoon.

As always, refreshments and an 8-page programme are included in this price.

- Kerith Fowles



Since our humble (but loud) beginnings last year, we are lucky enough to have accumulated two pipers: Hamish Dawson and Graeme Gentles, and four drummers - Joy Brown and Tanya Dawson on tenor drums, Karl Nyhuis on snare, and our own Bundanoon butcher Anthony Smith (Hoppy) is our lovable bass drummer.

Our inaugural performance was at the Bundanoon Christmas Variety Show in

December 2019, and we had lots of fun. A fantastic young Southern Highlands piper we know, Oscar Arnold, was able to help out, which was awesome!

We hope to perform as part of the annual Highland Gathering 'Brigadoon' this year on 4 April, so please look out for us. We may not be the biggest or best dressed, but we are Bundanoon's own community pipes and drums band!

We practise every Wednesday night, 7pm at the Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

Spectators, pipers, drummers and learners welcome!

Contact Tanya, mobile 0419 679 377.



BUNDANOON PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

As 2019 rolled gently to a close, little did we realise what the start to the new year had in store for us. December is the month of our Group's annual dinner and AGM held at the Bundanoon Guest House. Great food and great company, what more could you wish for.

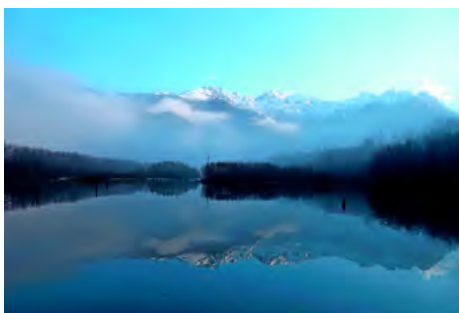
The evening commenced with the AGM, which we try to keep as short as possible. Positions remained unaltered. Peter Gray - President, Peter Brown - Treasurer, Joy Brown - Secretary, and Meg Nurse - Events Organiser.

It was also the evening when the winners of our monthly photographic competitions are gathered together and our members pick from this group the winner of the annual award. The 2019 winner was John Cooper with his entry 'Sunset'. Congratulations to John for his winning photograph.



Throughout the course of the year a second, unofficial competition came into being, to be known as the 'Pepperoni Award'. Origins of this award are

anchored in one of our meetings on a long winter night, all of us anguishing over a selection of fine photographs from which we had to choose the monthly winner. Many were in agreement, but I thought a different entry was worthy of winning, so in a momentary flash of inspiration I seized a pepperoni that just happened to be lying on the table and declared the other photograph the winner of the Pepperoni Award. The rules are simple: it's the President's Pick, no negotiations entered into. These photos are also entered into the annual Pepperoni Award and this year's winner was (again) John Cooper with a calming blue water scene. Well done John on a clean sweep of this year's awards.



Meg Nurse has designed the programme for 2020 detailing the series of lessons, workshops, topics for the President's Cup and outings for the year. Lessons should appeal to a wide range of photographers from new photographers thru to experienced photographers who wish to learn more advanced techniques. Workshops will build on last

year's success. They will be hands on and fun. Outings Meg has chosen include favourite sites plus some new ones. Topics for the President's Cup are slightly ambiguous, giving the photographer plenty of scope for interpretation. Check our Facebook page for details of the 2020 calendar.

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Bundanoon Men's Shed, Burgess Street, Bundanoon at 5.30pm. Lessons are held from 4:30pm to 5:30pm, prior to our monthly meetings and all are welcome.

Photo outings are on the fourth Thursday. Destinations are chosen to provide variety and opportunity.

Our club nights offer a friendly atmosphere to camera owners at all levels of experience from beginners to advanced photographers, when we share our photographs and experiences in a relaxed and friendly environment.

- Peter Gray
President

New members are welcome, contact

President, Peter Gray
4883 6312/ 041 922 3928

Secretary, Joy Brown
4883 6456/photos2578@gmail.com

THE REX CINEMA



21 MARCH 2020
FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS
(ENGLAND)



2 MAY 2020
ROXANE
(FRANCE)

7.00pm drinks and nibbles
7.30pm film
www.bca.asn.au/rex-cinema/

BUNDANOON GARDEN CLUB

50 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP THROUGH GARDENS

Garden Club members and others have helped to establish Bundanoon's reputation as 'the garden village' by following the motto Friendship through Gardens.

It all began on 26 November 1970 when 23 people met at the Royal Hotel (now Bundanoon Hotel) to consider forming a Bundanoon Beautification and Garden Club.

Beryl Gosbell, co-owner of the hotel, initiated the meeting; the club was formed and meetings were held on the first Tuesday of each month, with an annual membership fee of \$1.00.

In March 1988 the name changed to Bundanoon Garden Club but beautification projects continued. Over the years the club met at various times and locations until July 2001, when with about 60 members attending, monthly meetings moved to the Soldiers' Memorial Hall. From its small beginnings the club has now grown into one of Bundanoon's most popular organisations with a membership of over 200.

Numerous projects have been undertaken over the years and numerous fund-raising events to support them. Examples include tidying up the northern village entrance, setting up an arboretum there in 1990 with Council help and assisting with the subsequent re-landscaping in 2001 by the Bundanoon Development and Community Association (now the BCA).

Beautifying of areas around the station was ongoing - in 1993 a State Rail grant allowed for planting crab apples and sheoaks along the Goulburn platform.

In 2007 the club donated \$600 towards setting up the Southern Villages Memorial and the small square behind the Soldiers' Memorial Hall was cleared and planted. Club members still help to maintain it.

Club members also carried out maintenance of Nancy Kingsbury Memorial Park after it was landscaped by the BDCA in 1970. In 2001 the club took over full responsibility for it.

In 1980, the club proudly received a citation from Garden Clubs of Australia (GCA) in recognition of its efforts to beautify Bundanoon through the planting of more than 1,000 trees and shrubs. It was recognised again in July 2000 by receiving the Margaret Davis Award of Excellence, GCA's premier award.

These days the meeting format (followed for nearly 20 years) sees us gathering in the morning of the first Thursday of each month. After a brief business session we have morning tea - a social highlight! - followed by a presentation by a speaker, often an expert invited in from outside. A Question and Answer segment, introduced in 2000, provides helpful information from experienced local gardeners and is particularly useful to new arrivals in the village.

We encourage members to pot-up cuttings from their own garden to contribute to a trade table, which provides funds for the club. An extensive library set up in 1996, now has a large collection of some 240 books and DVDs which members can borrow.

Friendship Gardens are open on a Saturday morning each month during Autumn and Spring, allowing members and visitors to see what grows well in this area and how other gardeners are setting up their gardens.

This year on 21 March a gala Garden Party is to be held to mark the 50th anniversary of the club, at the Hines' lovely garden on Penrose Road. Clear Strings, a classical trio, will enhance the garden party atmosphere, there will be an historical display and proceedings will end with a

lone piper playing from the stone mound at the back of the garden's pool. We hope that many members, past and present, will attend with their guests, while residents of the wider community of the Southern Highlands and beyond are also welcome.

Not only will it be an occasion to remember what the Bundanoon Garden Club has achieved over 50 years but also a chance to celebrate the community spirit which brought people together to support each other during the recent bushfires. It is that sort of spirit which makes Bundanoon such a lovely village and place to live.

- Bruce Marshall

*below: Crabapples at the station
inset: Beryl Gosbell*



GARDEN PARTY

Saturday 21st March, 3-6 pm



For more information and tickets
contact Steve Press: 0455155897
gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com

Tickets: \$45 each for members and their guests
\$50 each for non-members

BUSHFIRE SUMMER JANUARY 2020

BUNDANOON

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ON BUSH FIRE BRIGADE



photo: Peter Gray



BUNDANOON RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

P O Box 288 BUNDANOON N.S.W. 2578

The Captain, Members and the Auxillary members of the Bundanoon Rural Fire Service wish to pass on their sincere gratitude to the community of Bundanoon for the amazing support, incredible generosity and the interest and concern you shared during our current bushfires.

The people of Bundanoon have once again shown the remarkable spirit in our community, especially during these recent adverse times.

As a Brigade we would also like to thank the other RFS Brigades who came from near and far to assist us. Also our RFS Support Groups, NSW Fire and Rescue Bundanoon Brigade and their neighboring Brigades, the Bundanoon Men's Shed and the many other people who assisted us during this time.

Thank you.

Ken Rooke
President

25 January 2020.

My Wingello

Wingello is the southernmost village of the Southern Highlands in the Wingecarribee Shire, although David Bruggeman, the owner of the only local general store, insists on calling it “The entrance to the Southern Highlands”. It is a special place, full of characters, creatives, and good-hearted people.

In January Wingello had the heart ripped out of it when the ferocious bushfires ripped through its houses and country lanes. Many houses were lost in the holocaust. But thanks to the bravery and ‘no guts, no glory’ firefighters from many RFS branches and NSW Fire+Rescue teams who stood up to the beast, many more houses were saved, including the infamous general store, (who could forget the ‘shhh’ campaign in local theatres?). Because of that mighty effort no-one was injured and no lives were lost, and everyone in the village is eternally grateful.

I moved down from the ‘Big Smoke’ in 1997, and I have to say it was the best move I’ve ever made. As it was just before Christmas I was being sent Christmas cards, and one, addressed to ‘The new lady in the blue house on the corner’ actually found its way to me. I was charmed.

The local forest is home to many events: sled-dog racing, horse endurance rides, mountain biking and many other get-togethers. It has been decimated by the fires, but it will come back, and so will the people. Country people are nothing if not resilient.

Wingello is an unpretentious little village with no town water or sewer, and no letterbox mail service. However the bore water is pure and beautiful to drink, and the general store is there for us to pick up our mail, catch up with the locals and do our banking at all hours, whenever the shop is open - an Australia of long ago, still thriving in the Southern Highlands.

The people are ‘there for you.’ There is Jennifer, who runs a fabulous therapeutic massage business next to the shop; Sofie, who is a talented hairdresser; Sally, who is always up for a party and a dance; Hilley the chippy who can fix anything; and the legendary Simona who knows her way around coffee and good food like no other and runs the family business Snax on Trax, with Peter and Luca (their van was obvious supplying the firefighting troops recently). We can’t forget the lovely Kim, who owns Highland Lady at Moss Vale, a wonderful friend of mine, and ‘Grampy’ her husband Ron, who runs the local Christmas tree farm.

There are many other wonderful people in my village of Wingello and I will miss each and everyone of them because, after losing my own house to the fire, I reluctantly decided to move down to the coast to be with family. I simply don’t have the heart to build again and my prominent, heritage-listed old home just can’t be replaced. I will, however, keep the land for as long as possible, with a view to having a weekender to come back and enjoy.

I may be moving away but in my heart I will always be a Highlander, and a huge chunk of that heart will stay in my Wingello. The sad wrecks of homes and the fallen, broken trees will be cleared away and village life will resume, but the care for each other and the kindnesses shown will remain.

- May King



above: Posted by my granddaughter on her phone: “This is my granny’s house. Overnight, gone.”

It has been decimated by the fires, but it will come back, and so will the people. Country people are nothing if not resilient.

below: What’s left of ‘Bonny Day’, which, before it was my home, was once the old general store at Wingello.



AFTER SADNESS, LOVE.

Sadly, our home was destroyed in the Bundanoon bushfire on the night of Saturday January 4th.

It was a freak occurrence - an 'ember tornado' generated when the pyro-cumulonimbus cloud that formed near Nowra collapsed and started fires in Yuille Avenue and elsewhere along the escarpment.

Eerily, there were no red skies that you normally see when a fire is approaching. There was a black ash-shower which we hosed off the house, the gutters, the decks and the verandahs.

Once back inside we checked the RFS website and various satellite heat maps all of which showed no indication of a fire approaching.

Then our mobile phone rang. Our neighbour Kate was yelling "We're on fire, get out, get out, get out". Looking out the office window we could still see no red sky.

We grabbed our computers and crammed them in the pre-packed bags at the door. We also managed to grab the chicken we had moved to the laundry. We loaded our bags into our cars which were already packed with sleeping bags, pillows, photos and some valuables. We left within three minutes.

As we drove along our road, we could see a wall of fire around 500 metres long roaring up the hill through the neighbouring paddocks. There were no fire brigades, police or fire and rescue in sight. This fire had caught us all by surprise, and it was moving fast. By the time we reached Bundanoon Road both sides of the road were on fire. We drove through it.

But we were safe.

Next morning we were sent this picture.

Yes, our house was gone. Four of the 23 homes on our road were lost. Sadly Andrew & Kate lost their home in Yuille Avenue in very traumatic circumstances. John H & Donna S in Evelyn Avenue lost their home. Andy & Ellie were renting in Yuille Avenue and they too lost their home and all of their possessions.

But overall we were fortunate in that no lives, no pets, and no livestock were lost on our properties. But please also stop and think of the fauna: we have lost our homes, but they have lost their habitat. It is devastating.

We are thankful that we are blessed with all of the community support we have received from our fabulous village of Bundanoon. We think we have hugged at least half of you!

Further, the Australian spirit of mateship and helping someone down on their luck has been a beacon of light in this moment of need. And a big thank you to the RFS and Fire & Rescue for keeping Bundanoon safe.

Back in 2014 Bundanoon found us. Yuille Avenue found us. Oast House found us. And we found an incredible community with the most generous people. How could we leave? We intend to rebuild.

But what we really want to say is a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contacted and supported us. We simply don't have the time to thank you all individually – but you know who you are – so please accept our collective thanks for all you have done for us. We will be eternally grateful and indebted to you.

We are so lucky. We are safe. We will have a new roof over our head. And we have your love and support.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

With lots of love.

- John Grono and Donna Andrews





◀ Bundanoon 242 crew pictured:
Alex, Cameron, Mitch, Tracy, Roberto, Carl and Ewen

The flames towered over the treetops, more than 30 metres high. Embers showered down on dry grasses. The fire was rushing uphill, pushed by the powerful Southerly.

"The first few seconds were the most confronting. We realised that, as the first on scene, what we did in those first few minutes was crucial."

They reported the situation to COMMS. "Tom Freedom, the NSW Fire Rescue Superintendent (a Bundanoonian himself) was right behind us. Checking Evelyn Avenue in his car, he requested the immediate evacuation of both Evelyn and Yuille Avenues. This is when everyone in Bundanoon would have received the famous SMS to leave town."

"The embers carried by the wind had already jumped over us and ignited fires all around us and in many parts of the town. We planned our initial defence strategy, to keep Exeter Road clear so that people could get out."

"Shortly after the *Leave Now* text message, hundreds of cars were lining up on Railway Parade to leave town. A few cars made it through but the road was soon engulfed in flames and we had to close it. Getting people out of town to safety was now critical."

"Asked to escort 200 cars waiting at the oval, we checked Ellsmore Road and realised this would soon be overrun by flames and was no longer safe. We organised with the police to set up a blockade at the Ferndale Road turn off, to direct cars to the last remaining safe way out of town."

"The police did a great job, they were on the scene helping from the beginning and the cars were finally on their way out. Strike teams from everywhere, together with the RFS, poured into town throughout the night, to work on hundreds of fires."

"We worked on many fires that night, in Robbie Burns Place, Railway Parade, Bundanoon Road, Blue Gum Road, Ben Nevis and Garland Road. At 10am the next morning, fresh crews came in to relieve us for a few hours. Others from our crew (Paul, Andrew Hale, Colin, Andrew, Vicki, Alex and Cameron) were all fighting fires elsewhere, in Wingello State Forest, Bundanoon, and the South Coast."

So what's it like to be a Fire+Rescue member? Roberto grins. "It's very satisfying - I love the camaraderie, being able to help people, and sometimes we can save a life. We have a saying: *the moment we arrive, things get better*. It feels good to have that skill."

And how does he deal with seeing dead people in car accidents? The sadness in the eyes of parents of suicide victims, the profound grief? "We allow ourselves to be sad. We have a great crew, we play, we joke, but we know when it's time to get serious or when someone needs support. We try to keep an eye on each other."

He adds: "I must mention how well Fire + Rescue and the RFS get on in our town. It's not always the case in every town, but here in Bundanoon we have each other's backs."

Aren't we blessed to have them have OUR backs!!

- Annie Crawford

Meet Italian Roberto Gnechi Ruscone and you are immediately relaxed in his company. His engaging personality bounces with humour. He doesn't seem to mind me taking up his time at his architectural practice here in Bundanoon.

I am here to enquire about his other job as one of 15 locals who work for NSW Fire+Rescue. As 'first responders', they attend house fires, road accidents, chemical spills, heart attacks, and other medical emergencies. Jacks of All Emergencies!

Roberto arrived in Sydney in 1998. Gowings (remember that iconic store in George Street?) employed Roberto as a consultant architect on a three-month contract. And he's still here! By 2010 he'd moved to Bundanoon with his wife Bella and their two children.

For the first 4 years, he was a FIFO (FlyIn/Flyout) Firefighter in Queensland. He had a 16 hour(!?) commute to a donga town of 1700 people to work as a firefighter for a private operator. There, he trained in firefighting, HAZMAT (hazardous material) and rescue operations. He even rescued a frightened cat marooned up a tree!

NSW Fire+Rescue is not a voluntary organisation. Retained firefighters must attend emergencies when rostered on duty. These can be medical emergencies, traumas, motor vehicle accidents or fire and rescue operations. In the middle of a conference with folk wanting a design for their new home, if his pager buzzes, he's off. Pronto! Speedy Gonzales!

NSW Fire+Rescue train in firefighting skills twice a month and ambulance skills once a month. "And we need it," explains Roberto. "Bundanoon 242 is the busiest 'Community First Response' station in NSW". During this fire season, they all took part in strike teams around the country. Roberto spent a week on the Glen Innes fires in November 2019.

On 4 January 2020, the NSW Fire+Rescue Bundanoon headquarters was manned all day. This is the case every time there are extreme fire conditions. On this particular day, they were preparing for the impending Currowan/Morton monster.

"At 8:00 pm everything seemed peaceful. The fire was predicted to reach town sometime the next afternoon. If that eventuated, we figured we should try to rest before the big day. Later that night, as we know, all hell broke loose," says Roberto.

Responding to a 000 call reporting fire at the end of Yuille Avenue, Roberto and the initial crew (Tracy, Ewen, Ian, Mitch, and Carl) went to investigate. As they came over the last hill at the end of Yuille Avenue, they saw the enormous fire front.



inset: Balgalal 1

main picture: Scene at the Workshop during the fire

"Private unit attending"

Born and brought up in a small town in Somerset in England, I find bush-fires on any scale anathema. I've lived in Bundanoon now almost 30 years but never experienced anything remotely akin to what we all faced at the dawn of 2020.

I spent the first weeks of the Christmas break raking leaves, moving logs, foiling up windows, preparing hoses – and feeling anxious and unsafe. Family anxiously contacted us from the UK: "Is everything OK?"

Dear friends George and Libby rang to ask if they could come and help. "We'll be fine", we replied ... but they came anyway, leaving their drought-stricken farm and arriving in a Landcruiser (known as 'Balgala 1') which they had cleverly adapted for fire-fighting, complete with tank, pump and hoses. Next morning they assessed our fire preparations, helped us improve things and worked tirelessly through the heat of the day.

As advised, we made a plan – my brother-in-law Cameron, and George and Libby with Fire Truck Balgalal 1, would remain at our furniture business near the eastern edge of town whilst we would stay to protect our home in Garland Road. As evening approached, we watched the cauliflower-like pyrocumulus cloud from our front veranda as it blossomed and ballooned.

I don't think any of us actually expected the fire to come that night – but come it did, with a ferociousness that surprised even our calm, fire-experienced friends. The anxiousness in the pit of my stomach made their sudden text message "It's here" strangely hard to comprehend. "What do they mean 'it's here'?", I questioned frantically, as we aborted our plan to stay and packed our last few belongings in the car. I felt like I was on a film set.

Now unable to reach our friends, we left Bundanoon, driving a little wildly as fires started spotting around us. In between answering phone calls I desperately rang our friends, now trapped on Yuille Avenue with the fire racing towards them. Surprisingly, Cameron answered – 'We're fine, we're fine, we're safe', his breathless voice implying that safe he certainly was not.

We retreated to Southern Medical Centre in Moss Vale which became home that night to many two- and four-legged evacuees. We felt terrible for leaving, and terrible that our friends were stranded in the eye of the storm, battling through the night and even sending us updates from time to time whilst we made cups of tea for young and old in Moss Vale and give hugs to strangers who felt sure their homes had gone.

It was almost unbearable listening to the RFS scanner that night. Despite the forced calm of those radio controllers sending help in multiple directions, we feared our town was being burnt alive. No one slept. It was only later that we realised that the scanner's mention of "private unit attending" in relation to several spot fires along Yuille Avenue was actually referring to our Balgalal 1.

As the next day dawned, we learnt of friends whose homes were no longer, of the devastation in Wingello, of the fate of our own homes and of the tireless efforts of the RFS and of our valiant Cam, George and Libby. The fire had lapped at the doors of both house and workshop but despite the blackened destruction around them, both remained, squatting solidly on the landscape, blinking in structural surprise perhaps that they had survived. The lavender hedge, planted lovingly around the house by my late mother-in-law, was singed. The pile of precious furniture timber removed for safety to the driveway was blackened only slightly at the edges. The business van driven to the centre of the paddock and christened 'the mobile bomb' because it was filled with flammable thinners from the workshop, stood intact despite blackened grass beneath its wheels. The six beehives survived.

And most miraculous of all – we learned that Balgalal 1, the fire unit which had helped save the day, had been constructed upon the very Landcruiser once owned for 30 years by Cameron's father and sold on to George and Libby. (From his retirement village in Wagga my father-in-law could hardly comprehend the coincidence.)

To George, Libby and Cam – you are our heroes!

- Sue Reid

Too close for comfort

Our decision to stay and defend was based on very thorough research and analysis by my husband Richard. After reading everything he could on bushfires, how to prepare and survive, and statistics on bushfire deaths, he was of the opinion that on the evidence there was little risk to our lives. Richard also used the RFS's Bushfire Assessment Tool to gauge our risk. Fire Authorities acknowledge that staying and defending is a legitimate strategy and provide a lot of information about it. The local fire authorities agreed our house was defensible and our decision was a reasonable option.

Saturday 4 Jan 2020: By 2pm a massive, awesomely beautiful pyro-cumulus cloud was building in the sky to the southeast of us. By 7pm the cloud of thick, dirty smoke towered ominously over us. Some hours later a red glow appeared then spread east and north accompanied by a roar - not loud but suggesting immense power, pulsing, throbbing and crashing. As the southerly change came in between 8 and 9 pm the night air filled with charred leaves and twigs. Then, without warning the trees at the edge of the forest near us exploded into flames through the thick smoke.

About this time an automated phone message told us to seek shelter. Our neighbour whose son is with Fire and Rescue rang, and said they were leaving - "Simon says GO!". So we tried to leave but fire was already across Railway Parade and we were turned back. I was so relieved to get back in our house as the thought of being caught by fire in the car was terrifying. As we turned into our drive the trees at the bottom of Garland Road were burning to the edge of the road. Shortly after, trees in a yard just in front of us caught alight. I thought 'OK, it's jumped the road, it'll set the neighbour's house alight and we'll be next!' However, the Fireys had it under control in 15 minutes and we settled anxiously into our routine for the night.

We stayed awake all night. We watched. We waited. We patrolled for embers and spot fires in gardens - ours and neighbours'. I couldn't take my eyes off the fire-ground - I stayed by the open door all night watching and listening for changes in fire activity. The bush along Glow Worm Glen just to our north burned. We heard the crack and crash of falling trees. As dawn

broke we began to feel that the threat to us had passed but then we saw flames licking up the trunks of tall gums between Garland Road and Ben Nevis Circuit. Our spirits plummeted, fearing the wind would bring the flames our way. However, the Fireys were onto it rapidly, thanks to a triple zero call from Sandy and Ian who had stayed to defend their home in Ben Nevis Circuit. The only firefighting we did was put out a spot fire deep in mulch in a neighbour's yard early on Sunday morning.

Sunday morning, shrouded in thick smoke, found us emotionally and physically exhausted. As the day passed into a cool and misty, windless evening and nothing more threatened we weighed up the information from all our trusted sites and decided to stay. Trees continued to crack and crash, fire vehicles still patrolled and we slept through the calm night.

Has staying had any psychological effects on me? Yes, most certainly. I'm jumpy and anxious. Any roaring that I can't identify or loud crashes have me terrified. I get anxious when I'm away from home for any length of time. I need to be where I can scan the scorched hills and gullies for smoke or flare-ups or the 'phantom giant front' lurking down there.

Would I do it again? Yes, under similar circumstances, I would. I'm exhausted and have no mental energy to deal with the other problems facing me, but I will recover.

I think Bundanoon on the whole was incredibly lucky. My heart goes out to those who did lose homes and property, and I'm deeply grateful to the wonderful Fireys who did so much to save our beautiful village. Thank you Fireys!

- Barbara Eckersley

*photo: Barbara Eckersley
Pyro-cumulus cloud on
4 January 2020*



photo:10/11 January 2020 from Echo Point.
Newscorp Richard Dobson

Garland Road CFU

Most of you would have noticed red CFU trailers dotted around and perhaps wondered what was their purpose.

They are Community Fire Units (CFU), part of Fire+Rescue NSW (FRNSW), and are intended to enhance the safety and resilience of residents living in urban areas close to bushland. The trailers are manned by local volunteer CFU members who manage small spot fires usually caused by ember attack, to prevent them growing into large destructive fires.

After seeing the ferocity and speed of the 4th January fires that destroyed properties, on the following Friday most residents of Garland Road elected to leave before the predicted arrival of the southerly change which was threatening to bring more dangerous fires than the previous week. This meant that Garland Road was mostly deserted and the potential for unattended

spot fires evolving into large destructive fires was significantly increased.

The volunteers of the Garland Road CFU trailer activated on 11th Jan in anticipation of the predicted 'big one'. They established two live hydrant points and conducted continuous fire watch patrols during the critical period, providing protection to Garland Road against ember attack and providing the chance for a 000 call to be made immediately if needed. The unit was de-activated at 5am Sunday morning after a thankfully uneventful night.

We are a humble lot, we creep round in the dark and never attract the attention of the press. Next time you see someone wearing the light blue fire kit, toot your horn and give a friendly wave.

- Peter Gray



photo: Peter Gray



Sunnataram monastery

The monks of Sunnataram monastery were safely housed in Moss Vale at the home of their secretary Kim McSweeney when the fire hit the escarpment on 4th January. They had prepared and secured the temple and the property and put out plenty of water and food for any potentially affected wildlife.

Firefighters managed to save the temple, although a shed and some cabins were burnt.

"We are very grateful to all selfless firefighters who have been working very hard to save many lives and properties," the monks stated on their website, and later visited Wingello RFS headquarters to show their appreciation for all the firefighters who had saved the monastery.

"We wish for all of us a very peaceful New Year 2020. May all of us achieve the highest wisdom and free ourselves from unhappiness in the present life," say the grateful monks.

Clockwise from above:

Firefighters at Sunnataram, News Corp Australia, photo by Richard Dobson, published 11 Jan 2020

Building engulfed in flames, ABC News, photo by Brendan Esposito

Erratic fire conditions were predicted well into the night, ABC News, photo by Brendan Esposito





Exeter escape

2020: anticipation of a fabulous New Year and decade, and new beginnings... but it was a false start for Exeter. Tensions had been heightened since December when the Bargo and Balmoral fires hit the north of the Highlands. Talk at the Exeter General Store was anxious, most people wondering if or when fires would encroach on our much-loved village.

We, along with several neighbours, attended the very informative fire briefing organised by the RFS in Bundanoon on Saturday 28 December. We wanted to know how to be prepared should the Currowan Fire come our way. When the weather prediction for Saturday 4 January was announced, Exeter Village Market was cancelled and the General Store announced it would close that day.

The first of my family's evacuations occurred on New Year's Eve with a red sky to the north and a huge pyrocumulus cloud to the south.

Our farm-stay guests departed with our chickens for safe keeping and we headed to Sydney, hoping to have a New Year celebration at the fireworks. It didn't really feel like a celebration and the evacuation turned out to be a false alarm.

As the heat and wind built up over the next few days, so did the concern of the village residents. Activity at the RFS shed increased and WhatsApp and message groups were set up in neighbourhoods. These proved to be invaluable.

The news of fire was everywhere, in conversations, on the television and radio. We found the sensationalism of television news unhelpful. Radio Illawarra, on the other hand, became our information source as we listened over Saturday the 4th. When the cool change came in at 8pm and day turned to night with a reddish-black sky, activity in the neighbourhood groups across Exeter turned to full volume, some announcing they were evacuating, some staying to protect their properties, whilst others remained uncertain and were pushed by circumstances to act and leave.

We were packed and had previously removed valuable documents. As soon as the Fires Near Me App 'binged' with five alerts, several in Exeter, we knew it was time to evacuate again. We took our ute so that we could navigate any difficult road conditions and

'crawled' through the red pea-soup smoke until we got out of Moss Vale. As we headed north along the Hume towards Sydney, a fleet of fire trucks from Sydney and south raced along the Highway towards Exeter and Bundanoon. Our message groups kept us abreast of the location of the fires – Yuille Avenue, Ringwood Lane, Ellsmore Road, Rockleigh Road, Stonequarry Creek Road, Meryla. Our home is in Rockleigh Road. We knew we had done the right thing to leave.

We woke next morning to text messages: "your house is okay". The RFS had been there and had put out a fire in the paddock in front of the house and 50 acres of bush to the east, south and west. Two of our neighbours were not so lucky - their houses were razed. Stonequarry Creek Road was too unsafe for the RFS to enter. There were burnt paddocks, trees and fences in Exeter, but no other loss of property or lives. There were many heroes that night. The RFS did an outstanding job and continued to do so over the next week, along with the Police, Emergency Services, Department of Lands and associated services.

A new form of tension started. We couldn't get back into Exeter to check on our cows, sheep and alpaca, and no one could tell us whether they were safe. When we finally arrived home late Monday morning we were relieved to find them upset but safe.

Anticipating, deciding, leaving, not knowing, discovering the damage, fielding calls and messages from concerned family and friends, caring for our animals and coming to terms with how to care for our property in the future was exhausting. We felt like we had had a major accident and survived. There was shock and relief all around us.

The Exeter RFS remained a central point for trucks to Wingello, Penrose and Bundanoon. The village was like Pitt Street leading up to and after the local fires – people evacuating from the south coast as well as our local area.

There have been many cathartic conversations and the community has remained on alert with the informal communication systems continuing to prove to be very useful: occasionally raising anxiety and at other times keeping it at bay.

On Sunday 19 January, it was wonderful to see the Exeter RFS shed closed and all the Fireys having a well-deserved rest. We can't thank the teams enough for their time, efforts, commitment and bravery.

- Jill Keyte

photo: Exeter RFS

Heat and smoke

Heat and smoke and dry, dry earth. Water dwindling in the dams and the landscape turning to brown. Our crops failing, along with our pumps as the water runs out. And the smoke gets closer. Working in the tomato tunnel watching the vast column of smoke I'm wondering if it's time to leave (but I haven't finished the row). Should I weed or will it all burn in the next few days? And the smoke gets closer.

Sweltering hot days and the already dry and dying landscape gasps as the cracks in the earth split even wider. I can't look outside without feeling dread and panic. I know this will pass and it will rain at some point, but is this our new normal?

We're packed, we have a plan, we've had endless discussions on the 'ifs' of it all. We've never been in a fire - we have no idea. And the smoke gets closer.

Saturday is hot beyond belief. I've given up on the farm today. I can't get water to the crops fast enough. Dry earth and dry air wick it away before it does any good. We sit in the shade, sweat, and watch endless news stories of fire after fire. Nervously we check in on neighbours; discuss our plans. Word is the southerly will bring it close but not close enough to threaten. We're tense and watchful as the smoke cloud towers higher. It's beautiful, bright white against the grey-brown haze.

The southerly comes early - usually a welcome relief but not this night. I'm checking every 10 minutes, walking around the property looking for embers. The night is thick with smoke and heavy with ash and burnt leaves but it's dark and quiet. We check, check, check. Check the app, check the news, check the sky and all is good - until it isn't.

Suddenly we learn of three fires in Bundanoon. Outside to check again and the dark is now bright and orange. Bundanoon Road is on fire, just there across the top paddock. The flames move from tree to tree like a bright sticky liquid blown against the trunks and then up to the leaves and off again to the next tree.

In a flurry we gather up the pets and leave, our backs to the flames, the ute filled with essentials plus piles of ash. I wonder what we'll do if the farm burns, will I be the person who gets back into it and starts again, or will we move on?

As we drive out away from our home, I know we are safe. The fire is far enough away from us not to be a threat. But we're leaving our home and our livelihood in its path. I'm driving while Elisabeth phones all our neighbours to tell them the fire is here and we're going. As we get to the end of the driveway, we can see another fire burning across the lane in Exeter. On our way to Moss Vale - our evacuation destination - we are passed by at least six fire trucks, heading towards Bundanoon and the fire we've just fled.

The next morning, we find out just how lucky we are. The fire was held back from our house, shed and crops by two brave local men who stood and fought the wall of flame until they ran out of water. They were joined by wonderful RFS firefighters (with more water) who made sure our property was safe. There is no word for what we feel for these people - gratitude, awe, relief, respect all in one.

When we're allowed back in, we stand in silence amongst the heat and smoke and dry, dry blackened earth and wonder what's next.

- Sam Costello
Brillig Farm

photo: Glenn Tyson
Morton Fire photographed from Cambewarra
4 January 2020

DIARY OF A **VOLUNTEER** FIREFIGHTER

Did you know that NSW has the largest volunteer fire fighting service in the WORLD? With 70,000 members? These altruistic men and women train regularly so that, on the night of January 4th, a coordinated, harmonious and competent team was able to save our village. Yes, homes were lost, paddocks scorched, animals destroyed and Wingello suffered terribly. But it could have been devastatingly worse. The skill-set of these dedicated souls who have years and sometimes decades of commitment needs praising from the rooftops.

But in the eyes of Deputy Group Officer Peter Lockerbie, it works both ways. Bundanoonians made him and his team very proud. You followed directions from Police, Fire and Rescue et al, so that your necessary and immediate evacuation was “more successful than I ever imagined. I’m in awe!” he says quietly, with a humility that overwhelms me.

Did you also know an RFS team member might have seen a fire so savage maybe only six times in thirty years? These guys have experienced six so far this season! No wonder they are exhausted and still processing the trauma. In fact Peter says he hasn’t had the head space TO process the myriad emotions. He knows that in time he will. That the entire RFS is there for one another. He is one in a brigade of hugs, listening and vulnerability. And overarching these is LOVE. For team mates, for the community. And for Australia.

That’s why Peter joined the RFS nine years ago: “I joined to do something for the community. It’s rewarding to have a positive impact. I’m so grateful for all the garnered training and knowledge.”

I am in awe of how so many are able to do what they do so seamlessly. Fires from everywhere! Opaque, choking smoke! Night sky making everything surreal! How do they do that I ask him. “Training!” emphasises Peter. “From The Incident Management Team to five divisions to five sectors to five trucks with five crew in each. It’s an organised span of control.” He keeps reminding me that he is one piece of the amazing jigsaw

puzzle of community coordination. (Except that I know Peter was in charge).

Hundreds of others will have a similar diary, but let’s track just one man’s day on January 4th ...

SATURDAY 4 JANUARY 2020

9:00am

Peter meets in Mittagong with Group Officer Russell Moore and they drive around gathering intelligence on progression of southern edge of Green Wattle Creek fire at back of Colo Vale. Monitor from different vantage points all day. (Currowan/Morton fire expected to erupt in next two days but for now OK.)

6:30pm

Mittagong Fire Control Centre: Peter and Russel at Planning meeting to participate in briefing with all emergency services for expected Currowan/Morton fire.

7:30pm

Drives down Hume Highway to Wingello, grabbing food at Sally’s Corner. Appalled as ahead he spies three leviathan Pyrocumululus clouds caused by massive heat, unburnt fuel and hot gases creating a unique weather event horror. Adrenalin rushes through him! Phones Planning Team. Meets in Wingello RFS Shed with Group Officer Aaron Deegan to discuss Plan of Action.

9:15pm

Alarm bells ring! Everyone jumps in utes and trucks and heads to Forest Road Wingello. Three spot fires become 33 in five minutes. From out of the smoke comes a Forestry truck the fire has burnt over. Parts of it melted but crew safe in cabin. Meanwhile the dark, smoky sky is now a menacing ball of increasing fluoro-orange. They all agree they should not be there! A speedy U-turn and they leave Forest Road. The flames are now above the trees and the fire travelling at 100 metres in two minutes.

9:30 pm

Peter on radio to Aaron. The forest needs to be evacuated as impossible to control. Now it’s about property and lives protection.

9:45 pm

A crew of 30 to 40 remains at Wingello.

9:50pm

Peter hears RFS HQ at Picton trying to radio Bundanoon Division command (Divcom). No-one answers. (Remember the Currowan/Morton fire was not yet of serious concern? Everyone was elsewhere as Peter had been all day.) He radios back that there is no Divcom.

“Yes there is. You’re it!” is the reply from HQ. He realises he NEEDS to leave Wingello NOW. Receiving permission from Aaron to do so, he hands over to another.



10:00pm

It would be impolite to ask Peter what speed he drives along Penrose Road back to Bundanoon. He arrives at RFS shed. The fires have already started impacting Bundanoon. With the very valuable assistance of NSW Fire+Rescue and a minimum of 20 trucks, he coordinates the fires by dividing the area into two sectors and appoints Sector Leaders.

10:15 for many hours

The fire attacks Yuille Avenue, Evelyn Avenue, Bundanoon Road, Ellsmore Road, Blue Gum Road and Exeter.

Peter must make every decision with lightning speed, based on accurate Intel from the field and HQ. Several hundred people who evacuated to Bundanoon Oval (now very unsafe!) must be escorted out of town. The Police take charge. Ellsmore and Bundanoon Roads are now blocked by fires so the only exit is via Old Wingello Road. Some people miss Ferndale Road and need redirection. All safe!! Amazing coordination by so many!

While this is happening in Bundanoon, Wingello is still being defended by many crews. Under the control of Aaron Deegan, miraculously many homes are saved although twelve lost. And meanwhile, Andrew Neale, with Russell Moore, is running Meryla Division, dealing with the fires threatening homes in the Meryla locality.

**SUNDAY
5 JANUARY 2020****5:00am**

A fire behaviour analyst visits Peter at Bundanoon RFS station to check how things are progressing. He shares his thoughts on what actually happened the previous night. The fast development of three Pyrocumulus clouds simultaneously created extraordinary fire behaviour over many kilometres, from the fire front to the southern villages. This is unprecedented in Australia so there was no history to predict such an event.

Over the next several hours, with daylight arriving, crews are replaced with fresh crews. Reports are being collated about confirmed loss of property. Craig Rowley (Bundanoon RFS Captain), coordinating units in his sector, manages to pull up the Bundanoon fire near the corner of Ringwood Lane and Ellsmore Road.

**2:00pm Sunday 5th
January**

After 30 hours on duty, Peter dives onto his bed. Probably still in his filthy uniform! The least of his concerns! His brain is scrambled with emotion. With exhaustion. Thank Heavens his wife and young daughter are safe with friends in Bowral. After three disturbed, tossing-about hours, he heads back to the front.

Peter is just one unsung hero in a host of other local unsung heroes. Without their familiar yellow uniform, you mightn't even know who they are, as they all have jobs and businesses and yes, have lost income and wages, some for months.

And, what about their families? The quiet left-behinders? Those who give loving support, their Christmas lunch and New Years Eve spent without their brave RFS father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter. "That's OK," Peter's grin spreads across his kind, engaging countenance, "we can always celebrate next year." So thank you Nane and Ciara, for being the gentle breeze beneath Peter.

Some seemingly insignificant concepts (unless one stops what one is doing right now and ponders their profundity) quantify and qualify Peter Lockerbie: TEAM WORK; COMMITMENT; HUMILITY.

Methinks they are the buzz words for ALL our RFS and other volunteers. "A volunteer is a VERY valuable person," smiles Peter.

THANK YOU A THOUSAND TIMES OVER TO YOU ALL! And Peter Lockerbie told me to say that.

- Annie Crawford





Community support from Bundanoon Lions

It all began when the ongoing drought and unreasonably hot weather unleashed our worst nightmare: a fire season that would have scared Beelzebub himself. As with many others, we bugged out on the sound advice of our fire chiefs and spent the next fortnight anxiously glued to the radio, scanner or the TV to hear whether or not the village had been spared. Indeed it had not, as many of our friends and neighbours across the Southern Highlands were directly impacted. Not only was our beautiful Morton National Park and all its wildlife treasures ablaze, but many residents had lost their homes and possessions.

When we returned home, it was with a profound sense of guilt. We had left neighbours and our firefighters to defend what seemed to be the indefensible. As Lions we wanted to do something so that our community could move gently towards the 'new normal' in our lives. We decided to get the invitation out to all, an invitation to join us for a cuppa and a chat - after all, isn't that what neighbours do?

The invitation was posted on the Bundanoon Noticeboard Facebook and Lovely Bundanoon and the response was immediate. Bundanoon Lions hosted a 'Community Gathering' with our trademark free BBQ and, as we were still in a total fire ban, we arranged to hold the event in the Memorial Hall.

'Our Big Kitchen' in Bondi sent boxes of biscuits prepared by parents and their kids and normally destined for the homeless and needy in Sydney (thank you Maggie); the Kingscross Bikers Welfare group from Blacktown and Bankstown sent a pallet of water for those whose tanks had been

contaminated plus copious other provisions including boxes and boxes of produce for our wildlife (thank you Michelle, Ian, Wendy, Chip and the team); and then our local mums stepped up, baking cakes and slices, muffins and all manner of treats (thank you Lynda, Rosie, Ilze, Steph and all the ladies who made this possible).

As the 'Hits' and 'Likes' rose into thousands, we were completely unsure of how many people to cater for. On the Sunday we served 380 sausage sandwiches, and hundreds of cuppas and cake. We think between 400 and 500 people attended the event.

As mentioned in the invitation, "hugs were for free" and we were pleased to see so many people warmly sharing these around. We had been living on edge, but the gentle hum of conversation on that Sunday, of shared experiences and of sad loss was, I believe, cathartic and reinforced why we love living where we do in the close-knit villages of the Highlands.

As a token of appreciation for all the RFS stations in the Southern Villages, tablecloths were provided so the many grateful residents could either just sign or write a short message of thanks. These tablecloths will be presented to the various stations to remind them of how much they contributed to saving both lives and homes.

It also gave Lions an opportunity to launch our Disaster Recovery Fund Applications for those directly impacted by the fires. Application forms are available from the Bundanoon Newsagent, the Bundanoon Village Grocer and the Wingello village store and, once approved by the Disaster Recovery Committee, will enable a payment of \$1500 reimbursement towards losses.

As Lions, we are grateful to serve in these trying times and hope to take considerable steps towards rebuilding the spirit and infrastructure in our community.



Boots of Hope

Unless you have been living under a rock, you cannot fail to have been impacted by this summer's devastating fires which have been the worst since records began. The last figure published for the area devastated by fires was 12 million hectares. To put this into perspective, this is larger than the North Island of New Zealand.

Also the lengthy drought has meant that the ground has had little or no moisture content for months, therefore even before the fires many animals were already starving. While the rain in early February was welcome, it will be months before there will be adequate feed for animals in the bush. According to the ABC's Fact Check the number of animals killed during the bushfire crisis is conservatively estimated at one billion.

After the fires there were reports of animals coming out of the bush and literally dying at people's back doors. Many of our native species are facing possible extinction due to injury or death during the fires, and starvation and danger from non-native predators preying on animals in a weakened state.

In response to this crisis, the **Boots Of Hope Project Bundanoon** was born. We created our Hope Hub, calling for volunteers to help distribute emergency food and water. We added a simple mapping system to ensure a good solution to manage the efforts. We called this 'Operation Hope Hub'. Through our Facebook group Wildlife Stations Bundanoon, people can volunteer, connect, donate and be informed of events. There is a lot of learning happening.

Water stations were built by visiting students from the USA and more have been donated – these are the white PVC pipes with a hook bend that you will see sitting against trees. Our pipes have instructions for refilling – a pink label. If you see 'orphaned' water stations with no stickers, please contact us with the location.

Wildlife food has been donated by supermarkets, and generous folks have donated money to buy suitable food. We learnt sweet potato and pellets are the simplest and most effective food. We operate using emergency guidelines published¹ by the NSW Government.

We had our first deployment of water and food on Monday 27 January. Around 50 'boots' came to help. They were supplied with maps of areas where the needs were greatest and out they went into the field.

We now have the Hope Shop: a place where volunteers can come at regular times and pick up food and water stations to deploy. The use of this facility was donated by a caring local.

The Boots of Hope project began as a response to the hopelessness we felt seeing the devastation around us. Hope on its own is ineffective. Action driven by hope makes change.

We need more 'boots' to help our wildlife recover. If you want to join us please email wildlife.stations@gmail.com or phone 0492 908 871.

- For the Boots of Hope /
Wildlife Stations Bundanoon Project

1. <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/native-animals/helping-wildlife-in-emergencies>

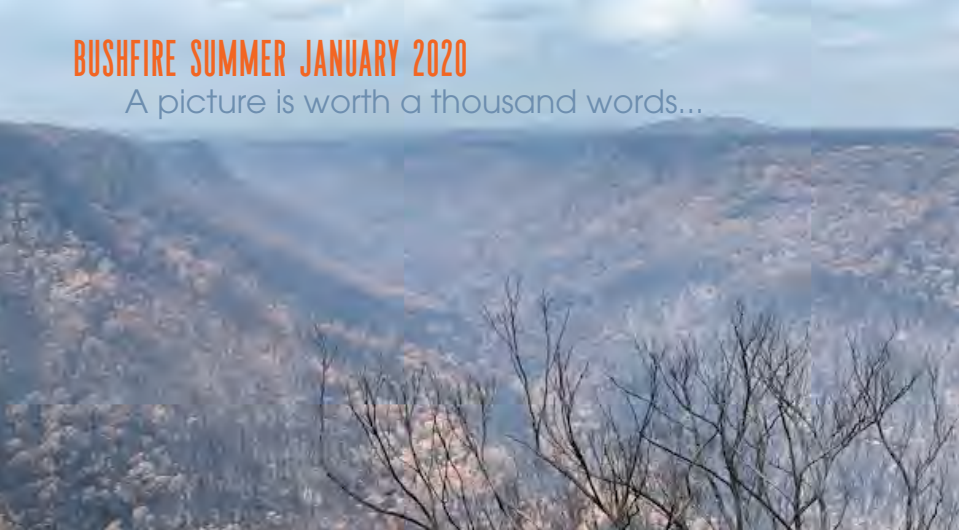


"I went to the Wingello fire area and found the landscape black and bleak with the ground still smoking and devoid of life. Surviving wombats were sighted but without food and water to sustain them for the long term, they too will join the victims of the fires."

- John Creighton
Wombat Care Bundanoon

BUSHFIRE SUMMER JANUARY 2020

A picture is worth a thousand words...



▲ Riverview lookout. Jane Lancaster



▲ House prepared for the night of 4 January 2020. Helen Clark



▲ A piece of history: a Railways water tank on a Bundanoon siding. Helen Clark



▲ Fire trucks at the ready on Ellsmore Road, Bundanoon. Helen Clark



▲ Fireaid2020, Bowral. Christine Miller



▲ NSW Fire+Rescue 242 crew, 5 January 2020



▲ Exeter Rural Fire Service

The cheese slicer

This precious little cheese slicer has been with me a very, very long time. If you asked me how long I couldn't answer; I know not where and when I acquired it but I know I've had it decades. I have cared for it all that time and made sure it never left my side. Its monetary value is zero and yet it has a value beyond calculation. Tired looking, it has never given up working.

And work it always has: it has been the king of cheese slicers. Many other pretenders have come and gone: bent and broken, consigned to the dustbins of history.

The plastic handle, had it been made in China, would have been resting in landfill a long time ago. It has never complained about the endless abuse in caustic dishwashers that have left it with many visible scars. It always happily obliged when called upon to go beyond the call of duty to slice things other than cheese.

And now the final moment of reckoning has arrived. Will this little champion be left in the drawer when we leave to seek shelter from the fires that may over-run the house? The plastic handle will I'm sure valiantly hold on as long as it can to the metal from which it has been inseparable all its life. The metal slicer will surely and defiantly refuse to buckle, so that even burnt and blackened it will still proudly slice cheese like it always has.

And so, little slicer, as I pack the car and cast one last glance around the house to survey all the valuables we can't take, don't worry, there is a place for you in my pocket.



"I wrote this in a moment of reflection in the midst of deciding what to take with us during the evacuations from Bundanoon. Like many others, we packed up our valuables and were ready well before we chose to leave, but one thing the fires did was to make us think about what is really valuable and important and what is not. And in the end monetary value was of little consequence; instead it became mostly an emotional and sentimental judgment."

Anton Baggerman - 4th January 2020

Last word.

"Yesterday (7 Feb) Bundanoon Rural Fire Service Brigade received a package from a little town called Givry in Burgundy, with some amazing paintings of kangaroos and koalas. The students are about 11 years old.

John and I have visited Fitzroy Falls Visitors' Centre and bought some great little Australian animal books to send to them, plus a bit of info on Bundanoon, with a few photos of the Brigade fighting fires.

Bundanoon Primary School will contact them as well, with a view to forming pen-pals.

We have no idea why they chose Bundanoon, but we were delighted!

Regards,

- Rosemary Page and John Brock,
members of RFS Bundanoon

Primary school Lucie Aubrac
France, Burgundy
Givry
CRU-012
Thank you!





THE VILLAGE *Grocer* & STORE

What a difference a year makes!

In the first year since opening our doors as The Village Grocer & Store, we've given the old Bundanoon supermarket a new lease on life. We've expanded our freezer and refrigeration capacity ten-fold. We extended our opening hours so we're open longer for your convenience. We have invested heavily in new point of sale and back-office technology, as well as installing a new shop counter. We introduced a range of local organic produce and become the largest reseller of Moonacres' Bakery products in the Highlands. We've also increased our grocery range, including a significant array of Asian ingredients. We are now very competitive on price (in fact you'll find that on many items we are cheaper than our big Moss Vale and Bowral competitors). We order fresh produce direct from Sydney Markets three times a week. So, while the start of the year has been challenging, with bushfires and building works keeping things interesting, we're really looking forward to our second year as we expand into the rest of the premises and continue to work towards becoming an IGA. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Open Monday–Thursday and Saturday 8:30am–7pm Friday 8:30am–8:00pm Sunday 8:30am–6pm

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GARDEN TALES

Lyn Morehen

A cheery present

It is late summer as I write this and although already I see the green traces of new growth on some trees burnt in early summer, Bundanoon's long hot summer of fire devastation hit our gardens and beautiful environment and saddened and confused us. Dust smothered plants and everything else with a red and unattractive film. Birds, bees, animals and humans suffered. We put out water and food and were stunned and shocked to see the damage to our beloved plants. At best our gardens looked unkempt, at worst burnt and dying. Vegetable gardens sulked and produced little produce: much too hot for pollination.

Yet we gardeners are resilient and I knew I had to do something for my plants. So towards the end of January, with hot temperatures, wild winds and fires threatening, I awoke early, stumbled out into the garden and doused my beloved trees and shrubs with Seasol, a seaweed extract. I know from experience and attendance at many lectures that research in both laboratory and field prove that this product has remarkable qualities in assisting plants recover from drought and extreme heat conditions. It gladdens my heart that research on exciting new ideas and products is being undertaken here and overseas to help us manage the changing climate conditions that impact our gardens and environments. A few weeks later I hosed on a plant food and I saw that the ladybirds are returning.

However there was still sadness in my heart so I decided to cheer myself up and visit the Bundanoon Bloomery. I needed to buy a new plant, a plant to bring joy and hope. I decided on an indoor plant because with hot summer weather still to come I didn't want to put a new baby out there in the heat and smoke. Not only did I find the perfect plant but also had such a lovely chat with owners Ian and Alan who throughout the long fire season have been carefully watering and tending the plants in the nursery.

They had many treasures on display, but what I fell in love with was a Coral Cactus, *Rhipsalis cereuscula*. Alan pointed out this treasure to me - he knew I needed cheering up. He told me that the long thin stems will branch out and that the weight of them pulls down the stem which then cascades down. Perfect. I had just the spot for it. I placed it alongside the String of Hearts, *Ceropegia woodii*, a plant which I bought at the Bloomery many years ago. This gem from Southern Africa has grown an amazing leafy veil which cascades down the library shelves.

I was so cheered up by my visit. There will be many more visits to the Bloomery so I can buy more plants as gifts for friends who have been so supportive during this challenging season. I am going to pop into the shop many times and treat myself to joyous green and colourful treasures.

- Lyn Morehen





Ring for appointments:
4883 6363

Monday to Friday,
Saturday mornings @
the Moss Vale clinic

Allied Health services
available at Bundanoon:

**Physiotherapist • Podiatrist
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Doctors available
at Bundanoon:

Dr Vincent Roche
Dr Geoffrey Sparkes
Dr Nicola Oehm
Dr Rick Aitken
Dr Aarielle McLaren
Dr Abeera Sivapalasingam
Dr Amanda Cuss

Bundanoon:

22 Erith Street
Bundanoon NSW 2578
Telephone: 4883 6363
Fax: 4883 7066

Moss Vale:

61 Elizabeth Street
Moss Vale NSW 2577
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LAUREL HONES, OAM

Laurel Hones came to Bundanoon in 2003. As soon as she arrived she threw herself into a wide variety of community activities and services, with her usual enthusiasm and energy, and with her characteristic good humour and empathy for others. She is an extraordinary and much admired volunteer.

Here are just some of the organisations and activities Laurel is involved in:

Meals on Wheels. Laurel regularly volunteers to deliver meals, particularly in recent years to residents of the flats at Warrigal Aged Care. She always has time for a little chat which cheers her customers up. She also often visits house-bound residents of Bundanoon.

Visiting Warrigal Aged Care Facility. Laurel regularly visits residents of this Facility and does other voluntary work around it.

Bundanoon Garden Club. As a member of the Bundanoon Garden Club since 2003, Laurel's outstanding service to the Club was recognised with the award of Life Membership in 2012. She was an active Committee member for some years during which she was the co-ordinator for Friendship Gardens and for Welfare. Friendship Garden events give members an opportunity to socialise while enjoying local home gardens. As the Welfare Officer Laurel sent cards to sick and bereaved members and handed out treats each month to those having a birthday. She still encourages members to participate in bus trips and other such activities.

She is very generous with her own garden, opening it as a Friendship Garden and for visiting Garden Clubs, the Open Garden Scheme and the Bundanoon Garden Ramble. She often provides morning or afternoon tea for participants of these events. Her generosity does not end there: she regularly invites interested people to admire her garden and shares plants and cuttings with them as well as her extensive gardening knowledge of local conditions. Many Bundanoon gardens now have an array of plants which started life in Laurel's garden.

Laurel has been a member of the Bundanoon Garden Ramble Committee since 2006; her role for many of those years has been to collect the volunteers and to co-ordinate the rosters for manning the gates at each garden.

The Green Team. Laurel was a founding member of The Green Team, an initiative of the Bundanoon Community Association. The Team undertakes the ongoing development and maintenance of the public green spaces and gardens in the village. Laurel is regularly there to help out at the monthly working bees.

The Bundanoon Quilt. Laurel was one of the ten or so stitchers who worked on the creation of the Bundanoon Quilt. This outstanding quilt, measuring five by three metres, was supported by a grant from the Wingecarribee Shire Council. Much admired by residents and visitors, it is hung with pride in the foyer of the Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

Southern Villages War Memorial. For many years Laurel has been one of a handful of volunteers who planted and maintain the garden around this War Service memorial, located behind the Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

Laurel is a welcoming person, especially to new arrivals in Bundanoon. She is always helpful, ever cheerful, constantly good-humoured, known to everyone for her good works – qualities which make her a much-valued and admired member of the community of Bundanoon.

- Bruce Marshall AM



Congratulations Caitlin!

Wingecarribee Shire's 2020 Young Citizen of the Year

Bowral High School student Caitlin Gallagher has been named Wingecarribee Shire's 2020 Young Citizen of the Year for her community and volunteer work.

Caitlin has a keen interest in wildlife and environmental preservation and spends much of her spare time volunteering as a wildlife rescuer for Wombat Care Bundanoon.

Wingecarribee Shire Mayor, Duncan Gair congratulated both recipients saying that they were wonderful ambassadors for the Southern Highlands.

"We're very fortunate to have such dedicated, hardworking and compassionate people in our shire," he said.

"There is no doubt our Shire is a better place as a result of their selfless contributions."

(taken from WSC media release)



Quest for Life

– free programs

As many of you know, Quest has been a part of the Bundanoon community for over 20 years. I established the Quest for Life Foundation, a registered charity, in 1989 after a series of personal traumas including my brother's suicide and my near-death from leukaemia. When you nearly die, and then you don't, it changes you. Grief changes you. At the time, it was a great blessing to me to be offered a safe and nurturing space in which I could fully restore myself. I've been keen to pay that kindness forward ever since. More than 120,000 people have since utilised Quest services.

From 2020 Bundanoon residents are welcome to attend any of Quest's programs at no cost – if you're willing to sleep in your own bed and attend all sessions of the program. Your program, counselling, handbook and meals are provided free of charge. Details about the seven programs Quest conducts can be found at: www.questforlife.com.au/residential-programs. Please call Candice or Helen on 4883-6599 to ask any questions or register your interest.

Each year, the Quest for Life Centre hosts 30, five-day residential programs, and in addition, our facilitators conduct up to 100 workshops in rural and remote Australia. These workshops assist communities to recover themselves during or after natural disasters or to deal with grief, illness, depression and anxiety. Quest teams will be working in fire-affected communities over the coming weeks, months and years.

Quest conducts one weekend and six five-day (Mon-Fri) programs:

- △ Quest for Life – for people living with physical illnesses – cancer, Parkinsons, MS etc

- △ Healing Your Life – for people living with depression, anxiety, loss, grief, anguish
- △ Moving Beyond Trauma – for people with a diagnosis of PTSD
- △ Reclaiming Your Brain – for people wanting to age well and maintain memory/focus
- △ Taking Control of Chronic Pain – for people living with chronic pain
- △ Your Life Matters – for people aged 14 – 20 years living with anxiety, anguish or depression
- △ Living with Grief – a weekend program for people living with grief

People travel from all over Australia – and beyond – to attend Quest programs. We provide a proven and effective way for people to regain control over their response to the challenges they have in their life. Participants achieve wonderful outcomes when they implement the practical, evidence-based skills, tools and strategies that we teach on our programs.

All education is based on sound principles of neuroplasticity, (the brain's ability to heal and change) and epigenetics, (the factors which influence health including sleep, nutrition and exercise).

Quest counsellors, psychologists, therapists and facilitators are well-qualified and experienced in delivering trauma-informed care and most of them have personally suffered some trauma in their lives, which informs their compassion and understanding.

We look forward to welcoming you to Quest if any of our programs can be of assistance to you.

- Petrea King



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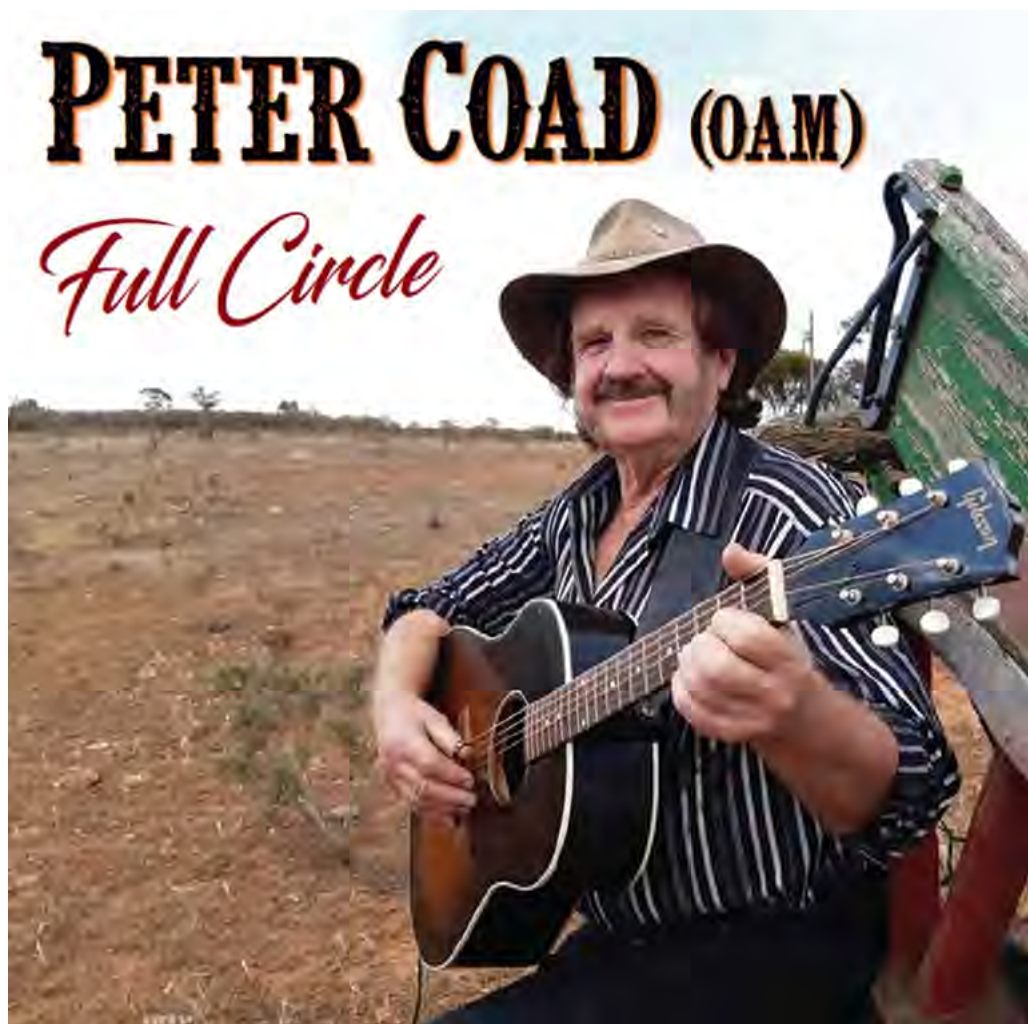
Bundanoon is Brigadoon -
a song to celebrate
Scotland in Bundanoon

The long time Scottish celebrations of Brigadoon every April has been put into song by Bundanoon's resident balladeer, Mr Peter Coad, OAM.

Over 30 years ago Peter visited Bundanoon for what was to be a half a day stay. He fell in love with the lovely town in the Southern Highlands, and has lived there ever since.

Being of Scottish descent, (his mother's maiden name was McRae,) Peter enjoys the time of the year when Bundanoon becomes Brigadoon, and the splendour of the Scottish pipes, drums, and kilts paraded through the town, and decided there should be a song about it.

Bundanoon is Brigadoon written by Peter, is a song from his latest album *Full Circle*, released mid- November 2019. The album, featuring 15 Australian story songs, is already being hailed as Peter's best album yet.



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Burrawang Easter Market



Looking for somewhere for a day out with family and friends during the Easter break?

Australia's famed Burrawang Easter Market returns to the secluded, historic and tranquil Burrawang village on Easter Saturday, 11 April 2020, between 8am and 3pm.

Nestled in the rolling hills of the NSW Southern Highlands, an easy 30-minute drive from Bundanoon, Burrawang has been hosting this annual event since the 1970s, and it welcomes thousands of visitors every year to explore 160 stalls of locally made and grown produce, handmade arts, beautiful crafts, jewellery, textiles and more, with a broad selection of baristas on hand to keep you energized throughout the day.

After a spot of shopping and taking in the picturesque village homes and gardens,

graze the many food stalls for a bespoke culinary journey, or sample the shop-front BBQ at the Burrawang butcher, Mangers Meats, nationally famous for its quality Highland meats

The village's central landmark, Burrawang Village Hotel, offers a stunning step back in time as a traditional country pub, along with breathtaking views across the green hills, a refreshing tipple and hearty menu to feed the soul. Its charming gardens are ideal for keeping the family entertained safely, or you can head over to Burrawang Public School for family-friendly activities and rides.

This year for the first time, the Burrawang Easter Market will host a dedicated stage featuring live music throughout the day from the popular country/folk musicians of Mountain Dew Band - well-known and loved across the Southern Highland region.

Last summer saw our quiet region ravaged by some of the most ferocious bush-fires and heartbreaking droughts in history. Your visit to the market can assist many small businesses and farmers trying to rebuild. Volunteers traditionally raise funds for community improvements within the village and this year proceeds will be donated to surrounding local communities who have been impacted by the recent national disasters.

The Burrawang Easter Market is the perfect opportunity to visit an historic town, have some fun, sample great food, browse fantastic and varied stalls while taking a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Entry to Burrawang village is via the Church St turnoff from the Illawarra Highway. Visitors will be directed to paddock parking available on Range St, or disabled parking at St Davids Church.

For more information, visit www.burrawangeastermarket.com



Penrose Timber Auction 9th May 2020 2pm Penrose Oval

Come and support this local fundraising Auction and grab yourself a bargain at the same time!

Timber is generously donated by the Penrose Mill (Penrose Pine Products)



All money raised at the Penrose Timber Auction is divided between the Penrose RFS, Penrose Community Association, Penrose P&C, Penrose Playgroup, Penrose Tennis Club



BUNDANOON SWIM CLUB

DIVES INTO 2020

With over 70 swimmers registering for the 2019–2020 Swim Club season, Bundanoon Swim Club kicked off for summer back in November. A busy five weeks before Christmas saw families from Bundy, Exeter, Penrose, Wingello and Marulan get together for Wednesday night races.

The focus for Swim Club is on improvement and having fun. The kids are encouraged not to race each other but to race themselves – all their times are logged and swimmers given a record of how their times are improving.

Giving it a go, taking part and encouraging other swimmers are also a super-positive element of being part of Bundanoon Swim Club.

Races start at 6:00pm with our gorgeous little'uns lining up for 12.5 metre kickboard and freestyle races. The improvement in five weeks has been astounding! We love how the big kids get in to help any little ones nervous about being by themselves in the water.

Then it's on to 25 metre, 50 metre and 100 metre races. These build stamina and endurance and are a great way to prepare kids for school swim carnival season!

Our Christmas party drew a super big Bundanoon Swim Club fan – Santa swung by and even ended up having a dip himself! A nice change from the colder climes of the North Pole.

After a break over Christmas and the school holidays, we tumble turned into 2020 at the end of January with everyone happy to get back into the routine and normality of Wednesday nights at the pool with friends.

We will finish up for 2020 on Wednesday March 4, with our AGM and annual presentation to follow a few weeks later where we will celebrate another successful season at Bundanoon Swim Club.

- Penny Webb



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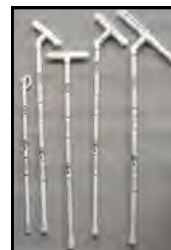


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 Secretary, Christine Miller Secretary@bca.asn.au

BCA Subcommittee Convenors

Arts Bundanoon
 Greg Slater gregs50@dodo.com.au
'Bundanoon Sings' Choir
 Geoff McCubbin geoffmc@iinet.net.au
Bundanoon on Tap
 Christine Miller christine.rowell.miller@gmail.com
Bundanoon Ukesters
 Anton Baggerman anton.j.baggerman@gmail.com
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Garden Ramble
 Sandy Weir sandralynne67@gmail.com
Glow Worm Glen Track
 Anna Perston anna.perston@bigpond.com
The Green Team
 John White johnifer@bigpond.com
JCG
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Melting Pot Theatre
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Membership
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Community Groups

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 Garden Club Janine Armstrong 0400 120 141
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 Lions Club Harry Hull 0411 818 132
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 St Stephen's, Tallong Sunday, 10am
 All Saints, Sutton Forest Sundays, 2pm

Uniting Church

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 Bundanoon Thursday, 12.30 pm

Catholic Church

St Brigid's Bundanoon 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays, 5pm
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FOR OTHER SERVICE TIMES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Anglican Church: www.parishofsuttonforest.com 4883 6019
 Catholic Church: Parish Office 4868 1931
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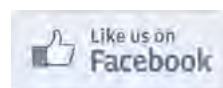
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