

# Wollangarra's Spring Newsletter



Wollangarra, Licola, 3858

Ph 5148 0492

Spring Newsletter 2006

Number 63

www.wollangarra.org

## Spring is in the Air...

You know that you are in a pretty special place when you sit down on the verandah, and the loudest sound you can hear is a sheep eating about 10 metres away. And then the next loudest noise is the sheep next to it. Life at Woll—not half bad.

And Spring! Yeah baby, it's Spring. There was a veritable explosion of colour as the wattles went crazy with yellow, and then the cherry blossoms blossoming. The Funky Organic Love Kitchen (aka the veggie patch) looks amazing, with all manner of culinary delights booming forth on their quest from the soil to the sun.

And the chooks—well, they keep on doing what chooks do. Chook-chooking away.

The sheep continue with their dutiful service, for which I thank them dearly. I guess it all works out reasonably well—we give them a life of sheep luxury at Woll, with hand feeding, beautiful scenery, superb grazing, the option of venturing to the front paddock when they want. And then, well, we eat them. Up until that part, I think you'd agree it's a good life. We all have to go some time, and I can only hope that when I die I make as many people happy as what those sheep do every Thursday night. Actually, that logic is a bit weird, but you know what I mean.

better pair of friends than Gemma and Billy? For those that don't know, Gemma couldn't go with Jen and Reiner, and so she has become the Wollangarra Dog. This despite several people clearly hearing Reiner declare: "If we have to leave Gemma, we're leaving Charlotte (they're daughter). Nonetheless, Gemma seems very happy—her coat is shining, she loves running flat out to the front gate, and she keeps trying to stick her



*Billy (left) and Gemma (right) posing for the cameras outside the homestead. "It's a tough life," said Gemma, pausing between licking the cameraman, "but someone's gotta do it." Billy refused to comment, but wagged his tail a lot.*

tongue in your mouth. Now, I'm no dog expert (although I have just read "The Dog Whisperer") but I reckon that is one happy doggy.

**8 Things I Didn't Expect From My First 4 Courses**  
*Notes from the novice Director*

And the dogs—could there be a

- That 75% would require evacuations
- That one of those (on the first course) would be a suspected spinal
- That although staying up late playing guitar every night sounds like a good idea, there are drawbacks
- That our fridge isn't very good for storing insulin for diabetics. It's a long way to get some more if you freeze it.

- That you need your headtorch to read inside during winter—in the middle of the day
- That after three days of hiking and fruity armpits, boys would want a shower.
- That running courses is tough—and great fun
- That retrieving a pocket knife from a drop dunny can be a messy business.

# Calendar

Here is what is on at Woll:

- December 10-11 Work Party for New Fox
- December 16-21 Holiday Stage 2
- January 7 New Staff Arrive!
- January 16-20 Holiday Stage 1
- January 21-22 Fruit Bottling

# Fox Work Party

We need all hands on deck on the weekend of **December 10 and 11** for us to put in the new flying fox. The main components are a

- support structure for the cable (see below)
- a new cable
- the anchor for the cable which will consist of four lengths of railway track
- metal rod to join the support structure to the anchor
- the worlds biggest washer to join the rod to the anchor
- lots concrete

So bring your selves, your muscles, and a large tub of elbow grease. We'll supply the cups of tea and stodge.

# The Glenmaggie Bush Dance and Open Day

Well there was more Dosie Doh and 18th century styled facial hair than you could poke a fiddle stick at. Yes, it was all happening that night in Glenmaggie as the Briagolong Bush Band did their thing and the Wollangarra supporters did their thing in return. Even Kauf (our mechanic) and his wife were there, getting down and groovy to the foot stomping bush tunes (even if some did this on the inside).

As for the awards, we had a surprise visit from Barry, one of the Licola local yokels (by the way, "Licola Barry" and "I Barry, local" are anagrams) who gave away the following awards:

Best Dancing Partners – John and Gwen Colpo

Best Costume (Male) - Hamish McRae

Best Costume (Female) - Casey

For those of you that missed out, there is always next year.

Special thanks go to the Op Shop ladies of Heyfield for helping out with a few of the costumes, in particular the fly on Ross' high pants.



*John and Gwen Colpo were too busy with their dancing lessons to stop for a photo. So, instead our cameraman broke into their house and found the trophy of the "Best Dancing Couple" award right in the middle of their mantle piece. "It looked to be the highlight of the room's decoration," our intrepid cameraman reported. "I think the dog spotted me, but I think he was a bit deaf and blind." Lucky for him, and lucky for our readers.*



*Ross and Geordie (up in tree) unloading the support structure for the new fox. They travelled to Morwell using a trailer kindly donated by Des Coleman. "I don't think Des would have let us use the trailer if he saw what we did to it", said Geordie after descending from the branch, high up in the air. "He said if we scratched it, or heaven forbid, knock the side lights off, there'd be hell to pay." Well, somehow the trailer survived largely intact, and the fox now awaits its ultimate journey to the other side of the Macalister River.*

**Maybe you had to be there, but we'll tell you anyway**

As for Open Day, it was a big success. A big hats off to Graham Fall who put on a fascinating display of axe mastery and bush building. Graham took some trees straight out of the bush and turned them into posts for a post and rail fence. His arsenal of axes and other woodworking devices was incredible, second in astonishment only to his deft use of them. Thanks for coming Graham, and hope-fully you will come back again.

- Clare: "What do you think is the most uncivilised thing about Wollangarra?" Young Person: "Ross' Chops"
- "Just use your Common Brain!"
- Young Person: "Do snakes bite?" Ross: "Aaah... yes."
- Young Person: "Can I throw this rusty tin in the fire?" Ross explains at length about safety etc. Young person stands quiet throughout, then upon completion, says "What about this rock?"
- Young Person: "I'd like to thank the white sheep for making the black sheep special."

## More Musings from Ross...

This is my first newsletter as the new director, and I must say that it still hasn't quite sunk in that I am here doing it. Taking over the reigns from Jen and Reiner has been a huge task, but I am still here several months down the track, thanks mainly to some very exceptional staff. But more of them later.

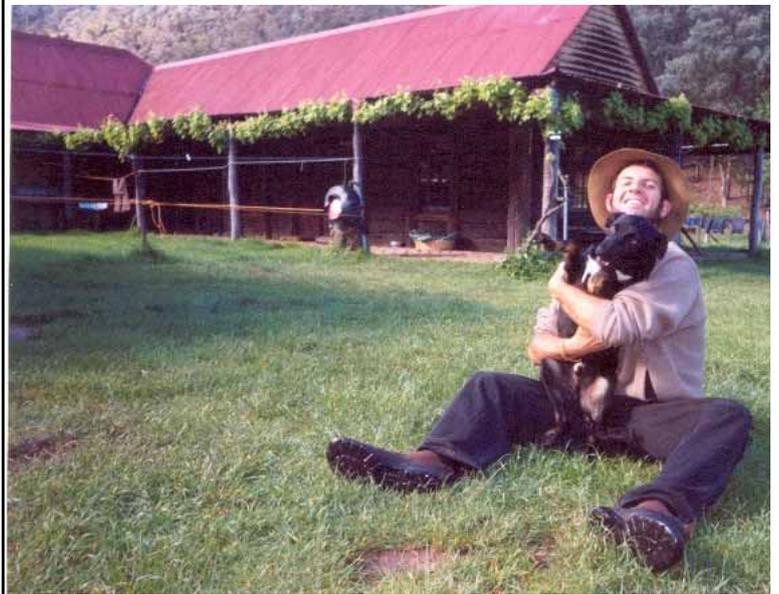
A friend of mine, upon hearing my news of coming here, said to me, "Give me three reasons why you're doing this?" I paused and thought. He does this all the time, and I should have seen it coming, but it was a good chance to really encapsulate why one would give up their normal life and live in the mountains for a few years. "Well", I said, "for challenge, community, and change." That seemed to shut him up. And since then I have stuck by those three words as the reason I am out here now, while the rest of the world goes on doing what it is doing.

So, the staff. When I first became interested in the job, it was made known to me that there was a great staff here. And, indeed, they have proved to be wonderful. Clare, Jane, Will, Lizzy and Geordie have made me feel comfortable from the start (except Clare, but we have largely moved on from that) and they have been superb in showing me the ropes. It must be strange to have a new person come into the director's role halfway through, and I thank them for their continuing support.

Of course, everyone else in the community has been supportive also. There are too many to name, so I won't, just in case I miss someone, and they say to themselves "I can't believe he didn't mention me, after the way I waved to him on the street that one time, even though he waved first, but I waved back, although by the time I waved he was actually past me, and he probably didn't

see me. Yeah, well if he needs me in the future, bad luck, matey!" As you can imagine, that would be an ugly situation best avoided.

But, after saying that, I am going out on a limb and men-



Ross and Billy spoke to our reporters from the courtyard of the homestead. "Of course Billy and I are happy here" Ross said, struggling to contain the "joy" of Billy. "Look how comfortable my boy looks!"

tioning one person—Ken Medew. Ken is unbelievable. So much so, that I have written a poem about him. See below.

Special thanks to Billy, my trusty sidekick. We are into a new phase of our relationship—one where he doesn't pooh in the bunkrooms, or wee on the front seat of The White Rocket for Will to sit in. I look forward to a more toilet trained future together.

## Ode to Ken Medew

The plumbing at Woll is crook,  
And the CAV will throw the book (at  
you)

What are you going to do?  
Call Ken Medew

There's a gas leak, "Oh No!"  
"Wollangarra might explode!"  
Are you going to stand there mute?  
Nope, call Ken Medew

We need more lights and they don't  
make 'em no more  
Our eyes are starting to get sore

Who knows what do do?  
Ken Medew

He's no spring chicken, you hear.  
Damn right, he'll be 79 before the end  
of the year

It might stop you  
But not Ken Medew

You've heard he could charm the legs  
off a chair?

Too right, and he still has all his hair  
Well kept, too.  
That's our Ken Medew

However, there's a woman that  
let's Ken come out all the time  
And she's as bright as sunshine  
Do you know who?  
Ken's wife, June Medew

If it weren't for June giving up her  
Ken  
Wollangarra would be very bro—  
ken

We wouldn't know what to do  
Without Ken or June Medew

We all sincerely thank you!

Bilyana presents...

# The 10th festival of



# Folk Rhythm & Life

2nd, 3rd & 4th December, 2005

Tickets \$65 or \$75, depending when you buy them. Available at selected retailers around the state. Visit [www.bilyana.com/home.html](http://www.bilyana.com/home.html) for more info. If you are short in funds then all you have to do is volunteer some of your time. In this way people can exchange energy for their tickets. Volunteers needed in all areas. Please send an email to [vols@bilyana.com](mailto:vols@bilyana.com), with your details and preferences for work, including when you are available.

## Wanted—Staff for 2006

- Hey there! You. Yes, you. Ever fancied yourself keen on the idea of working at Woll? Well, this could be your lucky day.
- Woll needs staff for next year, and recruitment time is NOW! Yeah, you buster. Get off the couch and get on the phone—03 5148 0492. Or, get off the phone and get online.
- Visit [www.wollangarra.org](http://www.wollangarra.org) for all you need to know.
- The cutoff date is supposed to be the end of October, but if you let us know you are interested, I can talk to the boss and see if he'll let you in.
- So, if you are either male or female, like to eat food, like having a roof over your head and could handle working in close proximity with 5 other smelly, unshaven, dedicated people, get on board!

## Wish List...

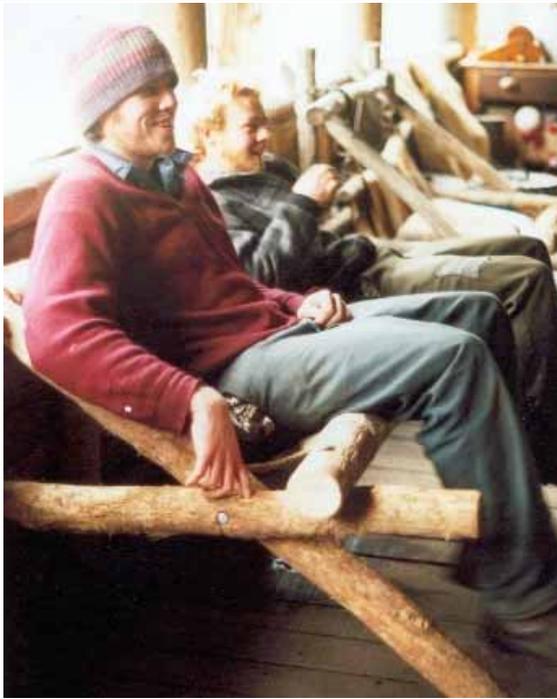
- Nutella
- 1 litre Nalgene Bottles
- SnoSeal for boots
- New (old) couches for living room
- Chairs for verandah
- New pillows
- Star pickets (or Wilson Picket)
- House for demolishing
- Grand piano
- Sunflower seeds for planting
- House paint
- Paint brushes of all kinds
- Draw knife
- Hatchet for kindling
- Used feed bags
- Pirate flag
- 2006 staff (5 of them, not 2006 of them)
- Holiday stage 1s

# Wollangarra's Mittagundi Mission...

The Wollangarra crew travelled to Mittagundi to help out on their last ski touring course for the year. Glorious sunshine, hail, 6 inches of snow, gale force winds, thunder, lightning... you name it, mother nature threw it at us.

It was great to spend time with the Mittagundi folks, to enjoy the vibe of the enthusiastic Beacon Hills young people and to take part in an epic 3 day ski tour.

*Bruce (left) and Wollangarra's own boy-done-good Geordie (right) reclining on the Wilbo built "Wilbo Special Chair". "It's very comfortable" Geordie said between sips of his coffe latte. "It's much better than the ground." Wilbo could not be found for a comment.*



We headed to Fitzgerald's Hut, which was built by Ian Stapleton and helpers, which just happened to be built in exactly the same style of the Wollangarra homestead. We took refuge in it during some crazy weather, with the wind and snow really making a mess of things outside. Luckily the cabin fever wasn't too severe, and we survived by playing games and drinking hot cocoa.

Some highlights from that course for us include:

- The wild weather and beautiful snow
- The garage collapsing after a tree fell on it
- Being at Mittagundi again, and learning how it runs
- Pizza and veggie wedges for 35 people
- Dancing on the tables and dressing up
- The music and great company

There was also an unexpected surprise for us in the form of an old water boiler that Mittagundi didn't seem to want any more. Our boiler, Aleks, is on it's

last legs, and the Mittagundi one is currently being tested by our plumber, none other than the great Ken Medew. So, lets look forward to hot water in the future compliments of our friends up north.

Thankyou to Mittagundi from Wollangarra!

*From Clare in the Citchen Comes the Culinary...*

## Wollangarra Carrot Cake

*...for all the budding 1950s house wives and house hubbies.*

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups raw carrot, grated
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup oil
- 1/4 cup orange juice and some rind
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons bicarb soda
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

### Method:

Beat carrots, eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla. Stir in spice, bicarb and flour until blended.

Grease 2 bread tins with oil and pour in mixture. Bake in low oven until brown and cooked through, which might take between 30 and 60 minutes. It's hard for us to tell here, since we don't have watches.



*Jane, Clare and Lizzy living it up in the kitchen. "We see ourselves as the new post-modern-neo-structuralist feminists", Clare said. "By baking in the kitchen, we are saying that we could be outside digging post holes, but we choose to do this. There's a very big difference." See Clare's recipe below.*

# Stage 3 Report

July saw a group of devoted young Stage 3ers do some track assessment for DSE. This took them to the Black River areas of the Australian Alps walking track, near Mt Skene. The Stage 3ers did a thorough report on the section of the track, got a bit wet in the process, and managed to get back to the homestead for a barbecue lunch, put on by some DSE and Parks Victoria staff.

Still with energy and motivation to spare, the wonderful stage 3ers came back for more. This time, to Horse Yard Flat and the Moroka Gorge walking track. Due to some quite large (although infrequent) dumps of snow, broken branches covered the track. That is... until September, when our group of Stage 3ers came with saws, axes and



*From left, Zoe, Sarah and Mardi, at the Pinnacles Lookout. A short side trip as a reward for their hard work.*

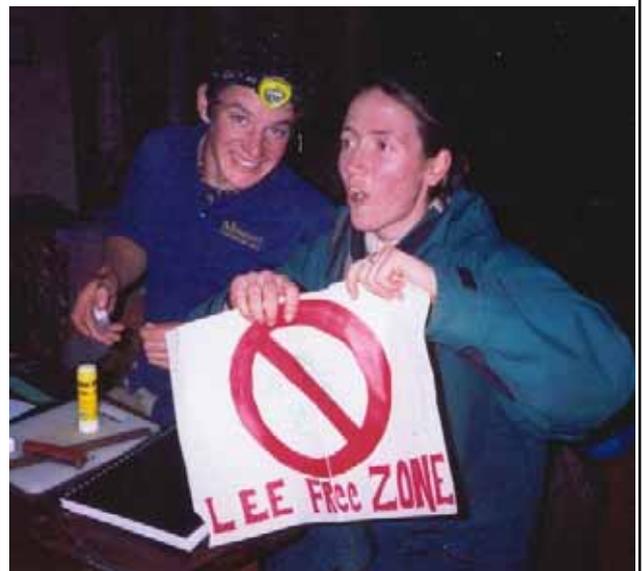
muscles and recovered the track beyond the expectations of the supervising park ranger.

So, we give our thanks to those caring and inspiring young people for their efforts and dedication.



*Sarah tightening some wire on a Wollangarra fence. Let's hope she didn't strain herself too much.*

## Caption Competition.



Send us your best caption and win a prize! Winner published next issue.

## Stage 1 Courses

We have seen a number of Stage 1 courses come through Woll since resuming after winter. These include:

- Preshil
- Melbourne Grammar School
- Vermont Secondary College
- Koonung Secondary College
- Westbourne Grammar
- Star of the Sea

and how could we forget the holiday stage 1. It was the first we had run in some time, and we had a great turn out. There were many home school students, and also a few girls from Ross' old school came to see how his facial hair was developing. Judging from the comments in the visitors book, they were not altogether impressed with the new beard. Anyway, getting back to more pressing matters, the holiday stage 1 program is a very important course that we run here, since it gives anybody the chance to come to Woll, at a reduced rate, even if their school is too slack, hmm, I mean, not able, to come. So, encourage your friends to come up for the holiday stage 1 happening mid January 2006.



*An unexpected surprise for our first trip into the high country after winter: SNOW! Yeah baby, there was heaps of white gold on the way up to Spion Kopje. It was great to have snow fights and for the young people to exact some revenge on the staff. For instance, shortly after this shot was taken, this snow ball was expertly thrown right into the mouth of one of the staff who, in their own words, admits they "probably deserved it."*

## Wollangarra Online

I guess you could call it the WWW. Anyway, we have a new website up and running at...

[www.wollangarra.org](http://www.wollangarra.org)

By the way, the "org" stands for "organic". You can now download all the forms you need for the courses, as well as additional information about Woll. There is a photo gallery coming, as well a few other things that we need to add.

So, if you are having trouble surviving suburbia far from the peace and joy of Woll, you can get online and get a virtual fix. Probably not as good as the real thing, but hey, we try.

You will notice there are no email addresses on the site. This is because we are still old fashioned, and love to get letters. Nothing gets us more excited than seeing that mail box overflowing with loving letters.



*Some past students of Ross (bottom, middle) came to see what had become of him. "I was shocked," said Esther. "We knew him as this very urbane, dashing, well manicured well kept young man. And now... look for yourself." As Esther sobbed into her handkerchief, Vivian continued. "It was horrible. We were so excited to see him when we got off the bus and all we could see was, well, hair. But in all the wrong places, you know?"*

*Also causing concern are the lilac fishermans pants that Ross is sporting. Geordie has since made a threat on Ross' life if he ever wears them in Heyfield again. "Craig from Aerial saw them, and that was enough," said Geordie, clenching his fists.*

# Woll Merch

What	How Much	How Many	Wollangarra Red Wine, from Rutherglen	T-Shirts, mens and womens, XS to XXL (sizes run small), in brown, aquamarine, navy with emerald, khaki with raspberry	Secondhand and Solid—the book of how Wollangarra was built.	Jim and Molly—2 Very Special Australians	Cards—Wollangarra Icons.	Stickers
	\$15 each, or \$165 dozen			\$25 each	\$15 per book	\$8 per book	\$2 each or set of 8 for \$12	\$2 each

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Total (including donation for postage) \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheque payable to Wollangarra Inc.

## Thankyou To...

- Dean, Annette and Jye at The Crossing
- Faith, Leanne Grant, the Dennets and Kizza for babysitting
- Mittagundi crew
- Margaret Beckett—wish list goodies, a mad hatters tea party
- David McPhee from Traralgon spinning
- Alby Drew—the awesome straw, and together with Ray (from the Lions) for the barbecue at the Bush Dance
- Darren Dyer and John Lamb—fixing the lights
- Ken Sussex—the wonderful dried peaches
- Ken and June Medew—the wishlist goodies, being amazing, inner sheets, beanies and mittens
- Ian Morris, Spanner and Foursy—sheep shearing at Open Day
- Graham Fall—his find demonstration at Open Day.
- All those that helped out before, during and after Open Day. Especially the Stage 2 and 3 crews.
- Aerial Motors—for endless support
- The sheep for giving us meat and wool
- The chooks for their eggs
- Tim Macaulay
- Loz Scanlan
- Anthi
- Emma Radcliffe
- Dannica for the treats
- John and Gwen Colpo—their freezer and friendship
- Stage 2ers and 3ers for their conservation work
- Wayne and Bev McCallum—can this couple be stopped? I don't think so! Amazing.
- WBM Engineering—for the new flying fox
- Marcus Veerman for his crazy ideas and inspiration.
- Jacque and Dave for the use of their computer, at all times of the day.



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Wollangarra

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