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WOLLANGARRA

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## Spring Newsletter 2019

The time has come to say goodbye. And of course, goodbyes are a time for reflection, not the still trees reflected in the Macalister. Reflection on our time here over the last two years. The job of Wollangarra Director isn't easy to define but stepping into roles including but not limited to; baggage handler, caterer, mechanic, web tech, farmer, plumber, and counsellor, can only begin to give an

understanding of the variety of things that are involved. But when all that is said and done, the things that I will remember most will be moments, micro moments spent with our amazing, unforgettable, and formidable staff, the community members who give so much of themselves and their time for their extraordinary place, the young people who are wise beyond their years, and being able to do this alongside my passionate and loving husband and inquisitive and adventurous son. This place, this job, is indescribable and really like nothing else. Thank you isn't a big enough word for all the help when we were completely out of our depth, for every hug, phone call, visit, letter, solid shoulder and firm word, meal cooked, fire lit, every cup of tea, every door opened, and every friendship formed. Thank you for having us. - Clare



"What are you going to do next?" Is the question I'm posed with by everyone I speak to lately. The answer is, I simply don't know! It's a bittersweet moment to be writing this and realising my time here is now down to mere weeks. I feel immensely satisfied with the work I've done, but I'll be sad to say goodbye to the awesome Wollangarra community, and without them, there'd still be broken pumps and half a tractor!

The willingness to answer the seemingly dumbest questions, the enthusiasm to turn up immediately and help with a problem, the early morning and late night phone calls, the endless wisely given advice, the ability to convert my "You know, the thing that connects to the other thing", descriptions into actual working parts. To the amazing young people, I've met, who are not only wise beyond their years, but a credit to future Australia, to everyone who has been kind to us, offered a bed a cuppa, a beer or a shower - everyone, I say a huge thank you. The kindness and willingness to give and share this place fosters are truly an incredible thing and I will miss it greatly. It's been a wild ride! - Jay

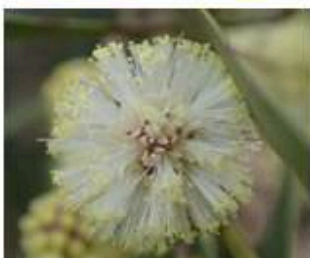
# Wollangarra Wattles

Plants are amazing. Plants sustain and enrich our lives.

Animals are OK too, but they tend to get lots of attention already. So, for the next little while we are going to be spreading the plant love by focusing on some of the amazing plants at Wollangarra. To kick off the 'Plants are amazing' segment of the Newsletter, I am going to share some info and images of some plants that are currently flowering both on the Woll flat and likely somewhere near you!

Wattles at Wollangarra!

**The Wattles**  
**Genus: Acacia**  
**Family: Mimosaceae**



*Acacia is the largest plant genera in Australia.*

Acacias have a close association with nitrogen fixing bacteria that live on their roots. These bacteria are important for fixing nitrogen in Australian soils.

All Acacias have feathery 'bipinnate' foliage when young, which sometimes turns into flattened leaf-like blades called phyllodes.

Acacias have glands on their phyllodes which produce nectar (the flowers do not). Phyllode veins and glands are important diagnostic features between species.

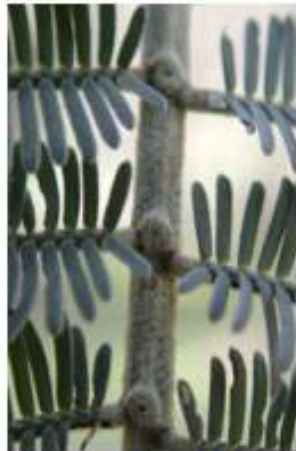
Individual flowers of Acacias are tiny and aggregated together into balls or spikes. Seeds sometimes have funicles attached to them which are harvested by ants.

Costermans page 297.

## Wattles at Woll

### Silver wattle, Black wattle, Golden wattle and Blackwood Mimosaceae – Part of the Pea Family

Two common species of Acacia at Woll which have bipinnate feathery leaves are *A. mearnsii* (Black wattle) and *A. dealbata* (Silver wattle). The position of the glands can be used to tell these species apart.



*A. dealbata*



*A. mearnsii*

*A. dealbata* have 'neat' glands at each leaf junction, *A. mearnsii* have 'messy' glands scattered up the leaf main axis.

*A. pycnantha* (Golden wattle) has big green broad phyllodes with a single vein and a distinctive gland near the base of the blade.



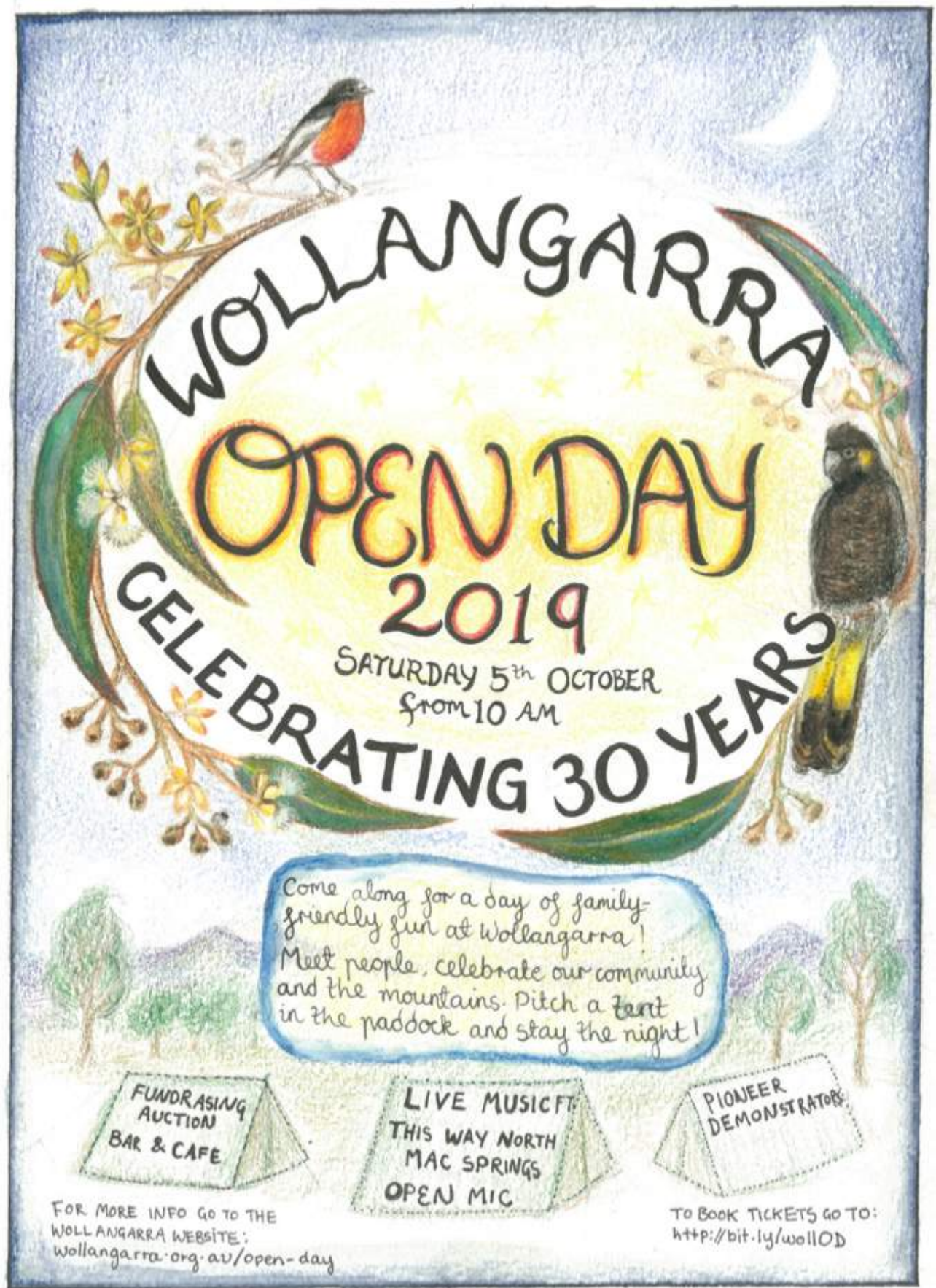
*A. pycnantha*

*A. melanoxylon* (Blackwood) also has phyllodes but they are pale green. It has pale yellow flowers and produces seeds with large red funicles. Funicles are seed attachments that ants harvest – ants get to eat and wattle seeds get planted underground!



*A. melanoxylon*

For more plant joy come to Open Day and come along to the Plant and Bird Tour with 'The Drs of Nature Enthusiasm' Freya and Holly!



# Food From The Flat

A collection of homestyle recipes from the Wollangarra cookbooks and community.

This stylish cookbook showcases the typical food from the Wollangarra Flat and our community. It's a beautiful memento with quality photos that highlight what a beautiful place Wollangarra is.

Forward by Ian Stapleton sharing his quirky food philosophy, and some of his favourite recipes.

This high-quality cookbook showcases Wollangarra through 79 recipes including breakfast staples, porridge and bread, lunch must haves, hummus and pumpkin dip. The dinner recipes are highlighted by our Thursday Night Stew, there's drool worthy desserts, the Blue Icing chocolate cake, sweet and savoury snacks, with our world-famous Munchie recipe and preserves, including our legendary tomato chutney.



Pre-sales are open now, books will be arriving with perfect timing to make a thoughtful Christmas gift. Pre-sales will receive a copy of the PDF document to peruse until your beautiful hard copy arrives. PDF will be sent once direct deposit has been confirmed.

It's a great keepsake of your time at Wollangarra, making a beautiful coffee table book as well as a useful book filled with your new favourite recipes.



Food from the Flat – recipes from the Wollangarra community can be pre-ordered at <http://www.wollangarra.org.au/cookbook> now. Shipping will commence mid-late October.

\$35 ea, shipping \$15 + \$5 for each additional book.

## A Weekend Stage 2

Few emotions compare to the exhilaration and excitement I felt as the lunch bell rang at school on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2019. That was my cue to sprint for my locker and jam everything into my bag so I could catch the earliest bus home. From there I had a small amount of time to do homework, time which I wasted, instead texting all my mates that I would be away hiking for the weekend. "I thought you only went hiking in the holidays?" was the most common response I received in reply. Those replies were promptly ignored as I was distracted in my race to Southern Cross station to catch a train out to Pakenham for the first ever Wollangarra weekend Stage 2 program.



Despite setbacks in the form of delayed trains and over-packed platforms, eventually we all made it. From Pakenham we drove all the way to Tidal River at Wilson's Promontory, with plenty of pizza and party tunes on the way. Our chauffeurs, Josh & Annabelle, struggled to park the van and

trailer before we all crashed under tarps at the camp ground. We were blessed by short-lived but fierce downpours through the night and woke to find several Rosella's going through the pizza boxes that someone had left out. Despite distractions from the local wildlife trying to steal our food, we managed to get out of there with enough time to detour up to the top of Mt Oberon. There we enjoyed stunning views of the Prom and the delicious snacks that several Stage 2s had brought for the group. From the bottom we grabbed our packs and began the hike from Telegraph Saddle all the way across to Sealers Cove, stopping at the non-windy Windy Saddle for

a typical Woll lunch of wraps and vita-grains. We stopped again for another detour into an awesome cave hidden just next to the track, which was full of Stalagmites, Stalactites and, surprisingly, Stage 2s. On this track it felt like every time we looked up we were in a different part of the world. We climbed mountains, explored caves, trekked through jungles and swamps, over rivers, through streams and plodded through the forest to reach the beautiful



Sealers Cove at the end of our walk. We crossed the chilly waters of Sealers Creek to reach our campsite and that night under the light of the full moon the group was dragged to the beach for a special game under the light of the full moon. There was a lot of amusement gained from watching them attempt to figure out exactly what was going on as they struggled to work out the clues left to them. Conflict and

## *A Weekend Stage 2 cont.*

catastrophe ensued as they began to work out the story of why they were here, as well as who their friends and enemies were. It all ended in a dramatic moment with Annabelle & Josh chasing each other around on top of a huge boulder while everyone else debated who to sacrifice in order to escape the place they stuck in. On Sunday morning we woke early to hike back along Sealers Cove Walking Track to the van before driving over to the beautiful Squeaky Beach for a super-quick lunch-stop & swim before heading for home. The first ever weekend Stage 2 was an amazing experience and I was very honoured to have been selected to lead it. Huge thanks to Tex for planning out the route and being an awesome co-leader to rely on as well as to Annabelle and Josh for “not leading” our trip and helping us with anything, small or large, that we might have forgotten to do. Massive thanks also go to the wonderful stage 2s: Ned, Essie, Quinn, Sean, Angus, Harriet, Isha & Jet. Spending time with these guys, even for just a few short days, was a total pleasure and something I would do again in a heartbeat.

## *Garden Update*

Our vegie garden at Wollangarra has come a long way since the start of the year. It has journeyed from an overgrown patch of amaranth galore and weeds, to a productive patch of vegies and weeds (the weeds never stop coming!).

Despite winter slowing plant growth, the garden has been providing us with an abundance of leafy greens including rocket, lettuce, silverbeet, spinach, kale and mustard greens. This has allowed residents and visitors to enjoy fresh salads in our remote home in Gippsland, where it isn't straightforward to just 'pop down' to the shops. We've been harvesting turnips and radishes... so many radishes that we decided to pickle the excess harvest. Yum! We're also seeing our first crop of broad beans flowering and snowpeas climbing their way up trellises.

We are learning lots about gardening in the bush. Many animals, especially the bowerbirds and currawongs, love our garden as much as we do! Many groups of young people have contributed their energy in the garden: planting, weeding and harvesting, learning a valuable practical lesson in where their food comes from.



## Stage 3 Induction



Earlier this year, Wollangarra's newest stage 3s were invited to come up to the flats for a week to officially induct, to gain new skills, and to go on an adventure of camaraderie and learning, with lessons such as "never be afraid to ask for help when you might need it", and "always

be on the lookout for low hanging branches". This induction was the backdrop for a short 2-day hike along the Macalister, in which navigational and administrative duties were delegated to the young people, instead of the leaders, and as such we got to experience planning and running a hike for ourselves. After returning from the hike we had a grouse week of activities. We cooked amazing (but very Avant Garde and pretentiously named) food to compete in a MasterChef challenge that, had it been televised, would have gone down as one of the greatest episodes in history, we exercised our noggins solving fun riddles, and we all got a whole bunch of work on the flats done despite having a tad bit more rain and hail than shine. The week was also filled with insight into how Woll is organised, and how much effort the awesome leaders and directors put into making sure everything is organised, spick and spam, and ready to be used out on hike, with the inductees being shown their way around these practices as well. Inducting was amazing, and all of us inductees can't wait more stage 3 experiences! - Tom

### Fruit Bottling

Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>

Join us for a long weekend of jamming, canning, preserving, chutney'ing, which will be spread on Vita-Grains and poured a top porridge for 2020.

Call us at the homestead to let us know if you're coming along and ask what you can bring to contribute to the menu: Ph 51480492





## *Fi and Annabelle's Thoughts on Winter*

So, it felt like we went into winter kind of dreading it. It seemed like the hurdle of the year, taking up brain space even before the end of summer. The dreary cold and dark days, the icy frosts and the nights cooking on a fire in the rain. Maybe we got a mild winter but now that we have said goodbye to August, and the days are getting longer, sunnier and less crispy, it feels like it is not too premature in saying that we quite enjoyed winter.

Winter created a dark chocolate obsession, and abolishing attempts at being sugar free. Winter was putting kindling under the tarp before bed to be able to light a fire in the morning. Winter was the internal battle to get out of your sleeping bag to go for a wee in the middle of the night. Winter was drinking so many cups of tea and eating so much food simply because it was warm. Winter was Bengal Spice tea. Winter was very cold river swims that stopped and restarted your heart, as well as having to go for swims in the dark to not lose a bet. Winter was laughing young people's faces as they leapt into the icy Macalister River. Winter was the Flame Robins and the Lyrebirds rocking up. Winter was cold hands on the frozen fox rope and the letter box blowing away. Winter was cuddles with Dom in bed. Winter was the death of half our ducks for unknown causes. But also, the birth of more bab-ies (chicks), and the bab-ies sleeping Fi's room to survive the frosty nights. Winter was the Newry Ball and Bush Dance, getting frocked up and working up a sweat dancing two weekends in a row. Winter was watching the colour of the valley change, now a lush green mosaic, a stark contrast from the yellow, red and brown valley of earlier this year. Winter was the wattles in flower and the seas of yellow on the flat and Banana Flat. Winter was frost shadows and packing sessions in the dark. Winter was standing in front of the stove to warm your bum and wearing all woollen attire until midday each day. Winter was 3 doonas, 2 blankets and a hot water bottle in bed every night (this was maybe just Fi). Winter was hot Nalgene's in your sleeping bag. Winter was a dripping tarp in the morning as the frost thawed, and steam coming off the homestead roofs as the sun hit. Winter was white blankets of snow draped over Mt Wellington and Mt. Useful seen best from the Helipad. As well as was a blanket of yellow appearing at Blanket Hill as the Golden Wattles came into flower. Winter was a purple vine that started hugging the rocky edges of Licola Rd. So oddly, in the dreary winter months Licola Road glowed purple and yellow. Winter was an obsession was Angie McMahons new album and a renaissance of the Temper Trap albums. Winter was the feeling of having a hot shower in the rain. Winter was realising inside of the fridge was warmer than the kitchen on frosty mornings. Winter was convincing young people that more fabulous woollen jumpers were warmer. Winter was getting seriously over eating seasonal winter vegetables. The emergence of a banana or avocado from a young person or volunteer



would be a highly prized and sometimes fought over item. Winter was putting the vehicles into 4WD just to get through the front paddock. Winter was forgetting to put them in 4WD and getting bogged. Winter was choosing to hang out on the weekends even though we saw each other every other day. Winter was water fights in the kitchen, ridiculous jokes that went for weeks, and so much laughter. Winter was great.

## *Things that have poo'ed in our rooms...*

- Bowerbird (BB) #1
- early days
  - grape season, BB's love grape season
  - Poo: lots, runny (likely linked to grape consumption)
  - all over Fi's sheets, pillows and 4WD manual
- BB #2
- Poo: also lots, also runny, also everywhere
  - specifically over Annabelle's freshly washed sheets, doona, pillow and letter from her mother
- Chickens
- Poo: minimal poo but bonus egg on Annabelle's bed
  - egg luckily spotted before bed was entered
  - several eggs found in proceeding months
  - Clare Hazelwood (staff 2015) "*the room next to the kitchen was often the egg laying room*"
- Doggo
- technically not poo related
  - resident doggo (Dom) vomited on Josh's floor and rug during night
  - incident has resulted in developing trust issues between Dom and Josh
- Bats (many)
- micro in size (bats and poo)
  - Poo: minimal but bats very difficult out get out of room
  - stressful for bat and room owner
  - victims so far: Jen, Catherine, Annabelle, Josh
- Mice
- Poo: many, many, many small specimens
  - all over Jen's desk
  - result of mice finding sunflower seeds on Jen's desk and having midnight snack
  - result: woll garden will be sunflower less in 2019
- Possum  
(we think, or ghost  
of sally the goat)
- Annabelle forgetting previous lessons is struck again
  - Poo: lots, though finally not runny
  - location: desk where an apple was left
  - possum/sally ghost appeared to eat apple and poo simultaneously

**Who will poo in our rooms next in 2019?**

## Upcoming calendar dates...

DATES	EVENT	FURTHER DETAILS
Sept. 29th – Oct. 4th	October Stage II	Been to Wollangarra before? Ready to give back? Come along to a Stage 2 program, this one is booked out.
Oct. 4th	30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner	A celebration for ex-staff, directors, and council members. If you haven't booked your ticket yet call the homestead for more information.
Oct. 5th	30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open Day	Come along a celebrate 30 years of Wollangarra.
Nov. 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup>	Melbourne Cup Weekend Working Bee	Enjoy the warmth of Wollangarra over this 4 day work party. Call the homestead to RSVP.
Dec. 5th – 9th	Stage III	Stage 3's enjoy a December hike.
Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup>	Stage 2 & 3 Skills Week	Been to Woll on a program? Keen to learn some pioneer skills? Come along to skills week.
Dec. 15 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup>	Stage 2	December Stage 2 – bookings open first week of term 4.
Jan. 13 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup>	Jan Stage 1	Never been to Wollangarra before? Know someone who needs to come up? Bookings open first week of term 4.
Jan. 25 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>	Fruit Bottling Weekennd	A weekend of bottling fruit, preserving, and jamming. Call the homestead to RSVP.

**For more information, visit [wollangarra.org.au/news-events/calendar](http://wollangarra.org.au/news-events/calendar)**

## Newsletter Opt-In

To save the environment (and our printing costs) we are asking everyone who would still like to receive a copy of the paper newsletter to fill out the form below, and either post it back to:

NEWSLETTER OPT-IN % Wollangarra, Licola, 3858 or email a copy (or the information) with the subject NEWSLETTER OPT-IN to [general@wollangarra.org.au](mailto:general@wollangarra.org.au)

You have until the end of the 2019 and if we haven't received your information you will be taken off the postage list. For the final newsletter this year, if there is a red dot next to your address, that will be you final newsletter. Thank you for understanding.



Yes, I still want to receive the newsletter by post

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# *Thank you's*

**Frances Grundy** for your amazing help on the Stage 3 induction and coordinating planting all those trees.

**Kia** for baby-sitting Wollangarra.

**Kate and Pete** for hosting us for the Newry Ball.

**Dean and Annette** for having us at the Crossing.

**Heyfield Lions Club** for your donation.

**Daniel and Jessie** for your help on the flat.

**Bernie** for inducting us to work with Parks.

**Olly, Gowie and Les** for the incredible glider box.

**Red Warren**, for your donation.

**Mario from Fish Creek Olives** for the tour of your farm and discount on the delicious olive oil.

**Peter Abikhair** for your donation.

**Maddy** for volunteering.

**Maeve** for helping out on a program.

**Danika** for babysitting.

**Kristy** for volunteering.

**Carol** for your hat donation.

**Ralph** for all your help always – but especially, this time for helping with our sink.

**Peter Frost** for your donation.

**Paul and Chryp** for all your help at Tussocky and our lovely weekend together.

**Bev and Wayne** for pizza.

**Glenmaggie Wines** for having us pop in for a tasting.

**Monica and Ross** for all your help always, but specifically, helping with the cookbook, rebuilding Matt's bridge and helping with the temporary toilets.

**Patty** for helping out on a program.

**Izzy** for volunteering.

**Serena** for helping out on a program.

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