

Number 109  
October 2018



WOLLANGARRA  
Licola, 3858

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## *Spring Newsletter 2018*

Winter's are always tough around Wollangarra but this year, the dark depths of the harsh cool months have left an imprint on all our hearts. There has been a significant theme of goodbye since the last newsletter, with the Wollangarra community saying more goodbyes than we'd ever like to say. We couldn't send out this newsletter without acknowledging the heartbreak we have felt.

Before we share those, we want to thank the incredible community who have banded together through these tough times, programs, helped in the simply been on the end of chat (or to cry). So often we hilarious, giddy, entertaining Wollangarra but it's simply newsletter's theme is it, there are also some times we've had. Our really was a party. Open lovely day. And our Stage II right back to the roots of community pull down and



We have farewelled two the valley behind for the miss them around the flat decision for themselves and ultimately for us.

who have volunteered on lead up to Open Day and the phone when we've need a share all the wonderful, moments of our times at not all like that. So while this goodbye, with a sad air about articles written about wonderful Garden Party working bee, Day was, by all accounts, a and III programs are getting Wollangarra with helping our build huts.

staff, Jacki and Adam have left bright lights of the big city. We but know they made the best

We've said goodbye to a couple of fleeced and feathered friends. Bolly passed peacefully one night, mid antibiotic course for an abscess in his cheek. And our newly acquired rooster didn't come home one night and met a fox and met his fate.

We've also said 'fly high' to two young people. Mental health is such an important conversation to have, not just once a year on 'R U OK?' day but every day. It's imperative that we ask our loved ones how they are going and really listen, really take note and really be there. We'll forever hold the memories of Georgie Whittaker and Thomas Whiley in our hearts. Two young people who has left the earth before their time was up.

We hope you are all ok, that you have an incredible community around you and some wonderful support. – Clare, Jay and Elliot.

# Vale Tom Whiley & Georgie Whittaker



## Remembering Tom Whiley

As many of you already know the greater Wollangarra Community has been devastated to learn of the sudden passing of 2015 Alpine Walker and Wollangarra fixture Thomas Whiley in August of this year. Tom's parents, Paul and Chryp have been long term supporters of Woll and have regularly provided a warm bed and hot meal for worn-out Wollies, as well as being vocal conservationists and historians of the Victorian High Country. Tom will be remembered for his easy-to-crack mischievous grin, his witty banter, his warm and welcoming nature and his thoughtful

wisdom was beyond his 18 years. Our hearts and minds are with Paul and Chryp and all of Tom's family, friends and previous leaders. Tom's passing accentuates the need for all of us to be checking in with each other, showing courage in sharing our mental health state and being prepared to actively listen when those around us open up. Tom, you will be deeply missed by all of us. Your smiling face and memory will live on in all our hearts.

## Remembering Georgie Whittaker

Being a Harrietville-raised lass, Georgie first came to Wollangarra on the recommendation of Ian, who knew her parents. It was in 2011 when she came on a holiday Stage I and from there, she got into Stage II's in a big way.

I first met Georgie when I arrived at Woll with a couple of uni mates to lead the 2012 January Stage II. With only the one full troopy-load, we were a tight little group. We headed off to Mac. Springs and Howitt for a cracking week of January fun in the sun.



Georgie was an absolute hoot from the start. Between her, Isaac and Hannah Lee on that trip, there were a million laughs; especially when we repeatedly ran into local lads, and fellow Stage II-ers, Six and Shaun who were on a family hike up there too. Georgie was often hiking at or near the back, and I distinctly remember we had this little thing going. From the front, if I thought we'd be good to go after a break, I'd yell back to her "Are we gravy?!?" If I heard Georgie ring out with a "We're GRAVY BABY!", then we were good to go! Isaac and I still use that one together a bit...

In December 2012, during the infamous "Wollagastro Incident", Lou had to bring down Georgie and Claire Woodward from the makeshift sick bay the leaders had made for the unwell Stage II's up at Mac. Springs. Back on the Flat, being looked after by a mob of Stage III's and I, after a good sleep and recovery starting to kick in for them, the stories that came from the mouths of these two as they recounted a night in a Woll tent, trying to look after themselves and each other, were recounted in the most hilariously vivid way - with reenacting out the scenes to boot! It was an absolute cracker and I'll never forget the way Georgie described their predicament, and how they kept each other laughing at the most awkward of moments all night, often making the situation worse! It's hard to be in stitches with laughter when your belly is already crook, apparently!

Georgie passed away on Sunday 30th September at her family home in Harrietville. She was 22. We'll miss her big smile and her generous laugh. -Dan

# Open Day

Open day dawned fresh and bright with excitement in the air. Tents and tarps had been pitched in the lead up and we awoke to a back paddock sprinkled with little homes and the sound of sleepy voices rising and falling around the flat. With the warming of the day so began the festivities with an acknowledgment of Indigenous sovereignty and the Gunai Kurnai people upon whose land Wollangarra stands. The day slowly grew with the sun and suddenly activities were underway. The iconic Wollangarra porridge eating contest was undertaken with all the seriousness with which such an event requires. Hands behind backs and heads in bowls meant for a hilarious spectacle. I must say I do wish that the young people we get up every week ate the porridge with the same amount of gusto as our glorious stage twos and threes. Oscar Terry Young won the day though with a porridge bowl on the head. Honourable mentions must be made for Orla, Angus and Bevan's efforts.



Next came the tug off war followed by a spectacular lunch created for us by our glorious stage threes. The afternoon kicked off with the Woll-a-thon in which four teams competed for the winning glory of being able to say that they set up and pack down a tent and hike bed in a ridiculously small amount of time. With valiant efforts from all teams our winners were the impressive combination of Serena, Angus, Emer, and Tex. Then came the cross-cut saw with some very impressive sawing action on display. An honourable mention must go to Gillian and Trix for their inspiring effort, but the winners were undoubtedly Isaac and Lachie who won with ridiculously speedy arm work. As the



afternoon grew and the shadows lengthened so began the sheaf toss. Unsuspectingly a lot harder than it appears we saw an impressive competition finally won by Ross Nitz. In the golden light of the late afternoon the auction began with a poem from our beloved Don Dwyer. Much bidding was had and money raised and we cannot thank you all enough for all the donations and fierce enthusiasm that was displayed to raise money for this glorious place and the young people that get to experience it. As the sun sank towards the horizon and the shadows stretched across the flat dinner was served after preparation all day from John and Hazel Brady. A hearty meal to fill all our bellies after a joyous day of activity. As the darkness fell the stage was lit for open mike and we all sat and listened to the incredible music of this community. As the night grew the Alfred Country Band took to the stage and the dancing flew thick and fast into the night. It was a wonderful way to finish such a joy filled day and slowly we all took our weary feet off to bed.

A thousand thanks must be said to all those that contributed to the functioning of the day. To all the people that donated beautiful pieces for the auctions, for all the incredible help in the cafe, bar, information and merchandise tent we could not have done it without you. To all the wonderful humans that helped with the set up and pack down you are all the epitome of the wonder of this community and to all that came thank you for making it such a glorious day filled with so much fun and laughter. We cannot thank you enough.



The flat is quiet now except for the baah-ing of the sheep in the top paddock. But the sense of community and support that is filled up by events such as Open Day lasts long after everyone has left.

# Garden Party

The weekend of 15-16 of September saw grey skies and bursts of torrential rain arrive just in time to welcome a team of 30 eager individuals to help team Wollangarra revamp our veggie garden to bring in Spring! Despite the less than ideal weather conditions, spirits were not dampened as we set about weeding, turning soil, planting, propagating and singing our way through the garden, with plenty of breaks for hot



cappas. The garden crew were so efficient that we also had the opportunity to tackle a few other projects, like dispersing the humanure pile in the orchard and building a new tank stand for the Outdoor Kitchen. A wonderful weekend with generous and hard working souls was highlighted by an exquisite and enormous cheese platter facilitated by Jeanine Booth. A huge thank to all that came up to lend us a hand, the fruits (and veggies) of your labour will be abundantly clear on your next trip up to Woll. -Alex

## **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open Day Save the Date**

October 5<sup>th</sup> 2019 is Wollangarra's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open Day. Please put the date into your calendar and get ready to celebrate in style.



More information to come.

## **Food From The Flat – Recipes from the Wollangarra Community**

We're re-doing our cookbook and we'd love you to contribute. Do you have a family favourite recipe? The best chocolate mud cake? A delicious vegan recipe? A fail safe loaf of bread? We want them all. Simply go to [www.createacookbook.com.au](http://www.createacookbook.com.au), go to submit, and choose Wollangarra in the drop down menu. Submissions close January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019.

## *Bolly Obituary*

There are not many faces or names that are synonymous with Wollangarra. Stapleton is one, maybe Brady or Nitz are others but as for Directors, Staff and young people, we come and we go whilst the place itself rarely changes. This is why it's such a sombre occasion when we lose one of those



faces. Bollinger the Alpaca has sadly succumbed to an infected cyst in his mouth. Bolly arrived at Woll in 2006 from Bridget, Keith and Charlie Kat's Alpaca Stud in Mirboo North and has charmed his way into all our hearts with his bizarre antics and unique groan. He had been a loyal companion in protecting Wollangarra's sheep from dogs, enthusiastic young people and occasionally a well intentioned staff member. In those cases, what an honour it was to be coated with a green sludge from the back of his throat. Bolly's final resting place is in the wattles at the front of the homestead. Farewell Bolly old boy, you will be sadly missed.

"With legs like that, that sheep should be a model" – Anonymous Volunteer 2018

-Alex

## *Farewell Rooster - BBC*

It fills me with much sadness to write that one of our most recent arrivals, our Rooster the BBC has unwittingly left us after a fatal encounter with the local fox. After an eventful arrival to Wollangarra with an escape and recapture in the front paddock, followed by a nerve wracking journey across the flying fox, he soon made himself at home among our hens and spent his days strutting around the flat and calling out when he found tasty morsels in the soil. His glorious posture didn't always allow for easy access into the pen at night meaning that often he would sleep on "on the couch;" ie the the nesting boxes at the back of the pen. It was this that was his downfall. He was taken along with two of our girls in the dead of night and we will miss their constant running for shade, the crow in the morning, and company with which the provided the other hens. Farewell old friend. -Katie



## Stage III News

Nearing the end of October as winter was finally starting to loosen its grip; a small, motley and very eager group of Stage 3's accompanied by Clare and Kato drove over to Glenfalloch for a week of nail pulling, timber carting and way too much fun. We were greeted by the lovely souls of the Glenfalloch Station: Shannon, Clarissa, Sharni and little Riley who introduced us to our project for the next week. They shared a glimpse into their amazing lifestyle and it was an honor to get to know them and all their four legged furry friends.



With the aid of almost enough hammers and crowbars, our little gang dismantled the wood and tin farm shed piece by piece to use the material for rebuilding another collapsed house owned by the

farm in Licola. During the salvaging process, damage to the materials and human bodies involved was minimal (any bruises I took away were unfortunately due to my uncoordinated hammer skills) and



although it was a task and a half to get the building apart remotely intact, the quirky little treasures we found along the way made it all worthwhile. Skills were gained, fun was had, and patience was tested: without a doubt, the full Wollangarra experience we have all grown to know and

truly

love.  
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nt was

made in full by the never failing company of the farm dog Boof who joined our pack and the much anticipated cuddles from the beautiful Kelpie puppies on the last day.

We are looking forward to the next phase of this adventure as Stage 2s construct the new house. See you there! - Emma



# Things We Really Need List

Over the last year or so we have tried to reduce the wanted list, we've been cleaning up around Wollangarra and getting rid of things rather than bringing them in but there are a few things that we're recently thought of that could really help us out. If you have any of the below things, please give us a call on 51480492 to find out if we still need it.



- We are looking for two reasonable quality **digital cameras** that we can take out on hike. If you have a camera that you have upgraded from and is just lying around looking for a new home, please send it our way.
- **Hand held UHF radios 5w**
- **Oven mitts**
- **Fly screen**
- **Small drill bits**

## Upcoming calendar dates...

| DATES                                   | EVENT                      | FURTHER DETAILS   |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup>   | Melbourne Cup Work Weekend | Come along, get stuck into the garden and enjoy a few days on the flat.   |
| Dec 5 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup>  | Stage III Hike             | The Stage III's are off o a hike. This one is booked out.   |
| Dec 11 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup> | Stage II & III Skills Week | A fantastic week where we have onld and new skills shared amongst the Wollangarra and Stage II & III community.       |
| Dec16 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup>  | December Stage II          | Head up into the High Country and do some work to give back.  |
| Jan 14 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> | January Holiday Stage I    | Introduce your friends, family, cousins, classmates to Wollangarra now is the time. Call Wollangarra to book 51480492 |
| Jan 20 <sup>th</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> | January Stage II           | Heading up to the high country. Call homestead to secure a spot   |
| Jan 26 <sup>th</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> | Fruit Bottling Work Party  | Come one come all for this huge community event. Call the homestead on 51480492 to RSVP                               |

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

# Thank you to...

**The Neeves** for having us to the Newry Ball  
**Kathryn Snell** for letting us crash over and steal your bed!  
**David Booth** for babysitting Elliot.  
**Dane, Clarissa and Shannon from Glenfalloch Station** for giving us a tree planting project, a demolition job and two hut rebuilds.  
**Ralf Baraclough** for being so skilled and helpful in project managing one of the hut rebuilds.  
**Mali Booth** for standing in for Clare and Jay when they went to Hawaii.  
**The myriad of volunteers** who've come out and helped on programs this year.  
**Dave and Jacque Stevenson from Aerial** for taking us boating.  
**Wayne, Bev and Kirsty McCallum** for an awesome dinner.  
**Neil Barraclough** for coming out and giving us a private tree grafting workshop.  
**Jamie Caffrey** for his tireless and beautiful work on the ever improving Outdoor Kitchen.  
**The Paul family** for your generous donation.  
**Hazel Brady** for feeding us all during the lead up to Open Day.  
**Monica Nitz** for your legendary tent erecting skills.  
**Rory and Mossie Brady** for wearing Elliot out every day during the lead up to Open Day  
**Kathryn Nitz** for being willing and able to take on any task during the Open Day lead up.  
**Ross Nitz** for buying coffee.  
**John Brady** for bring up the NSM food order, and heaps of veges, AND cooking an awesome Open Day brekky, AND for grabbing the staff a box of mangoes!! What a bloke!!  
**Huon Smith** for lots of great help during Open Day lead up.

**Angus McGillevry** for being there with us during the lead up to Open Day and providing plenty of muscle.  
**Patty Johnson** for helping out with Open Day prep.  
**Bernadette and Terri Young** for coming to Wollangarra for the first time and painting signs, cleaning windows and making the place look great!  
**Mali Booth** – because Mali Booth.  
**Don Dwyer** for calling the Open Day Auction.  
**Terri, Oscar, Gemma, Clare, Fraser, Kato, Fiora** for all braving the open mic.  
**Conrad** for felling and chopping up the big dead tree in the ODK yard.  
**Les** for your amazing work in our vege garden during Open Day.  
**Jack Gilbert** for being a great bloke, with great stories and quips and an amazing craftsman, examples of which ended up in our auction.  
**Lance Tucker** for coming all the way down and demonstrating in the forge all day.  
**Peter Frost** for coming in and working the forge.  
**Steve Carrol** for making the monster drive down for our Open Day and demonstrating superb firefighting skills all day.  
**Leslie Carrol** for donating amazing quilts to our auction.  
**Col Marion** for demonstrating woodworking on Open Day.

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