

# SEPTEMBER 2012

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1 Yoga 8am  Pappinbarra RFS HR Burn 10am	2
3 Losing it in the Bush 1:30pm	4	5 Bellangry Pottery 10am	6	7 First Friday 6pm	8 *Council Election *Hollisdale RFS Registration 2pm *Beechwood Bash 6pm	9
10 Losing it in the Bush 1:30pm	11	12 Bellangry Pottery 10am	13	14	15 Yoga 8am	16
17	18	19 Bellangry Pottery 10am	20	21	22 Yoga 8am  Farmers' Market 8am-12pm	23 All Saints Church 2pm
24	25	26 Bellangry Pottery 10am	27	28	29 Yoga 8am	30

Look through the *Pitchfork* for all the details of the events and programs found in the calendar.

### Hastings Farmer's Market

In September the Hastings Farmers' Market will be coordinated by our very own Ryan Barter and Emma Frost. They take over the reins from Elly Franchimont and Patrick McEntee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> while Patrick and Elly are holidaying in Ireland. September is a good time for visiting the market because spring will be in full swing. This means you can shop for freshly harvested spring produce and then relax under the tree in the Wauchope showground and watch Emma and Ryan work while you're sipping your coffee. As usual, the market will be held rain, hail, or shine at the **Wauchope Showground from 8 am to 12 noon.**

### Days Gone By – Farewell Patrick and Nancy Van De Linde

We met Pat and Nancy in January 1999 at a party Kathy Dowler held to welcome us to Pappinbarra. A few weeks later I ran into Pat at Beechwood Store; he asked me how moving in was progressing. When I told him that we had ripped up the floor coverings to find masonite stapled every couple of inches to the brushbox floors, and that I was having great trouble extracting the staples, he said he would come and "have a look at it". Next morning there was a knock at the door - Patrick with a box of tools. Without further ado he set to work on the staples and worked out the best way to get them out. Morning tea, lunch, lots of chat and we were firm friends.

I soon learned this was typical Pat. No sooner did he hear of someone in need of help than he was on the doorstep. He and Nancy had come to 927 Pappinbarra Road from Bonny Hills in 1980. They had a beautiful garden around *Wildridge*, the house they built on the hilltop, with an orchid house and citrus trees, wallabies, and a huge shed to house Patrick's ancient tractor and woodworking machines and tools, as well as a room at the end for Nancy's looms - built by Patrick. He was a person just bursting with energy, running rather than walking, full of good humour and interested in conversing about almost everything! Nancy, a truly gentle and lovely woman, while in no way as ebullient as her husband, was ever-welcoming and gracious. Spinning and weaving since the family moved to Tamworth from Hong Kong in 1968, she made curtains, tweeds, cushion covers and tea towels, regularly winning prizes at the Royal Easter Show and giving beautiful gifts to family and friends. I have two old chairs repaired by Patrick with seat cushions of Nancy's handspun, handwoven wool.

Born to Methodist missionary parents in Hong Kong in 1915, Nancy was sent to England at nine for schooling then went nursing. She met Patrick at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, where he was completing his medical training. Born in Surrey in 1918, he graduated as a junior surgeon in 1942 and was called up shortly after the outbreak of war. They were married on a freezing February day and had a few days honeymoon in the New Forest before Patrick was sent off to Yorkshire with his regiment prior to being posted overseas. He ended up in China with the British Army Aid Group, an 'underground' unit which cared not only for POWs and escapees but also refugees, local soldiers, guerillas and peasants.

Meanwhile Nancy had given birth to their first child, Margaret. Patrick moved to work in medical and industrial health for the Hong Kong government after the war; Nancy and Margaret took a troopship to meet him there. Barbara, Gerard, James and John

were born during the following years, and all grew up speaking fluent Cantonese. They had a spectacular garden, growing every tropical fruit and orchid imaginable. As well as caring for her own, Nancy was a volunteer at a local orphanage for abandoned Chinese children for over 17 years.

Patrick retired from his job as Hong Kong Director of Health in the late 60s; he moved with Nancy, James and John to be Director of Health for the New England/North West Region based in Tamworth for ten years. All the family except Margaret followed to Australia.

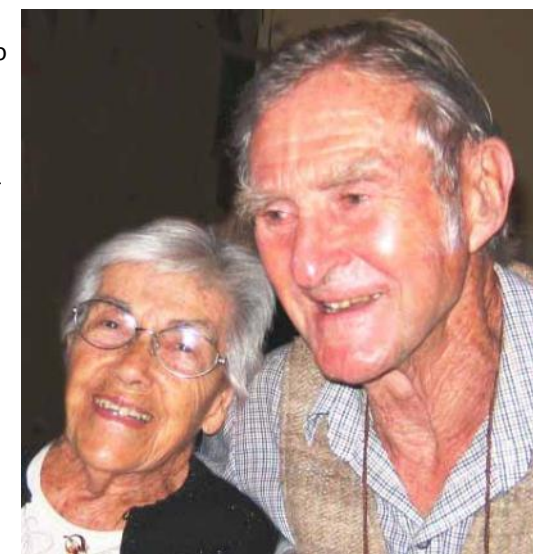
When Patrick and Nancy arrived at Pappinbarra, the locals had just begun to resurrect All Saints' church, a task Patrick threw himself into with legendary energy while Nancy commenced weaving cushion covers for the pews. Years later, when re-piering and re-painting the outside were in progress, Patrick's enthusiasm was undimmed. He was up on the roof when a crash and a yell made everyone fear the worst, but he had merely dropped the shifter he was using to secure the cross!

The 'children' persuaded Pat and Nancy that a move to Wauchope was in their best interests; we certainly missed them in the valley although they continued to come to services at All Saints' for a long time.

Nancy died in June this year. After asking his sons was there anything else they thought he should do, and being answered in the negative, Patrick closed his eyes on 21 July and peacefully passed on. Thus ended the lives of two incredible people - true Christians who lived by their faith, never wasted a minute, and didn't fear the end.

Those of us who came into contact with them were enriched and inspired. Farewell Pat and Nancy.

**Jean Hegarty**



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## No Saturday Sing Along on the 8th Sept

Elly is away and Council elections are on.

## No Yoga Saturday 8th September

Due to Council elections.

## Critter of the Month - Eastern Common Froglet

Winter is a pretty quiet time for frogs in the valley. But one of the smallest of our local frogs is also the bravest and most of you would have heard them creaking away right through the coldest period of winter. Common Froglets are tiny animals, barely 2 cm in length and they really are common in many areas, mostly because they will use just about any kind of habitat, provided it has enough water for at least an attempt at breeding.



The call of a single frog is a loud 'grrrrccckkkk' but when many are calling together it can sound like lots of people sawing through pieces of wood. The call is made by males and serves a couple of purposes - attracting the females which are slightly bigger than the males, and telling other chaps to keep out of your way. A male will call in even the smallest puddle of water and if he is successful in attracting a female, he will clasp her about the waist from behind in what is called amplexus, and the pair will then enter the water to lay eggs. The eggs are laid one by one or in small groups, sometimes stuck to grass or sticks, or just dropped onto the muddy bottom. About two hundred eggs is an average effort for one session. Tadpoles hatch after 7-10 days and measure about 8mm long. Depending on the temperature of the water and on how much delicious algae they can find to eat, they take from 6

weeks to 3 months to finish their growth and transformation into a small frog. Not too many of the 200 or so eggs in a clutch can expect to make it all the way though to become a small froglet - most become a snack for a bird, a dragonfly larva, or a fish. This seems sad but if all of the 200 became frogs and each of them laid 200 eggs etc, we would all be buried alive in frogs. With the weather now starting to warm up, many other kinds of frogs will soon start to become more active and more obvious as they start to call through the night. Over the next couple of months we will be starting out on a process of surveying the frogs of the Pappinbarra Valley, partly out of curiosity to find out what is around but also to work out whether we can do anything more to keep our local frog populations healthy. We hope that some *Pitchfork* readers will be willing to learn a bit about frogs and help us with the survey over the coming years. An introductory educational session about local frogs will be held in early October - see October *Pitchfork* for details.

Ken Aplin and Angela Frost, 'Tullamore'.

## Bush Dance

What a great night in perfect weather! Lots of new faces, lots of young people and **just** enough room to do a two-hand-swing. It was lovely to have the *Jugged Hare* back and they put on their usual lively performance. Thanks to all the guests who helped make supper such a fine spread. A very big thank-you to Michele and her team at *EcoWild* and Danny and Natasha at *Beechwood Store* for selling tickets. Many thanks also to Bryony for the poster art work, and to everyone on the set-up and clean-up teams - Bryony, Chay, Emma, George, Jan, Jean, Kelly B, Pete, Rob, and all the little helpers.

Bev Sibthorpe



## Plant of the Month - Giant Parramatta Grass Crown Rot Fungus (*Nigrospora oryzae*)

A couple of months ago I featured Giant Parramatta Grass in *Plant of the Month*, and after recently talking with a mid-north coast weeds officer, I thought it would be of interest to detail a relatively new development in the control of GPG (and other weedy *Sporobolous* grasses, or WSG's for short) - *Nigrospora* crown rot.

I was fortunate to attend a meeting of the New South Wales Environmental and Aquatic Weed Biological Control Taskforce whose role is to investigate and advise on biological control agents for plant pests. The group includes representatives from local government, regional weeds authorities, DPI, National Parks and - on occasion - their interstate counterparts from Queensland (we share many of the same weeds). *Nigrospora* was 'discovered' on the north coast only a few years ago and is considered naturally occurring. Being a fungus, it spreads naturally as wind- and water-borne spores and when they colonise a Giant Parramatta Grass plant (under favourable conditions i.e. warm and moist) it kills the host plant by infecting the crown (the clump of growing points at soil surface). Under controlled research conditions where the fungus has been introduced, *Nigrospora* has been recorded as reducing tussock size by 78% over 15 months and tussock presence (quantity of plants) by 64% over 12 months.

'Tell me more!' you say. In on-farm situations, the crown rot can be introduced from another area by simply transplanting infected plants and then either left to spread throughout the farm or further transplanted.

There is an excellent fact sheet produced by the DPI which can be viewed online at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/>

[pdf\\_file/0008/440729/Nigrospora-crown-rot-for-biocontrol-of-giant-Parramatta-grass-Primefact-1239-web.pdf](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/440729/Nigrospora-crown-rot-for-biocontrol-of-giant-Parramatta-grass-Primefact-1239-web.pdf). For further information and before introducing plant material from another farm, I recommend contacting Council's Noxious Weeds Officer to find out where infected plants might be sourced and the correct hygienic protocols for doing this.

As always, feel free to drop any plant ID specimens in my mailbox (sealed plastic bag please) (2011 Pappinbarra Rd) with your details and I'll get back to you.



<http://www.coffscoadadvocate.com.au/story/2012/06/04/help-parra-grass-identified/>

**FURTHER INFORMATION - Port Macquarie-Hastings Council** (Noxious Weeds Officer) 6581 8111; **NSW Dept. of Primary Industries** [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) or 1800 808 095; **Weeds Australia website** [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au).

## What to Plant in the Vegie Garden This Month

It's very easy for the weeks to come and go and suddenly you realise you've missed the best time for planting things you want your garden to produce in the coming months. Alison Robinson from *Greenbourne Nursery* has kindly agreed to contribute this regular feature to help keep us on task.



## What to Plant in September

This is the optimum time to plant asparagus & rhubarb crowns and seed potatoes (old favourites and newer varieties include: Pontiac, Dutch cream Desiree, Sebago, Nicola and Sapphire Blue). It's also time to plant via seed or punnets tomato, cucumber, beetroot, lettuce, shallots, Asian greens, sweetcorn and herbs.

Alison Robinson, *Greenbourne Nursery*

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