

PITCHFORK

Pappinbarra Valley Monthly News

Pappinbarra Progress Association

March issue

Valley Happenings

PPA welcomes new members Kees de Meer, Chris Woodlands, George Campbell, Angela McGuire and Will and Natalie Mrowka. Thanks to all the folk who have renewed their membership. Do join PPA if you haven't already - the more members the merrier and the better we are placed to access grant funds. Pay at First Friday or complete the form on P8.

Local Member, Andrew Stoner, visited the hall in connection with the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership Program. He was interested to see where the gas heaters funded by their grant were to be installed and encouraged us to seek grant funding for our future hall extension.



Elly Franchimont and Sue Frost with local MP Andrew Stoner at the Hall.

February First Friday saw a huge crowd arrive to enjoy the barbecue and conversation, and many participated in the PLCG Grant Show and Tell session. More details in *Conservation Corner*. The Members' Draw was won by Julie-Anne Murphy. Peter Wall won the raffle and chose the Hastings Fruit and Veg voucher.

March First Friday will be at the hall from 6 pm on **Friday 7 March**. All welcome! Cooks will be the *Tallawong* crew - Todd, Belinda and Dallas. There will be the usual offerings including vegetarian and gluten-free options, juice and soft drinks.

Hollisdale RFS will meet at the fire shed at 7 pm on Wednesday 5 March for a training session. Full uniform essential.

Pitchfork Choir will sing at the hall from 10 to 12 noon on Saturday 8th March. Come and try it out! You don't need to have a fantastic voice - it's all about having some fun singing together and getting to know each other a bit more. Bring something to share for lunch afterwards if you feel like sticking around for a little while. Cost \$10 (\$5 goes to the Hall).



All Saints' Church

Services are held on the fourth Sunday of each month (Sunday 23 March) at 2 pm with a cuppa 'off the back of the ute' around 2.45 pm. All welcome for the service and/or the cuppa afterwards. Bring a plate to share.



Anyone for tennis?

The season's comp is under way at the Recreation Grounds, Upper Pappinbarra. Cost \$5 per night. Contact Robyn Flanagan 6587 6011.

Meet the Neighbours - Suzanne Leigh

Having lived in the area since 2004, Suzanne decided that the Pappinbarra Valley ticked all the boxes for her, bought her property on Misty Vale Road, and moved to our beautiful valley in 2010.

Suzanne was born in Sydney and lived in various part of that city during her school years. Her dad was a multi-talented man - a buck jump rider, horse breaker, stud bull preparer and later on a statue maker...

When school days were over, Suzanne moved with her parents to Armidale where her dad managed a property and prepared stud bulls. She helped him and has fond memories of catching eels, which her father loved to eat. She and her mother were not so keen!

From Armidale the family moved to just west of Moree to manage a sheep and cattle property near Telegegra. Suzanne helped, working as a jillaroo. They suffered big floods in the area and after two years moved to Tharwa, south of Canberra.

This property was huge and very beautiful but freezing cold. Suzanne and her mother had the fire cranked so high that they set the chimney on fire! They only lasted six months before moving to Goodooga on the NSW Queensland border. Much warmer!

This was a Church of England Property and consequently did not have to pay taxes. Some rather underhand shenanigans took place with a previous manager and this was not a very happy time. Suzanne became engaged to a jackeroo called Wayne Lancelot Spence, but marriage didn't eventuate - for various reasons. Remembering the bore drains which ran for miles and had to be cleaned out using a delver, Suzanne recalled following the delver with her mum, picking up hundreds of the yabbies that lived in the drains. What a feast!

From Goodooga the family moved to a 250,000 acre property at Wanaaring, so Dad and Suzanne had a very busy time. Mum,



raised in the city, wasn't as active on the farm but Suzanne describes her as the rock that held the family together when things went wrong.

From Wanaaring the family moved to Coonabarabran where they purchased a 1500 acre property and ran a Santa Gertrudis stud. They also had stud stallions; Suzanne handled the mares brought in for service and broke horses to the saddle. During the last few years of their ten years at Coona, the district suffered a terrible drought; they had to feed their stock on the roadside. Suzanne's dad branched out into statue making; she helped by making the original in clay, either hand building or turning on her wheel, so they made quite a team.

In 1990, on a much smaller Gympie property of only 50 acres, the family business of statue making took off. Dad made the statues and Suzanne and her mum packaged and took orders. Then they would all head off to the local markets to sell their wares...

Suzanne describes her life as happy; she was spoilt and protected in a close-knit, loving family. She was, therefore, totally devastated when her parents both died of cancer, a day apart, in 2001. She sold up in Gympie a year later and moved south with her many animals, eventually ending up in our valley. She regrets leaving Gympie but feels she has come home in Pappinbarra.

Many of us really got to know Suzanne during the production of *Bushed*. She fearlessly took on the job of prompter - not an easy task with a cast that often ad-libbed when they forgot their lines!

Mary Walker

2015 Photographic Competition

Advance notice for everyone to dust off their cameras and start snapping!

The competition is open to all in the *Pitchfork* area to showcase whatever you like in our beautiful surrounds.

Categories are: Landscape, Farming, People, Flora & Fauna and 16 years & under.

Show your skill and/or your unique interpretations of our surroundings.

The comp will close and be judged in August.

Further information from **Sharada Boyce** by phone or email (see back page for contact details).


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Rural Fire Service Update: Hollisdale Brigade

First of all I would like to thank those community members who voted for the PPA to donate an extra piece of land to Council (about 2 metres more along the length of the shed). This will enable the Hollisdale fire shed to be extended to accommodate another truck plus install a toilet and shower. The access to the hall grounds through the big gate near the shed will not be altered. Now there will be a long process of talks, surveys, plans, approvals, grants, etc. etc.

Hollisdale's truck was deployed to Singleton in January for four days to help National Parks with a huge backburn. The crew was made up of one Pappinbarra, two Hollisdale and two Byabarra

fire fighters. Many thanks to you all.

I cannot believe how quiet it has been in our area. Even with high temperatures, dead grass, huge fuel loads and high winds we did not have a fire. Someone upstairs was on our side! The soaking rain we have had in the past week has been very welcome with over 100 mm at lower Pappinbarra. It's good to see farmers with half a smile on their faces.

Stop press: I have just been informed by fire headquarters that fire permits will be issued from Monday 24 March.

Chris Roelandts

BUSHFIRE DANGER PERIOD

No fires without a permit.

Prior to a burn you must to give your neighbours notice 24 hours in advance.

IN CASE OF FIRE – CALL 000

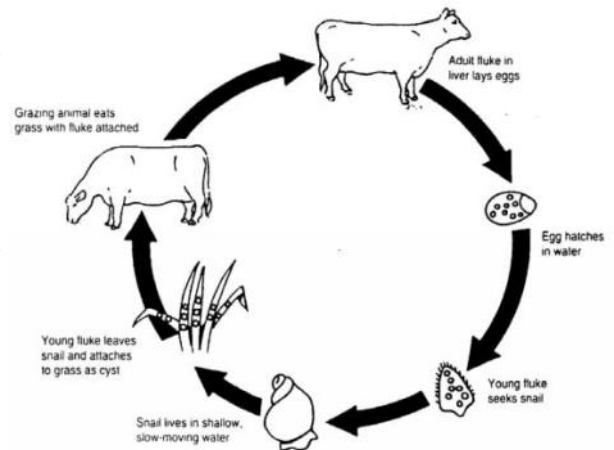
Fire Permit Officers: Upper Pappinbarra: Steve Ostler 6587-6090; Bob Ostler 6587-6180; Anthony Wall 6587-6127 or Andrew Jarrett 6587-6181; Hollisdale and Lower Pappinbarra: Lyn Blythe 6587-6186; Beechwood: Sam Elphick 0428-856-222.

Cocky Corner

I visited the 2012 Beef Expo at Rockhampton. I was interested to learn, talking with two Veterinarians, that liver fluke inhabits soaks in our region. *Fasciola hepatica* (liver fluke) costs millions of dollars in productivity in south eastern Australia each year according to the Department of Primary Industries (dpi.nsw.gov.au). It reduces lambing and calving rates and growth rates, reduces milk yield and wool quality and can lead to death. The cost is not just counted in productivity but also in treatment and prevention says the DPI and I know that the drench for liver fluke is particularly expensive. It not only infects cattle and sheep but also goats, pigs, alpacas and deer.

Preventing cattle access to soaky areas caused by natural springs could be a cheaper more effective long term way to reduce liver fluke infestation in your herd. This can be achieved through fencing off soaks and has the added advantage of increasing farm biodiversity. Strategic farm management can not only increase productivity and reduce costs but also enhance the environment.

Mark Hickson



Life cycle of the liver fluke

Heritage Week Events

Escorted Rail Escape to Wingham Monday 14 April. Depart Wauchope Station at 8.44 am; morning tea at MV Museum; two course lunch at Wingham District Services Club. \$65 all-inclusive (conc. \$55)

Escorted Coach Tour to Wauchope, Byabarra and Comboyne Thursday 17 April. Depart Wauchope 9 am, morning tea at Wauchope, two-course lunch at Comboyne Ex-Servicemens and Citizens Club. \$65 all-inclusive.

Escorted Cruise of the beautiful Hastings River Wednesday 23 April. Depart Port Macquarie 9 am, morning tea on board *River Princess*, own arrangements for lunch in Wauchope. Cost \$45 (excludes lunch)

Bookings essential. Enquiries and bookings: Jeannette Rainbow 65 851 895 or 0424 226 258

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Bird of the Month – Australian King Parrot

Scientific name: *Alisterus scapularis*

Other names: King Lory, Blood Rosella

Size: 41 - 43 cm.

Status: Secure.

The Australian King Parrot is a highly colourful member of the Parrot Family. The male has a brilliant red head, breast and underbody, dark green wings with a light green shoulder stripe, dark blue hind neck and rump, a long blackish tail, a bright yellow eye and reddish upper beak. The female differs by having a green head and breast, greenish tail, little or no shoulder stripe and a grey/black beak. Juveniles have plumage similar to females but have a brownish eye and pale beak.

They are found along the coast and the ranges of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria where they occupy rainforest, wetter eucalypt woodland and nearby farmland including orchards, parks and gardens.

The main foods of King Parrots are fruit and berries, but in



surrounding suburban areas they can be attracted to seed tables, even alighting on outstretched hands to take offered seed.

Their flight is strong but with erratic dips and changes in course. The bird often

calls while flying, giving a 'Arrk-Arrk' call. It also whistles while perched.

Breeding occurs from September to January. A clutch of 3-5 eggs is laid on bare debris at the base of a very deep hollow, usually in the trunk of a eucalypt. The female incubates the eggs for 20 days and is fed by the male during this time. This behaviour continues until the chicks are several weeks old. They fly at about five weeks.

The Australian King Parrot appears to be increasing in numbers in suitable suburban habitat.

Peter Fackender

For further information or questions related to this or other species contact can be made through this email address peter_fac@yahoo.com.au.



Hastings Farmers' Market

There are around 40 stall holders at the Hastings Farmers' Market offering not only fresh fruit and vegetables but also other fabulous local product including pork, beef, various local cheeses, smoked fish, free-range eggs and oysters. There are also hand-made chocolates, freshly cut flowers and delectable cakes. Add to that preserves, condiments, and some great take-away food and the Market is a great morning out for all the family with plenty of room for children to safely play on the showground lawns.

For further information and vendor enquiries contact: Elly Franchimont on 0424 220 937 or visit our facebook page www.facebook.com/hast.farmers.market

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Plant of the month: Banana bush *Tabernaemontana pandacaqui* Family APOCYNACEAE

This striking native shrub has paired fruit with a likeness to the edible namesake, but these are most definitely not edible. Like many plants within the Apocynaceae family (moth vine, cottonbush/balloon bush, etc), the milky sap is an irritant to the skin and eyes and poisoning can occur if eaten. Livestock also seem to shun the plant, presumably because of its bitter taste.

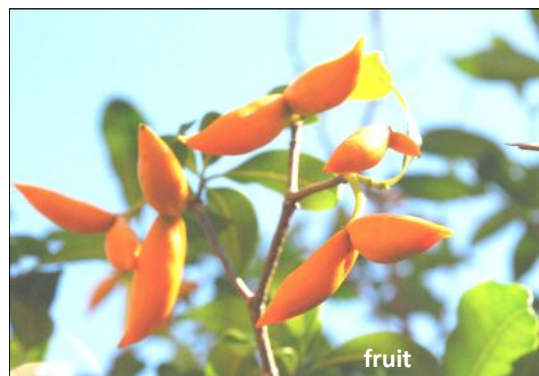


In Pappinbarra, banana bush is common and widespread, can be seen along roadsides and fencelines and regularly volunteers in house gardens, usually dispersed by birds attracted to the sticky red seeds in the open pods. It can occupy a wide range of situations and habitats, but is common on the margins of rainforest and in wet (and to a lesser extent dry) hardwood forests. It may also feature in the riparian vegetation along watercourses, although not usually close to the waters edge. The

shrub usually grows to around two metres in height with a vase-shaped habit, although some specimens reach three metres. The drawn-out, oval-shaped leaves are simple, arranged opposite each other on the stem and are slightly glossy. White flowers with five spirally radiating petals are borne in summer.

Notwithstanding the trait of being slightly poisonous (!), banana bush is an excellent addition to almost any garden. It is easy to grow, relatively hardy in most positions from sun to shade and offers an interesting and novel fruiting display.

Pete Michael



Regarding any specific or general weed (or native plant) identification or control, contact Council or the DPI for further information, but if you're still having troubles, please just call or email me (petewm@hotmail.com). As always, if you have any plant you'd like identified, pop a sample in a sealed plastic bag along with your contact details into my letterbox (2011 Pappinbarra Rd) and I'll try to identify it for you.

Further Information - Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (Municipal Ecologist or Noxious Weeds Officer) 6581 8111

In the Vegie Patch

This month we should be harvesting our final summer crops and preparing for autumn/winter crops. It's time to dig the patch over, adding compost and lime.

The rain has finally arrived, though not nearly enough. You have to keep an eye out for the little insects that come after rain such as aphids and scales. Also be aware of fungal issues that start when the humidity is high.

The vegies you can start to sow are: broccoli, cauliflower, peas, onions, spinach, shallots, cabbage, kale, carrots and lots more.

Greenbourne Nursery has a huge range of seeds (some organic) available for planting now.

Happy gardening!



Brendan

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**THE NORTHERN RIVERS - MORE ABOUT THE HASTINGS.
A BUNCH OF SETTLEMENTS. (From Our Special Reporter.)**

**PART TWO:
A MODEL FARM.**

Past Yarras Mr. John McLennan has what is regarded locally as a model farm. His disc ploughs, and corn planter, and general plant of modern farm Implements are one of the sights of the district. The neighbouring farmers gaze on them with admiration, but at the same time are slow to follow the good example set. Many of them have decided for themselves, on questionable evidence, albeit, that Mr. McLennan is wasting money - that is, that he does not make the most out of the farm for himself. Yet in the same breath they say, It is the most valuable farm on the river. "He is a good man for the district," they say, "because his profits go out in labour." Of course Mr. McLennan will smile, for he knows that he is making good money, and is at the same time living the life of farm luxury. There are a good many northern river farmers who if they knew how, might be Sybarites instead of slaves. Pigs, maize, and cattle, with auxiliaries, all scientifically handled make the tale of industry on Mr. McLennan's farm.


Up both sides of Forbes River, a tributary of the Hastings, which joins the main stream near Yarras, there is a big and prosperous community of small agricultural farmers. They grow maize and raise cattle, and amongst them all there is only one dairy farmer. No doubt the distance from the factory - about 30 miles - has made them fearful of venturing with cream, but nothing can long stay the flowing tide of dairying excepting a rooted aversion to hard work. On the same river about 50 miles from Beechwood there is Comer Station, a 1200-acre freehold, devoted in the main to dairying. The large output makes it practicable to work profitably at that distance, so there is much hope for the smaller man 20 miles nearer. There are some other fine properties on the Ellenborough River, which, rising beyond the Comboyne, reaches the Hastings about Yarras. The whole belt of country is magnificently watered, and one day must be a mine of direct and indirect revenue to the State.

Coming down the river again, and nearing Long Flat at a point about 21 miles from Beechwood, on the southern side there is a 1200-acre property that has just been acquired by Messrs.

Lindsay Bros, from Mr. Angus Kennedy for £3000. Just here the country opens back from the river, and the estate looks particularly well. It is current gossip that the late owner could not see enough profit in it, but the new owners are satisfied that they have a first-class investment. They have not yet had time to get thoroughly to work, but they are experienced men, and their success will cheer up some smaller holders who are prone to despair. There are, unhappily, too many such, but their naturally buoyant spirits quickly respond to instances of proved success in the face of only mediocre prospects.

At Long Flat, on the southern bank of the river, there is a long chain of rich maize fields. They are the property of an old resident named Henry, and to-day the crop looks well up to between 70 and 80 bushels to the acre. The property is made up of old purchase blocks of 30 acres, and also some selections. Two or three miles round the river Mr. Joseph Churchill and his two sons own farms aggregating 323 acres. The former has spent a short lifetime on the property, and has put £7000 into it in improvements. It has given him that and a good deal in addition. This farm is exceptionally placed, for it has 1½ mile of river frontage, but Mr. Churchill made his start with £200 as his solo capital, and not an axe had been put on the ground. A few acres are down in corn, but the money has been made out of cattle. Mr. Churchill occasionally sows oats for hay. He had hoped to harvest it, but the rust disposed otherwise. There is a pretty little bijou home just built out of hand-sawn and dressed local timbers; fruit and flower gardens surround it, and its bushhouse helps to bring it up to the standard of comfort sought by well-to-do English farmers. In a pocket of the river about four miles from Beechwood are Hardie's Plains, a comfortable sweep of partly undulating alluvial country of not quite first-class quality. Probably about 800 acres here cut up into ten or a dozen farms, and just at present most of them show rich holds of maize. One or two are used for grazing, and one or two are dairy farms. The establishment of the Co-operative Butter Factory at Port Macquarie is having its effect, and before many seasons dairying will be the staple of the place.

Continued next month.
Mary Wagg



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Editor's Musings

We often have visitors from overseas who come to stay and work on *Slieve Mor* as WWOOFers - willing workers on organic farms. They join the WWOOF movement and agree to work 5-6 hours a day for their keep. Hopefully, the arrangement is of mutual benefit - we get jobs done and they experience life in rural Australia.

Some arrive with the conviction that the river will be full of crocodiles and the bush full of snakes; when I tell them I have lived in Australia all my life and have never personally known anyone who has been bitten by either a snake or a crocodile, they find it hard to believe. While they are looking for snakes and crocodiles here, the birds are singing and flying around them, but they fail to notice them! We get 'the bird book' out. Suddenly they start to hear and see the birds; their time in the garden or the paddock becomes much more interesting. They come in for smoko and head for the book to identify their latest discoveries.

Before we came to Pappinbarra, my husband would never have seen the fences in a farming landscape, let alone paused to see

how they were constructed! Some wise person whose name seems to have been long forgotten, once said: *You only see what you are looking for; you only look for what you know.* The truth of that dawns anew every day we have WWOOFers here, or we go for a drive and look at things we wouldn't have been conscious of in our previous lives.

Those who believe that this world and all its creatures were created by a divine being must derive infinite joy from coming to know about all God's creatures - from ants to snakes and crocodiles. Buddhists try to not even step on an ant...

Others, with the view that the earth had a more cataclysmic origin, see its living things related to their environment and to each other in a complex web - endlessly interesting, fascinating, riveting and perplexing.

Knowing what to look for and seeing the diversity in our surrounds enriches everyday life and work - just one reason to try to look after the plants and animals that were here before us.

JH

Conservation Corner

At the last PPA First Friday monthly BBQ the Pappinbarra Landholders Conservation Group (PLCG) ran a "Show and Tell" of our activities. The purpose of the evening was to welcome new members and to inform the Pappinbarra Community of PLCG activities, in particular the achievements for the Local Land Service grant. Approximately 40 locals gave up some of their Friday evening to interact with our presentation and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Of course, any individual or group can apply for grants such as this.

PLCG thanks the local community for their interest and extends that appreciation to the Deputy Mayor Adam Roberts, Councillors Michael Cusato and Sharon Griffiths, North Coast Local Land Service Officers Lindy Brown and Hugo Marree and Council Ecologists Thor Aaso and Bill Peel who were also in attendance. <http://plcg.net.au/>



Kelly Miller

Editor's note on *Conservation Corner*: If you google 'Hastings Landcare', you will get an overview of the sorts of projects that were funded by the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Program of 2013-2014. 26 grants were given across the Hastings, Macleay and Nambucca areas for such activities as riverbank stabilization and restoration, erosion control, tree planting, fencing riparian zones and limiting stock access to waterways. You can register for the Landcare newsletter on that site and be informed of future funding opportunities.

Local Land Services and Landcare update

Local Land Services (LLS) North Coast will be running a series of farm planning workshops to help farmers develop a comprehensive farm plan to include stock and vegetation management, business planning and climate change preparedness. The subsidised program will start in Wauchope on Monday 10 March and run for 12 weeks with a workshop every two weeks. All bookings through the Landcare office 6586 4465.

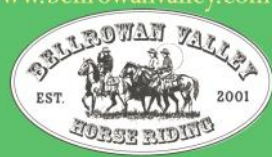
You can also book through the office for two Hastings Landcare events:

Feral Animal Control; Wildlife Nestboxes Sunday 6 April

Native Bees; Weed Control Essentials Saturday 12 April

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PPA Matters

PPA Committee meetings – Usually the Friday before First Friday at 6pm. All welcome.
General Meetings – quarterly. Next general meeting will follow the AGM in July/August. All welcome.
Facilities for Hire
Hollisdale Hall – contact Sue Frost 6587 6129
Upper Pappinbarra facilities and tennis court - contact Damian Privett 6587 6185

Pitchfork

Circulation

Pitchfork has hardcopy and email circulation of approximately 350. It comes out on the weekend **before** First Friday - **Friday, 28 March** for the **April Issue**. Material for the **April Issue** to the Editor by **Thursday, 20 March**. We run both casual and regular **advertisements** at very competitive rates. Contact Sharada Boyce.

Production Team

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Advertising: Sharada Boyce sharadaboyce@yahoo.com.au 6587 6079

The views expressed in *Pitchfork* are not necessarily those of the PPA.

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Vice President: Mary Walker 6587-6055
Treasurer: Sue Frost 6587-6129
Secretary: Elly Franchimont 6587-6097

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Send cash or cheque made out to "Pappinbarra Progress Association" to: Sue Frost, 2751 Pappinbarra Rd, Pappinbarra NSW 2446

