



PITCHFORK

Pappinbarra Valley Monthly News

Pappinbarra Progress Association

July 2017

Valley Happenings

PPA welcomes new members wherever they live. For only \$5 per adult, avail yourself of the pleasure of belonging to the group of volunteers who support the community and maintain Hollisdale Hall. Join us at First Friday. AGM is at the hall on 21 July.

Bushfire benefit concert in support of the **Rebuild Pappinbarra** appeal: Sydney's Royal Australian Navy Band will pause at Laurieton on their Queensland and Northern NSW tour to perform at the United Services Club on 2 July 2017 at 4pm. Hastings Concert Band, some of whom fought the Pappinbarra fires, will be supporting. See poster back page.

Pappinbarra Community Market - Grown and Gathered is on Sunday 2 July. Come along and bring the family from 9 am to 12 mid-day for a country experience with beaut food and coffee and live music! No PPA jumble stall till further notice. Stall enquiries to Lisa on 0418 220 138.

[grownandgatheredcommunitymarket](#) on Facebook.

First Friday get-together is on from 6 pm at Hollisdale Hall, Pappinbarra Road on 7 July. Come along and enjoy the company. Don't worry if you don't know anyone - we make all feel welcome! Vegetarian and gluten-free options included in a tasty low cost menu. Soft drinks available. BYOG.

June First Friday saw Sharada Boyce's number pop up for the members' draw but she wasn't there so it jackpots for July. Many thanks to Adrian, Christine and Suzanne who did the cooking for FF and the market and to all who helped with the set-up and clean-up. Your willing assistance is most appreciated.

All Saints' Pappinbarra: Service on Sunday July 23 at 2 pm with afternoon tea around 2.45 off the back of Murphys' ute. All welcome. Bring a plate to share.

Rural Fire Brigade training for Pappinbarra and Hollisdale members is on the second Saturday of the month: 8 July 8-10 am. Meet at the hall in full uniform.



Working bee at the hall Sunday 11 June had to be postponed. Watch the notice board for a new date.

At Winter's Turn performances 13-14-15 July, 6:30pm. Tickets at [trybooking.com](#) and also at Wauchope Travel. See poster this page.

At Winter's Turn

A Mid-winter Feast with Music, Entertainment and a Promenade Performance of a Pappinbarra Mystery Play



At Hollisdale Hall, 13, 14, 15 July

Roast Dinner Banquet (with vegetarian option) and the Show
Full \$35, Conc. \$25, Kids \$15, Family (2 adults, 2 kids) \$70
BYO drinks, cushion and blanket

Book online at [trybooking.com](#)
or buy tickets at **Wauchope Travel**

Pappinbarra Landholders Conservation Group

Welcomes New Members

Would you like to get involved with PLCG? We're a small incorporated group of landholders that formed in 2013 to work together to improve the conservation values of our individual properties, and through that, of the valley as a whole. To date we've put in about 3,000 hours of bush regeneration work on member properties.



Morning tea and lunch are always feasts!

We have a working bee at one of our properties every 5 weeks, on a Sunday. We start early (at a time depending on the season), work until lunchtime (with a break for morning tea), then share a fabulous potluck lunch followed by a short general meeting. Over the years, with lots of great support from Council and the wonderful bush regen experts who live in our valley, we've accumulated lots of know-how. By getting involved you'll be able to contribute to and draw on this wealth of knowledge - about the flora and fauna of this wonderful valley, about the best approaches for prioritising and managing weeds, and about what to plant where.



You can get involved in one of two ways:

- By becoming a working-bee-property member you'll get two working bees on your property each year, which will work out to be about 100 hours of work. Annual property membership fee is \$50.
- By becoming an individual member, you'll simply participate in working bees on member properties whenever you can. Annual individual membership fee is \$15.

The working bees are thoroughly enjoyable - there's a convivial atmosphere, the work is varied, we take safety very seriously, the meetings are short ... and the food is always delicious!



The team are ready for action!

On top of all that, the rewards for effort are great - it's amazing to watch the return of native bush, either due to natural regeneration once the strangling effects of weeds are removed, or to planting. The recovery is rapid and so rewarding.

If you're interested in getting involved we'd love to hear from you. Contact Patrick McEntee on 0400483305 patrickmcentee18@gmail.com or Bev Sibthorpe on 0409249921 bsibthorpe@bigpond.com

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Insect of the month: Wanderer butterfly *Danaus plexippus*

Here we are in winter - cold nights and some sunny days - but it seems that summer's butterflies are still with us. One reads that butterflies have short lives - this big black and orange species lives only 4-6 weeks in warm weather, but as the nights begin to cool, new generations of adult butterflies leave the inland areas of Eastern Australia and migrate towards the coast, where they can survive in non-breeding state for up to seven months.



tiny caterpillars emerge and gorge on leaves and blossoms, secreting the poison into their skin. Their bitter taste and warning colouration warn potential predators of their toxicity; only pied currawongs and black-faced cuckoo shrikes seem to be impervious. Two weeks later, fully-grown larvae spin a pad of silk on the underside of a leaf, attach by their tail end and enter the next stage of

their life cycle - a pale green pupa tinged with tiny black spots and a gold band, beautiful but perfectly camouflaged. In warm weather, the adult butterfly emerges after three weeks to feed on nectar, fly, mate and reproduce. It, too, is poisonous to consumers!



Back in the 1960s, I was part of a research project conducted by Dr Courtenay Smithers, Curator of Insects at the Australian Museum. Provided with a stash of tiny sticky labels, volunteers tagged wanderer butterflies, which finders returned to the museum, so that Smithers could document their migration patterns. We found clustering sites in the Hunter Valley; others have been observed at Upper Rollands Plains and Lorne.

Apparently, there is demand for large numbers of wanderers to let fly (like balloons!) at celebrations like birthdays, weddings and even funerals. The honest curator of Coffs Harbour's 'Butterfly House' once told me that wanderers hate being confined - they like to fly free.

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JH



Pappinbarra Players latest

Pappinbarra has a great tradition of putting on entertaining plays. This one comes with music, laughter and a roast dinner banquet (there's even a vegetarian option). Come along to **At Winter's Turn** on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July at 6:30pm. Bring along your own drinks, a cushion and a blanket.

Tickets are \$35 full, \$25 concession, \$15 kids, and Family \$70.

You can book online at trybooking.com or buy tickets at Wauchope Travel

← Rob Williams - local comic talent in **At Winter's Turn**

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Solar Panels for Hollisdale Hall

Under the 2016 Holiday Coast Credit Union Community Partnership Grants Program, PPA applied for funds to install solar panels on our community-owned hall 'to provide power for running the refrigerators and freezer and to run the electric hot water system'. Thanks to HCCU, we were successful in obtaining \$2900 towards this project. We had quotes which needed \$4172 for implementation, so had to re-think what to do. After exhaustive deliberations and input from members with experience of various solar systems, PPA committee decided

tales of good-hearted, trusting people being ripped off by these fly-by-nighters. As always, PPA likes to support locals and to promote local initiatives whenever we can. We find what goes around comes around! With local enterprises here for the long haul, they are going to be available to service their products and advise on maintenance and upgrades.

With the announcement of electricity price hikes, the case for solar power generation becomes more compelling every day.



Ged, Sophie and Ben's solar-powered homestead at Ellenborough

Power blackouts are bound to become more and more frequent; solar systems with grid connectivity don't function during outages. While small generators can be used in emergencies like the aftermath of the Pappinbarra bushfires, stand-alone solar systems look increasingly attractive. As well, there is so much changing in the solar industry so quickly, with prices falling amazingly.

In this land of sunshine (just try to forget the past few weeks of 'soft Irish weather'!) our future is solar. Did you know that Australia, one of the sunniest countries on earth, ranks ninth in the world for solar uptake - behind the EU, China, Germany, Japan, US, UK, Italy, France and Spain? Shame on us!

that it would be better to install solar panels as part of a system which could be upgraded to stand alone when funds became available. So the latest addition to our community-owned hall is visible on the north-facing roof!

Pappinbarra is seen as a haven for people consciously looking for other lifestyles, with a

We'd like to stress that we approached reputable local businesses to do the initial quotes for the grant and thank them very much for those quotes. We have been made aware of 'solar sharks' circling - pestering people to install solar and selling systems into this area at double and even triple their costs - cheap panels and appalling inverters that soon fail and when they do, the shark company is long gone. There are sad

strong commitment to the planet, sustainability, health and life choices. Each business that supported our application for solar was keen to showcase a solar installation at the hall; we thank everyone involved. We are especially grateful to Ged McCarthy, selected from a strong field, for his particular commitment to making sure the committee had all the information and education it needed to make a financially sustainable and smart choice in terms of solar.

Ged is a licensed electrician and builder who chose to specialise in solar over 15 years ago when the idea of a solar powered future sparked his passion. *Continued next page...*

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Ged has been living a fully solar powered lifestyle since 2003 and understands the lifestyle choices and education needed to make the transition to solar power. First he asks potential clients for their old power bills so he can understand their power usage and patterns before inspection and working out what solar is possible for the site and budget. While grid-connect was all the rage during the Government's Solar Bonus Scheme, now more and more people are electing for systems with battery back-up, so they can be self-sufficient in times of power

He bought 400 acres in Ellenborough in 2003 and four years later he did a solar quote for a single 40-year-old female buying a farm nearby. Sparks flew; they were married in 2008 and Ben joined them later that year!

outages. The grid is ageing and failing and while successive governments dodge the climate change bullet, ordinary and intelligent citizens are taking ethical purchasing decisions into their own hands. See Ged's ad on Page 4.

Editor's musings

The horror of the destruction of London's Grenfell Tower by fire gives us all reason to pause. London 'rumbles on' but the people of and around the tower feel let down by authorities, complaining that no-one is helping them. Communication is lacking, and, as less well off members of society, survivors feel exploited, having been housed in a building which 'met minimum standards' only. What has happened and why is seemingly much more important than helping the survivors.

In Australia, our building standards are more rigorous we are told. Is the cheap Chinese-manufactured plastic cladding which combusted in so disastrous a fashion permitted for import by cost-cutting entrepreneurs? Australians need reassurance that sprinkler systems and fireproof escapes are mandatory for such buildings. Londoners will be demanding them; too late for those who perished in the inferno, texting farewells to friends...

From our rural valley, high rises are a very distant prospect. Not so fire. The comforting, friendly fire of hearth and home, lit daily by many of us in Pappinbarra for warmth or cooking, is a familiar friend. Mere months ago, the enemy went on a

rampage. It bears repetition that, were it not for the preparedness of our RFS and countless volunteer firefighters, we could have seen a tragedy reminiscent of other fiery disasters.

In the aftermath, PPA quickly organised a meeting so that authorities could communicate directly with those affected by our fires. Various agencies came so that people could speak face to face with them, not having to wonder who, what and how. The immediate and wider community rallied - a glance at previous *Pichforks* shows just how widespread and generous the support. Practical, direct help happened - of the sort that appears lacking for the Grenfell Tower folk in London.

Jean Hegarty

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Critter of the month: is it a frog?

You could be forgiven for thinking that the crickets have been very noisy lately, for one wouldn't expect 'cold-blooded' animals like frogs to be active at this time of the year, let alone in full voice! Encouraged by the recent rain to go into reproductive mode, male eastern common froglets (*Crinia signifera*) have been drowning out most other night noises with their 'come hither' chorus.

If you arrived in Pappinbarra after September 2012, you won't have seen Ken and Angela's article on *Crinia signifera*. It's good, so here it is again.

Some of the smallest of our local frogs are also the bravest, and croak away through the coldest period of winter. Common froglets are tiny animals, barely 2cm 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, will clasp her about the waist from behind in what is called amplexus, and the pair will then enter the water to lay eggs.

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 the 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 six weeks to three months to finish their growth and transformation into a small frog. Not too many of the 200 or so eggs in a clutch will make it all the way through to become a froglet - most become a snack for a bird, a dragonfly larva or a fish. This seems sad but if all 200 became frogs and each laid 200 eggs etc. we would all be buried alive in frogs.

Ken Aplin and Angela Frost



In the Veggie Patch

It's time to prepare the garden for potatoes with a range of varieties available now. They are easy to grow, high yielding and OK for long term storage. The best part is that home-grown taste.

Rhubarb is good to go now - try 'Red Dragon', a true red stem variety and there is a new, easy to grow, purple variety of asparagus. Plant the crowns for long term benefits.

Are your peas not coming up? It could be mice or rats pinching the seed under cover of darkness or the early morning riser. Some options are to place netting over your crop, or use artificial bird decoys, such as eagles and owls with reflective glass eyes. These are relatively cheap and somewhat effective in keeping the rodents and birds at bay.

If the glove fits: nowadays there are lots of different types of

gardening gloves - cotton and nylon and some with a waterproof silicon coating. Greenbourne recommends Redback or Red Hog series gloves (our best seller). They are cotton/nylon backed so they breath well, and dipped in rubber on the front. Best suited for veggie gardening or dealing with firewood keeping your hands splinter free.

Weed watch

Spray bindii and lawn weeds before the end of July to stop them in their tracks!

Happy Gardening,

The Greenbourne Team

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Beechwood Festival 2017

Beechwood School P&C has invited Wauchope District Historical Society (WDHS) to be part of their festival this year – an expansion of the popular 'Billycart Derby'. We propose a display on the history of Beechwood. Did you know that when Wauchope was a cluster of bush huts, Beechwood was a thriving township? Things only changed when Wauchope won the railway; originally the plan was a tunnel under Bago. Then the construction of Bain Bridge turned Beechwood into a sleepy village while Wauchope forged ahead. If you have anything to contribute on Beechwood's history, please contact us!

History Week September 2017

The theme for the NSW History Council's History Week this year is 'Pop culture'. WDHS, with the assistance of Wauchope Arts Council, is mounting a display on the history of Wauchope's

Regent Theatre. Contact us if you have memories to contribute or would like to be involved.

PPA and Wauchope District Historical Society are planning celebrations next year for the **Centenary of the Ellengrove schoolroom**, part of Hollisdale Hall. We would like to interview anyone with memories of the school and to copy any old photos people may have. A 'Back to Pappinbarra' weekend is planned and we are anxious to hear any suggestions from interested people – current and former residents of the valley. We can be found in the Local Studies area of Wauchope Library every Tuesday and Wednesday morning.

WDHS committee – Mary Wagg; Jeannette Rainbow; Daphne Salt; Sue Frost; Rob Tickle; Jean and George Hegarty.

Kendall District Gardeners Biennial Horticultural Speakers Day

10am to 3.30pm Saturday 29 July at Kendall Hall

Sydney's Diego Bonetto is a whizz on edible and medicinal weeds; Tony Moore, a local vet, dazzles with butterflies; Diamond Head's Terry Wright, rainforest guru, shows you how to grow bush tucker and wildlife-attracting rainforest species. Local Greenbourne Nursery's Brendan Harris will talk about perfume and colour as he traces new, old and timeless flowers.

So eat weeds and grow a garden or rainforest patch alive with butterflies and plants from our local nursery!

All for \$15 + morning tea. A pre-ordered three-course lunch is on offer for \$15. Plants and steel garden structures for sale. Bookings 6556 9677.

RFB Report

Hi All, Don't get complacent and think 'it won't happen to me' or 'we will never have fires like February again!' With the unpredictable weather patterns we don't know what is on the agenda for us.

There were a lot of problems discovered in the February fires and with a little bit of knowledge we can all be better prepared.

There will be a community meeting on Saturday 12 August at 2 pm at Hollisdale hall. RFS staff and volunteers will be available for questions and there will be a demonstration on what you can do to help protect your life and property.

Cheers,

Chris Roelandts
Hollisdale captain

Fire permits are not required but check the RFS website to make sure and notify your neighbours 24 hours in advance. Fire Headquarters must also be notified before lighting any fires on 6588 9000.

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Pappinbarra Community Connect

To connect with Pappinbarra Valley residents for trading, swapping, selling and other services go to Pappinbarra Community Connect on Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/850891678290572/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/850891678290572/)

(Admin Damian Privett)

To find out more about our monthly 'Grown and Gathered' market (or to give us a 'like'!) go to [facebook.com/grownandgatheredcommunitymarket/](https://www.facebook.com/grownandgatheredcommunitymarket/) or google 'Grown and Gathered Market'

President's message

Who are we seeking to become?

We get what we invest in. The time we spend comes back, with interest.

If you practice five minutes of new, difficult banjo music every day, you'll become a better banjo player. If you spend a little bit more time each day whining or feeling ashamed, that behaviour will become part of you. The words you type, the people you hang with, the media you consume...

The difference between who you are now and who you were five years ago is largely due to how you've spent your time along the way.

The habits we groove become who we are, one minute at a time. A small thing, repeated, is not a small thing.

Lisa McLeod

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PPA Matters

PPA Committee meetings – every third Friday of the month 6 pm at the Hall. Interested members welcome.

Hollisdale Hall Hire - booking essential. Contact George Hegarty 6587 6077.

Upper Pappinbarra facilities and tennis court - contact Lisa McLeod 0418 220 138 or Robyn Flanagan 6587 6011

Pitchfork

Do you have suggestions for items in *Pitchfork*? Are you a budding writer? The editor is seeking new contributors and is more than happy to work with anyone who has ideas for our newsletter. Contact Jean by email jeanmay@activ8.net.au or phone 6587 6077. (Copy may be edited for reasons of space or clarity. The views expressed in *Pitchfork* are not necessarily those of the PPA).

Advertising Contact Liz Gough lizabeth52@hotmail.com 0473 170 761 for info on both casual and regular ads. If your business would like a one-off A4 advertising insert in *Pitchfork*, provide us with 300 copies and we will distribute for \$30. Deadline is 26 July for the August issue. Classified ads are free for members.

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