



April 2007

Robertson News

Edition 59

www.robertsonsw.com.au

Robertson Railway Station's 75th Anniversary

The year 2007 is 75 years on from the year 1932, which saw the official opening of several important pieces of infrastructure in NSW, including the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Perhaps less well-known than the bridge, but also important to the people of NSW was the opening of the Unanderra-Moss Vale link railway line through Robertson on 20 August 1932. Like the Harbour Bridge, the construction of this line took place during the difficult times of the Great Depression. Over the years, the importance of this railway line to the economy of NSW and Australia has increased; it is now a major link in the Australian railway system.

Robertson railway station was opened with the line on 20 August 1932 and on Saturday, 18 August 2007 many people will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of the opening of the line. To commemorate this important occasion, the NSW Rail Transport Museum is running a special passenger train from Sydney to Moss Vale and return, traversing the Unanderra-Moss Vale line on both the forward and return journeys. The train will be hauled by iconic steam locomotive 3801 to Wollongong, and from there it will be assisted by a further two steam locomotives up the steep grades of the Illawarra escarpment to Robertson and continue on to Moss Vale. On that day, Robertson will witness the most unusual sight of a 'triple-header' featuring three heritage steam locomotives. It promises to be a spectacular sight.

Robertson Heritage Railway Station (RHRS) will be hosting events at the Robertson railway precinct to commemorate this significant anniversary. These include an exhibition of railway items in the Fettle's Shed Gallery, refreshments will be served at the station, there will be a ceremony at the Bert Flugelman commemorative monument near the station and, of course, the arrival and departure of the special steam train on both the forward and return journeys. It promises to be a great day, where we can enjoy the experience as well as promote Robertson and its attractions to the wider community.

RHRS is also planning to issue a commemorative booklet this year to coincide with the 75th anniversary. While a good deal of relevant information is at hand, RHRS seeks further information from people who have personal experience with the railway line through Robertson, particularly in the days of steam-train operation or when passenger services were provided by a rail motor.

If you have knowledge of this, or know someone who does, please make contact with Ian Wallace on 4885 2848 or Helen Tranter on 4885 1394. Any information provided will be a valuable contribution to the compilation of the booklet and will assist RHRS in compiling a list of people who should be invited to the 75th anniversary commemoration celebration at Robertson station on 18 August 2007.





Announcing the return of the Southern Highlands' most outstanding musical success of 2005.

The Burrawang Wildes Meadow Progress Association in association with The Burrawang School of Arts Committee proudly presents **Autumn Arias 2007** in The Burrawang School of Arts Hall.

The community of Burrawang experienced two sell-out concerts full of great spirit, good humour and excellent music-making in April 2005 and the audience were awe-struck by the talent assembled in the charming setting of the historic School of Arts Hall.

Three stars of Australian opera will again perform a varied and magical programme featuring arias, duets and ensembles by Mozart, Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Strauss and more. Drawn from operas such as Madame Butterfly, Carmen, Lakme, The Marriage of Figaro and The Barber of Seville, there will be something to please every listener, whether operatic novice or aficionado. Added to that will be the rich sound of a twelve-piece ensemble featuring musicians from Australia's most highly acclaimed orchestras.

The afternoon concert will feature a one hour programme of popular works and family tickets are available.

The evening gala concert will have a two hour programme and the ticket price includes a chicken and champagne supper at the conclusion of the concert

FOR BOOKINGS: Mrs. Virginia Stewart 4886 4244

FURTHER INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS:

Roger Press 0418 441 215

Email genrog@bigpond.net.au

Proudly Sponsored by the Burrawang Wildes Meadow Progress Association Inc. and The Wine Society (a not-for-profit Co-operative)

WHEN
Saturday 14th April, 2007

Afternoon : 3.30 pm

Evening : 8.00 pm

WHERE

Burrawang School of Arts Hall
Hoddle St. Burrawang,

TICKETS

Afternoon concert : 3:30 pm.

\$30 per Adult

\$15 per Child (under 18 years)

\$70 per Family Ticket

(2 Adults & 2 Children)

Evening Gala Concert : 8.00 pm.

\$70 per Adult (no concessions)

including supper

(one interval of approximately 20 minutes)

VINTAGE & CLASSIC CAR DAY –Robertson Heritage Railway Station

Vintage and Classic Car Day-Easter Sunday, 8 April

This year we will again be hosting a vintage car day on the Railway Common, It will be on Easter Sunday. This will be our 4th year and each year it gets better. Some 80 cars of all ages and types provided a great show last year. We had lots of people through the gallery and the common was a hive of activity and fun all day. This year Murray Power will be organising a participants' choice series of trophies for best British, European, American, Australian and Japanese cars 30 years and older. These prizes, judged by car enthusiasts themselves, will provide some more excitement for attendees and car buffs. Anne Wilson and her crew will be running a delicious hot food kiosk. Highlands artist Penny Levett is arranging an art show in the Fettle's Shed gallery called Paintings for the "Birds" (pretty things for the girls to admire while the guys ogle the cars) and the station history display will be open. There will also be a loop train run by 3801 Ltd., of vintage train carriages hauled by a vintage diesel, across the Highlands to Moss Vale and back. It leaves at around 1.00pm and returns at 3.00pm. Tickets for this fun ride can be bought at the Station. We are hoping to have some live music as well.

We hold these events on the 2nd Sunday of April so that people can go to the village market at the School of Arts and make a full day of it.

If you would like to lend a hand please let us know (Steve-Ph. 4885 2393) and tell a friend particularly if they have a classic car. All are welcome.



*Southern Highlands
Funerals*

Colin & Laurelle Boland

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Small Cow Farm Wins at Sydney Royal

It is just over 18 months since Small Cow Farm first began selling the delights of their efforts to the public – they have come a long way. The cheese, made from a blend of Dexter milk (the world's smallest cattle), has been increasing in popularity at Farmers Markets as well as local and South Coast outlets. In addition to a 2006 Sydney Cheese Show GOLD medal for their Fetta in Brine, they now have won recognition at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Small Cow Farm's Marinated Fetta and Fetta in Brine were each awarded a SILVER MEDAL! It is encouraging that small local producers are making an impact on a national level.

www.smallcowfarm.com



To Be or Not To Be Political

Now that the silly season is over and yet another very forgettable episode in our democratic process has been laid to rest, the time is ripe to consider just what it all means. The looks on the faces of the voters as they entered polling booths in Robertson, Glen Quarry and Bowral seemed to say it all. There was a definite suggestion of complete weariness with the whole process: neither major party had done much to impress and voters could be forgiven for thinking there was nothing to do but go onto autopilot and vote the way one did last time. A typical sort of Pavlovian response, the bell rings, push button A and go home.

Correct me if I'm wrong. Was there a hint of a feeling in the air that there is no point in voting? I'm doing it because I have to? What do you get for your vote anyhow?

I think the problem really is, we have let the people we elect get away with simply not representing us. We have forgotten how to make any attempt at 'keeping the bastards honest'. Blinded by an institutionalised tendency to follow the Westminster system, we have all been lead away from the Australian Constitution, which enshrines our right to be represented by those we elect. For our "representatives", following the party line and not the wishes of the good burghers who voted for 'em has become the key to political success, namely getting a promotion into the Ministry. Meanwhile, that attitude has turned the whole process into a huge yawn – for the populace at large. We have all just lived through it. Politics has nothing to do with the people any more. There is a disconnection from reality here. Politics is, and always should be, about the people. We have strayed so far away from the process that it has become a negative thing to be 'political' at all. The lobbying of a selection of political parties to try and achieve any ends at all is regarded as "just not done". We have been taught to do just what the polities have done in disenfranchising us in the first place. If your party of choice does not want to help you with a grievance, because it breaches the party line, then you have to be a good little boy and lump it!

Not only do we now get the polities we deserve, we are also getting the treatment we deserve because we all meekly roll over and take being disenfranchised by the 'party line' time and time again. In this mess, no one seems capable of determining the clear difference between touting political principles and pushing partisan beliefs!

As an example of what I'm saying, the established local leaders of an environment movement are seemingly asleep at the wheel, while the greatest threat to that environment is allowed to loom over our heads. Why the silence? Because, after all 'we can't be political now, can we?'

So, those who supposedly know all about environmental issues stick their heads in the sand, like ostriches. It then falls to others, many without experience in campaigns on environmental matters, to try to re-invent the wheel. After all, this threat, the pumping of the Kangaloon Aquifer, is being run by the same people as were largely responsible for the last big environmental debacle in the district, at the Wingecarribee Swamp, namely the Sydney Catchment Authority. But some local people have established a cosy relationship with the local SCA officers, and they prefer not to jeopardise that relationship. Shame about the environment. The same can be said of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which as an institution, has totally failed in its Charter to defend an area for which it has joint custodianship. But have the established environmental spokespersons, some of whom have advisory roles on various NPWS groups, said anything? Not a word. Shame about the environment, once again.

Meanwhile, the local population, who look to the recognised environment group for leadership on this issue, wonder why this campaign is being lead by a bunch of 'amateurs' with no established local track record. A very hard task is made ten times harder because no-one quite understands what is going on.

In the lead up to an election, to adopt a "non-political" stance, and say nothing, is to be totally political. Worse, it risks being seen as playing partisan politics. It is time for the local leadership of the environmental movement to be answerable for their inaction.

Without some clarification from our absent custodians, a crucial battle may well be lost for all time.

Bernard Eddy

The Kangaloon Aquifer

The Federal Department of Environment and Water Resources (DEWR) (in Canberra) has the power to step in and protect the Kangaloon Aquifer from being pumped. The Department has the power, but we do not know yet if their masters have the political will to do this. It involves State and Federal Government instrumentalities, and could become a battle of Government against Government.

The Sydney Catchment Authority was granted approval for a "one month" trial, which began on 26 February 2007. The SCA is pumping from its 7 bores along Tourist Road, and the water is being pumped into the Nepean River in two places. The most visible is just below the Nepean River crossing point, about 1 Km east of Kirkland Road, East Kangaloon. The second is just west of Kirkland Road, where the white pipes veer off the road, and down into the bush, beside what is known as Wallaby Creek.

The SCA have told the DEWR people that they will read the various test bore figures on 30 March 2007, and then their consultants URS will prepare an analysis of draw-down figures, etc to determine the effect of the pumping on ground water levels, and specifically on Butler's Swamp, which is a "listed" Endangered Ecological Community. They will have that Report reviewed by an expert, and then will submit it to the Federal Department on 20 April.

Anyway, the Save Water Alliance will go back to Canberra to meet with the Departmental officials, late in April, after we have had a chance to look at the report of the SCA's "one month's trial pumping". We hope by then to have our own "expert" analysis of the relationship between groundwater levels (hence "pumping") and the local environment, particularly Butler's Swamp. We hope to persuade the Federal Environment Department to step in and declare that the SCA should not proceed with this pumping. Even if they do make such an initial determination, there will be further inquiries, and an Environment Impact Statement (E.I.S.). Then a final determination would be required to be made.

Traditionally the Federal Government is reluctant to make such declarations. But at least we know the Federal Authorities are listening. Ultimately, it is a matter for Mr. Malcolm Turnbull MP, so keep hoping and praying that he will make a favourable decision.

We have pursued a media and State-level political lobbying campaign, but we have also been doing behind the scenes lobbying with Departmental officials, and we know they are listening to us.

Although we are pursuing this battle primarily on "environmental" grounds, we are well aware of the potentially devastating impact that long-term pumping from 60 bores could have on the local farming community. As we told a group of local farmers recently, the Dragonflies in Butler's Swamp have better legislative protection than the dairy farmers and potato growers do. While there is no justice in that situation, we are using what powers which do exist, as a way of protecting the local farmers. I am pleased to say that many farmers are now supporting us in this endeavour.

Denis Wilson, Robertson.
Chairman, Save Water Alliance.

RESIGNATION OF ALEX WALKER

The resignation of Alex Walker from the Upper Nepean Groundwater Community Reference Group (CRG) last Monday could not have occurred at a more crucial stage in proceedings.

Councillor Larry Whipper has been appointed spokesperson for the group. His first task was to write to Premier Morris lemma and ask for a suitable replacement as soon as possible. Everyone on the CRG is keen to get on with the vital chore of acting as intermediaries between the Sydney Catchment Authority and the public - a job they have taken with great care and responsibility for the past ten months.

On 30th March, the 'trial' pumping results (over the last 35 days) will be tabulated and a consulting firm (URS) will write a Test Pumping Report to be Peer Reviewed by Don Wooley. This report is expected to be ready to go back to the CRG - and thence to the public on the 20th April.

The Save Water Alliance has arranged to return to Canberra to talk with the Minister for the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Malcolm Turnbull's key advisers as soon after the 20th of April as possible.

Bernard Eddy

Old Potato Shed

Gallery

Signatur Handknits
Mollydale Yarns
Belisa Cashmere
Honoré Leathergoods

The gallery displays an ever changing selection of work by Australian craft makers, artists and designers including
Leather : Metalwork : Handknits : Etchings : Cards : Jewellery :
Paintings : Hand-dyed Yarns : & much, much more.

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COMMUNITY NOTICES

WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WOMBATS

On Friday evening, 13th April, at Robertson Community Centre (7.30pm), Gaylene Parker of Wingello will be addressing REPS on the whims and ways of wombats. The first wombat came into her care in 1986 and, as a founding member of WIRES, she has almost lost count of the number of native animals that have passed through her door and are still coming. As Wombat/Koala Coordinator, she has rescued and rehabilitated injured and orphaned wombats, koalas and other native wildlife. Recently, with the assistance of Sydney University, she began a research study of the survival of hand-raised wombats in the wild using radio-telemetry. She is gathering interesting information on how to live with animals so often regarded as pests. All welcome, lively discussion, light refreshments (gold coin donation)



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BRANCH

Creatures of the Deep and Not So Deep

What's changed since the Jervis Bay Marine Park was established? – Pia Winberg, the next speaker in the National Parks Association's guest lecture series, is especially qualified to answer that question. She's the research project officer at the Jervis Bay Marine Park, where she is studying the biodiversity of Jervis Bay estuaries.

Pia will present an overview of NSW marine protected area research and illustrate the results of her own Jervis Bay work, including some exquisite tiny creatures. Some of her work shows that certain species and habitats are in the early stages of recovery – a good news story for a change!

7.30 p.m. Tuesday 1 May
CWA Hall, Elizabeth Street Moss Vale (next to Fire Station)

Refreshments Gold Coin Donation

FOR MORE INFO & INTERVIEW: Pia Winberg 4441 7752 or 0428 421 815



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At Robertson Recollections

26 Hoddle St, Robertson 9.30 - 5.30 (Closed Wed.)

The Kangaloon Aquifer

Public concern about the intended pumping seems to be having some effect on the NSW government and the Sydney Catchment Authority.

Yes! They are pumping from 7 bores along Tourist Road at present, but the substantial series of significant rainfall events guarantees no damage will be done within the scope of the one month test requested by Canberra.

It also prevents any meaningful gauging of 'draw-down'. In other words, so much water is flowing into Butler's Swamp at present, they could pump for quite a while and not run the risk of the groundwater disconnecting from the ecological system - thereby risking threatened species. The surface water is flowing in such quantity the pumps are well behind the race at present.

The Alliance will continue to lobby Malcolm Turnbull, work with other conservation groups and generate as much info as possible to allow the public to make an informed decision on this issue.

Visit the web site www.savewateralliance.org.au or em_savewater@hinet.net.au for more info.

Will report further soon.

Bernard Eddy
Robertson Chamber of Commerce

Church Services

Anglican

St John's Robertson

8.00am Traditional Services
1st Sunday- Communion
4th Sunday- Morning Prayer

9.30am Family Service/Sunday School
Every Sunday

St David's Burrawang

8.00am - 2nd Sunday - Communion

Uniting

Robertson

9.00am - Every Sunday

Roman Catholic

Burrawang

1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays - 8.00am
2nd & 4th Sundays - 5.00pm

*Robertson Christian Group now meets at
East Bowral Community Centre*

Bowral Kids Clean Up Robertson

The Bowral Pathfinder Club took part in the recent Clean Up Australia Day in Robertson. The Pathfinder Club, which comprises of kids ages 10 to 15, is part of a worldwide organization, which is run and sponsored by the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Both kids and adults had a great time scouring the length of Hoddle Street, sporting ovals, and around the railway station for rubbish. "It was amazing how much rubbish has been washed into creeks and drains after the recent heavy rains," reported Phil Herford, the club director. Thirteen large bags of rubbish were finally collected, with rubbish ranging from glass bottles, to large pieces of builder's plastic. Even a cricket bat and toilet seat were among the items collected! The kids reckon it's cool to care for our world and our local environment!



Contribution Guidelines

Community Service Announcements, articles and diary submissions are free of charge. All items must be submitted by deadline dates and may be modified at the editors discretion. To avoid extensive editing please limit announcements to 25 words, and articles to a maximum 300 words. It is preferable that submissions be typed or emailed. Thank you.

Advertising

A single insertion is \$35. (Discount of \$5 for members of Robertson Business Association) Each insertion is limited to a maximum 85 x 55 mm. Advertisers are responsible for meeting submission deadlines. Any copy received after the deadline is unlikely to be included. All advertising is payable in advance. All advertisements to Dorothy Baker at the Old Potato Shed gallery (4885 2400). Thank you for your support.

Deadline

The next issue will be distributed in the first weeks of **June**. All advertising & submissions must be received by **15th May 2007**. Forward correspondence to: **Robertson Newsletter, 64 Hoddle St, Robertson 2577**, or **Email: bjlee@dodo.com.au**. (Submissions are best supplied by email or on disk. Hard copy should preferably be typed) Enquiries - 4885 1210

Disclaimer

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Editor : Barry Lee