

Faster Internet for Robertson?

By Owen Greenwell

Robertson has never been listed on the National Broadband Network (NBN) roll-out plan for the next generation of high speed internet access. Being higher up and further away, normally a good reason to live here, meant laying fiber optic cable was never likely.

While cities and larger towns, such as Kiama, have been connected with FTTN (Fibre To The Node) technology using a physical cable, NBN Co have been promoting a wireless or satellite solution for regional areas.

This type of connection may be a few small steps closer to happening in Robertson.

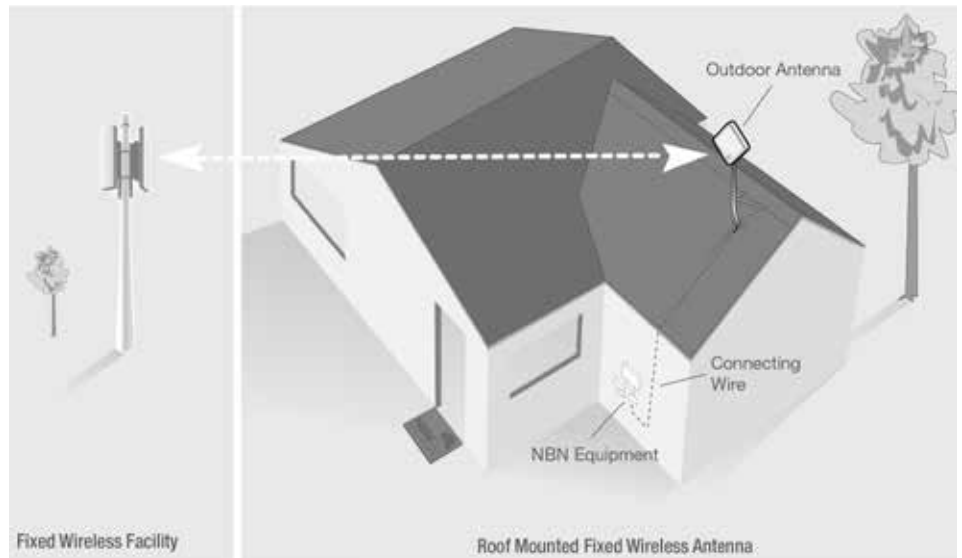
On 27th of March, NBN Co held a Community Information Session in Bowral promising to reveal details of what the Robertson area, including Burrawang, Wildes Meadow and Bundanoon can expect in the future.

Fixed Wireless is the service that will be offered. NBN Co staff were on hand to explain the process and the technology behind it. Before delving into the specifics for Robertson, what is NBN Fixed Wireless?

This service uses LTE or 4G technology, just like the data service available to mobile phones.

However, the mobile phone network is designed to cover a larger area and offer service to anyone with a phone for that network. This might be a resident or someone passing through at 100km/h. However a set amount of bandwidth is available at any given time and this can lead to variable performance or congestion. For example, you may have been to a sporting event or concert where a sudden increase in the number of phones has overloaded the available network.

While using the same basic tech-



NBN Co. diagram showing a residential connection to Fixed Wireless

nology, NBN Fixed Wireless dedicates capacity on the network to each subscriber. As more subscribers sign up, so more capacity is added to the network. Each home or business will receive a dedicated antenna, which will be installed on the roof with line of sight to the nearest NBN tower.

This will make the service both faster and more reliable than mobile phone data services, even during peak usage times.

"We are in the very early stages of planning and design for the fixed wireless facilities"

How does this compare to existing services?

Most people in the town will be using some kind of ADSL provided through the copper phone lines. The data speed rates advertised by NBN Co for Fixed Wireless are 25Mbps download and 5Mbps upload. This is similar to the theoretical maximum of

ADSL2, but remember that nobody gets those ADSL speeds in practice. The further you are from the exchange, the slower ADSL gets.

If you are too far from the Robertson phone exchange for ADSL, then NBN Fixed Wireless with its bandwidth allocation and better choice of usage plans will be a big improvement over current 3G mobile services.

NBN Wireless has an additional advantage in that it does not rely on the aging copper network in the ground and will not be affected by fallen trees, water or careless excavations in the same way the current phone and internet can be.

Also consider that the NBN is the future of internet access in Australia. This is where new developments and improvements will occur. In areas with full fibre access to the NBN, the copper network is being turned off.

Pricing for the service is expected to be in the \$50 to \$150 per month range depending on speed and usage plans selected.

How will it work for Robertson? According to the NBN Co representatives, *continued on page 3...*

From The Editor

By Vicki Ioannou

The icy cold crispness of our Robertson weather has left this editor with a yearning for much warmer climes. In the spirit of escaping, you will find within these pages the occasional travel story, the fun and fabulous experiences of Robertson people abroad. To sum it up in a phrase... watch this space!

In addition to our love of travel, there is, no less, our love of animals. This issue we welcome Emma Paloff (Talk to the Animals) as a regular contributor regarding the care and welfare of our beloved fur-babies. Naomi Janzen (When Research Dogs Retire) has discovered that there is happy ever after for retired lab test dogs and Geoff Spears (Sammy's Dramatic Rescue) recounts an amazing tale of survival, quite literally, from the edge.

Our cover story is the NBN - a topic that has concerned our residents for some time now and we have the latest, as reported by Owen Greenwell.

Robertson is a town that has its own links to the gourmet food scene, not to mention the recent big truffle find, which will have certainly put Robertson on the foodie's map and firmly in their sights! We have our very own quality restaurants in Pizzas in the Mist and Rockabellas. Rockabellas is the newest food stop in the town and aside from serving wonderful, traditional diner fare, it

has recently been open for dinner from Thursday to Sunday, with an albeit Mexican flavour. We couldn't resist going in on opening night and we were not disappointed: we loved the Vegetarian Chimichunga, the generously portioned Nachos and the divine frozen Blueberry Daiquiri.

Doug Tilley (Spuddies Celebrate their 100 years) recounts the history of our local football team and we get a report from the Garden Club President, Ian Roxby, regarding the planting of some very pretty cherry trees in the town. Sheila from P&S lets us in on her latest offerings from the world of fragrance, I still love the Ginger Milk Wash; pharmacist Nick Knowles' regular column is about sleeplessness and what you can do about it; not to mention a host of August/September activities planned at the CTC in Hoddle Street: the brilliant Sunday Cinema series from Tony Williams and Anna Hewgill; a writer's weekend to be hosted by Michael D. Breen and the always popular, Tech Savvy Seniors courses run by Karen Mewes.

Robertson looks great right now, so get out and about... why not drop into Rockabellas for a slider or go and see the lovely cherry trees. I don't mean to sound rushed, but I have a plane to catch... see you all again in the Spring!

*All the best,
Vicki*

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Please submit all article and event notices to editor@robertsonctc.org.au

The submission deadline for the October issue is September 20, 2014.

All submissions, advertising and payments must be received by this date to ensure inclusion. Any material received after this date will be held over for the next issue. Submissions may be modified at the editor's discretion.

CTC@ Robertson is managed by the Robertson Shed Inc.
PO Box 3069 Robertson NSW 2577
Ph: 02 4885 2665
info@robertsonctc.org.au

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Spuddies celebrate 100 years

By Doug Tilley

You could be forgiven for thinking that the most significant historical event to take place in 1914 was the start of World War I... but, in the little town of Robertson, it was also the inaugural year of the Robertson District Football Club.

In Robertson's first year of competition, the draw consisted of teams from Moss Vale, Mittagong, Wildes Meadow, Bowral, Thirlmere and Picton. The Grand Final saw Robertson defeat Moss Vale and take the 1914 Premiership.

Doug Tilly, present Captain of the Spuds (and descendant of original team member Bill Missingham, shown middle row far right of photo), is one of eight original families

from the 1914 side, that still live in the area. These families include the Mackeys, the Mortimers, the Hindmarshes, the Missinghams, the Gilroys, the Johnstons, the Clarkes and the Moloneys. Stories are told of the early Spuddies riding from the old sawmill to the various playing fields around the region, sitting on stools set up on the back tray of the old sawmill truck.

The Club will be holding a 100 years reunion dinner Friday, August 1 to celebrate the Club's rich history. There will also be a gathering at the Robertson show ground for all interested. For further information on these two events and to book, please contact the Robertson Inn by email at info@robertsoninn.com.au or phone (02) 4885-1202.



1914 Spuddies

...from page 1

Moss Vale will be connected to the main fibre network and act as a wireless hub.

Smaller repeater towers, built on high ground for line of sight, will provide the service to Robertson.

Although the plans were explained to be preliminary, the maps suggested NBN Co plan to use an existing phone tower and build at least two more towers, possibly with one in the vicinity of Robertson cemetery, and the other near Burrawang.

Before you get too excited, bear in mind this is a government operation in the early stages.

A follow-up call to NBN Co yielded the quote "We are in the very early stages of planning and design for the fixed wireless facilities."

No further updates to what was presented in March or dates of service availability were offered. In fact, the NBN website still does not list the Robertson area as even in "Build Preparation".

Wingecarribee Council has not received any development applications to build any towers.

Faster, more reliable internet is a tantalizing prospect for the businesses and residents of Robertson, But, as with any large scale project, it isn't happening in a hurry.

Be sure to register your interest with the NBN Co through their website.

Robertson News is following progress closely and will relay any updates.

NBN Co website:

<http://www.nbnco.com.au>

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When Research Dogs Retire

By Naomi Janzen

Have you ever noticed “This Dog Needs a Home” posters staring out from behind the glass at the Post Office, fluttering on the bulletin board at the Friendly Grocer or lying on the table at the CTC? Well, several Robertson residents did a lot more than just notice. Something about the eager, furry face in the photograph said “Hey, it’s me! Your dog!” and so, they took action.

The creator of those posters is Emma Paloff, a 34 year-old veterinary nurse from Robertson. Two years ago, she founded Senior Dog Adoptions with one goal in mind: to find homes for twenty-two retiring research dogs.

It was a monumental task. The dogs were all bitzers, ranging in age from three to fourteen years and, having never been outside the facility that housed them, they did not know

much about grass and trees, let alone couches, cats and house rules.

But Emma, who had made this her mission when she first learned of their existence, was undeterred. Though they were being given the best veterinary care, the best food and clean, dry accommodation, it is what they didn’t have that saddened her. Emma felt that after years of service to the veterinary products industry these dogs deserved more. They deserved loving homes.

To adopt one of these dogs through Emma is quite a process. In the words of Sonja who adopted Jack, a border collie/staffie/ kelpie cross, “I rang and she started asking me all these questions and suddenly, I’m thinking, am I being interviewed?” Though Jack was adopted mainly as a pet for her partner and their young son, it was soon clear that there was a special bond with this self-described

“cat person” who now cheerfully calls herself “a Jack person”.

Emma goes to great lengths to make sure the fit is right. “I used to have more prerequisites” she says, “then, I relaxed a little as I gradually saw that cat-free and totally secure fencing were not one hundred percent necessary”. In fact, several of her dogs have gone to homes with multiple cats and/or other dogs and there has not been a single problem. They are much more adaptable than she could have expected.

Another place where I got to see this firsthand was at Elizabeth and David’s home on Caalong Street. This time I was looking at not one canine newcomer, but two - a pair of gorgeous beagle/border collie crosses, named Tasker and Lilly - being treated very well by two very relaxed cats.

Just as before, I found not only grateful adoptees but, if it is possible, even more grateful adopters! David was effusive about what these two dogs had brought into their lives, writing to Emma, “Adopting Lilly and Tasker has been one of life’s most rewarding experiences for Elizabeth and me”. A note that Emma quietly says she will treasure forever.

But what about the challenges, I wondered. Surely, with dogs reared in a research facility, there must be some special considerations. Emma agrees that there definitely are, stating, “It can be tough for the first couple of weeks, because they just need a bit of time. Then, by the third or fourth week they are bonding nicely with their new family and adjusting to their new environment. When that happens, then there is no turning back”.

They have some special needs at first, explains Emma. They’re in a strange and scary new world and they depend on their new owners to help them learn to trust it. Sonja says it was challenging at times but she couldn’t give up because, she says,



David Henderson with Tasker & Lilly

"I knew he really needed me and he was really trying," she beams as Jack gazes up at her, proving this without a doubt.

Another plus is that these dogs have impeccable manners. Many new owners are surprised at how well behaved they are in the car, and even in shops.

She compares them to "garaged cars" that have lived a sheltered life, have had all their scheduled maintenance (shots and checkups), come with complete documentation (a full history and all health records), have very low mileage (all cross-breeds, they have that inherent hybrid vigour, stamina and health that purebreds sometimes lack because of inbreeding) and are very responsive (very focused on pleasing and being obedient, looking for leadership).

Which is why I was surprised to learn that the dogs were originally going to be destroyed at the end of their service because rehoming was considered just too daunting a task. It was Emma's persistence in reassuring the company that the dogs would be placed in good homes that persuaded them to let her try.

"When I learned that they were closing down in 2012, I offered... inquired ...insisted that I be given the opportunity to find homes for them," eventually convincing them to subsidise the dogs over a period of two years, hopefully giving enough time for the task ahead. As this deadline approaches, only three dogs remain unspoken-for. Four lucky dogs have been adopted by Robertson residents.

It would be a mistake to assume



Emma Paloff - three more dogs need to find new homes

the three remaining are deficient somehow. As Emma points out, it's not a matter of the others being "better" in any way. Rather, it is a matter of the perfect family having not come forward to claim these three yet. What does she mean by perfect?

"The right match in terms of the dog's temperament, exercise requirements, space, personalities, number of family members, other pets..." she explains, ticking off a list she knows like the back of her hand.


So, who are these three that still need homes? Their names are Bunny, Harley and Indiana, five and a half year-old littermates that are medium sized (20-25kg) cross breeds. According to Emma, Bunny is your girl if you are looking for a totally loyal female friend who is playful and devoted and active. She will need good fences or full time companionship and prefers to be an only dog as she is very "human-oriented".

Harley, on the other hand, needs an owner that is very experienced with

dogs and can be understanding of his introverted nature and the initial shyness that comes with that. As he is not an alpha dog, he will be happy with another dog who can be the leader. He can get overwhelmed by the energy of children so it will also need to be an adult-only/teenager household. Once he is comfortable in a stable place, his natural playfulness will come out and he will be a great companion for his humans and the other pets in the home.

Indiana is smaller than her siblings and is a real sweetheart. Affectionate and loving she will be best served by someone who won't leave her alone and will be happy to have her indoors. Emma has managed, against all odds, to rehome nineteen of the twenty-two retired research dogs she set out to rescue.


If you think you might be one of the remaining lucky owners-to-be, or are interested in providing a temporary foster home for one, or all them, call Emma on 0422 774 274 as soon as possible.



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P&S Are Back

By Ricci Wilson

And if you are like me and had not noticed, P&S has been back in Robertson for about three years, tucked away quietly in their not so new premises in the Potato Shed. Go there to sample all those sweet, intoxicating aromas - perfumes, soaps, body scrubs, bath & shower oils, washes, hand creams, candles, and room infusers plus much more. There are two new perfume releases - Alibi for the ladies and Men in Fast Cars for ...guess who?

It was whilst listening to Sheila explain to the customer the challenge of perfecting the Men in Fast Cars range, that my interest as to how a person goes about creating beautiful smells was piqued. "It is important to find the high note to complete the balance of the product", said Sheila.

Creating an unforgettable fragrance is an intriguing process. In the same way that music, art, love, food or words can transport us to a place of euphoria, or take us back in time, great perfume has the power to arouse deep lost feelings. I suffer from anosmia and when I asked Sheila about this, she said most people can smell six different aromas in a row - she can do twenty-four.

Formulating a perfume is similar to the construction of a symphony, she explained. All the notes have to blend and balance. Firstly, there are the base notes, which provide the stability to hold the creation together (things like sandalwood, cedar wood). Then, there are heart notes (often floral or herbal), and these are the ones the product is celebrating. Lastly, there are the high notes (usually light and citrusy), which are the ones that first announce themselves to the olfactory senses, and are usually the first to diffuse. I was told that some perfumes consist of all top notes, or all heart notes. Some perfumes consist of 200 different notes but, to date, Sheila has only ever had to use a total of 57, to achieve the



Sheila from P&S

result she was looking for.

I was keen to know how she had got into the business of perfumery - Sheila said it was probably due to her life-long love of flowers (although, as she explained, she took a few detours along the way). On leaving school, she pursued a career in journalism, and after that was involved in the fashion industry for many years. She then briefly studied perfumery in France, before realizing she had the gift of being an intuitive perfumer, so really only needed to learn the basic structures, and how to blend smells. She learned this by studying aromatherapy.

P&S uses only the highest quality synthetic building blocks (of which she has over 2,000), then there are the Essential Oils, and Accords. She will not replicate anything currently on the market, as she considers it unethical. Her clientele is predominately female. However, more men are starting to buy her colognes and shaving products, not to mention those special occasion gifts, which so many men find themselves at a loss to find.

Skin care is very much a thing Sheila believes both sexes need some education on, and she is particularly concerned that so many

people are using products containing petro-chemicals, which totally dry out the skin. I asked if she would be creating a truffle cream (given Robertson's recent fame), but she said it had already been done. Her advice to people wanting to care for their skin was to stay away from petro-chemicals, and get a good skin cream. As she said, "If you want to look ten years younger, you'll have to go to a good plastic surgeon!" With that, she also added that exorbitant prices and outrageous, false claims, "...just ain't going to do it for you!"

Her all time best seller is still the Fig & Olive line (a creation originally made by mistake).

White Flowers is back and so are the new editions My Little Black Dress, Alibi and Men in Fast Cars.

I could sing the praises of this Robertson icon all day, however, I did realise one of us was supposed to be working, so before I reluctantly took my leave, I asked Sheila if she had anything new in the perfume pipeline. I was thrilled to learn that Sunday Perfume Classes are very near to happening, so watch this space for more details.

www.perfumeandskincare.com.au

Robertson grown Truffle sets new Record

Yelverton truffles located at Robertson in the Southern Highlands of NSW 1.5 hours from Sydney, have received confirmation from the Australian Truffle Growers Association that they have indeed grown the largest recorded French Black Perigord Truffle Australia has grown to date.

Last week Ted and Barbara Smith of Yelverton Truffles were excited when they found a truffle weighing an impressive 630 gm. Little did they know this was going to be quickly out-sized.

Ted Smith couldn't believe his eyes when he started to uncover the record sized truffle weighing in at 1.172 kgs. "Our electronic scales only went to a kilo and failed" said Ted.

"We immediately jumped in the car and drove to our local Post Office as we knew they would have certified

accurate scales. Being a small country village Post Office they are accustomed to some strange requests but never to weigh a truffle!"

The previous Australian Record stood at 1.084kgs with the World record at 1.3kg (France).

Not only is this the largest specimen unearthed in Australia it also has excellent aroma and is free from defects. The truffle is on the open market for sale and will be a special buy.

There has been immediate and amazing interest from around Australia.

Yelverton Truffles produce French Black Perigord Truffles and are into their third harvest year. Truffle Hunts are also run through the harvest season between late May and August and are proving to be very popular.



Ted Smith with 1.172kgs of truffle

Robertson Garden Club

By Ian Roxby, President

Residents may remember that from Robertson Garden Club's 2013 Open Gardens, funds were raised for work to be carried out for the beautification of Robertson. As a result, the Garden Club purchased sixteen cherry trees for planting along Hoddle Street.

The planting of the trees was carried out on Tuesday, 15 July. All the trees have been given a very good start and have been protected by surrounds that were made by club members. Six trees have been planted on the south side of Hoddle Street

just before the railway crossing, while the others were planted opposite the Cheese Factory.

The Club is considering projects which may include extending the cherry trees further.

The planting could not have been possible without the dedication of Club members in discussions with Council officers and organising all that was needed to be done. I would like to extend the Club's appreciation to Greg Bray and Michelle Green for organising Council staff to plant the trees and to Ryan Petty and Jake Uecher for the professional way they approached the work. The Council should be proud of their contribution.

Steam Train Day

The Southern Highlander, run by Heritage Express will visit Robertson Railway Station on September 27.

The steam locomotive departs from Central at 8:45AM and is expected to arrive in Robertson at 12:50PM. The locomotive will remain on view for approximately two and a half hours.

Other attractions include miniature train rides, working farm machinery, train displays and a jumping castle.

For more details visit the web site at www.heritageexpress.com.au or phone on 1300 11 55 99.



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Write with us in Robertson

The Robertson Writer's Workspace will be a first for the Southern Highlands. Many of us would like to write (and write more), but need the dedicated time and triggers to get going. This is what the Workspace provides.

Participants will be given exercises to start writing and then opportunities to produce material and to share it. The writer is not a peculiar kind of person; every person is a peculiar kind of writer. Many people, unfortunately, have been put off writing by bad experiences in schools and criticisms of their writing. The Workspace is a place to learn to manage criticism.

At most writer's festivals, accomplished writers talk about their writing and sometimes read it aloud. Booksellers promote these events - they sell books. Also, the readers enjoy hearing the voices of their favorite writers and the writers enjoy meeting their readers. But listening to celebrities and buying books can be daunting deterrents from writing yourself.

The Writer's Workspace will provide exercises, ladders and tools to get going beyond a blank page, to ease writer's cramp and to produce material. Participants will choose from the many available places in

Robertson to do their own writing, in their own way. Exercises and presentations will show how to write dialogue, how to create scenery and how to tell your unique story (or stories).

Robertson is the home and inspiration for highly skilled painters, musicians, actors, sculptors filmmakers and other creative people. Now there will be an event for those who want to write in their own way. Writing is a somewhat lonely task and writers need to be nurtured. This weekend Workspace will provide company and comfort, for writing.

Some will want to write for their children, some will write to revisit times and events passed (but incomplete or still brimming with attraction). Some will write to understand the meaning of life and its many events, puzzles and mysteries. Some will write to explore their own spirituality, or to find what their spirituality is.

Michael D. Breen will conduct the Workspace. Michael has conducted many such workshops across Australia in cities and country regions. He was a Jesuit priest and is a Zen Buddhist. He is an English Literature graduate from Melbourne University and an educational psychologist. He has

taught in schools, universities and on community education programs. His work has been to help people and organizations build their potential and become more who they really are. He teaches English as a second language to needy children and adults in poorer parts of Thailand. Any profits from the Workspace weekend will go toward English teaching of these people of Isan (in Thailand) for whom learning English provides an escape from the pain of poverty by getting better jobs and by expanding their life options.

The Writer's Workspace will be held from Friday evening August 22nd till Sunday 24th at the Community Technology Centre on Hoddle Street, Robertson. Lunch will be provided on Saturday and Sunday.

The cost is \$180.00 for the weekend and \$150.00 for concession cardholders and students. There is a limit of 20 participants.

Participants will go home with written material and the joy of having created it.

To enroll:
email : michaelbreen9@gmail.com
phone: 4885 2180

What's happening at Robertson CTC

By Karen Mewes,
Manager CTC

The free Telstra Tech Savvy Seniors computer courses are proving to be very popular with all courses fully booked. The initial focus has been on gaining confidence in using the internet, email and online safety - essential skills that everyone needs these days. If you have missed out, give the CTC a call to go on the waiting list for the next round of classes.

Following on from these will be courses on basic computing skills, various Microsoft applications, Windows 8, tablet PCs (iPads, etc), basic photo editing and sharing.

Have you just got stuck with trying to do something on your computer? Don't worry, the CTC may be able to assist.

Aside from computing, there are art classes available (from time to time and subject to sufficient numbers) and the next cinema talk An Afternoon with Sir Dirk Bogarde will be held on

Sunday, August 10.

On Sunday, September 28, Andrew Ford will be hosting a workshop for music lovers. A Day with Beethoven - An Amazing Musical Journey. \$75 or \$50 concession includes refreshments and light lunch.

I am keen to hear what you would like from the CTC. We are open to suggestions, and if there is a course we can run or a group we can host, let us know.

Phone 4885 2665 or email Karen

Sammy's Dramatic Rescue

By Geoff Spears

In November of 2013 Alex Townsend, the owner of Wallaby Hill Farm, purchased an adorable four-year-old rescue Labrador named Sammy.

Early last month, on a sunny Wednesday afternoon Sammy went missing in action. On Friday, after numerous hours of concern, extensive searching and calling out his name, his owners feared the worst. Six days later, a local resident whose home is situated at the base of the escarpment commented to staff members at Murray's Tractors that a dog had been barking for the past four days, presumably stuck on a ledge on the escarpment face.

A call was put through to Wallaby Hill Farm and with this, hopes were raised and the search for Sammy commenced once again.

With many hours of trying to pinpoint the area where the barking

was coming from and with daylight dwindling, a call to the S.E.S. was made.

S.E.S. teams from both Mittagong and Wollongong arrived that evening to discuss the next steps.

However, the search was delayed until the following morning due to the harsh terrain and the dangerous nature of the rescue operation.

By mid-morning the S.E.S. worked their way through five hundred meters of thick bush to finally discover the whereabouts of Sammy.

He was spotted on a ledge, with a one hundred metre drop to the bottom of the escarpment. Two crew members abseiled some twenty metres to where he was and improvised a sling. Sammy was hauled back up the escarpment, and returned to his very grateful owners.

Sammy is now the proud owner of a new collar fully equipped with a tracking device ... just in case!



Sammy and her rescuers



...home safe

An afternoon with Dirk Bogarde

Robertson CTC, August 10, 2PM



Tony Williams will discuss the work of Dirk Bogarde. Bogarde's handsome appearance in British films in the '40s and '50s coined the title 'Matinee Idol'. However, it was in his later films with European directors in the 1960s where we find a deeper edge to his work.

A sample of this work will be shown: excerpts from the early 'Doctor in the House' series, *The Night Porter* and *Death in Venice*.

The feature presentation is the film, *The Servant*, from 1963. Directed by Joseph Losey and for which Dirk Bogarde won Best Actor at BAFTA.

Tony's discussion will be approximately 30 minutes and will be followed by a short interval.

The Servant runs for 116 minutes and is rated for adults only.

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Talk To The Animals

By Emma Paloff

This is not going to be your average 'How to Keep Your Pets Warm In Winter' style column - partly because there are much broader concepts to discuss regarding the magnificent animal kingdom, and partly because everyone knows you just wrap them in a cashmere shawl and pop them on a heated bed in front of the fire with a cup of soup.

What I hope to share here are some ideas that, though for some will be common sense, for others may stretch and hopefully open up new ways of relating to our fur-friends.

Let us begin with the well-explored dream of being able to speak to animals. Who did not grow up with a desire to be able to speak to animals? The thing is, as kids we all did. And most of us still do all the time without giving it much meaning. Talking to our animals is just one more thing that we doubt and de-value as we become well-conditioned, sensible adults.

In my work managing a dog and

cat boarding facility, it is completely normal for people to instinctively give the dog or cat specific information regarding their return, "I'll only be gone for 3 days" before they remember that they are in the company of another human and quickly add, "Aren't I silly" or "as if he understands" or "if only we could explain to them". The entire human race is silly for so many other reasons...including losing faith in its ability to commune with nature.

The most obvious, intelligent counter-point is that animals do not speak our language, so how could they possibly understand? If linguistic skills were a requirement, no doubt we would be signing our animal friends up for English/Spanish/Zulu classes. We have largely lost our ability to be silent, so while we could communicate just as well telepathically, we might as well use the sound vibration coming from our throat to convey our feelings and intentions. Imagine every word you speak carrying an energetic tone - a vibrational frequency which is perceived by the extraordinary senses

of our animal friends as love, fear, reassurance, frustration, anger, curiosity, joy, play, etc.

Practice being mindful of the energetic tone you are projecting to your animal friends and be clear about what you want them to understand. Loving kindness is always the most effective vibration. We could even practice this with the humans around us.

The other highly effective way of transferring information is through visualization. Creating mental images of what you want to convey provides a virtual screen for animals to receive our messages and know what we are referring to when we say, for example, "...when the guests arrive please do not ..."

Animal communication has become an extremely popular concept in recent years, as people return to a natural interest and openness to consider our abilities to commune with other life forms. This is where our quest for animal communication goes next.... Not telling, but listening. Also known as 'The other 50% of the equation'...

Stay tuned (to your animals)

Emma

Springtime Open Gardens

By Marion Tyree

Robertson Springtime Open Gardens 2014 will be held on the weekend of October 11th and 12th with eight beautiful gardens open to the public. This year we have four new gardens to see, one a large country garden on the outskirts of Robertson, and three large gardens in the town. Be inspired by great vegetable gardens, spring annuals, shrubs, beautiful trees, hedging, dry stone walls, gardening with large pots and many more ideas you can try at home. You will get many ideas to help you jazz up your own garden!

Tickets and maps to the gardens will be available at the CTC in Robertson on the main road (opposite Murray tractors), where there will be a display and description of the gardens. Also at

the CTC, there will be an art sale by a local artist. Tickets are valid over both days.

Ticket prices are: \$5 per garden, \$20.00 for all the gardens (\$15 concession). Tickets can also be purchased at the gate at each garden.

Stop and browse at the Robertson Garden Club's monster plant stall where you can buy many of the plants seen in the gardens. Other attractions in Robertson include a botanical art display at the Light Horse Gallery, a craft exhibition at the Robertson Village Woodworks, antique shops and collectables, cafes and the local market on Sunday. Enjoy a picnic in the beautiful waratah garden at the Heritage Railway Station, where the Fettle's shed will be holding an art exhibition. The station museum will be open and light refresh-

ments will be available. Visit Robertson's Nature Reserve where you can wander through remnants of Yarrowa Brush and rainforest.

Proceeds from the Open Gardens support your local community and go to the Robertson Show Society, Robertson Community Technology Centre and the Robertson Fire Brigade.

This year the Open Garden Committee will welcome volunteers to man the gates of the gardens. Bring a friend and spend two hours in the sunshine.

Please call Marion Tyree - 48 852 249 Gardens open at 9.30am - 4.00pm on both days.

www.robertsonopengardens.weebly.com

Letter to the Editor

Congratulations CTC on the new look Robertson News.

The Robertson Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate Jenny Kena, CTC president, the CTC committee and volunteers. After our 100th issue earlier this year, the RCoC is very pleased that the newsletter has been handed on to the extremely competent team at the CTC who with their collective knowledge and skill will continue the role of providing us all with local information, news and views, alongside the Village Website and the E-News.

Thanks also CTC, for the other work you do for the people of Robertson by co-coordinating computer training classes, projects such as the recent ceramic tiles created with the Robertson Primary School, the popular 'Adventures in Music' workshops with Andrew Ford, the 'Sunday Afternoon Film Talks' which attract people from all over the Highlands and Sydney, the art shows, assistance to the Gardening Club for the open gardens and Robertson Show.

We realize that many people give generously of their time to make all this happen and we support you and thank you.

Dorothy Baker
President Robertson Chamber of Commerce

Do you have trouble sleeping?

By Nick Knowles

Sleep problems can make everyday tasks seem more difficult and can make you feel more irritable than usual. They can also affect your health. If you are over-tired, you are more likely to feel anxious or depressed, have memory or concentration problems, even trip or fall. Severe sleep problems may even have an impact on your personality. If you're having problems sleeping, these tips will get you on the right track:

- Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- Be as active as possible during the day and spend some time outdoors
- Reduce the amount of caffeine you have each day and avoid caffeinated drinks after lunchtime
- Avoid naps during the day. If you do nap, keep it to 20 minutes and before 3pm
- Late in the evening, avoid heavy meals, exercise or working on the computer
- Relax for 30 minutes before going to bed (e.g. have a warm bath)
- Make sure your bedroom is not too hot or cold
- Don't eat, work, watch television, read or discuss problems in bed
- Ensure you are comfortable and your bedroom is quiet and dark
- If you are awake for more than 20 minutes, don't stay in bed — get up, go to another room, do something relaxing

If you have tried these tips and are still having problems with sleep, ask your doctor or pharmacist about other treatment options. Your doctor

may also refer you to a sleep specialist, a sleep clinic, or suggest you fill out a sleep diary. Medicinal sleeping products should normally be seen as a short term solutions but people often like them because they are seen as more a quick fix. They can include prescription, over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies. If you are thinking of taking sleeping pills, it is important to talk with your doctor or pharmacist as these medicines can have serious side effects and should always be used with care. Apart from these side effects, other medicines, food and drink (especially alcohol) can react with sleeping pills and cause further problems. If you are taking sleeping pills you need to know that the side effects can potentially affect work performance and safety. Stopping some prescription sleeping pills quickly can also cause serious problems. If you are already taking sleeping pills, it is important that you talk to your doctor or pharmacist before you stop taking them to understand how to do this safely. Your doctor may be able provide you with a reduction plan to help you gradually stop taking your sleeping pills to reduce possible side effects.

Never share your sleeping pills with anyone else — they have been recommended for your personal circumstances and could be harmful to another person. The best medicine for you may not be the same for someone else.

There are various organisations that can provide you with information on sleep and different sleep problems. For more support visit Sleep Disorders Australia at <http://www.sleepoz.org.au>.

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4262 6122

Our Village, Our Future

Robertson, Have Your Say.

Last year Wingecarribee Shire Council piloted the Our Village Our Future programme in the villages of Balmoral and Wingello. This project involves the identification of the community's vision for the Village and harnessing the existing strengths of the community to develop tangible actions to achieve this vision. Seed funding of \$20,000 for each village is attached to the programme to kick start the action plan.

The programme involves the whole community working together to identify what is great about their village, how things could be improved and what organisations could partner with them to achieve this vision. Examples could include more social interaction, welcoming new residents, business opportunities, neighbourhood watch, visiting health services or sharing of excess home grown produce.

After the successful pilot of this project Wingecarribee Shire Council has decided to roll this programme

out to other villages in the Shire. For the 2014/2015 programme, Robertson and Hill Top have been selected to participate.

Councils support of the project will include, administrative support for surveys and information distribution, facilitation of initial workshops, assistance in developing an action plan and the provision and administration of the seed funding. The development of the action plan will require strong support from the community, both in promoting the programme and participation in consultation activities.

The programme is a community capacity building initiative and following the development and subsequent launch of the plan, responsibility for implementation will be handed over to the community. Council will still continue to provide support to implement actions where Council is identified as a stakeholder however ownership of the plan will rest with the community.

A survey of residents and land owners is the first stage in the development of the action plan to assist

the community in realising proposed improvements. In the second stage, survey results will be analysed and then interested community members will be invited to a series of workshops to further develop an action plan.

A short Reply Paid survey will be posted out to all property owners during August. The survey will also be available at key locations in Robertson. However, our preferred response is online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/robertsonOVOF>

The survey should be completed and returned by Friday 5 September 2014.

Please be honest with your responses as the results will be used in our workshops and to inform the vision for the village over the next few years.

If you would like further information on this programme, please feel free to visit Council's website <http://www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/our-village-our-future> or email wscmail@wsc.nsw.gov.au or call Nicola Robson Acting Community Development Coordinator on 4868 0801.

Robertson Event Calendar

August				
8	Fri	7:30pm	REPS - Bill Gemmel will speak on 'Nuclear reactor safety and waste'	Robertson Community Centre
10	Sun	9am	Robertson Markets	School of Arts
10	Sun	2pm	An afternoon with Dirk Bogarde <i>see page 9</i>	CTC
10	Sun	1pm	Catwalk City	Robertson Inn
22-24	Fri- Sun		Writer's Workspace <i>see page 8</i>	CTC
September				
14	Sun	9am	Robertson Markets	School of Arts
14	Sun	1pm	Catwalk City	Robertson Inn
27	Sat		Steam Train Day <i>see page 7</i>	Robertson Heritage Railway Stn.
28	Sun	10am	A Day with Beethoven <i>see page 8</i>	CTC
Regular Events				
Every Tue		7:30pm	Trivia Night	Robertson Inn
Every Fri		7pm	Live Music	Robertson Inn
1st Sun		8am	Traditional Anglican Services	St. Johns Robertson
4th Sun		8am	Communion	St. Johns Robertson
Every Sun		8am	Morning Prayer-Family Service-Sun. Sch.	St. Johns Robertson
1st, 3rd, 5th Sun		8am	Catholic Service	St Peters Burrawang
2nd, 4th Sun		5pm	Catholic Service	St Peters Burrawang