

THE TRIANGLE

COMMUNITY

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BROGO QUAAMA COBARGO BERMAGUI TILBA & LOCALITIES

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The Triangle's gone 7 - Up

Well howzat - last month was *The Triangle's* 7th birthday and 80th issue and we completely forgot!

It says something, not sure what: dementia, ennui, habit, comfort, routine ... and yes, it seems that things don't change. The front page of the first issue was 'Fires at Yowrie'.

It's been a great seven years and a major learning curve for all of us who have been involved.

Conceived on a whim, *The Triangle* has grown into a reasonably - daren't just say it - professional monthly newsletter. I don't think anyone who was involved in those first issues ever imagined that the paper would still be going seven years later.

In those early meetings it was quickly decided that *The Triangle* would have no politics (in its strictest sense), that it would be local, positive, and a vehicle for community discussion. There would be no editor; instead, an editorial committee. As we were all amateur volunteers, if there was an editorial committee it would spread the responsibility and hopefully bring in different snippets, attitudes, pictures and news. Ideally the articles, news and photos would magically arrive and we'd just pick and choose.

It wasn't like that at all and that's where the learning curve comes in - the power of the written word, the responsibility of writing or publishing the word. There an editorial committee, especially if paying for lawyers isn't in the budget, can come in handy. The cool head balances the hot head, proof being

a discussion, mind you we don't like the personally abusive calls. That's one of the learning curves, such language, and before breakfast!

But all said, it has been a great experience with the positives greatly overwhelming the negatives.

It is with some pride that we can say we have donated over \$10,000

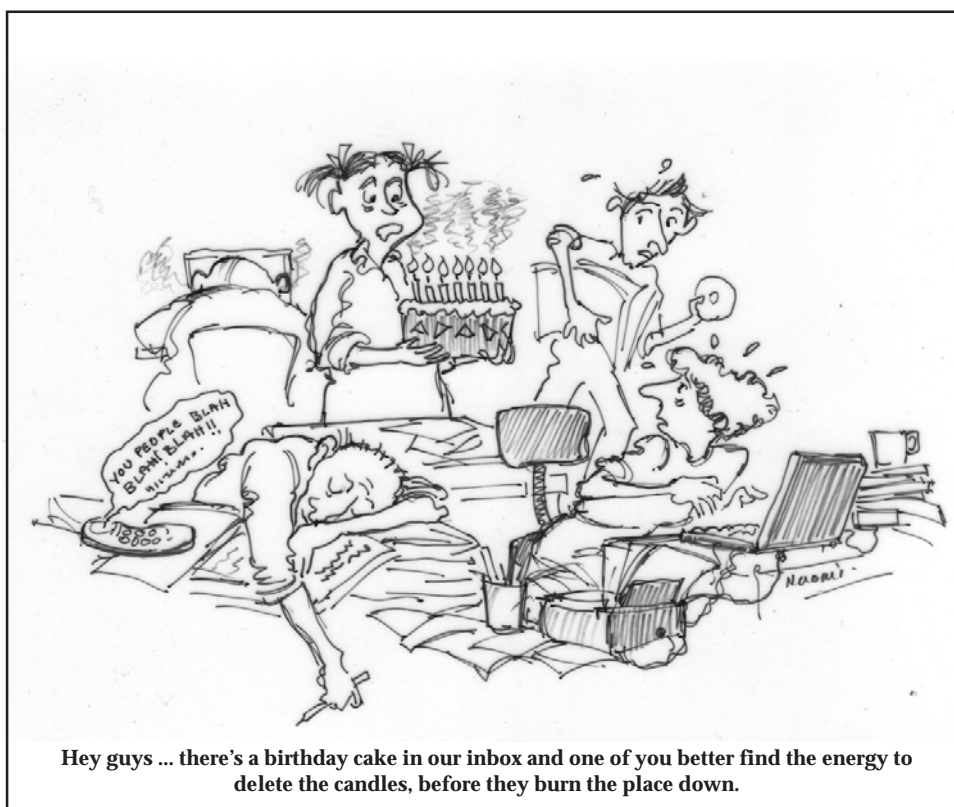
back to the community in our seven years; each year we donate a minimum of 12 new book releases to the Bermagui Library, we've bought and been given (thanks Mumbulla Foundation) an inflatable screen and projector, which is available for use; we've run a short story competition and paid for infant swimming classes.

All this can only come about because of the community. The community that reads, the group that works and last but not least the community that supports with advertising.

On behalf of all who work and have worked on *The Triangle* we thank you.

Louise Brown -
one of the founding idiots.

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Hey guys ... there's a birthday cake in our inbox and one of you better find the energy to delete the candles, before they burn the place down.

that we've only been threatened three times with legal action. On the downside it can lead to a certain blandness and political correctness, a little bit of humour and lightness wouldn't go astray.

A common thread we hear is that *The Triangle* is 'green'. Well yes it is, 'cos it's dems wot send in the information' and *The Triangle* publishes from what is sent in. We love it when an article or letter starts

Editorial

On a recent Saturday, feeling a completely unjustified sense of hope, I went into the Cobargo Co-op to buy four tomato plants – thinking, ‘surely I can keep four tomato plants going this summer’. Moaning to Bill about the state of our weather he went into the office and came out with a photocopied page from the *Narooma News*, which we have permission to reproduce. This is an edited version, which I want to share with you because I feel that the surge of optimism felt after reading it reflects strongly on the appalling state of our weather!

‘Eden identity Betty Buckland who grew up on the family farm near Genoa said she could recall her father warning of his prediction that this century would begin with 10 years of drought.

‘Betty said her father had used Inigo Jones’s long-range forecasts.

‘Jones was a controversial figure who based his forecasts partly on sunspot activity and the orbits of the planets Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus as well as a detailed study of weather patterns over decades.

‘Shortly before his death in 1954, Jones predicted a 10-year drought across south-eastern Australia from the turn of the century.

‘He saw conditions being similar to those prevailing during the great drought of 1902, sometimes referred to as the Federation drought.

‘Internet versions of Jones’s long-range prediction models say that he predicted it would be at its most severe from 2007-2009.

‘But (*here’s the good bit*) once the drought does break, **there are favourable seasonal conditions for the next 25 years.**’

Ahhhhh.

On the other side of the coin, Brogo dam is at 25 per cent capacity and Bega is on track to break its record of about 385mm in 1885, with only about 240mm this year.

We would like to welcome to the Triangle the topsoil from west of Lake Eyre, it certainly gave us a taste of living in Beijing and turned the sun into a full moon. Now if you can just send us some rain to wash it in and stop the wind, we might make a crop for the locusts.

Hope everyone has held off on the spring cleaning, after the dust

storms, well, it’s just going to need to be done again.

Our thoughts go out to our wonderful Soft-footprint recipe writer, Carole Broadhead. We hope your recovery is swift and complete.

We would also like to thank Sallie Hand for all her hard work and input into *The Triangle* over the last five years. She is reluctantly (she said it) handing her pencil in. Work, life and 11 grandchildren have her run ragged. Thanks Sallie.

Louise Brown

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Letters to the Editors

Co-Op controversy

Dear Editor,

I was born in Bermagui and lived most of my life there. I would like to say the story about the original fish co-op is far from the truth. Maralyn Callaghan says ‘The co-op was on the site of the fish shop’. Well, the fish shop was built about the end of the 50’s into the early 60’s. The old co-op was still standing in the 1970s which was west of the new wharf.

It is a shame people don’t ask a real local about the town instead of guessing. There is a lot of history around Bermagui and Wallaga Lake that people don’t know about and probably never will.

Arthur Cotterill
Cobargo

(Eds. Note: See reply in *Bermi Banter*)

Gulaga Fire

Dear Editor,

I write in frustration at the ongoing and, in my opinion misguided, criticism appearing in the various newspapers about the recent fire on Gulaga, and the supposed certain damage to the ecosystem and the claimed irresponsibility of Forests NSW in giving rise to the burn.

It should be clear to anyone that the mountain has been subject to fires for thousands of years. This ‘cold, slow’ burn will not have done irreparable damage in the way that so many claim. A hot burn at the end of summer was inevitable soon if this burn had not taken place, and that would do far more damage to the ecosystem.

In addition to significantly

damaging the environment, the alternative to such a burn as just occurred was going to be the loss of 20 to 40 homes in the Tilba district and probable loss of human life.

I ask those who criticise to try to gain a more balanced and realistic perspective.

Harry Bate
Tilba Tilba

Focus on nature

Dear Editor,

Why is selling logs at a loss more important than all the other uses of the forest? For recreation, for bushwalking, for birdwatching, for photography and artistic inspiration, for education about the environment, for supporting animal and plant life, for storing carbon, for filtering water supplies, for protection of the sanctuary zone of Black Lagoon and Meads Bay, and the Bermagui flora and fauna reserve. For the beauty that attracts the tourists on whom our town increasingly depends.

As the world focuses on how to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and Australia is increasingly worried about water supplies, the role of our native forests seems to have fallen off the radar screens of our State and Commonwealth Governments and their forestry agencies. And this in spite of the fact that they recognise the importance of stopping deforestation and degradation of other countries’ forests, and the forests of south-east Australia have been found to be the most carbon dense in the world.

Managing the forest for the future should mean taking heed of more than supplying logs into already over-supplied markets. Loss-making native forestry is closing off opportunities for other industries based on the natural beauty of the region.

Does the Bermagui community have the foresight to insist on a different future?

Heather Kenway
Bermagui

Plea for wildlife

Dear Editor,

Logging of Bermagui forest is providing a perfect example of how Australia’s laws to protect wildlife are not working. Wildlife in State Forests covered by a Regional Forest

(Continued on page 16)

Bega Festival

The inaugural *Bega Valley Festival – Communities in Transition* will be held on Friday 20, Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 November in Bega.

This exciting Shire-wide event is hosted by Sapphire Coast Producers Association (SCPA), Clean Energy for Eternity (CEFE) and Austcom, the Community Network, as an initiative of our shared communities project, South East Transition Towns.

Broadly, the Bega Valley Festival will showcase food production, economic enterprise, transport and energy solutions, health, regional communications networks and more.

Held over three days, the Festival will include the CEFE Solar Ball.

The Bega Valley Festival extends an open invitation to all Shire residents, businesses and organisations to become involved either by having a stall, performing dance or music, conducting workshops, exhibiting art and sculpture, or simply coming to share the excitement and fun of this celebration.

For full details please visit our website, begavalleyfestival.com.au.

Enquiries: Prue Kelly on 0418 161 547 or pruekelly@bigpond.com

Tasting Trials at the Winery

Winemaking can certainly be fun! Several weeks ago saw us and several other wine lovers gather at Belgrave Park to taste some of this year's wines before they were bottled.



Wine tasters enjoy their drop

As the winemaker, Warwick Adams, explains, 'There are decisions we have to make just before bottling, such as the precise blend and sweetness of each wine. Taste is a very personal thing, so it's good to get a range of people involved to tell us which they like the best'.

For us guinea pigs it involved

some serious work - tasting, tasting and then some more tasting. We arrived at the cellar door to be faced with four unlabelled glasses of each wine, along with an evaluation sheet to fill in.

Swirl, sniff, taste, spit. Swirl sniff, taste, spit. It started off quite confronting to some of us who had never done this sort of thing before. But after the first few glasses it did seem to get easier, especially for those who forgot to spit.

Everyone had an opinion, and as you would expect, there were a few different preferences. Once we had shared our thoughts on each wine it was off to lunch - with a nice bottle of Belgrave Park wine of course.

Virginia White

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Changing The Climate!

The Furies of Earth are booked to sing in Cobargo Hall - just as climate scientists warn that drought, fires and other impacts of global warming are increasing in south-eastern Australia.

On Friday 9 October at 7.30pm, Glenda Cloughley and Johanna McBride will perform Glenda's one-hour mythic story-song, *The Gifts of the Furies*. Based on a rare Greek tragedy with a happy ending, this big teaching story from the European tradition shows what happens when people raise the laws of the cities above the laws of nature - and also how the common wisdom of citizens' voices is needed for harmony and reconciliation.

The public performance will be followed by a workshop called 'Changing the Climate!', also in Cobargo Hall, on Saturday and through Sunday lunch.

The travelling production is a two-person version Glenda and Johanna developed in June with internationally known

Pantheatre director Linda Wise in France.

For email or paper flyers for the Cobargo weekend, please phone Glenda on 6239 6483, Johanna on 0402 050 885, or email change@ozemail.com.au.

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Local nominations for Justice Awards

Local service provider Southern Women's Group has been shortlisted for the 2009 Justice Awards. The Awards are managed by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, an independent organisation that works to improve access to justice in NSW, particularly for socially and economically disadvantaged people. The Justice Awards recognise the contributions of people who have made an outstanding effort to improve access to justice in NSW.

Southern Women's Group is shortlisted for the Law and Justice Volunteer Award, for the voluntary work involved in the production of the booklet *Just a Piece of Paper? Making your AVO work for you*, a booklet aimed at helping women to understand their Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs). The author of the booklet, Maree Livermore, has been nominated for the Justice Medal, awarded to an individual for outstanding achievement.

Just a Piece of Paper addresses issues women face when obtaining ADVOs and provides information to help women understand their rights and responsibilities in maintaining an effective ADVO so it's not 'just a piece of paper'. The booklet recognises that women need support to go through the legal process of obtaining an ADVO, and contains information on police responses, breaches, varying an order, and information about children and family law.

The 2009 Justice Awards will be presented on 1 October 2009 at Parliament House, Sydney. Southern Women's Group members Andrea Powell, Wendy Hunter and Gabrielle Powell will attend the Awards dinner and presentation.

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On Compost and Creeks

In September Transition Triangle member Roz Wood held a skill share day demonstrating her skills at compost making. Fifteen years ago, when Roz and Declan first moved to the property it was an open windswept cow paddock with very little topsoil. Since then a well planned garden using hedges and trees has protected the house from the strong prevailing winds and created useful sheltered areas.

(continued next page)

On Compost and Creeks

(from previous page)

A base of compost, combined with the use of cardboard for weed control and a topping of mulch has created a no-dig garden and a very productive vegetable garden. Roz makes compost (or perhaps we should

major planting effort along the Bobundara Creek banks on the Dibden Dairy property. The work formed part of the Wallaga Lake Catchment project and the planting included a mix of shrubby species, rainforest and eucalypt tube stock, a total of around 2000 plants in all which were planted



Landcare volunteers on the job

call it soil) on a grand scale. In true multipurpose style the hedges which control the wind also provide the soft clippings for the compost heap, a beautiful setting, and some of them provide fruit as well. There are a total of nine short term compost bins which are used as they mature and two other long term bins which may take up to 12 months to mature.

Those who took advantage of this skill share opportunity were offered a very detailed and complete picture of the value and use of compost and how to make it.

The subject for the next skill share day will be grey water irrigation and will demonstrate a council-approved grey water irrigation system.

September also saw Transition Triangle members joining with Far South Coast Landcare to assist in a

in three sessions over a period of four weeks.

Rod Logan from Far South Coast Landcare said that it is now thought that creeks and gullies in this area were probably vegetated with rainforest species originally and not eucalypts. He pointed out a black wattle that was colonised with a rainforest mistletoe, providing nectar for birds that would later help in spreading seed to regenerate the rainforest gully. (Hope I got that right but please Rod let me know if I haven't)

The three days culminated in a morning tea and a cheese tasting featuring Erica Dibden's beautiful cheeses.

Jo Lewis

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Marine Rescue

David Gelme, Divisional Commander from the Bermagui Division of Marine Rescue NSW says that the Bermagui Division is very keen to get potential new members for radio and crew duties. Bermagui Division has developed an advertisement based on an advertisement placed in a London paper by Mawson seeking crew for his Arctic exhibition. It sets a challenge, suggests personal rewards and provides contact details. Bermagui has also developed a history of marine rescue in Bermagui which highlights the dedication of locals to marine rescue back to 1981. This dedication included raising of funds to open the first radio base. David says he would like to see this tradition maintained but to do this Marine Rescue needs the support of the community. So call, get some information on joining this great new organisation. The information will include a brief history of Marine Rescue in Bermagui. The new Marine Rescue NSW will be providing uniforms for all members and of course full training is provided. See the advertisement below.

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Tilba Bites (continued)

Postscript on 'To Burn or Not to Burn'

It would appear that I'm damned if I do and damned if I don't whenever I write an article for *The Triangle*. Whereas I concur with many of the points made by Ross Constable in his letter (*The Triangle* September), he should note that my article was not intended to debate the environmental implications of burning; that is indeed a complex matter.

The article was merely to encourage people to take adequate precautions against the high likelihood of fire in the coming summer and I'm glad that the Rural Fire Service saw fit to provide further information in their article.

Whereas the Parks and Wildlife Service do carry out hazard reduction burns in many of their parks, the fact remains that the authorities have adhered to a no-burn policy for the Gulaga National Park for many years. In the light of the fire that has since happened (I'm not prescient!) I hope that they review this policy.

Similarly, I concur with many of Rebecca Perry's sentiments in her 'In defence of forests' letter. Half my 60 hectare block is forested and I too love my ferny gullies and old growth trees. A properly conducted hazard reduction burn will not threaten habitats such as these.

As it happens the Gulaga fire saw much of this forested area burnt, but I'm happy to report that the damage to water-course and gully vegetation was minimal and comparatively few mature trees were lost, despite the drought conditions. Also, a few strolls through the ashes saw a variety of animal tracks and scats that suggest that most mobile animals escaped the blaze. Some decent soaking rain

(hopefully, soon!) should see many of the native ground plants swiftly re-establish in the burnt areas, although weeds such as lantana may be a problem.

Richard Tilzey
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Fire on Gulaga

There has been a significant airing of views that the recent fire on Gulaga was very harmful to the ecosystem, and people have been stating or implying that the fact that it was initiated by human activity is the result of gross irresponsibility.

It is worth considering the view of Mal Dibden of Tilba Tilba. Mal, who has a passionate love for the mountain and whose property runs well up into it, points out that Gulaga is possibly 80 million years old, and has endured and survived fires, looking after itself in a natural process, for the whole of that time, resulting in its present ecosystem. Over all that time, some of it, the NW, W and SW areas would have been burned fairly regularly from lightning strikes – thereby moderating the intensity of hot fires on the Pink wood forest areas and the rainforest valleys and creeks.

Mal says if one were to draw a time line stretching from Gulaga to Batemans Bay, then the last 40 metres of that line would represent the time that aboriginal people have been here. The last 170 mm (6 ½ inches) would represent the time since white settlement.

Mal believes that it is possible that the mountain is burning less frequently now than before white settlement because with our modern capabilities we have a practice to put fires out as soon as they start. Less frequent burns give rise to bigger fires when they do occur.

'Try to imagine the burn that could have happened about January,

February 2010, with howling west winds and 45°C to 50°C temperatures', Mal said.

Harry Bate commented, 'The recent fire was a blessing, and well overdue. The apparent belief by some that if a fire is never lit by a human then there will never be a fire is difficult to comprehend, let alone accept'.

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Celebrating Life Ken and Kath Doust – A Real Team

I was amongst hundreds of friends and family who shared the life of Ken and Kath Doust at Tilba Cemetery the other day. It was the occasion of Kath's funeral and despite being such a sad occasion for all her family and friends, it was a true celebration of this wonderful person, mum, wife, mentor, local councillor, quilter and all the other things that Kath found time and energy to include in her long life.

The day was beautiful with whales (three) passing by, eagles soaring and lots of other birds enjoying the invigorating landscape of Tilba, Mystery Bay and Montague Island. This was the land that Ken and Kath chose to spend what some would call their retirement, but for these two wonderful people it was their ongoing interest in people, issues, making a better life for those who deserved better, time for passions and an ongoing work ethic.

The stories that were told by brave and loving family members, friends and business associates/friends were uplifting and so positive for us all with humour and compassion.

Ewen Genders

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