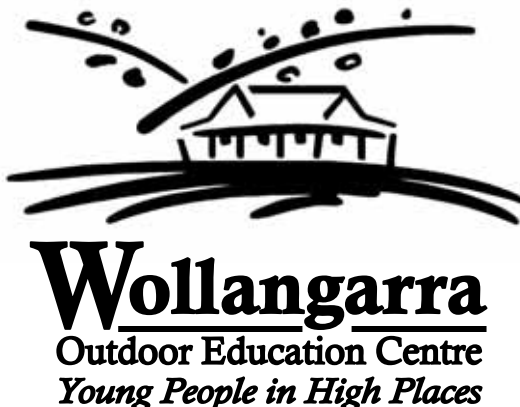


Number 70, 2007

www.wollangarra.org

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Licola 3858

Patron: John Landy,  
AC, MBE

My last newsletter. Hmm. What to say. Pretty difficult to summarise two years of my life out here. In fact, too difficult. So I thought I'd make a list of things I've done that are so trivial that they'll be overlooked. But will live on in my heart. Here they are:

#### Ross' List of Trivial Improvements

**Revolutionary Whistle Rack:** This ingenious piece of wire came at the end of a long period of product and prototype development. Now anyone can grab a whistle without the rest falling on the floor.

**New Tyres on Cement Mixer:** It might sound like no big deal, but changing these bad boys made life so much easier.

**Trapdoor for Gas Light Isolation Valve:** Oh, how easy it is to reach up above the dining table and turn the gas lights off.

**Punches:** I bought some punches!

**Table Stability Tension Members:** Ever tried cutting toast on the big table in the outdoor kitchen? Had the table wobble around under you? Well, try it now. Some diagonal tension members have sorted that pappy out.

**Bike Rack:** Well, it's a bike rack.

**Straight Gate Posts:** Closing gates has never been so much fun since we straightened those suckers.

**Typed Up Telephone Directory:** Oh, the joy of looking up a phone number in the beautiful Times New Roman serifed font, updated biannually.

**Insect Repellant in Toilet Bag:** I don't want to blow my own trumpet, but What a Genius!

**Separate Boxes for Rain Pants:** You read it right, folks. No doubt as to where the "Large, Childrens" pants go.



*Ross in his finest hour—doing the "pooh talk" with the young people. Supposedly included 14 euphemisms in one talk.*

**Six Inch Thick Dictionary:** Thanks to Elaine for this invaluable contribution. And it passes my personal dictionary test—it includes the word "pocourante".

**Gas Light Strategic Repositioning:** One of the first jobs I gave Ken Medew—move the office desk light so it doesn't cast a shadow for right handed people. Sorry to all those mollydookas out there.

**Sharp Knives in the Kitchen:** We now have sharp knives in the kitchen.

But seriously, it has been an extraordinary two years. I knew it would be amazing, and I have not been disappointed. Thanks to all those people who have opened their doors, their hearts, and most importantly their fridges, to me.

When asked why I came to Wollangarra, the reasons I came up with were Change, Challenge and Community. I got all that, and a lot more, and I thank every person who I have met while out here for their contribution to my experience.

As stated above, I feel that I have shaped Woll in some way, but it has definitely shaped me. Thank you, Wollangarra. - Ross & Billy

## The Hop

*June 30, 6:30pm*

*Collingwood Childrens Farm*

*Come and give us your money.*

## Open Day & Bush Dance

*October 6, From 10am*

*At Wollangarra*

*Give us more money.*

## Licola Ball

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May saw a very schmicko looking Woll posse head up the road to the annual event that stops the nation—the Lions Village Licola Ball. With proceeds going towards the community, there was a surprisingly large turnout for a town with a resident population of nine.

About one hundred people rocked up dressed in all sorts of costumes, some of which seemed to fit the ‘heroes and villains’ theme, others which weren’t so easy to categorise. Jo, Tess, Gaz and Steph hit the dance floor with the best of them to the sweet croonings of the Prairie Oysters, who were the headlining act, with some very high quality karaoke acts punctuating sets.

The night passed very pleasantly, and after boogying (see Gaz for some hot dance move tips) and chatting to locals it was well past bedtime when we finally made it over the fox and tumbled into bed.—*Tess Macrae*



*From top: Jo, Tess, Gareth and Willy getting cosy at the Ball. Willy lives up at Glencairn, about 30 kilometres from Woll. That makes him a close neighbour. Next: Greg Oakleigh getting even cosier with Jo, but I can assure you that they are just friends. Next: A delightful photo that shows all the poise and grace that our current staff (Tessa) and ex-staff (Dan McMunn) can muster. We are so proud of them both. And Dan tells me it's a boy. Not sure about Tessa Lee's. And last, the Woll crew, plus Jess and Aleks, help celebrate Ross' 22nd birthday in style. Here, they are dining on gourmet, wood fired pizzas served on—wait for it—a table cloth! The outdoor kitchen has never looked so good.*





*Simon and Josie at their wedding at Wollangarra in January 2006. Not sure if the veil is “Man From Snowy River” style.*

## Welcome Josie & Simon— The New Directors!

Simon and Josie McLachlan (nee Reeves) will be taking over the reigns in early July. Last time they were here they wore rather impractical clothing, like a wedding dress—let’s hope their dress sensibilities have improved since then. Oh, and their’s a third member also—little Thomas.

But seriously, Josie and Simon are a wonderful couple, who we are sure will do a wonderful job at the helm of the Goodship Wollangarra. Josie was staff back in 2000 and has been doing outdoor ed work since then, and Simon was a biodynamic strawberry grower who has since turned to teaching. Thomas hasn’t done too much, but don’t hold that against him. Their expertise and enthusiasm will be a welcome relief to the grumpy old bugger Ross has become. So, Wollangarra extends a very warm welcome to Simon, Josie and Thomas.

## Mountain Cattlemen’s Get Together

When we were told we were going to have 3000 people in the front paddock, we thought they were joking. And then they came. The Victorian Mountain Cattlemen’s Get Together is the annual event that brings the cattlemen and their steeds out of the high country to put on some shows, and for them to have a good time.

There were semi trailers galore, with showers, port-a-loos and a stage for the bands. The music was pounding out day and night, but at least there was some variety. They played both country and western. There were more Akubras and Drizabones than you could poke a stick at. But, as one old Wollangarra supporter said, you could tell the real mountain cattlemen—they were the ones that weren’t wearing an Akubra or Drizabone.

The highlight for us was Gemma coming second in the Dog High Jump, where she was only beaten by the state champion. Tessa and Jo will tell you different highlights, as they were there as “spectators” as rather copious amounts of amber fluid were consumed by the festival goers on the Sunday night.



*Far left: The front paddock as you’ve never seen it before, or ever likely to see again. Unless they come back, that is. A few of the punters thought it a bit strange when I walked past their tents with a dead sheep in a wheelbarrow that Saturday morning. And then back again with an empty wheelbarrow, which I then stashed at one of the tents. Left: Gemma Dog posing with a very proud owner in front of the high jump. She was just trying to jump into the back of the ute—with a big wooden wall in front of it.*

## Alpine Walk

*The Alpine Walk was a great success this year, with the five young people from Woll raising about \$5000. That is a huge effort, so thanks to Thom Woods, Nathan Segal, James Thompson, Anna Calder and Hannah Wall. Also a huge thankyou to Brooke Warren for copious amounts of organising, since the usual route was closed due to fire. And a thankyou also to Mittagundi, who did all the food prep, saw them off, and hosted their return. The young people were always on the Mittagundi side of the mountains, so Woll was not able to do as much as we would have liked. So, thanks to everyone involved, including those that donated. And remember, it's not too late to give some money, either. If these stories inspire you, then dig deep for a worth cause.*

The Alpine Walk was a fantastic experience for me. It came at a great time in the year to give my mind a break from all the study and homework that Year 12 entails. Just getting out of the city and spending time in the fresh air cleared my head and gave me time to rest, apart from the 150km's of hiking of course. The group was awesome. Everybody got on like a house on fire. I was actually surprised that there wasn't any conflict. It would seem that when a group of people get together there is bound to be some sort of disagreement. But in our case, I think, we all got on well. With such a great group the entire trip was full of highs and very few lows at all. I can only recall one day where I was really worn out and not as happy. The weather had to have something to do with it. Not a drop of rain for the whole ten days and only one day when it was really cold. It managed to hold off until we were sitting down for dinner at Mittagundi after a warm shower and clean clothes. To finally get into the hiking was a huge reward after the months of anticipation, planning and organising fundraising events. The views we saw were nothing like I have ever experienced and I keep looking back through my photos reliving the spectacular landscapes. Thinking back on it now, it was a pretty massive undertaking. It is hard to comprehend the distance we actually hiked and some of the terrain was extremely difficult. Being back at school was a big shock to the system after only being surrounded by thirteen other people for ten whole days and it took a bit of getting used to again. If anyone ever gets the chance to do something like the Alpine Walk I would definitely recommend it. Not only were the views great but making new friends and pushing yourself physically is really worthwhile. A once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget.—*Thom Woods*

WOW! I cannot believe it has almost been 2 months since one of the most amazing experiences of my life. It all started last year when I got the call from Ross asking me to do the famous Alpine Walk, without any thought I said yes, but as it got closer to the day of departure I got increasingly worried, I was very under prepared. I had not bought boots, even with Ross stressing the importance of getting them and wearing them in, well before I was to leave. I had not trained and I was very anxious about spending 11 days away from friends, family and technology let alone with a bunch of people who I didn't really know, bar the Woll crew. So after little sleep and a few last minute final purchases, my bags were packed and I was in the car on the way with Hanna and Anna down the Princes Highway to Woll. Once I reached the country, the familiar roads to Woll and hills surrounded me, my mood began to change. I knew that I was going to be in

*The fearless crew before they headed for the hills. They spent the night before at Ian's Hut at Mittagundi, before heading off on a 150km trek that effectively did a circuit of the high country around Mittagundi.*



# April 2007

for an awesome experience. After a quiet night at Woll we hit the road to Mitta where we prepared for our hike and met our fellow trekkers. As usual for those who have done a Stage 2 the initial meet and greet was a bit quiet with people sticking close to those they knew, but the atmosphere lightened up very quickly as everyone got to know each other. The next day after a night together at Ian's hut (which felt very special and in a way fitting as Ian Stapleton was the reason we were all there together) we hit the road.

It wasn't long before the breathtaking views arrived but not after the sweat started to pour, then after a day or two the odours developed, along with hot-spots, blisters and then the aching pains from our packs. "Stage 1" toilet paper restrictions were enforced followed by "Stage 2" and so on (it was a tight

squeeze literally but we made it to our food drop JUST) with more astonishing views, freezing nights, politically incorrect jokes and many late night conversations. The end was in sight and the hike that I was originally very nervous about going on, was coming to an end all too soon. Upon arrival back at Mitta we were greeted with a nervous - but very happy to see us - welcoming party (we were a few hours late) as well as hot showers, clean clothing and an incredible meal, the night was the perfect ending to a perfect hike shared with family and new friends.

The Alpine walk for me brought many highs (up to 1,922m at the top of Mt Feathertop) as well as friendships and memories that will last a lifetime.

In finishing I would like to thank: Brooke, Digger and Toby for being awesome leaders; Mitta, Woll and Typo for running the hike; Faith, for her tireless efforts in planning and organising, including some very delicious meals; And last but definitely not least, my fellow hikers for being the best bunch of people to hike with. Thank you every one!— *James Thompson*

*Neville didn't go on the walk, but his thoughts were with the hikers.*



*A spectacular sunset during the Alpine Walk. Young people in very high places.*

In my time at Wollangarra I've heard a lot about the Alpine Walk. How exciting, how challenging and how much fun it is. It was amazing, then, to get the call. How could I resist? I even gave up a part in the school musical and my Red Hot Chili Peppers tickets to go (but then again I'm no die-hard fan like Hannah). It was such an exciting event to look forward to during those boring hours at school, plus, it gave me an opportunity to get out in the community and raise some money. The walk itself was truly amazing. We got perfect weather for the whole ten days, giving us great views of everything. There was just everything to see, everything to do, everywhere to go, everyone to talk to, and anywhere to take some time out, and think. It's not often you get an opportunity to take on something like this, and it gave us time to get to know each other and the mountains like never before. I'd like to say an enormous thankyou to Chooka and Faith from Mittagundi, Digga from Typo and Toby from Woll. And of course thanks to everyone else who came along and made the walk the greatest thing I've ever done. Its not often you get such an enjoyable chance to give something back to Wollangarra.—*Nathan Segal*

## Stage 1 Courses

Last week sadly marked the end of the Stage 1 courses for this half of the year. True to form the Geelong College young people proved they were no soft bunch, braving the (almost) sub-zero temperatures on the Mitchell River and enjoying (almost) every last mouthful of delicious porridge. Yes, the rumours are true, we've returned to the mighty Mitchell after a couple of "interesting" but beautiful hikes to the Mt. Howitt area. We gave the high country a fair go but sitting around three tranguias in cold wind and having fog thwart our plans made the two trips not our idea of a good night out. I think the staff appreciated a change of scenery but the desire for a good old -fashioned fire made us rethink our choice. Good thing we did too. On Blanket Hill came the distinctive 'crikey, what's that white stuff?' Yes, folks, that was no crushed styro-foam boxes strewn all over the Wellington High plains; that was snow baby! Surprisingly we did have a week or two without The Geelong College and were able to run some great courses with Newhaven, Melbourne Grammar, Plenty Valley and Forest Hill.

We all have our fingers crossed (not me right now 'cause I'm typing) that at least a few Stage Ones felt inspired enough from their experience to return. Time will tell but I got a good feelin' about this crew and look forward to leaning on a shovel handle with them and making it look like Stage Twers do work. Over and out—Gaz



## W h a t i s W o l l a n g a r r a ?

*Wollangarra is an independent non-profit outdoor education project established in the firm belief that young people and mountains are natural partners with a great deal to offer each other. The pioneer-style homestead, which serves as our base camp, is situated on a small, remote river flat of the Macalister River, half way between the towns of Heyfield and Licola. Wollangarra is a unique and simple place. It has no electricity, is accessed only by flying fox and has been built by hundreds of enthusiastic volunteers using second hand recycled materials. Nearly 2000 old railway sleepers were used in the construction.*



*It allows young people the opportunity to discover the heart of Victoria's high country in small, well organised and supervised hiking groups, and shows them practical and important ways in which they can help the environment. The five staff and directors that live there balance education, environmental sustainability and the pioneering lifestyle through the development of the self, community and environmental awareness.*

# What's New At Woll

Early morning aerobics and dance classes in the gear store. No muddy dogs allowed.

Neville's bigger than before! But still as cute...

Lots of chewed up cushions, compliments of Neville.

500 trees planted in the ford area! Woo-hoo.

Lambs galore. Old Roger the Ram certainly can't be criticised for slacking off on the job. See the photographic evidence on the right.

I would like to write New Male Staff Member, but unfortunately we're still on the hunt.

Tessa Lee has dreadlocks. Hippy, hippy, hooray!

Lots of rain, and a very damp, green flat.

Cold nights, cold mornings, and cold days. Summer seems like such a long time ago.

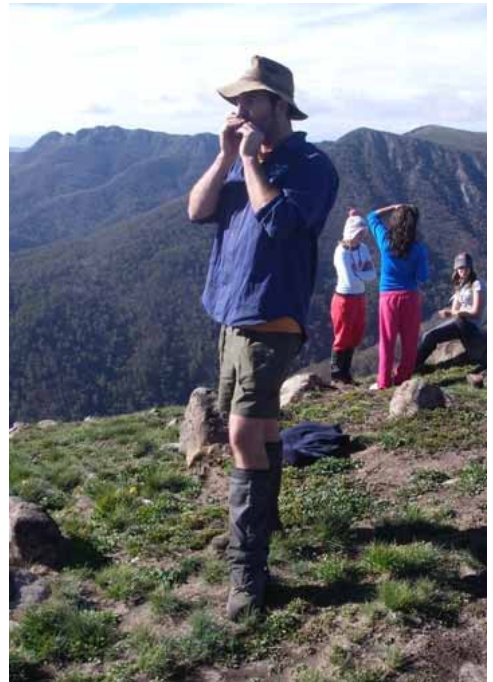
- Tessa

## Stage III Induction Weekend

July 7 & 8 is the date of the Stage III Induction Weekend. It is designed for any of you Stage 2 folk that have ever wondered about Stage III, but were too afraid to ask. We'll be showing you how to use all sorts of tools, how to plan a trip, who to speak to at Parks—all sorts of things.

Stage III is the culmination of all that Wollangarra embodies, and so this is a great opportunity to get stuck into it.

Contact Woll for more details (that is, if we haven't already contacted you.)



*Anti Clockwise from top left: Some people ask Ross what he wants to do when he leaves woll. He is now thinking about being an obstetrician. Phone Woll directly if you want his services after July 15. Next: Tess Macrae on the new shaving horse. There'll be lots of (dare I say) horsing around. Hmmmm. Next: No jokes about chicks; the Woll staff certainly travel in style. No tent (or tarp) is too good for this lot. And last, Ross playing harmonica on Mt Magdala, near the Crosscut.*

# W o o d C h o p



A very dedicated bunch of Woll supporters braved the cold and wet in an effort to keep us warm and fed for the rest of this year. Over the long weekend we were amazed by the amount of things that just seemed to get done. The splitters made sure that the wood shed was very nearly filled, a small problem with the trailer halting the process right at the end. An amazing effort was put in by the very muddy tree planters—the ford area now boasts a further five hundred and seventeen residents. The roof of both the homestead and gear store was painstakingly scraped by many wire brush-wielding individuals on Sunday (apt as it was actually sunny). Their fantastic endeavours were sadly halted on Monday by steady rainfall, and it was a very disappointed Jo that watched the all too fresh paint running off the roof. The damaged telephone line to Tussocky was dug up, removed, replaced and recovered in a sterling effort by the trench-diggers. Heaps of yummy goodies appeared on the dining room table which are still in the process of being consumed. A huge thanks to everyone that came up for the weekend and worked so hard—without weekends like this and so many willing helpers we would find it very difficult to get big stuff done.—Tess



*This page, anticlockwise from top right: Wollangarra does not endorse young people spooning; Will and co getting stuck into the unloading; Fiona Macrae under a mat of weeds; our existentialist expert, Marco, contemplating life, the universe, and everything; Anthi and Conrad; Bonnie and Grace. Next page, clockwise from top left: Steph, Jo and Gareth holding cake; Kara, Zoe and Gareth holding cake; the Woodchop Crew of '07; Ross on an earlier course, in all his finest; Alex in the kitchen; Jo feeding a lamb, so we may feed on it.*



*J u n e 2 0 0 7*



## Thanks to the Masons

Without further ado I'd like to share with youse a little something about the Freemasons do. Ross, Jo and I donned our Sunday best and headed to Maffra to be part of the Ceremony of the Vacant Chair. I can't tell you much about it because it's a secret but what I can tell you is that we walked out of there with a hefty cheque (which we're spending on our annual staff holiday) and four out of the six prizes from raffle.

I took home a tidy pack of handkerchiefs which have helped my cold out some considerable. Ross lucked out with a box of chocolates and Jo of all things won a 100 pack of tea bags with a free mug (which Nia broke soon after, as well as Ross').

June Medew graced us with her presence but unfortunately Ken was still recovering from his hip operation and wasn't able to make it. We are extremely grateful to the freemasons for their donation and it was a rare behind the scenes look at what goes on behind closed doors. —Gaz

*Can I just thank the Masons in a different way. We are very much appreciative of their support, and the \$2000 which was donated was used to pay for the gravel which was used on the front track after all the traffic of the fire period. The Masons have been very good to Woll over the years and we look forward to a continuing relationship in the future.—Ross*



*From top: Gareth and Jo showing the ewe who's boss, with some drenching lovin'; June showing Jo the style which earned her the crown of "Miss Sock Puppet of East Gippsland 1957-61", while Gareth peruses the informative pages of New Idea. Note the lovely cardigan. Next, the Woll posse in the hallowed halls of the Masons lodge in Maffra, receiving the donation. And lastly, Woll has gone Akubra mad—if you don't have some rabbit fur on your scone, don't even bother showing up.*



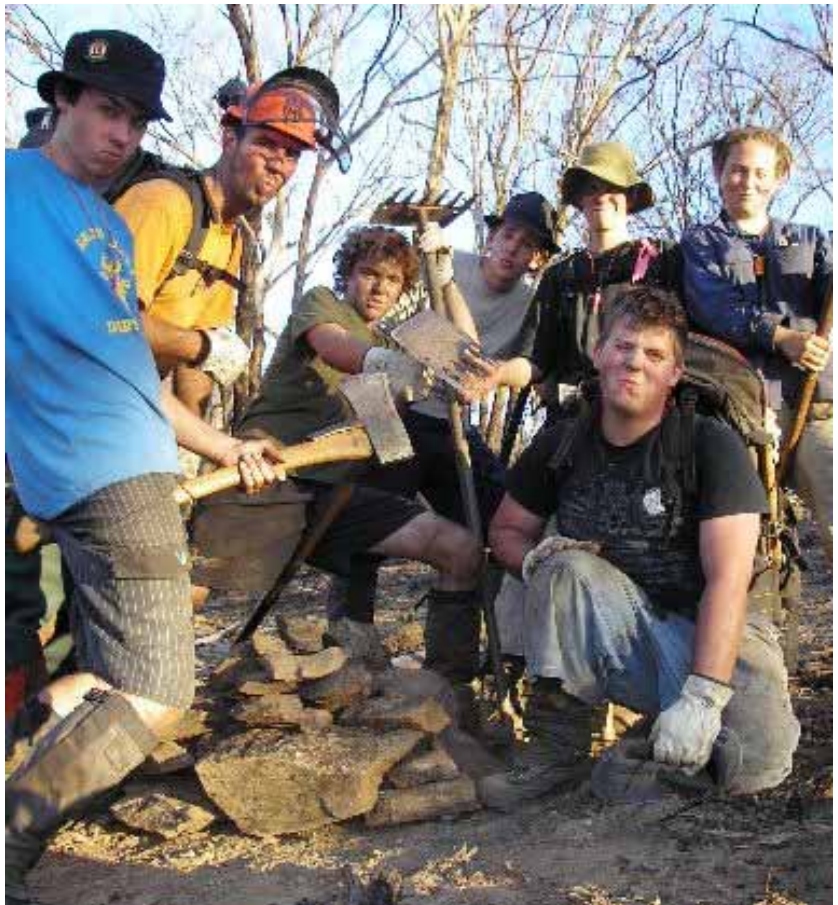


## Stage 2

Stage Two: woo-hoo. I'm sure I should be a high-flying corporate advertising yuppie with slogans like the above, but I'm merely stating the truth. Traditionally stage two courses are booked out WAY in advance and staff and young people look forward to all the fun, fun, fun one could possibly pack into one week. HOWEVER! When the majority of the regular stage twoers are off on the Alpine Walk, things can seem slightly... lonely. This was the case last April. HOWEVER! Six dedicated young people made their way up to Woll on Easter Sunday. And for a place that is currently having trouble procuring male staff members, it certainly was heartening to pick up five strapping young lads from the train station. It's definitely worth mentioning that the only girl on the trip, Zoe Keane, had been a stage one only the week before and spent her whole holidays here with us in the mountains (hear hear!). Very appropriate surname don't you think?

So Ross and I headed the team, and we set off to Burgoyne's Hut to work on a section of the Local Walk. We answered the eternal question whilst there: what do you get after bushfires and then floods? The answer is: no more walking track! Literally. So we set about resurrecting the section of track which heads around the mountain from Burgoyne's to Banana Flat. Word. Got it all done in the two allocated days, and enjoyed the muddy yet still refreshing swims in the Macalister after work each day. We walked home on the third day and spent the last two days of the week hanging out around the homestead doing jobs and making up long, politically correct alternatives to my favourite turn of phrase: "Word to your parental figure, who may or may not be female, depending on your race, denomination, sexual orientation, and/or any belief system you may or may not believe in." Word up to Alex Scott, Jeremy Davis, Darcy Moran, Tom LeRoy, Zoe Kean and Charlie Kat.

Next Stage Two is going to be held from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July till the 6<sup>th</sup> of July. It will be Ross' last Stage Two as director, and (I just peeked at the numbers) it's already filling up, so get onto it and book yourselves a spot! - Tessa Lee



*And the track goes where? Zoe and Jeremy about to tackle it. Next: Alex and Charlie on the bridge built over a nasty eroded section. And last, the Stage 2 crew with weapons in hand, getting down and dirty.*

## Ken and June Medew Update

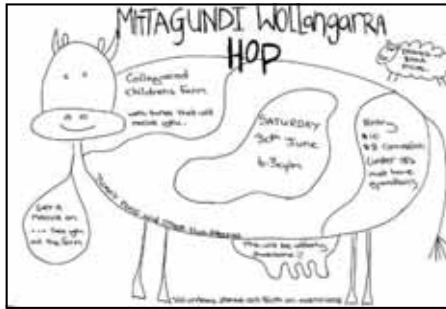
It's that time again—the quarterly newsletter is here and with it a little something for those two special people that most of us know and love and who probably wouldn't like an article about them but who, fortunately, have no say in it.

I'd like to officially welcome Ken back from his 'joyous' time eating hospital food and drinking light beer and also add 'thank god for private health cover'. Out of principle I don't support it but without it Ken may be selling old plumbers wrenches on a back ally in Maffra or doing a year as staff at Wollangarra. Not that we don't want Ken to work here but June said to me over a cut lunch while he was in hospital that if she has to do those damn dishes again she's going to shoot somebody.

I don't know about you but the thought of getting shot at such a young age doesn't appeal to me so I'm going to forget about principles. On another note, thanks to June we've been enjoying hole free munchy bags and warm fingers (because she knitted gloves in case anyone was still wondering). Youse two, you're great. We'll see ya's soon. - Gaz

## STOP PRESS! T-shirts restocked!

Have you ever been in the unlucky position of bringing all your hard earned pocket money up to Woll in the hopes of procuring that much-desired spankin' red tee (size XS), only to find that we'd sold out of that colour and size months ago and we were too "busy" to reorder it? Well, you're in luck coz we recently reordered and restocked in the mens and women's tee-shirts department and we now have (probably!) every single size and colour, which we say we have. This offer will not last. n.b. No free steak knife sets are available at present, but watch this space.



## The Hop

The Mittagundi Wollangarra Hop is a big fundraiser for the two camps. Since there will be no FRL this year, this is the only chance to let your hair down and boogie. There'll be auctions, raffles, yummy food, great music, merchandise, and us!

What: The Hop

How Much: \$10/\$8

Date: June 30, 6:30

Where: Collingwood Childrens Farm

Bands: Tessa Lee (Woll), Velvet Cake Gypsies (Woll & Typo), The Busted Onions (Melbourne), The Grenadines. (Bill Skermer)



# W o l l M e r c h a n d i s e

Second Hand & Solid	\$15	Polo Shirt	\$25
Jim & Molly	\$8	Girly T-Shirt (new)	\$25
Unisex T-Shirt, coloured neck and arm bands (new)	\$25	Work Shirt—full & half button, long & short sleeve, fawn & blue (now for sale to anyone!)	\$35
Unisex T-Shirt, single colour	\$25	Girly T-Shirt (old)	\$15
Wine, from Rutherglen	\$15/\$150	Unisex T-Shirt (old)	\$15
Stickers	\$1	Cards – Wollangarra Icons	\$2 each, 8 for \$12

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Total (including donation for postage) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheque payable to Wollangarra Inc.

*Note: new stock of shirts are regular sizes; old stock—order 2 sizes larger than normal.*

## Thankyou To...

- Wayne and Bev McCallum—endless hospitality, especially now with the pizza oven
- Helpers—Maddy, Scotty-too-Hottie, Lucy Scott, Sonja
- Brooke Warren—organising the Alpine Walk
- Faith and the Mittagundi Crew—your bigger-than-usual part in the Alpine Walk
- Ross Davis—babysitting and bringing treats
- Woodward Family
- Ken and June—For being Ken and June, mittens and lemons
- Brian Huty—use of acrow props
- The Freemasons
- Andrew King and One Planet—12 new back packs
- John and Gwen Colpo—frozen meat, cups of tea and cake
- Hedge Thompson—printing the labels every time
- Brian Medew—allen keys
- Cath Noble—splitters and handles
- RL & DF Andrew
- Brian Collins & Parishioners of Resurrection Parish—donation of goods
- Victor Berg
- Andrew Graham
- Faggs Mitre 10—big discount with paint for the roof
- Geelong College—your part in the paint
- Gabby—food
- Aerial Motors—for letting us get changed and have a shave in the garage (I know you liked it, Dave)



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