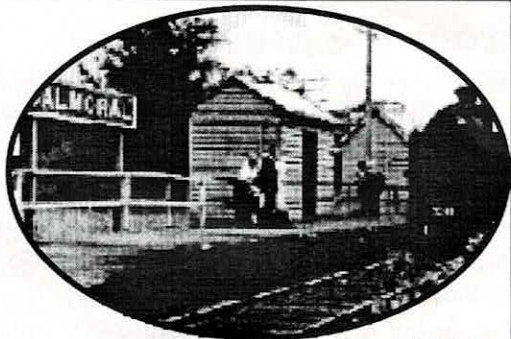


Balmoral

Village Voice



February 1998.

No 9.

A newsletter published by the Balmoral Village Association Inc.

SEABROOK BLAZE DESTROYS HOUSE



A Balmoral house was completely destroyed by fire on the afternoon of Saturday 24th January despite efforts by fire crews.

The mudbrick & fibro house at the end of Seabrook Road (formerly West Road) caught fire shortly before 3:00pm, at the time of a violent electrical storm.

After being reported to 000, the NSW Fire brigade from Picton and Mittagong as well as Rural Fire Service brigades from Balmoral, Mittagong, Hilltop and

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From the Editor:

Welcome to my second Village Voice. Thank you to those people who made such positive comments about the last one ! The information has been rolling in and this has turned out to be a 'bumper issue'. Thanks to Ian Tait, our local horticultural expert for starting a regular feature on one of our local species of plants. If you have something to contribute to The Voice, even a letter regarding a local issue, please feel free to call me on 898 146 or drop it into my letter box at 7 Station Street, Balmoral.

Paul Mallia



Saturday, 28th February

Clean Up Australia Day is traditionally organised in Balmoral Village by the Fire Brigade, and this year will be no exception, aiming to clean up along the roadsides around the village.

Any interested helpers should **turn up** at the fire shed at 9:00 am.

Bring along a ute, truck or trailer if you have one, or **just yourself with gloves and old clothes**. then **stay** for a barbeque lunch and fire shed open day.

Hope to see a crowd to help keep our little part of Australia clean !!!

This newsletter
was printed by

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your printing needs.

Ph (02) 46 55 8234.

**Would you like to
advertise something in
the next Village Voice?**

If you have something you would like the rest of the village to know about, like your business, something you are selling etc, you can advertise it in the next Village Voice for a small donation to the Balmoral Association. We'll even design your ad'. Contact the Editor for more information.
(48 898 146)

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Yerrinbool responded quickly, but unfortunately the blaze had taken hold before crews could arrive. Fire fighters worked through rain and fought thick smoke in an effort to extinguish the fire using water from tankers as well as by pumping from a nearby dam. Live electrical wires posed a hazard to crews as they worked around them, waiting for two hours until Integral Energy could disconnect wires and confirm them dead.

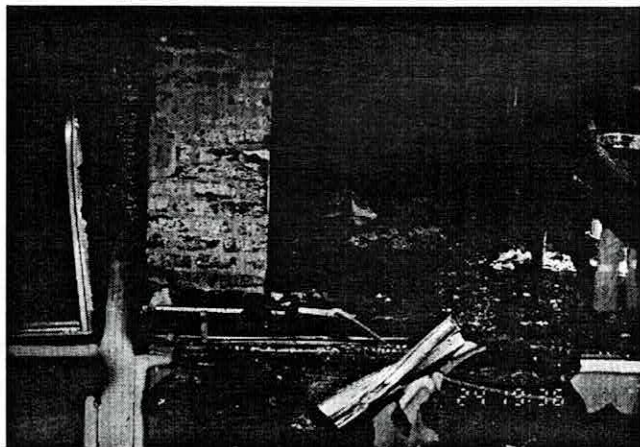
Once extinguished, an officer from the Fire Investigation Unit carried out a detailed examination of the sight

focusing on an area just inside the front door where he believed the fire began. Here there were electrical appliances plugged in. This, coupled with a burned fuse in the electrical box led the officer to the conclusion that a lightning strike had caused a power surge which had started the fire in one of the appliances.

The family who had left the house, a weekender, shortly before the storm, were shocked to hear of the news and were distressed upon their return, one being cared for by ambulance officers.



All that was left of the once living room



Fire crews worked late into the night to make the area safe and to determine the cause of the blaze

Photos: Alan Barker

News from the....

Balmoral Association.

Since the last Village Voice the Association has put together a submission to Wingecarribee Shire Council for a community grant to fence the hall and its grounds.

Grants are given each year by the council for worthwhile projects which will benefit the community. The Balmoral Association were successful in the past in gaining funding for the renovation of the hall kitchen and thought that fencing the hall would be another worthwhile improvement to the village.

With a fence, vandalism would be minimised, as there have recently been cars tearing up the grass around the hall. The other reason for the project is that during functions such as the Christmas party, children would no longer be at risk of being hit by cars on the 100km/h stretch of road just metres from the hall doors. With this improvement in safety the possibility of a pre-school, playgroup or similar activity happening in the hall would be greater.

In keeping with the rural tone of the village, the fence will be a solid post and rail fence, with a wire mesh backing. Although the Association does not have a great deal of money for the project, which is estimated to be worth over \$6000, the hope is that members of the Balmoral community will contribute the labour, reducing the cost to that of materials only. This cost will, if the grant is successful, be met by council. Below is the summation of costs as quoted on the submission to the council's Grants Committee.

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
To be sourced by grant:	Hardware	\$837
	Posts & Rails	\$1823
	Survey	\$400
	Total	\$3060
To be sourced by Community:	Sundries	\$200
	labour	\$2990
	Total	\$3190
Total cost of project:		\$6250

The Balmoral Association meet on the first Tuesday of each month in the Village Hall at 7:30pm. In upcoming meetings the association will be discussing the building of the fence, wheelchair access for the hall, hall hiring rates and conditions as well as any other topical local issues. All residents are welcome to attend. It is your association so come along, voice your opinion, have a cup of tea and meet other local residents.

National Parks & Wildlife Clarify Rules

In a recent meeting at the Balmoral Fire Shed, National Parks and Wildlife Local Ranger Michelle Rutkauskas and Illawarra Area Manager Jennifer Bean outlined the regulations for the area to the west of the village now known as the Bargo State Recreation Area.

The land was classified as a State Recreation Area and not a National Park due to the mining leases across the area. Basically, the rules are similar to those of a National Park. In a State Recreation Area vehicles are permitted on some designated roads, as is the case with the Bargo State Recreation Area.

The roads between Balmoral and Buxton which are signposted with large wooden National Parks symbols are public roads to the Little River swimming holes and will remain open to the public. The track from Boundary Rd to the waterhole has been closed for public safety, while the many minor tracks which lead from Wilson Drive to the Waterhole have been covered in an attempt to regenerate plant life. The Powerlines Road from Little River to Hilltop has been closed, as has Bolans Road from Central Road onwards. The reasoning behind the road closures is that with less tracks there will be less chance of vandalism, rubbish dumping, cars being dumped and set alight or even the deliberate lighting of bushfires.

Signs along the boundaries of the 'prohibited area' explain the restrictions. **No horseriding** is a piece of National Park legislation common to all National Parks and State Recreation Areas. **No Domestic Pets** means that no domestic pets are allowed in the park, even with a lead on. **No Unauthorised Vehicles** means that only National Park service vehicles, police and fire brigade are permitted to enter.

Fire hazard reduction will still take place in the SRA, as outlined in National Park's Fire Management Plan. The Balmoral Rural Fire Brigade will be pursuing this issue further over the coming months.

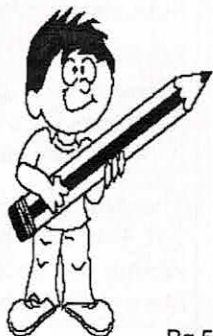
Another interesting point to come out of the meeting was that National Parks & Wildlife have listed the crown land to the east of the village for acquisition. Further information will follow in future Village Voices.

Wollondilly Mobile Preschool

Wollondilly Mobile Preschool is a preschool with a difference - we are mobile. We meet at Buxton on Wednesdays and Thirlmere on Fridays. The mobile preschool offers a full preschool program with fully qualified teachers. All our equipment- puzzles, books, educational toys, climbing frames and other outdoor items - are carried in our van.

Preschool hours are 9:30am - 2:30pm, school term only.

At only \$12.00 per day (fee relief is available) we are cheap but good. Vacancies still exist for 1998. Phone Linda on 309 596 or Judy on 831 484.



From the Tennis Club...

Anyone for Tennis ?

The tennis club are always looking for new people to come along and join in their Wednesday social games.

The Tennis court behind the hall is also available for private bookings at very reasonable rates. With great lighting, why not have a game with the family after work.

If you would like to hire the court phone Pat Lawrence on (02)48 898 066.



(Call the day or night before if possible).

Children must always have an adult supervising.

Pat Lawrence.

Have a

Film Society Saturday Night

We're showing films at the Old School and not at the Hall while our numbers are small. Here is a brief summary of our programme for the next four months.

February 14th

The Bank Dick.....1940 U.S 73 mins

Burlesque starring W.C. Fields

Pudding Thieves.....1967 Australia 56 mins

Produced by Brian Davies & influenced by the French New wave

March 14th

Camille.....1937 U.S 108 mins

Tragic romance starring Greta Garbo and Robert Taylor

April 11th

She Done Him Wrong.....1933 U.S 66 mins

I'm no Angel.....1933 U.S 89 mins

Both starring Mae West and Cary Grant

May 9th

Potselui Mery Pikford.....1927 Ukraine 59 mins

(Or a kiss for Mary pickford)

A rare comic cinematic oddity.

The film Society borrows from the National Film and Video Lending Library which is now housed with "Cinemedia" in Melbourne. If you are interested in joining our Society please ring Steve or Janine on 4889 8479 . If we can increase our numbers once more we will be able to use the Hall again.

Janine King.

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Fire Brigade News...

The recent fire season has been a busy one for the brigade. In addition to the house fire on Seabrook Road, Balmoral Brigade were called to fires at Fitzroy Falls and Linwood Park.

A major concern throughout December and early January though, was the fire burning to the west of Balmoral. This was burning in land managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Water Board.

The fire began on 23rd November last year near Yerranderie and flared up each time weather became unfavourable. The management of the fire was jointly controlled by Wollondilly Fire Control, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Water Board. With the fire almost two hours drive along dirt fire trails, crews from all over the state worked long shifts in attempts to control the fire, some of which burned in inaccessible country. As the exercise carried on through November, and throughout December, stress on crews, trucks, roads and bridges forced authorities to look at other transport alternatives. Choppers were then used to fly crews into the Macarthur Flats control area from Picton, where they met their trucks. A map of the burned out land has been included to show the huge area affected, and where it was in relation to Balmoral. In a separate fire near Wingello, firefighter David Quinlivan was killed while he and his crew fought a fire in state forest. The Balmoral crew would like to extend their sympathy to David's family, and have contributed \$100 to the Wingello Fund. Anyone wishing to make their own contribution to the families of the

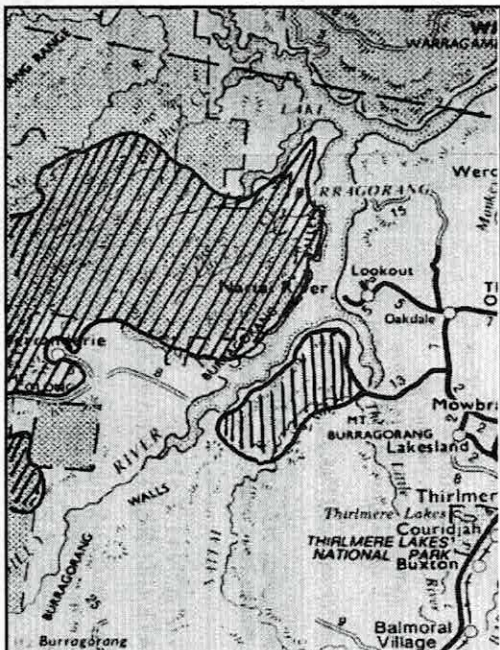
Wingello victims can do so through any National Australia Bank.

On 28th February, the fire brigade will organise the Clean up Australia Day activities in Balmoral, as it has done in past years. See the Clean up Australia Day ad' for more details.

Also on 28th February, after the clean-up activities, the fire brigade will be holding an open day at the fire shed, which will be a chance for residents of the village to look over the new tanker, and have a barbeque lunch.

The Annual General Meeting of the Brigade will occur on Wednesday night, 4th March at 7:00pm in the fire shed. All residents are welcome to attend.

Anyone wishing to pursue free training opportunities should contact Captain Peter Lawrence, or come to the fire shed on Wednesday nights at 7:30pm



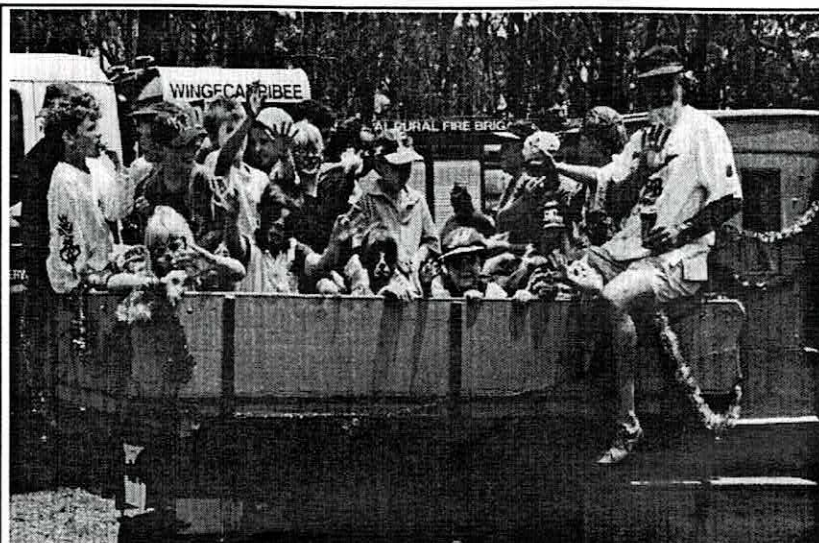
Santa Comes to Town !

The 1997 Christmas party organised by the Balmoral Association and the Fire Brigade proved once again to be an enjoyable festive get-together for adults and children of the village. Pictured here are scenes from the day, captured by Rob Wilson. Children enjoyed a visit

from Santa, Christmas show bags and face painting, as well as games. Adults too showed their skill in the Tug-o-war. A Barbeque lunch was enjoyed by all, before a waterfight which left nobody dry.

If you couldn't make it to last year's Christmas Party, make sure that you don't miss this year's. Stay tuned to the VVoice for a date. Thank you to all those who helped out in the planning and organisation and on the day.





What Flower is That ?

by Ian Tait

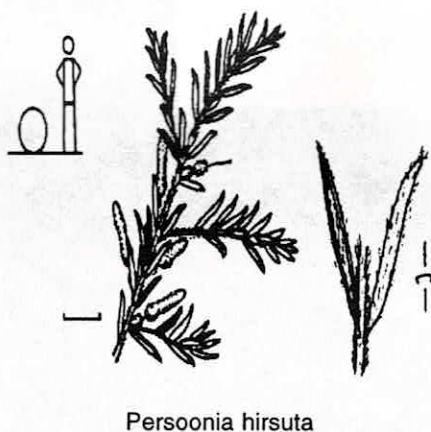
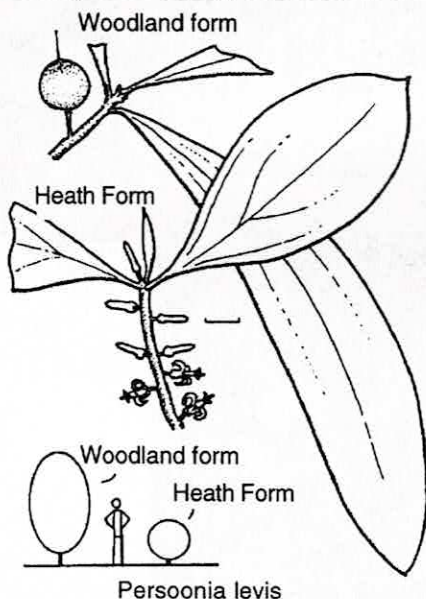
It was somewhere up the country, in a land of rock and scrub
That they formed an institution called the Geebung Polo Club.....

So starts the first few lines of Banjo Patterson's classic Australian poem about life in the Australian bush.

But few people realise that polo club is named after a classic group of Australian plants called the Geebungs. The small yellow tubular flower with 4 petals that fold back is easily recognized on all species. But the leaves and the stems vary greatly and until the flowers come out many people do not realise that very different looking plants are related.

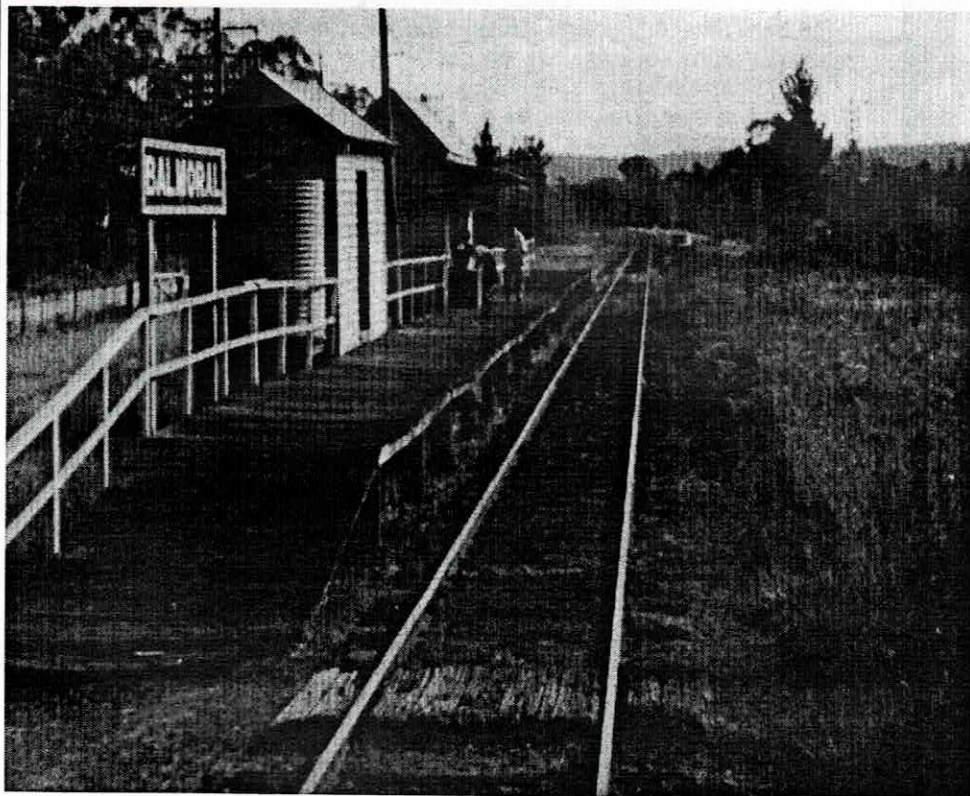
The most easily recognized Geebung around Balmoral is the Smooth-leaf Geebung *Persoonia levis*, to give its scientific name. It is a medium shrub with black papery bark and large oval bright green leaves that make it stand out amongst the dull sclerophyll vegetation. The green berries are edible and said to be a popular bush tucker. They are rather tasteless but probably nutritious because I often find them in kangaroo droppings when they are in season.

There are about 7 species around Balmoral and one species *Persoonia hirsuta* is particularly rare and endangered. This geebung is a small shrub to knee or waist height with small leaves covered in fine hairs. It is quite obviously a Geebung when in flower about Nov.-Dec.



Historical Feature

Many people may have seen the set of four old train & station photos which the fire brigade often sells at functions, but here is a photo from State Rail Archives which is much older. You may notice in this photo that the slope at the end of the platform is rotting and in need of repair. In the more common photos, obviously taken later, this slope has very noticeable replaced boards. Note too, the lack of pine trees behind the station, and the young age of the one on Wilson Drive. A very early photo. If you could date the photo, let me know.



If you have any historical content about the village and would be able to share it through the Village Voice, I am sure that all readers would be grateful. Contact the Editor.

The Village Noticeboard

A handy list of upcoming dates and information.

Important Dates:

- * Saturday, 14th February, Film Society,
"The Bank Dick" & "Pudding Thieves". Contact Janine King.
- * Saturday 28th February,
Clean Up Australia Day, Fire Shed, 9:00am.
Fire Brigade Open Day, Fire Shed 1:00pm.
- * Tuesday, 3rd March,
Balmoral Association Meeting, 7:30pm, Village Hall.
- * Wednesday 4th March,
Fire Brigade Annual General Meeting, Fire Shed, 7:00pm
- * Saturday, 14th March, Film Society,
"Camille", Contact Janine King.
- * Tuesday, 7th April,
Balmoral Association Meeting, 7:30pm, Village Hall.
- * Saturday 11th April, Film Society,
She Done Him Wrong + I'm No Angel, Contact Janine King.
- * Tuesday 5th May,
Balmoral Association Meeting, 7:30pm, Village Hall.

Regular Events:

- * Balmoral Bushfire Brigade meet each Wednesday night,
7:30pm at the fire shed.
- * Tennis club play Wednesdays,
10:00am, at the tennis club (behind village hall)

Phone Numbers:

- * Bush Fire Control (Bowral) 48 61 3635 or Dial 000
- * Tennis Club or Tennis Court bookings,
phone Pat Lawrence, 48 898 066.
- * Film Society enquiries,
phone Janine King or Steve Harrison, 48 898 479

If you have a date or other information for the noticeboard, contact the editor (ph898 146)