

August 2018

**1.50 incl.
GST**

Delegate Doings



**Delegate Progress
Association**

ISSN 1446-6716

Volume 17, issue 8.

SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITION OPENING

As a fitting beginning to Naidoc Week celebrations an exciting new exhibition was opened at the Bundian gallery Delegate on Thursday 5th July.

The artists represented are Bronwen Smith and Gavin Chatfield a talented couple of Yuin artists from the Bateman's bay area.

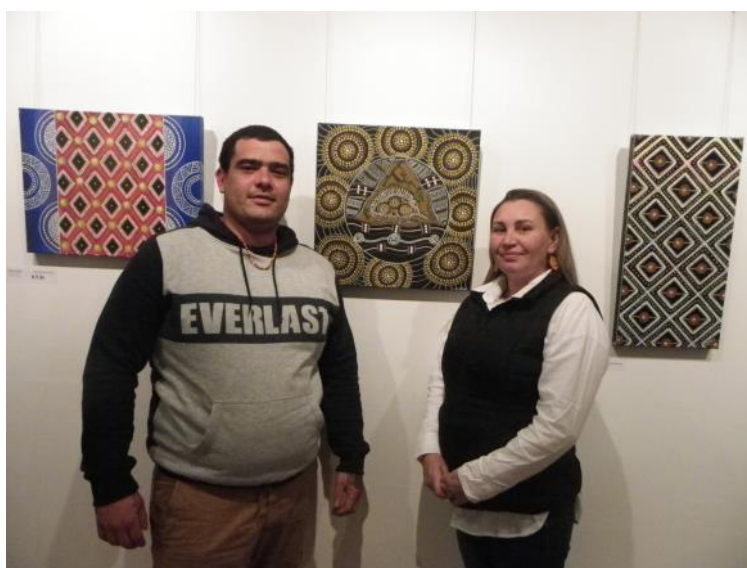
Bronwen and Gavin were both in attendance at the opening. After the formal part of the evening was completed, with Karen Cash in her final role as Development officer for SMRC declaring the exhibition open, they entertained the appreciative gallery supporters with the stories that inform their art.

Both artists explained how the stories are handed down from the elders, the "Aunties and Uncles" of their families. Bronwen acknowledged in particular the women and drew attention to the motto for this year's Naidoc Week *Because of Her We Can* and talked about the women's business represented in her work. She also spoke of the numerous times her journeys are represented in her work, from being cooped up in an office to the natural world and to the infinity of the night sky. She has strong ties to the coast and so many of her paintings represent the sea, stingrays, crabs etc

Gavin explained that his art is more earth-bound. He represents stories and skills provided by his 'Uncles'. His artwork contrasts with Bronwen's as he uses the traditional earthy ochre tones whereas Bronwen uses a kaleidoscope of colours. His subject matter includes echidnas, kangaroos, fishtraps and importantly his totem the snake.

After this informative session, the visitors retired to the meeting room for refreshments. A very successful opening and enjoyable evening .

Right: Gavin and Bronwen with there artwork.



Next Issue: 7th Sept

then: 5th Oct and: 2nd Nov

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Dates for your Calendar

- 14th August DPA meeting
- 18th August RSL card night
- 25th August Movie afternoon
- 4th September Heritage meeting
- 5th September Community Meeting re seniors activities.
- 13t/14th October Team Penning/ Team Sorting
-
-
-
- 27/28th October Celebrate our Heritage weekend
- December MPS 20yr celebration

Kids Pics

Delegate RSL August 25 at 3 pm.

Gold coin donation, bring snacks.

Parents welcome. Our last event saw the hall bursting at the seams (that's why we use a small venue - warm and cosy).

The film is **Boss Baby**, about a 7 year old boy's new suit-wearing baby brother and his gradual acceptance when they have to go on a mission to save the world.

Black Allen Line Podcast By ABC Radio National

Lyn Gallagher was in Delegate recently to do a history podcast for ABC National Radio. Her interviews with Irene Butterworth and Russell Buckman can be heard on the following link.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the-history-listen/black-allan-line/9836566>

Monthly Medical Visits.

Dr. Simonson visits Delegate, at the Doctors Surgery in Hayden Street, on the last Friday of each month.

**For an appointment ring,
Merimbula 6495 1369**

**Card Night
18th August**

5.30pm

RSL Sub Branch

All Welcome

The Friends of Errinundra

The friends of Errinundra held their AGM at Bonang held on Saturday 21/07/2018 and was well attended. Everyone enjoyed the catch up and eating lunch together.

John McRae, Program Manager for the Australian Alps national parks Cooperative Management Program was the guest speaker, travelling in his own time from Canberra to meet us and inform us about the work the program does. It brings together the states, NSW and Victoria, and ACT which each have a bit of the Alps in their jurisdictions as well as the federal government, to fund the position, some research and workshops. John works out of an office in Namadgi in the ACT and the office moves each three years and a new program manager is appointed (after July next year, it will be located in NSW).

The Alpine area is a very small and precious part of Australia's ecological regions - 0.3% of our landscape. How 'Alps' is defined varies from country to country; in Australia it refers to land above 1800 metres, characterised by absence of trees. The Alps are the source of three major rivers: the Murray , Snowy and Murrumbidgee so their ecological health is crucial to Australia's well-being.

The Alps provide habitat for migratory birds, RAMSAR listed wetlands and is heritage listed as well as a UNESCO biosphere. It is also home to a number of endangered species.

Climate change is a threat to all natural processes but the Alps are predicted to be worst affected - if we have the predicted average increase of two degrees, the Alps will have a rise of five degrees. This will mean the drying up of aquifers we depend upon, a disaster by anyone's reckoning.

Another topical discussion point in John's presentation was feral horse management and the contrasting ways that the ACT, NSW and Victorian governments go about feral horse management. Each has a different approach, with the ACT taking the strongest

measures with a zero tolerance approach. NSW recently withdrew its control program in response to lobbying by people who care more about this introduced species than native species. We saw pictures of wetlands, the source of our rivers, trampled and compacted by horses hooves; seeing so many of these habitats are in NSW, we can expect a large rise in horse numbers which will be measured next autumn by aerial survey. Such are their numbers that they now pose a threat to campers and walkers in the Alps.



photo of John McRae

Friends of Errinundra continued

Of course, pigs, deer and to a lesser extent, goats, are also a threat, as is tourism, but horses have the most devastating impact at present.

After John's presentation, we watched a short film about the Emerald Link which proposes connecting up paths, old logging and other tracks to enable cycling, walking and car tourism in East Gippsland's forests from Bemm River to Mt Ellery. We talked about connecting up with the Bundian Way across the border, perhaps with Mt Delegate as a mountain bike playground and viewing area across the Monaro and East Gippsland. These are just ideas but we all agreed that it is a discussion point in future community planning.

Since it was an AGM, we looked at our finances and elected officebearers - there was no change from last year. We also reflected on activities undertaken by the group in the last 12 months and developed a program for the next 12 months. There was interest in becoming part of the official monitoring of the greater glider, an endangered species now relying on the Errinundra Plateau for its survival in this region. A grant for equipment will be prepared so that we can go out at midnight and look for this, the largest aerial marsupial, as it glides between the tops of tall trees.

We also agreed to lobby for the reopening of Greens Road which has been closed for over 20 years by damaged culverts. As the southern entrance to the Errinundra, we think it is important that it be reopened for tourist and local access and to provide an exit route in times of emergency.

People are welcome to join any of our activities; already planned are a working bee on the 17th of November and a half day activity followed by a Christmas BBQ lunch on the 15th of December.

Please keep an eye on Friends of Errinundra Facebook page for more details about our activities. We welcomed new members from both sides of the border and look forward to our next working bee and joining Victorian bushwalkers working on the Silvermine Track in Snowy River National Park.

Deb Foskey President

RT/CT Centre Delegate

Free Seniors Internet Access

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Nurses Cottage Accommodation / Gallery Flat Bookings

Borderline Gallery

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MORE THAN \$1BILLION FOR OUR STATE'S DROUGHT STRICKEN FARMERS

As you move around the Monaro, it is evident to anyone that we are in drought. Our dams are low, the land is dry and farmers are doing it tough.

Today the NSW Government announced a \$500 million Emergency Drought Relief Package, which will help farmers right across regional NSW.

This takes the Government's drought support to more than \$1 billion, with \$584 million announced in June 2018.

With 99 per cent of the state now in drought and farmers facing one of the driest winters on record, we know this package is essential not just for our farmers but for everyone in the regions.

The severity of the drought across the state has resulted in failing crops, drastic water shortages and a diminishing supply of fodder to sustain livestock.

A major feature of this package is the introduction of transport subsidies, recognising the fact that in many areas people have been forced to cart fodder because the local supply is drying up.

We will also backdate this measure by six months; when we began to see conditions deteriorate.

As part of the emergency funding, waivers will apply to Local Land Services annual rates, fixed charges on water licences, registration costs for class 1 agricultural vehicles and interest on existing Farm Innovation Fund loans.

I still encourage people to access the Drought Assistance Loans, with applications now totalling more than \$14 million.

The Emergency Relief Package provides key support in priority areas including:

- Drought Transport Subsidies; (Subsidies will be back-dated to include an additional prorated amount for expenses incurred in the previous six months. Up to 50% of the full cost of transporting fodder, livestock to agistment, slaughter, sale and water for stock will be made available to eligible farmers.)
- Waived Local Land Services annual rates, fixed water charges in rural and regional areas, as well as class 1 agricultural vehicle registration;
- Support services including counselling and mental health;
- Community assistance including water cartage and drought-related road infrastructure improvements;
- Animal welfare and stock disposal.
- The Government will also allocate an additional \$150 million to the Farm Innovation Fund, reflecting significant uptake by farmers across the State.

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority will begin processing applications from Monday August 6. For more information on the NSW Government's emergency drought relief package visit

www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au.

Kind regards, John Barilaro MP

Tragic House Fire In Delegate.

Tuesday morning saw the RFS called out to the residence of Mr. Bob McCluskey in Stewart Street, the building was well alight by the time the Fire Truck arrived, and sadly Mr. McClusky, 89, as well as his two little dogs, perished in the fire.

It maybe the time to review safety checks around your own homes, do you have a fire alarm? Have you a plan of escape? Do you have all your important papers, or photos together and easily accessible? Many residents in Delegate live on their own, now might be the time to get a little organised just in case the worst happens. Winter is a notorious time, unfortunately, for house fires with heaters going, electric blankets and washing being aired by heaters etc so take extra care.



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Tel: 6458 8004

Livestock— Tony Brady,

Sam Platts

Agronomy— Kathryn

Bullas

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New Windsock Installed at Bill Jeffreys Park.

After many years of talking about 'the Windsock' Delegate Progress is so very pleased to see it is finally installed and ready for action. We have raised money from the Snowy River March, with donations from various organisations, Men from Snowy March, Country Energy, Sunday Sippers, Bombala Lions, Delegate and Cabanandra Campdrafts. A big thank you to all for your help especially to Ian for his effort to finalise this long running Project. Special thanks also go to John Jeffreys, of Delegate Station who provided much needed assistance with a tractor and manpower for erecting the Windsock on the day. It's great to see it flying in the breeze at last. Let's hope it doesn't get used to frequently, but it's there now for when it is needed.



A Final Quoll Report to the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife

Written by: Dr Andrew W. Claridge NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Queanbeyan, NSW

Summary



The endangered spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) is the largest extant marsupial carnivore on the Australian mainland, principally occurring along the eastern seaboard and adjacent ranges and tablelands. In southern New South Wales, the species is sometimes locally common on public estate, particularly in larger national parks and productive state forests characterised by tall eucalypt trees. But elsewhere, on private property, records of the quoll are scant where apparently suitable habitat is present. The current project aimed to improve information about the distribution of the species on private land in the region. Using camera trap stations associated with bait lures, surveys for quolls were undertaken across a range of habitat types on 23 properties around the Monaro Tablelands, a dominant feature of the landscape. Overall, 178 camera traps were deployed and all but three of those functioned for at least 30 days. Spotted-tailed quolls were recorded from approximately 30% of camera stations on 9 properties, the majority of which were deployed at the southern end of the Monaro along the Snowy River corridor. In contrast, introduced predators were more widely distributed across deployment sites, from one end of the study area to the other: the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) was detected at over 60% of camera trap sites and the feral cat (*Felis catus*) at around 15% of camera stations. In addition to these predators, camera traps also recorded a wide diversity of other fauna, including other mammals, birds and reptiles. Bird species of conservation significance detected on camera traps included the brown treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus victoricae*), hooded robin (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullata*), scarlet robin (*Petroica boodang*) and speckled warbler (*Chthonicola sagittata*), all of which are listed as Vulnerable under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. The brown treecreeper was recorded at eight different camera trap sites, while the other three threatened birds were only recorded at single camera trap stations. Among the other mammals, species of conservation significance included the Vulnerable koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), detected on a single property south-east of Bredbo, and possibly the vulnerable squirrel glider

(*Petaurus norfolcensis*), also in the Bredbo area. In the case of the latter species follow-up live-trapping is required to confirm species identification since photographic images are not necessarily

diagnostic. Introduced mammals such as the fallow deer (*Dama dama*) and sambar deer (*Cervus unicolor*) are also noteworthy as they are both species that are known to be increasing in abundance in the region and may require active management to limit their detrimental environmental impacts. Quolls were detected at camera stations set in open fragmented areas, on the edge of consolidated forest and woodland and within contiguous blocks of native vegetation, highlighting their apparent resilience. Integrated fox and cat control, combined with improving vegetation corridors in areas with little native vegetation cover, should assist in quoll conservation around the Monaro.

Delegate Multi Purpose Service

Wellness Clinic is held at the MPS, in Craigie Street Delegate. People come to the clinic for procedures and assessment by nursing staff.

The clinic is open

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri 1pm to 2pm

Every week except public holidays.

No Appointments necessary.

A variety of procedures are available.

- Wound care
- Blood pressure readings
- Blood sugar readings
- Non-urgent ECG's
- Suture or clip removal
- Injections – with Dr's written order
- Other procedures that do not require a Dr.

Pathology clinic

Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30 am. No appointment necessary. Closed public holidays.

Other Services

Women's Health Nurse

3rd Wed of the month

Dietician and Diabetes Educator

2nd Thur of the month

Immunisations – 4th Fri of the month

Podiatry – for HACC clients – monthly

Ring the MPS for appointments for the dietician, diabetes, immunisation, podiatry and women's health 6459 8000

Child and Family Health

visits Delegate MPS on a regular basis ring Kirsty on 6458 5777 for an appointment.

FOR SALE

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DELEGATE SCHOOL NEWS

UNEXPECTED SCHOOL CLOSURE

Tuesday 24 July 2018

Delegate Public School's temporary closure occurred on Tuesday 24 July 2018.

An emergency situation arose in close proximity to the school around normal drop off time. During this period Emergency Services personnel contacted the school who were also experienced water supply issues. A closure decision was made after careful consideration of the health and wellbeing of the students and staff.

Normal school services resumed on Wednesday 25 July 2018

HUGE Congratulations to Errin Farran. Errin ran in Nowra on Friday at the Regional cross Country and was placed 12th in a race of 88 runners. Fantastic Effort!



Kindergarten Orientation

Class of 2019

Delegate Public School would like to invite all students wishing to attend Kindergarten in 2019 to participate in our Kindergarten Orientation Program. It is a 10 week program designed to help children make the positive transition between home and school.

When:

Term 3 - 5 x half days – 9:00am to 11:10am

Monday 20th August ,Monday 27th August ,Monday 3rd September ,Monday 10th September ,Monday 17th September

Term 4 - 5 x full days – 9:00am to 3:00pm

Monday 15th October ,Monday 22nd October ,Monday 29th October ,Monday 5th-November ,Monday 12th November

In Term 3 children will need to bring their recess and 'Crunch and Sip' (vegetables, fruit and water)

In Term 4 they will need to bring their recess, Crunch and Sip and lunch.

Students may wear uniforms but it is not necessary.

For further information please contact:

Carol Sellers – Principal

Hannah Bucholtz – K12 teacher or

Selinna McKinnell – K12 teacher

6458 8183

CANBERRA EXCERSION



Pony Club

Delegate Pony Club held its July rally yesterday 1st July 2018 at Mila Livestock Learning and Equine Events Cen-tre at 952 Mila Road MILA and what a great day had by all. Its was a very frosty start to the day but the sun did shine. Delegate Pony Club had 18 riders attend with one new sign up. The riders were briefed and then split into 2 riding ability and horse groups. One group went down to the indoor arena area and they were instructed by Meg Williams who is a riding instructor from Berridale. Meg ran the riders through a few basic riding skills and then tested their ability on Darryl the barrel, something



Meg brought along to show the riders a bit of trick riding. The 1st group had a lot of laughs as they went through their group of riders. They all learnt a fair bit. The 2nd group that came to Meg in the afternoon session were instructed in control, different commands and leg work with balance with their riding abilities. Meg had the riders standing up in their stirrups, one hand in the air and cantering and the riders said they could feel their legs burn (the basics of trick riding). They also took turns in learning a bit about trick riding. They all had to mount from a run onto Meg's prop in many ways. Meg showed and put the riders through the paces of standing up on Darryl the Barrel the correct way. The riders all had a go at trying to mount their own mount from what they learnt from Meg, this vaulting session will aid the riders competing at the mounted games. All the riders had so much fun learning new skills with Meg and hope she will return to Delegate Pony Club for instructing again. The riders also had the privilege of having a local Bombala gentleman Doug Peadon come along and teach them some skills and rules of Polo Cross. Doug has had many years experience and time in the saddle and having him at DPC rally was great for some young riders to learn new skills from so much experience. The 1st group learned the rules, then had a mini game that proved to be a bit of a challenge for most. There were lots of laughter and by the end of their session had picked up on some great racquet and ball skills. The afternoon session Doug had these riders on the ground learning racquet and ball skills. These riders were set in groups of 3 catching and throwing the balls from racquet to racquet. Delegate Pony Club members and parents wish to thank Sophie and Keith Campbell for having us at their venue, Meg Williams for sharing her trick riding skills and sharing her prop (Darryl the barrel) with them and to local Doug Peadon for sharing some great skills in polocrosse. All the riders and their mounts had a great day learning and are sure to take home what they learnt and practice their new skills. Thanks to the organising committee and parents, without you all days like this could not be so successful.

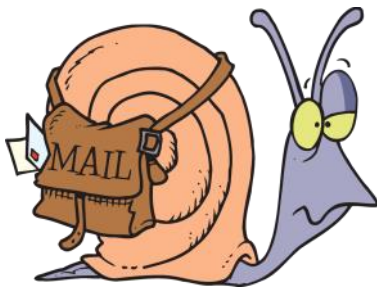


HERE & THERE

Happy August Birthdays to Claire Strickland, Su King, Hunter Reed, Philomena Collins, Laura Chapman, Sharon Buckman, Maria Calloway, Amelia and Georgina Jeffreys, Tom Ventry and Chops Guthrie.



Good to see our Postie Pam back home again, best wishes to her from everyone for a continuing recovery.

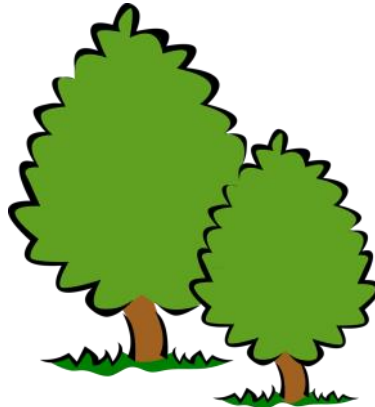


Pam and Max Clear are pleased to have Megan and husband Michael move back to this area. Megan and Michael have taken over the Delegate River Tavern and the Delegate mail runs.

Dates to put on your calendar, the big 'Celebrate our Heritage' weekend at the end of October, it also incorporates the 30th anniversary of the Settlers Hut and the return of the W.W1 Diggers.

The Delegate MPS will be also be having a 20th year celebration in early December, so something else to look forward to and get involved to support our local facility.

The Delegate tree planting will be continuing in the near future, the Sunday Sippers have donated a very welcome \$500 toward new trees, Council also will be giving assistance by mowing and preparation prior to planting.



Some interesting viewing, the Delegate Streetscape Plans are now on show on the Snowy Monaro Regional Website, so check them out. Copies also available for viewing at the Café and RTC. The section in front of the School of Arts will be finished for the Celebrations in October.

Condolences to Chris Bayliss and family on the recent death of his mother.

Get well Soon to Diane Bayliss who spend a few nights in Bega Hospital.

Two properties were recently sold in the area, with Ron Flanagan being the new owner of John Bates block on the Hayden's Bog Road and someone from South Gippsland buying John Turners Property on the Craigie Range Road

Robin and Chops have just returned from a Queensland holiday. They visited Roma, Longreach, Mt Isa, Winton, Kurumba, Cairns, Townsville, Harvey Bay and Toowoomba. They are now getting used to the cold weather again.

Those who enjoyed the Team Penning last year will be pleased to learn that its on again at the Delegate Sportsground on 13 & 14 October. This year it will be a two day event with Team Penning on the Saturday and Team Sorting on the Sunday. A dinner will be held on Saturday night so put the dates in your diary for a fun filled weekend for the family. Further information can be found on the Delegate Team Penning Facebook page. If you haven't tried either of these fun horse sports here is your chance.

Cynthia Dolan has requested a community meeting to discuss what activities could be held in Delegate through the Council's Contact Group Program. The meeting will be held at the RTC on Wednesday, 5 September at 10.00am to 12.30pm. Please come along and have your say and give Cynthia some ideas to work on for our area.

The DPA hosted several people from Jindabyne and Berridale Contact Groups in early July. They enjoyed a meal from the café with the DPA ladies providing cakes and slices. An enjoyable day was had by all.

LOOKING BACK

CALTEX RUGBY LEAGUE KNOCKOUT HELD 8th AUGUST 1965 AT COOMA SHOWGROUND

It was an indication of how strong Rugby League was back then, with 13 teams taking part in the Caltex Knockout held at Cooma. The Southern Monaro teams were part of Group 19, while the Coastal teams were in Group 16. A. M. Kingston (Clancy) was the President of Group 19. The top four teams from each group played each other in the Knockout.

Some of the Match conditions were:

16 players per team

Nominations 10pounds per team

Each match 40 minutes – 20 minutes each way

Each player was responsible for their own medical and hospital expenses.

The teams were from Canberra, Candelo, Goulburn United, Goulburn Workers, Bega, Bemboka, Tathra, Queanbeyan, Utah/Island Bend, Jindabyne, Bombala and Delegate.

Players in the last mentioned teams are shown below and an item of interest is that Robert Warren, playing second row for Jindabyne is a brother of Ray (Rabs) Warren, Channel 9 Sports Broadcaster.

Jindabyne defeated Queanbeyan in the final.

THE TEAMS	
DELEGATE (Group 19) (Black and Gold)	
Full Back: G. McQualter (1)	
Wingers: T. Clear (2), C. Newton (5)	
Centres: F. Glover (3), R. Collins (4)	
Five-eighth: L. Walsh (6)	
Half: P. Jeffreys (7)	
Lock: C. Reynolds (8)	
Second Row: B. Callaghan (9), D. Manning (10)	
Front Row: A. Duffell (11), R. Black (13)	
Hooker: B. Reed (12)	
Reserves: T. Ventry (14), B. Ventry (15), M. Clear (16)	
UTAH-ISLAND BEND (Group 19) (Orange and Black)	
Full Back: M. Todd (1)	
Wingers: P. Carey (2), P. Roche (5)	
Centres: C. Rolles (3), F. Rixon (4)	
Five-eighth: R. Berrell (6)	
Half: B. Ewart (7)	
Lock: L. Jones (8)	
Second Row: B. Lucas (9), W. Morgan (10)	
Front Row: A. Hobson (11), D. Skeen (13)	
Hooker: G. Thompson (12)	
Reserves: E. Murray (14), G. Venables (15), R. Rees (16)	

JINDABYNE (Group 19) (Red and White)	
Full Back: R. Caldwell (1)	
Wingers: A. Costello (2), B. Tanzer (5)	
Centres: J. McIntyre (4), R. Thompson (6)	
Five-eighth: D. Pearson (9)	
Half: W. Carey (7)	
Lock: C. Watt (8)	
Second Row: J. Wolter (10), R. Warren (15)	
Front Row: T. Duffy (11), K. Huppatz (12)	
Hooker: M. Sellars (13)	
Reserves: K. Borrow (14), S. White (16), R. Roberson (17)	

BOMBALA (Group 19) (Blue and White)	
Full Back: W. White (1)	
Wingers: B. White (5), D. Ferry (2)	
Centres: P. Clear (3), A. Elliott (4)	
Five-eighth: R. Dent (6)	
Half: J. Smart (7)	
Lock: G. Hale (8)	
Second Row: L. Dudgeon (9), A. Bailey (10)	
Front Row: V. Holdt (11), A. Reid (12)	
Hooker: B. Brownlie (13)	
Reserves: K. Kimber (14), G. Jones (15), J. Elton (16)	

Community Information

EMERGENCY / AMBULANCE: 000

FIRE: 000

POLICE

Delegate: 6458 8044

Bombala : 64583444

Cooma: 6452 0099

Bendoc: 6458 1523

HOSPITAL: 6459 8000

DOCTOR: 64951369

CHURCHES

Catholic: Father Mick McAndrew 64522062

Sister Teresa Keane: 6458 3045

Services: Delegate Saturday 6:00pm

Liturgy of the word and Holy Communion

Bombala Sunday 9:00am

Liturgy of the word and Holy Communion

Anglican: Rev. Robert Lindeck 6241557 Mob.

0408531544

Rev Judy Holdsworth—64583513

Services: 11am every Sunday..

COMMUNITY HEALTH (3 days per week)

Generalist Community Nurse –Monday, Thursday, Friday

Wellness Clinic—Monday , Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 1pm to 2pm

Pathology—Wednesdays 0930-1-3- hours

Immunisation Clinic—Fourth Thursday from 1100hours.

Podiatry Clinic

Victorian Visits Tuesdays

Call MPS 64598000

Healthdirect and GP helpline 1800022222

MONARO FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

Bombala Office: 6458 4888

open Tues to Thurs - 9:00am to 5:00pm

COUNCIL CHAMBERS: 6458 3555

DELEGATE PRE-SCHOOL: 6458 8196

DELEGATE PUBLIC SCHOOL: 6458 8183

DELEGATE PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

RTCT Centre - 6458 8388— dpaoffice@bigpond.com

Newspaper: delegateprogress@exemail.com.au

NRMA/RACV: Jack Stewart: 64588047

TUBBUT ACCESS CENTRE: 6458 0295

DELEGATE CARAVAN PARK: 64584047

Delegate Progress Association Inc.

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Do I Need a Greenhouse?

Already the days in August are noticeably longer with the response in both animals and plants becoming obvious. Chooks are starting to lay again, magpies are sorting twigs, buds are swelling on deciduous plants and the emergence of daffodils is heralding the Spring bulb display. Likewise, gardeners are stirring into action keen to prepare for Spring. Since plant growth is still dominated by frosty nights there is the temptation to start seedlings on windowsills etc. with all the work and clutter that that entails. Thoughts inevitably fly to that magical place - a greenhouse that will solve all the growing difficulties that our climate throws up.

So, do I need a greenhouse and if so what type?

The perception that a greenhouse is a prerequisite for success is particularly strong in new gardeners. The number of abandoned polyhouses around town forlornly flapping weathered plastic vividly illustrates those failed dreams. That these structures did not fulfil expectations and to then have an ongoing life is in fact mostly due to the inexperience of the gardener. To be successful the use of a covered structure requires a subtle adjustment of open garden techniques in response to the altered climatic conditions that the structure itself generates.

If a strong foundation of understanding of growth responses of a given plant in the open garden is not already present there is inability to make adaptations to the different environment generated inside a structure.

All structures, whether glass or double walled polycarbamate or polyfilm, only marginally increase night temperature but massively increase day temperature i.e. increase the range of temperatures experienced by the plant over a 24hr. period (the diurnal range). This can confuse the plant e.g. where low night temperature signals vegetative growth but high day temperature signals flowering. The plant may then start to flower and attempt to make fruit before the plant body has grown sufficiently to support this activity.

In addition, all structures reduce light and air flow while increasing humidity. The response of most plants is to produce larger, softer leaves. This is of benefit if you are producing leafy greens but the downside is that it also benefits whitefly and aphid outbreaks that quickly spoil crops.

The smaller the structure the more difficult it is to manage as most plants will touch the walls. Those leaves in contact with the walls are bathed in condensation making them prone to fungal disease. On some occasions frosty nights may cause the condensation to freeze causing these soft leaves to die reducing the plant's overall growth. As summer progresses the walls will now radiate heat which scorches the leaves in contact so providing ideal conditions for spider mites.

In short structures throw up a totally new suite of gardening problems that must be solved.

I often suggest that it is more efficient to grow plants that really suit the climate of the area and at the time in the annual cycle that growth is maximised. I call it the avoiding the 90%:10% trap i.e. spending 90% effort for 10% result. Just think of all the effort it takes to produce early tomatoes as opposed to the main crop in January/February. This idea was expressed in a better and more memorable way when Jerry said recently, on Gardening Australia, "A garden is not a hospital".

So back to structures.

Glass gives the best light transmission but this causes day temperatures to be highest. Vents that self-open are about \$100 extra allowing you to be absent during the day. They work on the principal of a column of wax expanding as it melts. **Polycarbamate** walls are a cheaper than glass and have the advantage of a longer life than polythene. The double air-filled profile tends to modify both night and day temperatures reducing the diurnal range produced by glass or poly.

Poly tunnels are characterised by high humidity and low light. Having side panels that can be rolled up helps but these require daily attendance and closing early enough to build up warmth before nightfall.

Investing in heated bench is always handy for producing early seedlings. The shallow soil of punnets will dry out very quickly so careful watering is required. The plants will be soft and will need to be hardened before transitioning to the outdoors.

Among the considerations of how useful these structures can be are where they are sited, ability to attend daily, plant choices and the skill of the grower. Thank goodness gardening gives the joy and opportunity for lifelong learning.