

# Bunya Mountains Community Association Inc (BMCAI)

## Newsletter

### Issue 6 - May 2020



### **Welcome to BMCAI Iso Newsletter-Issue 6**

*The last BMCAI Newsletter was issued in March 2020, following our general meeting in February 2020. Unfortunately, due to the CoVid 19 pandemic we were unable to meet for our quarterly meeting on 9th May 2020. However, staying in touch is really important in these unusual times, so BMCAI is issuing Newsletter 6, (which we usually do following each quarterly meeting).*

*We hope you and your families are all well and coping ok with the constantly changing situation. Over the past 3 months, so much has rapidly changed and it can be difficult to cope with the barrage of information about the virus and restrictions. On some occasions that barrage of information leaves us more confused than before the information became available. You will be pleased to know, that we are not offering any advice relating to the pandemic in this issue, but offering a diversity of members stories, news from BMCAI and a nature story about butterflies. We hope you can find a quiet corner and a coffee or hot chocolate and enjoy the read. This issue covers the period March, April and May 2020.*

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*This issue again provides some very interesting articles provided by Association members to share with you.*

*We sincerely thank those members for their contributions. Enjoy the read.....*

**Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift.**

**That is why it is called The Present.**

Quote by Bil Keane

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#### What's Been Happening at the Bunyas

The **"Stay at Home" pandemic controls** means that it has been very quiet in the Bunya Mountains for the past 8 weeks or so. Those of us lucky enough to be residing here during this period still had access to all we needed, and, a community that cared for and looked out for each other.

The two businesses who provide food services, continued to provide take away food ....so fish and chips on Friday nights delivered to the door ...yum... or takeaway coffees and burgers when we became tired of our own cooking.

The sense of community spirit was heightened... and in the words of one part time resident...

*"What an amazing bunch of wonderful people live up here. I was nervous about being lonely and isolated (in my isolation. Ha). It has felt the complete opposite. People here are being respectful of the distancing rules but doing it in a way that I still feel connected and a part of things.*

*Here are some examples of the warmth and kindness of people and businesses here over a short few weeks.*

- *Having a chat to me about work when I needed information and ideas about what people in the country need relating to telehealth*
- *Dropping off a bunch of flowers from the garden*
- *Dropping off a block for me to try to cut my own kindling.*
- *Chopping up some kindling for me when they could see that I was failing miserably at it*
- *Dropping off some mulch and plants for my garden after picking them up in town (love the saying...in town)*
- *Giving flu injections up here so that people don't have to leave the mountain to get it*
- *Offering to buy groceries in Kingaroy for not just one or two people, but to anyone who needs something!*
- *Inviting me to a 'lunch at a distance' and home made pumpkin soup*
- *Sending emails to all the community to keep them informed and connected*
- *Holding my mail for me and giving me a call to let me know it's there, when the postie didn't drop it off at my house...not once, or twice, but three times*
- *Continuing to look after accommodation owners and businesses when things seem bleak, knowing the implication loss of rentals has on people and the bigger picture*
- *Opening a café at lunch where I can grab a Bunya burger to take away when I can't stand the inside of my four walls another moment*
- *Opening a shop long hours, making meals on public holidays and even delivering them to people if needed.*
- *Dropping in for a coffee to keep me company and letting me have a chat when they knew I needed it*
- *Refusing to let me make the coffee myself, but choosing instead to buy it and support local people and business (that alone, makes me teary...in a good way)*
- *Dropping in a window frame, that they had laying around, in case it fit my sad broken window*
- *Going with me on a 3km walk in the rainforest because they knew I was too scared to do it alone (ok, I am a chicken, it's true)*

*Honestly, as I sit here and write this, my heart is full with gratitude and love for the people in this community. Thank you all so very much. I know there are many of you out there who I have never met, though hope to meet in future. I should add, that the above are just occurrences in the short few weeks I have been here and doesn't mention the services and support of the rural fire brigade, association fund raising, and so much more. Contd next page....*

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*I have heard it said many times by people in the city, that they could never live in the country because they would feel too cut off from the world. I will argue that now when I hear it said. I feel more connected to people and place here, then I ever do in the big smoke. Thank you. Thank you all. Oh, and if I have never met you before and you see me in the garden fighting with a weed, please wave or give a cooee to say g'day (as my dad used to say)."*

*By Christine, Colonial Cottage.*

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#### **An Unforeseen Event**

One of our part time residents decided that the lockdown gave him ample time to do lots of jobs around his property that had been set aside for some time due to the busyness of everyday life. One of those big jobs was to repair his shed roof. Unfortunately, the shed roof did not hold his weight and he fell through onto the floor of the shed... a very nasty accident indeed....

The alarm was raised, triple 000 called and a local nurse collected to provide first aid until the ambulance from Kingaroy arrived, followed by a helicopter to air lift the patient out, almost 3 hours after the drama unfolded. See below a message from Meg to all who assisted:

*Can I say a big, heart-felt thank you to all who assisted with Noel's accident and the many wonderful folk from the Mountains who have checked in to see how we are subsequently getting on? I would like to thank yourself, Jurgen and Christine, the ambulance and medi-vac team in particular, because we are daily seeing the importance of not moving Noel in those first hours. Noel continues to make slow, steady progress. He wears a brace and is up to taking short morning walks with a walking stick. He continues to need a couple of during-the-day rests and a sleep too. We begin visits to drs, physios, OTs etc based at PA this week to ensure healing continues steadily. He is expected to make a full recovery 'over time'. Thank you one and all for thinking of us. We are missing the mountains and the community heaps! Meg*

This unfortunate accident did highlight many things for the BMCAI, such as:

- Community comes together very quickly and capably when events take a turn for the worst;
- The Telstra mobile signal is appalling (not new news, I know) and caused us many issues on the day responding to the situation and relaying vital life saving information, for example, there was no signal at the accident site but 50 metres away, the signal was reasonable, so this resulted in first responders and Paramedics and Medi-Vac doctor having to leave the patient to relay messages to QAS despatch services. BMCAI will continue to lobby for improved telecommunication services;
- Bunya Mountains must have a helipad... this life-threatening situation clearly demonstrates that need. By the time the helicopter lifted off in this scenario, it was dark.... So, it is not just a safe spot to land that is needed but an established marked helipad that can be identified in all circumstances. BMCAI will lobby for a helipad for the Bunya Mountains.

*BMCAI sends our best wishes to all members who are unwell, and/ or recovering, at the moment. Stay safe and get well... we want to see you up and about in our community very soon.*

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#### B.OLD 2020 short film competition

#### Share a be B.OLDer story

People, community groups and organisations all over Queensland are proving age is no barrier — and Queenslanders' oldies are being encouraged to submit inspiring stories that celebrate the diverse capabilities and contributions of older people and help challenge stereotypes of ageing.

The films will feature stories about older Queenslanders who are active and engaged in community life as volunteers, athletes, artists, entrepreneurs or employees. Or stories about groups, events or activities that celebrate the achievements of older people in Queensland communities.

Ten stories will be selected by a panel of expert judges and matched with production teams will plan and coordinate filming. A production company will coordinate all filming, crews, production and editing of selected stories. Crews will be on location for up to two days. Winning entries get viewed across the state during August's 'Seniors Week'.

#### Bunya Mountains contribution to this Competition

Bunya Mountains very talented Book Club Convener, member of BM Rural Fire Brigade and BMCAI, **Lynne Downes**, developed this fabulous script / entry on behalf of the BM Rural Fire Service.... Have a read of this this, it is sure to be a winner.....

*"This year, 2020, marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade.*

*A first impression if you walk into a meeting of the BMRFB is that you have accidentally stumbled into a gathering of the pensioner's league or some such body of aged persons: wherever you look, you see grey heads. This is because the BMRFB is made up largely of retired or semi-retired members of the local community. We won't reveal their ages; but while you can tell at a glance that they are no longer in the prime of youth, when you see them in action, you realize they are far from over the hill!*

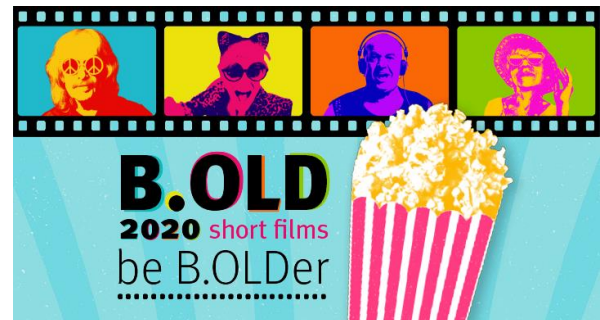
*Our community is unusual in that residences are adjacent to a national park. During the week, we live in a quiet rural retreat, but on weekends and during holiday periods, the place is abuzz with visitors from far and near, all eager for the mountain experience. Part of that experience is the comfort of a log fire, and most of the houses are equipped with wood heaters.*

*Add many dwellings unoccupied during the week to the mix of bushland and wood fire heaters, let alone high voltage power lines and high winds, and you can see the challenges our members face on a regular basis.*

*If I were writing a film script about the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade, the opening scene would read like this:*

*In the forest. A crisp morning, early. Sounds of whip birds calling.*

*Light filtering through the bunya pines reveals – the Tardis!      Contd next page....*



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*No, this is not part of a television series in which Dr Who visits Australia. This is the portaloo of the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade. (There could be an explanation of the need for a portaloo, but that is not really the point of showing it; rather it illustrates the enterprise and imagination of local brigade members.)*

*Subsequent scenes in my script would feature regular activities, such as:*

- *Preventative measures, including stack burns & hazard reduction burns*
- *Equipment checks*
- *Manoeuvring/deployment of fire engines*
- *Training sessions in the fire shed and in the field*
- *First aid training including resuscitation techniques and use of defibrillator*
- *Traffic control*

*These scenes would amply demonstrate that our members are not lacking in intelligence, skill, initiative and physical ability.*

*Supporting our largely senior brigade of fire fighters is our equally senior catering brigade, ladies of unchallenged virtuosity in the provision of victuals. They turn up at meetings, training sessions, and field activities to support and sustain active members. They also maintain emergency ration packs which can be accessed at a moment's notice.*

*The BMRFB is a social hub, involving the broader community in an endeavour to create awareness and encourage membership growth.*

*There are many reasons why older people would join an organization such as ours, and you would have to ask individual members what made them become members of the BMRFB in the first place; but it is clear that they all have one thing in common: a keen sense of social responsibility."*

Written by Lynne Downes

#### Update from the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade

The Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade is planning and organising hazard reduction burns for the current "cool burn season". The first burns will take place at the request of the Bunya Mountains Titles Estate on the 28 May. There will then be burns every 2 weeks. There has been tremendous vegetation growth on the mountain after the earlier rains. When this vegetation dies and dries out it will be very flammable. The aim of the Brigade is to protect property and to minimise the risk of wildfires on the mountain. Last year we conducted 31 burns and fought the large wildfire on Bunya Park in December, at the foot of the mountain on the Dalby side. This threatened to break out of containment lines and to come up the mountain.

If you need to talk about possible burns, then contact me on the Brigade mobile 0487923696

**Peter (Marshall), First Officer, Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade**

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#### Bunya Mountains National Park News

Report provided by Tony Parkin, Ranger Bunya Mountains



Pandemic restrictions have had a major impact on the visitation over the last month or so, this has included the Campgrounds being closed since late March. However, Day Use Areas and Walking Tracks have been and are still open to the Public. This is an ongoing process to manage / restrict Covid 19 and will change as the circumstances allow loosening restrictions more as the pandemic is reined in.

*(Photo- Co-vid 19 Closures – as we go to print, this area is now open again)*

- Currently the whole Scenic Circuit is closed while Boardwalks are being upgraded, expected to open again around the 5th of June.
- Planned Burns on the park have started with a burn taking place between Tim Shea Creek Road and Upper Barkers Creek Road on the National Park (very mild burn with further lighting to occur as the unburnt areas dry out a bit more).
- Strategic Fire Breaks around the base of the Mountain (on park) have been freshened up with a Grader to conduct this years planned burns.
- lot of Brush cutting and maintenance of walking tracks occurring after the rain and surge in vegetation growth.
- Ongoing monitoring and trapping of Feral Pigs to minimise their impact on park now and in the future.



Bunyas- Scenic Circuit Boardwalk Upgrade



Feral Pigs in the Bunya Mountains

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#### News from the BMCAI Management Committee

Whilst the BMCAI was unable, due to CoVid 19, to have the scheduled quarterly general meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the Management Committee utilised whatever means it could to stay in touch and progress any business that arose over the past quarter. To keep you updated and informed here is an overview of key business items:

#### **Bunya Mountains Local Disaster Management Sub-Plan**

Following the devastating bush fire season for many parts of Queensland and Australia earlier this year, BMCAI, in collaboration with the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade, sought advice from Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC), South Burnett Regional Council (SBRC) and QFES regarding planning for the Bunya Mountains should we ever have the misfortune to be threatened by wildfire or any other disaster in this area.

Representatives from WDRC and SBRC Local Disaster Management Committees, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade and BMCAI met on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to discuss the possible scenarios, current available resources, logistical issues such as telecommunications and terrain in the area. The meeting outcome is that a joint (WDRC and SBRC) Local Disaster Management sub-plan will be developed and implemented for the Bunya Mountains.



Meeting in the BM Fire Shed -6<sup>th</sup> March 2020



A draft of the Bunya Mountains Local Disaster Management sub plan is being developed by the QFES and the WDRC and SBRC Local Disaster Committees. Unfortunately, the pandemic has significantly delayed the completion of this document, but we expect that it should soon be available for BM Rural Fire Brigade, BM National Parks, BMCAI and community consultation. BMCAI will advise when it becomes available for consultation. Both BM Rural Fire Brigade and BMCAI are keen to see this sub plan implemented prior to the next fire season.

#### **Telecommunications Issues**

The community meeting with Telstra planned for the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 had to be cancelled due to pandemic restrictions. BMCAI has continued to contact Telstra to advise of service delivery issues and reiterate that the community still wishes to meet with Telstra to discuss the issues being experienced. When a new meeting date is confirmed, BMCAI will advise all contacts.

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#### **Community Plan No 2**

Some years ago, the Bunya Mountains community came together to develop a Community Plan which highlighted infrastructure deficits and also talked about future opportunities for a community that relies heavily on visitors for economic development.

BMCAI's focus is community, and the Association objectives are written as:

Bunya Mountains Community Association Inc aims to:

- a) *Provide a voice for consultation with local, state and federal authorities, on behalf of residents and property owners of the Bunya Mountains and visitors to the Bunya Mountains; and*
- b) *Work together with the relevant bodies to enhance the liveability and protect the unique Bunya Mountains village lifestyle and cultural and environmental heritage of the area.*

BMCAI members are now working on updating and further developing that Plan, which will be called Community Plan No 2 - 2020 to 2023. BMCAI have conducted 2 focus group meetings to collate information about what is needed, possible ways to meet that need, and establish operational priorities for the next 3 years (but being flexible enough to cope with emerging issues ...such as a Pandemic!)

#### **Raising local issues**

BMCAI has raised the following issues with the relevant Councils:

- the very poor condition of "suburban roads" including Bell, Tolmie, Ensor and Grimley Streets with the Western Downs Regional Council.
- Missing Devils' Elbow sign (on the Dalby side) with Western Downs Regional Council
- The loss of the footpath/ walkway line down Bunya Avenue -it was not repainted after the Avenue was resealed- with the South Burnett Regional Council
- The need to now resume the restoration of the Allan Stirling Memorial Park and the Bunya Avenue Project with South Burnett Regional Council (these projects have been on hold due to Co-vid 19)

#### **Supporting local business**

BMCAI recognises the devastating impact that the pandemic restrictions have had on local businesses. Whilst BMCAI is not an economic development organisation, it does promote improved facilities and eco and cultural tourism opportunities for visitors and residents, whilst retaining the unique village lifestyle. It these features that draw so many people to the Bunya Mountains.

BMCAI is keen to support local businesses in their future endeavours and will continue to engage with all tiers of government, whilst locally offering opportunities for business promotion through this quarterly Newsletter. The circulation of this Newsletter is continuing to broaden, so more people now have access. You, as our valued reader, are welcome to forward this Newsletter to whomever in your contacts may be interested in learning more about the Bunya Mountains.

This Newsletter features the first local business to take up the offer of promotion through the Newsletter. I'm sure you'll be very interested to read about the Astrophotography business on page 14.

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#### Nature at its Best

*Did you know that a group of Butterflies is called a Kaleidoscope!*

Wonder brown (female)



#### **Butterflies in the Bunyas** By Peter Taylor

You may have noticed in the month of April on the Bunyas, large numbers of butterflies to almost what could be called plague proportions.

The species seen during the month of April include the Caper white, Blue tiger, Yellow migrant, Common migrant, Lemon migrant, Pearl white, Common eggfly, Chequered swallowtail, Eastern crow, Common albatross, Australian gull, Common crow, Wanderer, Lesser wanderer, Large grass yellow, Painted lady, Meadow Argus, Blue Argus, Wonder brown and the Aussie admiral.

While plague proportions of Caper whites are not uncommon on the Bunyas, due to the last eight years or so being drier than usual. What is unusual is to see so many different species in plague proportions at one time. Further to this unusual event, some of the species mentioned above were flying out side of their normal adult flying times. For example the Common eggfly may be found on the wing at any time of the year in Queensland especially in the tropics. However in the Bunyas it is usually restricted to the months of October and February. And yet this year we have seen fresh adult specimens as late as May 8. For this species after the first rains in September the adults hatch from their pupal cases and lay their eggs on several specific types of plants. These plants include Joy weed, Pig weed and Paddy's lucerne. I'm sure that we were all aware of the weed infestation on the mountain at the beginning of the year which with the January rains helped with the butterflies being in plague proportions. These eggs again hatch and go through their life cycle again with the larvae pupating and hatching when we have our February rains.

What has occurred due to recent persistent drought conditions up to January 2020, is that we had no hatchings of pupae for the last few seasons and with the rain in January we have had around 2 years worth of butterflies in one season. These butterflies normally last for a maximum of 4 to 6 weeks, weather and traffic depending. Butterflies are cold blooded and are effected by the temperature, you will often find them early morning or on a cold day sitting on a leaf in the sun warming up to enable them to fly, forage for nectar and breed.



Common Eggfly (female)



Common Eggfly (male)



Blue tigers warming in the morning sun and drinking dew

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Addendum to the Butterfly Story :



Kay and Terry found this gorgeous  
critter in their garden ...

Can you identify it?

If yes, please email  
[bunyamcainc@gmail.com](mailto:bunyamcainc@gmail.com)



My grandson, Noah, found  
these gregarious caterpillars in  
the Allan Stirling Memorial  
Park on Mothers' Day. Peter  
Taylor believes they will  
become the Jezebel Butterfly  
(or one of several of that  
family....pictured --> )

What diversity and wonders of  
Nature we have here in the  
Bunya Mountains



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Can you find the  
the **mistake?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Try this puzzle .... If you can't solve it, the answer is available in on the  
BMCAI website at <https://bunyamcainc.wixsite.com/mysite/> (on the  
Newsletter Page)

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#### MEMBER TRAVEL YARNS

##### Adventures in a Canal Boat in France

**by Anna Zigterman** (Bidwillii)

In 2018 Robert and I bought a very old boat that was moored near the Loire River in France on the Canal de Central. We were not very experienced in boating or canals or French travel generally so every day brought new experiences and I kept a log to try to make sense of it all. This is an excerpt from early in our trip as we headed south along the canal towards Nevers. By the end of the trip we had developed much more confidence but early on it was all rather terrifying. Although it seems we will not get back to our boat the Vintage Cru this year we hope to continue in 2021.

30th May Friday – St Thibault Village

After the usual lunch of beautiful bread, interesting cheese and some sort of salad we set out to walk up the steep hill to the neighbouring town of St Sancerre. The track took us ever upwards past vineyards and cottages and the wall of the large

chateau that we could see from the canal. Eventually we reached the Sancerre Public Library which must have one of the best views that ever took any one's mind off their book. The mighty Loire curving through the landscape, the vineyards and hamlets and the canal that we would follow the next day. The garden was full of roses and herbs and flowers. But we did not rest for long. Upward ever upward through the town and even up the 200 steps of the Stronghold tower (Le Tour de Fiefs). We never understood if the Fiefs, made it or were kept

in it but it was a long long way up a winding narrow stairway. Whenever someone was coming down, which was often, this being a fete day and all, the Ascenders, had to suck in their stomachs and squeeze against the wall. Of course we will tell you that the view was worth it – it was very hard won. And the sun, elusive in the morning, was lighting up the landscape. From our high position we watched a group of children dressed in folk costumes – wimples, skirts, laced up tops and aprons for the girls, the ubiquitous dark blue smocks for the boys – perform dances while a group of ladies provided music with hurdy-gurdies with great expertise and vigour. It is a carrying sound – we could hear them well from the top of the tower.

Do they do this everyday?

Back at Vintage Cru and another surprise. People were assembled on the bank of the canal and two small boats were facing each other in the canal, each with a large and padded man standing on a little wooden stage at the front. The men held long poles at suggestive angles vaguely perpendicular to their bodies, the boats ( which also contained an assortment of family members, small children, random helpers) then drove towards each other at





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speed – it was water jousting and right outside our boat. Jane and I took wine ( excellent) on to the front deck and squinted into the westering sun to watch. Each round finished when one or both contestants had been



prodded hard in the chest and fallen out of the boat into the water. I think these boats were practising for the jouets ( games) advertised for the weekend. They kept at it for at least an hour and only hit our boat once. It seemed a great way to get the family together of an evening with the men falling in the water and being recovered with the help of a small ladder, a couple of other adults standing by to help and the kiddies bailing out the water. Then you do it all again. At least now we

know you can fall in a canal and not suffer great harm, at least where St Thibault is watching over you.

1st June – Saturday

The first day of Summer and another hot day on the canals – 30 degrees was predicted and the sun reflecting off the water made us go from pleasantly warm to need for shade by the afternoon. Today's first was deer ... a fairly small one swimming in the canal not far from the first lock out of Beffes. Much of the canal is lined with metal edges and the deer can fall in, perhaps chased by hunters, and not be able to get out. We realised that the metal triangles we saw sticking out from the bank sometimes were to allow wildlife to climb out but they are few and far between. None that we saw here. We moored briefly and Robert tried to get past the deer with the metal gangway and to give it a chance of escape but every time he was near it swam away and we were worried that it was only making things worse for it. Luckily the next lock was close and I was able to tell the young lockkeeper that there was a small cerf ( thankyou Google translate) in the eau and he rang a wildlife service. We lunched next to a really pretty park with a spring trickling out of a stone head – not old but quirky. The boulangerie was Ferme – nothing so empty as a French village at lunchtime on a hot day. We toyed with staying the night here but decided to get the next lock out of the way first. And it was scary! The double lock at le Guetin is approached via a park and there were picnickers and people at bistros having lunch and a large number lined the top of the lock to watch the fun. It is 9.23 m high so the lock keeper drops a large hook down which I had to catch and send the rope up on. Fine – but the rope wasn't long enough so we had to move forward in the lock to change the rope angle, he dropped it back and I caught it to cheers from the crowd. Nothing like a bit of performance boating.

I held on and we rose until the rope was slacker. I thought we were going well until the water stopped rushing in, the grim metal doors (cheered by geraniums in pots at various points on the way up) folded back again and we confronted a second stage of the lock. The water seemed to rush into this one and we did get pushed diagonally a bit but nothing too dreadful. Again the self congratulations. But as we rose I saw that the next stage was a long narrow pont (bridge) canal, over the Loire River. So Robert had more steering required to get us over this. The Vintage Cru managed to hook itself over one of the canal sides and scraped slowly along half out of the water until we managed to push off properly. It was a relief to reach the other side.

No one was really keen to push through to Nevers so we stopped and just relied on batteries and 12 volt for the night. It was wonderful to moor alone in a forested part of the canal. A highlight was first hearing and then seeing several woodpeckers up in nearby trees.



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We also tried the shower for the first time and it was lovely with hot water from the engine water heating system. Only sad thing was that by the time Jane and I had showered the LED lights had dimmed and the batteries were obviously struggling. Sadly the captain was unshowered and had to make do with a bucket. Of course with daylight saving it was later than it felt so we took our torches and went to bed. Another good day!

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#### **THE MAGNIFICENT BOAB TREES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA by Gill Marshall**

There are 8 closely related species of Baobab trees (Malvacea Andansonina)  
Six grow across Madagascar, one in South Africa in the Limpopo, Kruger and Kwazulu areas and one in Australia in the north and north west of WA. The Australian species, locally called Boab is Adansonia Gregorii – named after the Australian explorer Augustus Gregory

On a recent trip to northwest WA, I was fascinated by the quantity and shapes of these trees  
Every tree is different from their 'upside down' branches to their 'bloated' lower trunks. – girths of 20mts have been recorded –  
They are very slow growing. Some trees are more than 1500 years old. This makes them the oldest living things in Australia

The smooth bark is a grey brown and the leaves have 5 –9 long leaflets. Being deciduous they drop their leaves in the dry season then flower and fruit in the wet. The flowers are large, mostly white, with a slight pink center. The fruits are woody oval capsules of various sizes containing a dense white pith with several kidney shaped seeds.



There have been numerous theories to determine how the boab traveled from Africa and Madagascar to Western Australia. The latest theory is that they were brought by sea going travelers from Africa many tens of thousand years ago. This theory overlaps closely with a type of rock art known as the 'Bradshaw Paintings'. This art is significantly different from other rock art in both style and materials used. Flora and fauna are often depicted and include good representations of boab trees and high prowed ocean going boats. It is also thought that these boats may have been made from boab fibres. These people would have brought a cargo of boab fruit and seeds not only for planting but for food and medicinal use. It has been found that the fruit pulp, which is extremely rich in vitamin C (10 times more than oranges) will last for more than 12 months.

Other uses of the tree are as follows: 1) Useable water collects in the fibrous roots and trunks; 2) Young roots are used for human and animal food; 3) Leaves can be eaten fresh or dried; 4) Fruit pulp and seed are full of vitamins; 5) The hollow center of mature trees can be used as homes, shops, and even temporary prisons - a good example of the latter is on the outskirts of Derby; and 6) Used as landmarks and meeting points for travelers

All in all a very interesting and useful tree!!!

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#### Getting to know the businesses in the Bunya Mountains

Bunya Mountains Astrophotography.

Astrophotography showcases the pristine night skies of the Bunya Mountains. This is a unique and exciting activity that I offer visitors and locals.

I take people out to do night photography, explain some of the processes of astrophotography and assist them to take their own shots. I also offer post-processing of their photos which are then emailed to them ready for printing.

Price is \$60 per person and I offer this service on most nights, weather permitting, throughout the winter months.

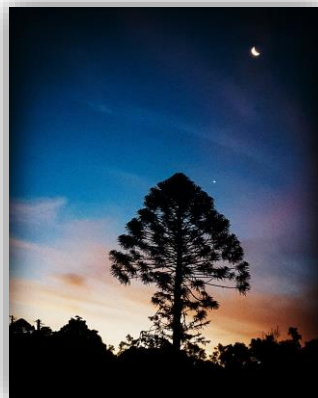
I also have metallic prints for sale (51cm x 31 cm) of night sky shots of Bunya Mountains compositions that make great keepsakes/gifts if anyone is interested.

Please contact me by email [bunyamountainsastrophotography@gmail.com](mailto:bunyamountainsastrophotography@gmail.com) or phone 0458680587 and you can find me on Instagram at bunyamountainsastrophotography.

Donna Glass  
Bunya Mountains

Sent from Outlook Mobile

#### Images of Prints Available



# Bunya Mountains Community Association Inc (BMCAI)

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#### **Don Seton's Life Story**

Don Seton was born in Glen Innes NSW on 06/01/1931, and as a baby, returned with his parents to live on the Solomon Islands. Don's father, was employed by Burns Phillp to manage Coconut Plantations on Faisi Island. Don had memories of his younger brother, Doug and himself being tied up on his fathers' boat, so they never fell overboard.

In 1937 he came back to Australia with his mother and brother Doug because War was imminent. In 1941 the Japanese occupation of the Solomon Islands took place. Don's father became a Coast Watcher, his knowledge proved of paramount value in the American's success at Guadalcanal.



**Vale Don Seton**

Don's Mother worked for the Australian Government in Sydney during the war, censoring the mail, entering and leaving Australia. Both boys, Don and Doug, went to stay with their Grandparents at Glen Innes.

Don started his education in Sydney. He had memories of the Japanese submarine coming into Sydney Harbour, and Dan later moved to Scott's College as a boarder. He enjoyed his senior school years, always in A form for his academic abilities, and his love of sport, playing representative cricket, rugby league and tennis.

During his education years, he spent many school holidays, with his Grandparents on their property at Glen Innes. He often spoke of the long, rough train journeys from Sydney to Glen Innes. It was during this time that Don's Uncle Bill, introduced him to Bird Watching. Don became fascinated, and never faltered in his ambition to become proficient in the ways of birds.

During his school life, money was very short, so when he went home to Glen Innes, in the winter months, and spent time trapping and hunting, foxes, rabbits and water rats. He used to run the traps, on his trusty horse, most nights not finishing until after midnight. He kept himself in pocket money, as their pelts were in strong demand, in the war years and later.

After finishing his education at Hawksbury Agricultural College, with a Diploma in Agriculture, he returned to join his parents. Don's father, had purchased plantations around Choiseul Bay on Choiseul Island, so Don helped run these. During this period, he also spent 12 months running a 50 foot launch between islands, trading with local natives.

Don returned to Australia, obtaining a position as a research officer in agriculture with the Department of Primary Industries at Hermitage Research Station at Warwick. His interest in birds was rekindled, as he met other people in the area, with similar interests.

Don, later married, and then with his young family, was transferred as Manager, of the Millaroo Research Station near Ayr in North Queensland. His work involved developing crops instead of sugar cane, for farmers to grow in the Burdekin Dam Irrigation Scheme. Rice was one of these crops. Don was author and co-author of a number of agricultural articles, especially dealing with rice research. About 1970, he moved to the Ingham



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Research Station, in a District Agricultural Advisory Position, because of his extensive knowledge of pasture grasses and legumes.

During these years, Don and his birdwatching friends, did many trips, to Western Queensland and many other areas, searching for rare birds. He loved North Queensland, because of the rare and special birds that are to be found there.

In the 1960's Don started writing articles on various ornithological experiences in the Burdekin area for the RAOU, now Birds Australia, the Bird Observer, and the Queensland Ornithological Society, now Birds Queensland.

In the 1970's he met Dr Hugh Lavery, of the DPI Fauna Branch, later to become Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service (QNPWS). Don and Hugh carried out considerable studies and fauna surveys of the Ingham, Bowen Areas and compiled various publications.

In 1976 Don joined National Parks and Wildlife Service (QNPWS), he was based in Warwick, as a Research Ranger, doing Bird and Fauna Surveys of many Western Shires. Part of his job was to monitor the booming population of Cattle Egrets and to locate breeding colonies. Quails were also monitored to see how adaptable they were to various forms of agricultural and grazing pastures; he studied both Turnix and Coturnix. Another study was of forest dwelling Button Quails, such as the Black-breasted viz Painted Quail. A study of Painted Button Quail in the Durikai State Forest near Warwick was carried out for 3 years, during which 230 birds were leg banded, weighted and measured.

Don authored and Co-authored many articles relating to Ornithological studies over the years. Additionally he provided significant input into Publications including Atlas of Australian Birds and Handbook of Australian and New Zealand Birds. For his research of Australian Birds, Don was made an honorary life member of Birds Australia and Birds Queensland.

In the early 1980's Don was transferred to QNPWS Head Office, in Brisbane, to an Administrative Position, he hated this work. During this period he suffered a marriage break up.

Then in 1984, he obtained the position of Regional Superintendent of the newly formed South Western Queensland Region, QNPWS, covering a quarter of Queensland, including the Bunya Mountains. He was stationed in Toowoomba. He loved this work, getting out and around out back Queensland, again. An issue arose between QNPWS and the Bunya Mountains Natural History Association (BMNHA). It was then that Don met Bernice, who was the secretary of the BMNHA and their life together began.

Don retired from QNPWS in 1988, to a life of farming on Bernice's property at Bell, which he really enjoyed. They were married in 1991 and decided to live on the Bunya Mountains and spent ten happy years there. He was a member of the BMNHA and compiled a booklet '*Birds of the Bunya Mountains*' which was sold as a fund raiser for the Association.

Don was a member of the Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade for more than 12 years and Chairman for about 7 years. During this time, land was obtained from the then Wambo Shire Council, so a shed could be erected. A grant was secured to construct the first fire shed, later a large truck was gifted, for use in carting water to fire sights.



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A couple of memorable fires occurred during this period, one in Bunya Mountains Titles Estate, when power lines hit together in strong winds, starting a grass fire, luckily no dwellings were lost, although one had a close call. The other fire was on Foxton's Property, when a Wedgetail Eagle touched two power lines falling to the ground, starting a grass fire, destroying part of Foxton's cattle yards. Many interesting meetings and fire experiences were had, with the personalities involved within the Brigade at that time.

Don and Bernice moved back to live on the farm after experiencing many years of drought. They lived happily, enjoying farm life, with their beloved cows.

Then in 2012 Don contracted Guillian Bare` Syndrome which left him paralysed. After much persistence, he taught himself to use his binoculars again, so he could still enjoy his beloved bird watching. Many trips were enjoyed to local areas including the Bunya Mountains in his special vehicle.

In 2016 Don returned to the nursing home, in Dalby, as Dementia was affecting him.

On the 29th March 2020 Don passed away peacefully with Bernice by his side.

On the morning of Don's funeral, 5 Wedgetail Eagles were lazily flying in circles out in front of our house, for over an hour..... Were they saying good bye?

Then as we went down our road to the service, 2 Wedgetail Eagles were sitting in a tree on the side of the road, they never moved as we drove beneath..... Were they forming a guard of honour?

***The story of Don's amazing life as provided by his loving wife, Bernice Seton***

***15/05/2020***

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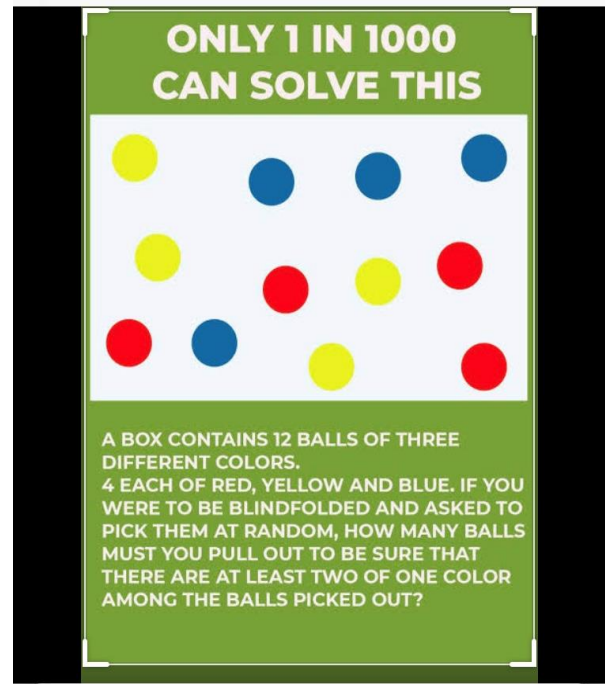


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Try these puzzles .... If you can't solve them, the answers are available on the BMCAI website at <https://bunyamcainc.wixsite.com/mysite/> (on the Newsletter Page)



*It has been fun chatting with you. Please feel free to provide us with feedback and some thoughts about how we can improve this Newsletter.*  
 Send your ideas to [bunyamcainc@gmail.com](mailto:bunyamcainc@gmail.com)

### Would you like to assist/ support the work of the Association in enhancing the Bunya Mountains experience for all?

Then become a member and join the Association so you can have your say and become involved in future activities. All Bunya Mountains property owners are welcome to make application to become a member. Membership is just \$10 per person per annum (1st January to 30 December each year).

If you would like to become a member, we are happy to send you an Application Form. You are welcome to pay the annual fee at any quarterly meeting or pay directly into our bank account using the following details:

**Next BMCAI Meeting: To be advised**

*Stay safe and stay well.....*

Bank Account Name : Bunya Mountains  
 Community Association Inc  
 Institution: Heritage Bank  
 BSB:638070  
 Account Number: 14018187  
 (please ensure you include your name in the Reference so that the Treasurers knows who has paid)