

# Summer Newsletter

Number 122

January 2022

Patron:

John Landy, AC, MBE



WOLLANGARRA

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A new year has begun at Wollangarra, 2022! Yet before we can dive into what's instore for the Woll community this year, we must first back-track a little to the end of 2021. Although we were unable to run any programs or events from August until mid-November 2021, we finished the year in the way Woll should be, with young people on the flat and in the mountains. Many Stage 3's, volunteers and casuals came up to help out and it was glorious to see the flats alive with young people and social activities - What a way to finish another strange year at Wollangarra!

So instead of sending out the usual December Summer Newsletter with little to report before these

programs went ahead, we decided to wait until January 2022 to share our summer Woll adventures with you. Ending 2021 in such a mega way really set us up with much positivity



for the year to come - Our energy is high, we have a brilliant new Staff team (who will introduce themselves shortly) and we are ready to rumble! The river is sweetly inviting, just the perfect temperature for a quiet early morning dip before the busyness and heat of the day sets in. Lace

monitors are once again patrolling the fields at the homestead, fruit is ripening on the trees and birds are singing a symphony at 5:30am - spirits are high. We are filled with hope and optimistic that this year will bring a new adventure full of programs and social activities for Wollangarra! Come and be a part of it all with us again. We have missed you! ~Kay

## *Around the flats*

The summer of 2021/22 at Wollangarra has been a wet one with lots of rain and considerable warmth too. Everything is so green, its wonderful. Yet also tricky to keeo up with the growth of the grass and the garden, yet thankfully the sheep have been loving the new growth and helping out where they can. With all the rain comes lots of water and the river, normally quiet and stable in this period has shown many changes from crystal-clear serene scenes to fast running chocolate-milk after another solid down pour. However, the temperatres for swimming have bene superb and it's a hot summers day dream to jump into the MacA for a cool off. The garden has exploded in these warm wet conditions and we hope for a big tomatoe harvest this year. With a new and keen staf team we are planning to invest in some more egg-layers and lambs this year, harvest a lot of fruit and grow lots of food in the garden. And ofcourse we are super excited for the new team to get into programs and events! Here's to 2022, may it be a propsorous and merry year for all Wollangarrians and the wider community beyond ~Kay

## *Farewells of 2021 Outdoor Leader*

### **Isabel de Ridder**



Dear fellow Wollies; present, past and future. It's with great strangeness, sadness and also excitement, that I can say I have now left Wollangarra! The past two years have been challenging yet greatly rewarding. Living on the flat with different combinations of staff, directors, dogs, even a horse and the occasional group of young people (thanks Covid!) has been a true rollercoaster. There are so many aspects to being at Woll, and in the end the good memories outweigh the not so good big time. I am very happy to have stayed on a second year, getting to experience what Woll is all about: running stages with young people, while living in such a beautiful place with a fascinating history and amazing community. Thanks to everyone who has made it home for me, sharing laughs, cries and so many amazing meals. Thanks to my letter-writers too, you have put many a smile on my face. Special shoutout to Ferg for always being an amazing listener and sharing lots of laughs! I feel very fortunate to have met so many great people, both amongst the staff and directors, and the young people! One of my favourite things (so many good things!) has definitely been driving the stage 2 bunch from and to Traralgon, so much fun! It had been Great to finish up the second year relatively normal, running a few consecutive stages, with the last one going into the Alps. I definitely finished on a high, which is always a great way to leave somewhere. Stay well everyone! Greets, Issy

### **Fergus O'Donoghue**



Where to start? Well, we are writing this farewell for Fergus as he is currently enjoying a well-earnt brake from Wollangarra after a two-year stint as an absolute Legend Outdoor Leader and Staff member... he is likely chasing waves in his home turf on Phillips Island, camping out in the bush (or his car) somewhere, making plans to explore the rugged mountains of New Zealand or setting himself up for stint of living the rock-climbers dream at Mnt Arapiles. Thank you for all your time, energy and love for Woll and its young people. On the programs you got to run in 2021, the young people revelled in your calm demeanour and cool bushman vibes- "the dude" was very popular and loved by all. Wherever you are Fergus, we wish you nothing but the best of luck and happiness for 2022 and look forward to the day you come home to Woll for a visit! ~ Directors

### **Sarah Haley**



How do you write a farewell when you aren't ready to leave yet? I guess one of the beautiful things about Woll is that you never really need to say Farewell, just 'goodbye for now,' as there's always the opportunity to be welcomed back into this precious space. One year ago I was introduced to Woll, and my life is all the better for it. Living and working at wollangarra for a year has been indescribable and invaluable. I have cherished the opportunity to introduce young people to the outdoors, live in a simple alternative off-grid environment, and to get to know this space and its incredible community. I hope that I have been able to give as much to Woll as it has given me. Hopefully I will see many of you soon throughout programs and events.  
With Love, Sarah

### **Lotus Wintersea**



We are thankful to Lotus for joining the Woll team for the last half of 2021, bringing new energy and entertainment in Scout – to Wollangarra. A keen environmentalist with a love for all nature and living things, we appreciated her knowledge on the beauty of Woll's wildlife. We wish her best of luck in her new journey as an intern at Halls Outdoor Education in Victoria in 2022. Her humour and her sourdough will be missed. ~ Directors

## *Hello 2022 Outdoor Leaders!*

### **Maeve Nunan**



With embroidery on her boots, dangly earrings and rainbow knitwear (made with love by her mum), you'll find her doing some zingy, creative crafting, or cooking up a storm, having a cuppa and a yarn. Her bubbly, excitable and funny nature leaves you feeling a little better about the world after talking to her. Along with her knitting, weaving and gardening skills, she brings a wealth of experience in outdoor education and is excited for daily swims in the Macalister river and mountain meandering. She'll be here all year! So get you're butts movin! I hope you'll get to know my dear, dear friend. ~Zoe

### **Zoe Merrigan**



Zoe is a Wolly from way back, the sort keener to clean out the sludge pit than a kookaburra is for an arvo shower. Open, honest and absolutely likeable, this year is bound to be a bumper as she brings a drive to pull together young and old to keep Woll doing what it's really all about. You'd be equally as likely to find her sowing or moving, spinning a well-earned yarn or just plain pondering what a wombat really tastes like. With all her past experiences at Woll, Zoe can pretty much put her hand to anything, this years team is lucky to have an energetic allrounder to keep the flat firing! ~Laurence

## Laurence Farr



A furr and feather fanatic you will find in our friend Laurence Farr. Hailing from Castlemaine, he looks upon the Bogong High plains as a favourite place for hiking. When not upon a Mountain he can be found submerging in the underwater world, both scuba and free diving, writing (so feel free to write him a letter and he will relish in writing one back!) And Fly fishing, watch out trout of the Macalister! We have wonderful Sarah to thank for bringing him to this wonderful place. For his last meal on earth he would tuck into a Roo Stew. Laurence is excited for a year of learning and to do some good for a place so dear to our hearts. ~ Maeve

## Shaya Kaartinen-Price



Shaya has arrived at Wollangarra with a bounding enthusiasm for the year ahead. Hailing from a tiny town called Forrest. The past few years has seen her studying Environmental and Social studies in Geelong. This led her to be working in community engagement citizen science. You'll likely find her practising handstands, out hiking, and creating conversations with people about the world. Her last meal would be a mango coconut sago pudding, eaten whilst reading the dictionary (a self-proclaimed word nerd amidst us!) and watching waterfalls. When in the kitchen Shaya creates rainbow feasts and enjoys a cup of tea. ~ Maeve

## *Dec'21 Stage 3*

We were lucky to have Oli and Ferg induct an excited and capable new crew into Stage 3 this year. Making a new cohort to take up the Stage 3 ranks, 2021 didn't allow them much time at Woll or in the mountains but we got a chance in the last few weeks of our Woll year. I doubt they had envisaged their first Stage 3 visit to Woll as having involved so much two stroke! However, the lack of hands and unstoppable rains of this summer has meant what Woll needed most was property maintenance. The Stage 3's worked valiantly as I cracked the whip and worked our wildly grassed property into a manicured mansion to make even the most discerning croquet player happy. There reward: 1 axe, 1 knife, 1 bowsaw, 1 spade, 1 length of cord, 1 Billy, 1 skillet, 1 roll of TP, 1 hand sanitizer and 1 match. The clothes on their back, a backpack and a blanket or sleeping bag. 1 spud, 1 apple, 1 egg and some local meat or a few falafels. The crew swam across the mighty Macalister and built camp on a favourite sandy bank nestled amongst wattles and bracken. Using their tools and wits the team crafted a fine shelter and worked together to collect bracken to insulate them from the cold sand. The 1 match was saved for the morning fire and dinner was cooked on a friction fire made from a team effort of some very dedicated young ladies! We look forward to seeing the Stage 3s adventures in 2022 and I reckon they look forward to new found independence lest I have them cutting grass like Jim all year. ~Toby



# Programs update

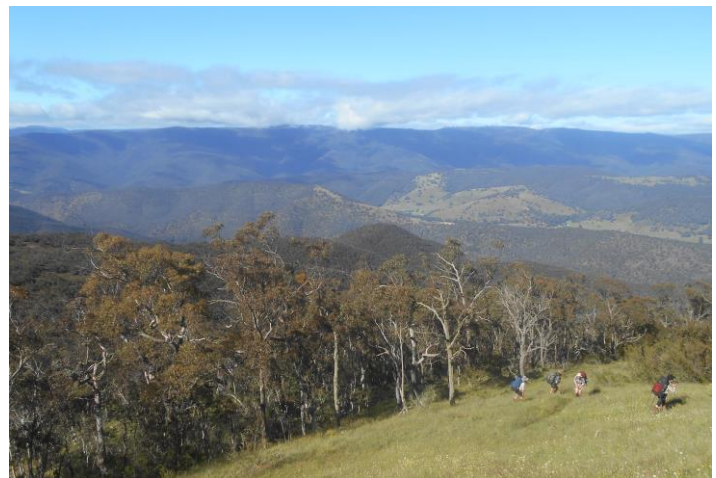


Since the last newsletter, we were fortunate enough to run a bunch of programs at the end of 2021 involving young people from near and far between the ages of seven to eighteen. Not only was it wonderful for us Wollies to get to work with people, but so great to be able to have the young people back here, either as first-time visitors or hardened veterans.



It seemed to be a trend that the younger the students were the funnier the programs were: with a single day visit from the Heyfield Primary students, yelling fire to life with Toby, relishing 'story time with Ferg, and drawing on the river bank

with me among other things. Backing it up from Heyfield Primary was a modified program with Fresh Water Creek Primary, and perhaps the most humorous Thursday Night Feast I had the pleasure of experiencing so far all year; leaving all with stomach pains not from overeating, but from ceaseless laughter.



To finish the year, we had Camberwell Grammar followed by the Holiday stage I and II programs with the stage III group up too. It was a real pleasure to be able to more-or-less start and finish the year with the same wonderful people

choosing to be here once again. It was also a special treat for everyone to, for the first time all year, get out of the local area and up into the high country. We had a successful stage 2 trip at the Crinoline and Rock Shelter, with spectacular vistas, treasured company and memorable conversation. For those who are interested in seeing a boatload of photos from the trip, I encourage you to jump on the Wollangarra Photo Sharing page and check out the myriad of photos documented by Flynn.



~ Sarah

# Memorial Tribute

## VALE EILY WILLOX



Sadly, another of Wollangarra's strong local supporters from the early days has left us.

Eily Willox, a member of the Gell family from Paradise Valley, passed away peacefully at home a few weeks ago, aged 88.

Eily and her late husband, Bill, spent the early years of their married life at Licola raising their growing young family, and they knew all about hard conditions in remote places. But that part of their life together was well & truly behind them by the time we started building Wollangarra. They were living in Sale by then, and their children had all grown up and were raising families of their own.

It didn't take Eily & Bill long though, to cotton on to the fact that something interesting was happening with young people up at Hickey's Creek, and they had soon rattled their way across the fox to have a look. They loved the place straight away – busy young city kids everywhere, all working hard to build something special.

But Eily was definitely not impressed with my catering arrangements! An old bush cook from way back, she somehow got it into her head that a diet of stale Savoy biscuits, out-of-date fruit cakes and Heyfield sausages was nowhere near good enough for kids working that hard. And after loudly telling me what she thought about the situation, she quietly decided to do something about it!

She did the rounds of nearly every food outlet in Sale, and convinced them all to make their excess food available to Wollangarra. And for several years after that, she and Bill would go around Sale at the end of every week, gathering up great piles of all this stuff, and driving it up to the Hickey's Creek gate where they would plant it all in a big clump of blackberries for us to come out and collect later on. All sorts of scrumptious goodies – lamingtons, coffee scrolls, salad rolls, sandwiches, and every other sort of left-over tucker you could think of. Lots of fruit and veggies too – Eily was big on that sort of stuff. God knows how much time and fuel they must have gone through over the years, and how many dresses she ruined getting over 'that bloody barbed wire fence!' Even though we seldom saw them, I can tell you, they saved the day many times, and probably prevented all sorts of festering mutinies! There was certainly never any shortage of volunteers to walk out to the gate on a Friday evening and bring in the latest haul from Eily & Bill.

She was a 'great old stick,' Eily. And I don't think she'd mind me putting it that way. A good old-fashioned bush woman, who quietly helped us through many tough times, and remained a good strong friend for many years after. Thank you Eily, for all you did, and best wishes to the Willox family at this sad time, from all at Wollangarra. ~ Ian

# Upcoming Events 2022

Here are the dates for some of the upcoming events and holiday programs at Wollangarra for the first half of 2022:

<b>TBC</b>	-	<b>Fruit Bottling</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> March</b>	-	<b>Locals Lunch</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> March</b>	-	<b>Labour Day weekend</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	-	<b>Holiday Stage 1</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April</b>	-	<b>Holiday Stage 2</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June</b>	-	<b>Wood Chop</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> June- 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	-	<b>Holiday Stage 1</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> July</b>	-	<b>Holiday Stage 2</b>

Keep an eye on our Wollangarra Outdoor Education Facebook page and website for updated details on the events closer to the time.



The

## Fox Flyer Donations Info

Fox Flyer initiative started at the end of 2020, asking for financial support from our community to help us get back up and running after having no programs in 2020. We have been so humbled by the support of our Fox Flyers, who have come from across Australia to support Woll. Some of our Fox Flyers have never been to Woll but have heard of the programs and opportunities we offer young people and see us as something they want to support. Others have been young people, parents, staff, active community members, and council members. All in all, a diverse and great group of peopland we are stoked and thankful to have them on board.



As Fox Flyers they committed to donating \$50/month across 2021, and their combined donations have already supported running staff training such as the Bronze Medallion, as well as purchasing materials for the new rota-loo toilet. Across the year they will also support us to continue running low cost and accessible school holiday programs, and maintenance costs of the infamous flying fox into Woll.

Keen on being a Fox Flyer? It is definitely not too late, and we would love to have more people join. If you are keen, head to [www.wollangarra.org.au/foxflyers](http://www.wollangarra.org.au/foxflyers) for more info and sign-up options, or chuck us an email to [donations@wollangarra.org.au](mailto:donations@wollangarra.org.au)

~Annabelle

# Support Wollangarra

Wollangarra is a small outdoor education centre situated beside the Macalister River in Gippsland. We pride ourselves on the high quality outdoor education programs we have run for young people aged 14-22 since 1989. Through outdoor education, Wollangarra provides a small step to a healthier environment, stronger communities, and happier young people. Wollangarra runs approximately thirty programs throughout the year, as well as several working bees and community events. When young people come on the property there are no timetables, bells, watches, or mobile phones. The living is simple and these young people get the chance to discover Victoria's mountains in small, well-supervised hiking groups. They are then given the opportunity to return on follow-up programs and become involved in a vibrant community and with our ongoing conservation programs. We strongly believe that our programs help young people see environmental issues as exciting and demanding challenges to the way we live, rather than as depressing and negative threats to our future.

Wollangarra's programs are available to schools and community groups. We offer both fully and partially sponsored places to any young person who needs financial assistance and we run many programs at or below cost-price and have worked with many different groups from diverse backgrounds. A non-profit organisation registered with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission, Wollangarra is independent of any school, religious or government funding. That means we rely on the generosity of our community and supporters to keep us keeping on. Your donation will help Wollangarra continue to deliver programs that get young people inspired to care for our environment in a hands-on way. Extra funds mean we can offer sponsored spots in our hike programs for those who cannot afford it, maintain our stock of hiking gear, and manage our beautiful property.



## **If you would like to support Wollangarra, here is how you can.**

**Resources we need:** If you have got any of these lying around, we would love to give your second-hand goodies another lease on life. Give us a call if you have any of the items that you are happy to part with, and we can organise the best way to get it off of you. Please call if you have any questions about anything (03 5148 0492).

- Rock stretcher
- Tirfor winch
- New home-made munchie bags
- Rolls and ROLLS of flyscreen
- Gloves/mittens
- Fruit-tree netting

## **Financial assistance:**

Wollangarra has deductible gift recipient status (DGR) and is on the Register of Environmental Organisations (REO). our ABN is 44 395 948 159. Donations can be made on the website and are tax deductible.

Or if you would like, you can mail us a donation cheque to our postal address to Wollangarra, 3439 Heyfield, Licola Rd, Glenmaggie VIC 3858.

You can also donate to Wollangarra by making a direct transfer to the Wollangarra Public Fund. Just email our Business Manager ([businessmanager@wollangarra.org.au](mailto:businessmanager@wollangarra.org.au)), after you have donated to get a receipt.

Wollangarra Public Fund  
BSB: 633-000  
Account Number: 139 880 017

## **Any financial assistance is greatly appreciated!**

To book into a program or get involved with Wollangarra, please visit our website <https://wollangarra.org.au/> or contact us on 0351484092.



# Thank Yous

## **Lenny**

Joining us on Stage 2 Holiday program and babysitting in December

## **Brady's**

Babysitting after Christmas time

## **Woll's Young People**

Coming back to Woll for programs and events

## **Alex**

Taking on the role as 2022 Staff Liaison

## **Lucy**

Donations of second-hand raincoat and waterproof pants for use around the flats

## **Ian & Liv**

Having the team up for a visit this Jan

## **Conrad**

Supporting Brad Pryce award winners in their WFA at Woll this Feb

## **Annabelle**

Coming and helping out on programs at end of 2021

## **Megan**

Helping out on programs at end of 2021

## **Council**

Availability, help and support

## **Fox Flyer Donors**

For the donations and ongoing support

## **Frances**

Answering all of our questions relating to organising Fruit bottling 2022

## **Dane (Glenfalloch Station)**

Hooking us up with some sheep 2022

## **Stage 3's**

Hard work on the property at the end of the year

## **2021 Staff: Ollie, Fergus, Sarah, Issy, Lotus**

Dedicating time and energy to Wollangarra

## **Anyone else**

Many thanks from the Wollies!



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