



## **WOLLOMBI SCHOOL NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024**

### **A full program of activities and achievements:**

- Committee members communications with Clayton Barr Member for Cessnock to progress the **WSCC SUBMISSION to the Minister for Education** regarding tenure and transfer to Crown Land title
- **WSCC FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE** aiming to develop a sustainable **FINANCIAL MODEL**
- Finalised a **rental agreement** with Hunter Mobile Pre School [a first]
- Commenced a **review of the harvested water system at the school** [water tanks and firefighting capability]
- Studio Users consultation on community use of the **Wollombi School Arts Centre** and implementation of the **Operating Procedures** [a first]
- Discussions continued with **Crown Lands** to remove the dead trees etc on the Cedar Creek Street boundry to assist in safety management and asset protection [fire risk] for the school
- Commenced preparations for the **Wollombi 2025 Easter Market**
- Commenced work on Grants Applications
- **Decided that there would NO HIRE RATES for community groups using the Wollombi School buildings and grounds**

**CAN YOU HELP ?.... get involved...contact WSCC**

## **COMMITTEE MEETING 12 NOVEMBER 2024**

A copy of the WSCC November Meeting Minutes plus Agenda for the next meeting will be sent to financial members prior to the December meeting

**Contributions and feedback to the WSCC Newsletter welcome.**  
to **EDITOR** : [newsletter@wollombischool.com.au](mailto:newsletter@wollombischool.com.au)

**NEXT Wollombi School Community Centre Committee monthly meeting will be held at the Wollombi School commencing:**

**2pm Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 EVERYONE WELCOME**



photo by Michael Fleming

15 September 2024

**Patron John Newcombe AO and Angie Newcombe with WSCC Committee members and Friends of Wollombi School**

**HOW TO CONTACT THE WOLLOMBI SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTRE: .... BY EMAIL IS PREFERRED**

**SECRETARY:** [secretary@wollombischool.com.au](mailto:secretary@wollombischool.com.au)  
**PRESIDENT:** [president@wollombischool.com.au](mailto:president@wollombischool.com.au)  
**NEWSLETTER:** [newsletter@wollombischool.com.au](mailto:newsletter@wollombischool.com.au)

## **PROFILE: FIONA BURLESS**

**Wollombi School Committee member**

**Founding member Wollombi School Community**

**Education [2014]**

**and the Wollombi School Community Centre [2024]**

**Wollombi Easter Market Co-ordinator**



My name is Fiona Burless, I am a nurse, a professional midwife in the NSW Health system, a wife and a mother who likes to dabble in stagecraft [production and cast Valley Artists], music, writing, family history, gardening, bushfire fighting: I am also a long-term member of the Wollombi Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade. I have been a Committee Member of the Wollombi School community since 2014.

I have had an association with the Wollombi Valley since 1984 when my parents bought a beautiful property in Wollombi. Visiting my parents as often as possible, my husband, Bert and I fell in love with this beautiful place. I bought the property in 1999 from my siblings after our parents passed. Our son, Atticus, was born in 2005 and he had the fortune of attending Wollombi Public School until the school closed.

When the Wollombi School was decommissioned by the Department of Education in 2014, I sat at a café table at the General Store with other glum parents and supportive locals. Discussion spilled out over the table regarding the future use of Wollombi School. Our despondence was swept aside with gusto (have you met gusto? A good friend of mine...) as we envisioned retaining the school and its grounds for community use. That very day, we formed a small but committed group inspired to encourage people to come and use the facilities at the historic, old school. That group incorporated as the Wollombi School Community Education Trust (WSCET). The inclusion of “Education” was in keeping with the original intended purpose of the founding village residents who donated the land in the 1850’s – Community Education.

For nearly 10 years, hundreds of community education events have been held at Wollombi School...music lessons; history talks; first aid courses; writing sessions; play readings; movie watching with discussion; presentations by experts in their fields; art lessons; theological discussions; community library; community indigenous education; Children’s University sessions; school holiday day sessions and so much more. The COVID era caused a cessation of many activities. WSCC is now rebuilding .

Groups that have used the school since 2014 include the Hunter Mobile Preschool, Ngarralingayil Barker indigenous school, Valley Artists, Pencil Orchids, The Wollombi Valley Community Choir, knitting groups, women’s groups, Arts Studio etc.

A great community achievement which I am very proud to have been part of.



**Wollombi School Community Centre  
Wednesdays and Thursdays  
9.45am—3.15pm**

**\$30 enrolment fee is the only charge for the whole year**

**Please call 02 49346725 or email  
lhactivityvan@bigpond.com to enrol your child**

Licensed by NSW Department of Education

*Hunter Mobile Preschool – providing education to rural children since 1979.*

Registered as Lower Hunter Children's Activity Van Association Inc. ABN 62 343 435 832.

Trading as Hunter Mobile Preschool

[www.huntermobilepreschool.com.au](http://www.huntermobilepreschool.com.au)

## **WOLLOMBI SCHOOL RELIEF AND RESILIENCE CENTRE**

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

To establish and maintain a Community Relief and Resilience Centre where the Wollombi Valley community may find support and practical assistance during times of fire, flood or other adverse events

## **BACKGROUND BRIEFING**

### **Emergency Survival Kit**

Should you need to LEAVE your property during an emergency:

- when directed or advised by Emergency Services [Police, RFS, SES]
- when the **FIRE Danger Rating is CATASTROPHIC** : leave now
- when the **Fire Danger Rating is EXTREME** : take action now to protect life and property
- or any other time you do not feel it is safe to stay at your property

### **Prepare an emergency survival kit before the bush fire season starts.**

Having a prepared kit means having easy access to things that can help you survive a bush fire or other natural disaster.

This kit will help you regardless of whether you are going to leave, or stay and actively defend your home.

### **Some of the things you might include are:**

- Portable battery-operated radio
- Waterproof torch
- Spare batteries
- First aid kit with manual
- Candles with waterproof matches
- Woollen blankets
- Emergency contact numbers
- Waterproof bag for valuables

**Before you leave, you should add:**

- Cash, ATM cards, credit cards
- Medications, toiletries and sanitary supplies
- Special requirements for infants, elderly, injured, disabled
- Mobile phone and charger
- Combination pocket knife
- Important documents, valuables and photos (in a waterproof bag)
- Change of clothes for everyone
- Drinking water (at least three litres per person per day)

**Keep your Emergency Survival Kit in a waterproof storage container  
in a location that is easy to get to and that the whole family knows about.  
This will make it quick and easy to find when you need it.**

**Remember to prepare for your pets as well.**

- Make sure your pet is wearing an identification tag
- If you're leaving, take a leash [or cage], basket, medication, food and a familiar toy for your animal. It will help reduce stress.

Reference: NSW RFS and WSCC ... **for more info go to... [rfs.nsw.gov.au](https://rfs.nsw.gov.au)**

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# COMMUNICATIONS



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Wollombi School Community Education Incorporated  
Yangocreek@gmail.com

To whom it may concern

### Letter of Support – Wollombi School Community Centre

Wollombi School Community Education Trust (WSCET) presented their concept paper for the Wollombi School Community Centre in April 2024 and I am very happy to provide a letter of support for their proposals.

The Wollombi Public School located in the village of Wollombi has been a cornerstone of the Wollombi community, providing a community events venue, community educational activities, providing a community hub for Local, State and Federal elections as well as relief and resilience centre in times of emergency such as fires, flood, extreme heat, communications failures, smoke intensity relief space and so on, all the while keeping the Wollombi School grounds, land and buildings in public ownership while maintaining the heritage listed Wollombi School buildings for community enjoyment in the Hunter Valley historic tourist village of Wollombi.

Cessnock City Council has supported and worked with WSCET for many years and we are in full support of the WSCC proposal. Their intention to continue and expand Wollombi School activities and progress into the Wollombi School Community Centre with a wider community centred capability including expanded community activity and emergency management options will provide a tremendous support to the Community.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my Executive Assistant, Tracey Cocking on telephone 02 4993 4210 or via email [Tracey.cocking@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Tracey.cocking@cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

Kind Regards

Jay Suvaal  
Mayor of the City of Cessnock

29 May 2024

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