

# Uralla Wordsworth

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## ANZAC Day 2021 in Uralla



ANZAC Day 2021 in pictures, with thanks to Dave Robinson Photography (0435 171 509 / [www.daverobinsonphotography.com](http://www.daverobinsonphotography.com), based at Rocky River) Continued on back cover.

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**Robert Bell was elected to Uralla Shire Council in September 2016 and has served one term as Deputy Mayor. He was previously Director of Engineering for Uralla Shire, lives in town, and has a grazing block at Kentucky. In his regular column, Cr Bell gives a personal view of some of the more important matters concerning Council and ratepayers in recent weeks.**

Congratulations to the Uralla RSL Sub Branch on a wonderful ANZAC Day Dawn Service, followed by the main parade marching up Bridge Street and then on to Alma Park. Estimates of up to 300 people attended the dawn service, and over 500 at the main service indicates strong community support. The Rotary Club provided egg and bacon rolls along with coffee and tea, which was really well supported. I believe only one bread roll was left! The net profit from donations of \$130 was gifted to the Uralla RSL Sub Branch at last week's Rotary meeting. A great effort by all concerned, but especially Russ and Teresa French.

Last week, Council adopted the recommendations from the Budget Review and Finance Committee, however did not endorse the reduction in services, two tiered water pricing, adopting all Armidale's fees and charges, or preparing for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) which was recommended by staff. The community will be told in the next 4 months leading up to the Local Government Elections that the Council resolved in 2015 to have a SRV to remain "Fit for the Future." What you won't be told is that it was only going to be 15%, which is a long way from the nearly 50% which is currently being touted. The full report on Uralla Shire's "Fit for the Future" is available on google.

A number of Councillors continue to raise questions on increases in administration costs, overheads, and the use of contractors and consultants. We are still being asked to recommend major plant purchases without a Plant Asset Management Plan. We also note that the Net Operating Loss would only be \$223,000 with the inclusion of grants. While it may provide a benchmark for the State Government, it is not a realistic way to view our overall performance. My argument has always been that if you get a bridge replaced, it matters little where the money comes from on our financial bottom line.

Great news for the Uralla Bowling Club with Council recommending that their application for the installation of flood lights has been supported. The club will look to boost their bowler numbers with a twilight competition.

Council has resolved to apply for a \$50,000 grant from the Regional NSW Planning Portal. This will allow Council to acquire the software, computers and to train existing staff so that our Customer Service can assist builders/developers through this often difficult process. The Public Spaces Legacy Program has been resolved to include the upgrade to The Glen with the "Constellations

of the South", model power boat area, and the upgrade to Rotary Park and toilets. It has also included upgrades to Pioneer Park. The "Uralla Bridge Street 40km/hr High Pedestrian Activity Concept Plan" was not supported. A significant number of concerns were raised in this report, including a public meeting in 2018 held at Michael's Café outdoor area, and more recently by the NSW Farmers' Federation. We all agree that improvements such as asphaltting the shoulders and improving the existing blisters is necessary; however these cannot be funded under this grant program. A petition from the Public meeting organised by Tara Toomey and a letter from the NSW Farmers' Federation were both tabled at the Council meeting.

Prompted by our rapid increase in Workers' Compensation costs, and the concern for the health and welfare of our staff, Council resolved to be provided with an urgent report on the assumptions and advice that has led to this blowout. The General Manager had advised that Council's insurer, Statewide, has been invited to address Council.

The "Uralla Shire Resilience Project" which was funded by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments is an outstanding 10 minute promotional video which commences with a Welcome to Country by Les Townsend and Pam Meehan. The link is <https://vimeo.com/539959391>. It is great to hear so many positive comments on Uralla Shire.

I was excited to hear that the Uralla Fairy Committee have partnered with Uralla Rotary Club to once again hold the Uralla Spring Fairy Festival. This year it will be held on Saturday October 9, and promises to be bigger and better, while still managing costs, especially for families. Stay tuned for announcements on special guest appearances at the Festival.



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**Robert Bell,**  
**Uralla Shire Resident**



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# Public Spaces Funding

Council met on Tuesday 27th April and I tabled a petition on this topic at the meeting. It was introduced as follows :

*Mr Mayor I am tabling a petition on behalf of our community who have asked to have their well developed project ideas considered as part of the Public Spaces Legacy Program and in relation to future funding opportunities. This petition strongly reflects community views and is being tabled to guide our deliberations at item 15.12 on the agenda today.*

There are 9 projects contained in the petition, under the following headings, and below is a tally of the supporting signatures against each project concept :

- Fibonacci Park, located at Pioneer Park - 40
- Constellations of the South, located at The Glen - 36
- Performance space / amphitheatre, located at Alma Park - 39
- Model Boating Lake located at The Glen - 36
- Upgrades to the Rotary Park facilities opposite The Glen - 44
- Mt Mutton Revegetation - 36
- 7 entrances to Uralla & 100 Sons tree planting - 37
- Basic (primitive) camping at The Glen - 41
- Increased walkways, cycleways, mobility scooter paths and connectedness between parks - 24

These supporting signatures were provided in person at the public meeting held on Thursday 22nd April at the Uralla Bowling Club, attended by around 50 people, at Burnet's Books on the following 4 days, and by email.

Unfortunately, the minutes from the Tuesday 27th April meeting were not available by the end of the week and so I

am only able to publish the outcome based on my notes from the meeting, rather than from the formal minutes.

However my notes were that Council resolved to support a composite project of the Constellations of the South at the Glen, the upgrade to Rotary Park adjacent to the Glen and the Model Boating concept at the Glen with a value of \$1.5 million, and to support Fibonacci Park at Pioneer Park with a value of \$500,000. I understand that the dollar values are a guide in terms of priorities for the funding total of \$2 million. The General Manager asked that they be part of the resolution as I recall.

This now has to be submitted to the Department of Planning for approval and it is part of the process that there is also further community consultation in relation to the design. I will share further updates about that consultation as it is announced.

Thank you very much for being willing to share your ideas, for helping achieve a positive outcome and for supporting one another in the development of a great list of projects for Council to keep close at hand.

Anyone who wishes to be included in future updates can email me at : taratoomeyuralla@gmail.com and I will include you in the email group.

**Tara Toomey, Uralla Shire Councillor**

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# Thunderbolt Community Solar reaches milestone

Meralli Solar's homegrown Thunderbolt Community Solar precinct reached another milestone last week with the Northern Joint Regional Planning Panel (NJRPP) completing its review. The NJRPP has approved the project subject to some expected and necessary conditions.

In the previous edition of Wordsworth, Councillor Robert Bell noted that he'd had the privilege of sitting on the Northern Regional Planning Panel as it considered the application for the \$11million 5MW Solar Farm on the old 'Pole Plant'.

"Should this project proceed, it will be another great indication of Uralla's role as a Renewable Energy Hub," Cr Bell said.

The Thunderbolt project incorporates sub-frame technology known as the Jurchen Technology PEG. Developed in Germany, the benefit of the PEG system allows the site to hold twice the capacity of traditional systems, using less steel, concrete and heavy equipment, which reduces environmental and visual impact both during the build and over the life of the plant.

The next step is to complete the network connection studies and progress to a network connection agreement with Essential Energy.

"It's great to tick another milestone off in this project and great to be on track," said David Mailler, Director, Meralli Solar.

"We're looking forward to getting to the next stage where we can start to talk about strategic regional investment, and it is important to be part on the inevitable transition to a renewable economy, that will bring more jobs and economic stability to the Uralla shire".

**David Mailler & Methuen Morgan, Meralli Solar (Uralla)**

## Crates with a difference

The Uralla Men's Shed have made a number of timber crates for Seasons of New England to use in putting together our Mother's Day and general gift boxes. For each crate sold, \$10 goes straight to the Uralla Men's Shed.

These are currently available to view and purchase via our social media pages and in person at the Pop Up Store in the Armidale Plaza from Tuesday 4th May to Saturday 8th May. As always, they are filled exclusively with

New England products.

 @seasonsne  
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# Uralla honours our veterans and remembers the fallen

On Anzac Day a crowd of about 300 gathered in the pre-dawn light, some with candles, the lone piper in attendance. We spoke of the ultimate sacrifice of those who landed on Gallipoli 106 years ago, and all who have followed. The Last Post sounded as the sun rose on a spectacularly clear Australian morning, with the smell of bacon and eggs and coffee in the background. Thanks to the Rotary Club for providing breakfast for over 100 veterans and citizens.

The Anzac Day march, supported by hundreds of spectators, commenced on time at 10am, led by the pipes and drums. Mayor Michael Pearce with the Australian flag, and Teresa French with the New Zealand flag, led the colour party, which included the three service flags carried by lady veterans. Our last WW2 veteran, Mr Paul Kennedy, and his wife Helen, followed in a WW2 Willys Jeep, restored and driven by Mike Sozoou. Then came Chris Barnden in his Ural sidecar motorcycle, and a visiting veteran in his bright yellow Ural.

Cadets from the 251st Army Cadet Unit in Armidale performed the duties of the catafalque party, then formed a guard for the march.

A huge crowd, estimated at over 1500, gathered for the ceremony in Alma Park, including veterans, cadets, and school children. All witnessed the flypast of an RAAF F-35A Lightning II fighter, at 500 feet above the Memorial Gates. This year's service focused on school children, each school presenting short prayers or stories of past students or family members. Then followed the laying of wreaths and floral tributes, the reading of the ode, and the Last Post, silence, and Reveille. We were then lead in the national anthems of New Zealand by Teresa French, and Australia by Cheryl Nolan, with the gates behind them a mass of flowers, poppies, and native branches.

Veterans and their families then retired for a light lunch at the Bottom Pub.

Plans have begun for improvements to next year's march and services. Thank you to our members, service organisations, schools, and local citizens for supporting a very successful Anzac Day celebration. Lest we forget.

**Russ French, President, Uralla RSL Sub Branch**

# The royal visit to Armidale Rosemary and Poppy

Who remembers the royal visit to Armidale back in 1970?

It was just on 51 years ago when the Queen, Prince Phillip and Princess Anne came to Armidale.

Their plane landed at the Armidale Airport where it was greeted by a flag-waving crowd of around 1500 people. Uralla certainly helped to fill the crowd with a good turn-out from both citizens and the schools; it was certainly a day for Uralla to remember.

The royal motorcade departed the airport and drove through the city of Armidale, visiting the Teachers' College before heading off to the University of New England. Large crowds lined the sides of the road as the royal motorcade made its way along Handel Street, which was later renamed Queen Elizabeth Drive. At the University, the royals were greeted by a large crowd and the Queen was presented with a memento, a hand fitted with a white chamois glove. The royal party later departed for the airport where they continued their tour of Australia.

A group of ladies from Uralla represented the Senior Citizen' Association. Mrs Florence Welbourn, 5th from the right and her sister Eva Mahony, seated on her right were among the 45 ladies who made the trip to Armidale. A lovely photo courtesy of Lyn Welbourn shows the ladies seated in Rusden Street awaiting the motorcade.

**Kay Adams, Uralla History Hub**



Last Sunday saw the Uralla Women's Bowling Club decide to participate in the town's honouring of our soldiers who, over the last many decades, went off to war. We especially honour and remember those who did not return.

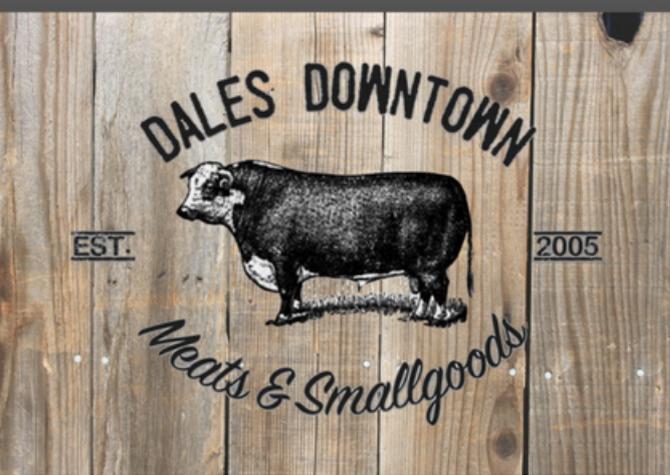
Although we did not take part in the March, we wanted to show our allegiance to all the families who sent their sons and daughters off to war. So we assembled on Sunday beside the Memorial Gates in Alma Park to lay a wreath of rosemary and poppies. Rosemary to show that the original ANZACS are not forgotten, and poppies to honour the people who answered the call when war broke out again in 1940. Some even answered that call for a second time. The red poppies remind us of the harrowing time those brave people endured on Flanders fields where the poppies grew so prolifically. They are a symbol of all the skirmishes our soldiers from the various spheres of our defence force took part in.

It is not a coincidence that the Uralla Bowling Club came into being in 1945. It was at this time that the men returning home to Uralla from the many theatres of war sought some place in which they could relax now they were away from the stress of war. They decided to create something fine for the town, something to take their minds away from all the destruction they had experienced overseas. And so, they built this bowling club, and they built it in an environment where they had only to gaze across the road and let the beauty of Alma Park sooth their weary spirits.

**Pauline Crouch, Uralla Women's Bowling Club  
Publicity Officer**



**Uralla Women's Bowling Club at the wreath laying in Alma Park on ANZAC Day**



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# A Thousand Metres Above Sea Level and a kilometre closer to heaven

Like many other businesses in the Uralla shire, bespoke media agency Fatmoon Studios (FMS) had weathered the drought, duststorms, bushfires, arsenic, so much so the mouse plague of the last six months is almost a relief. Ok perhaps not... However it was a morale boost to get a local gig with Uralla Council to create tourist promotional videos of the local area. The FMS pitch was simple, that the best people to spruik the charms of the Uralla Shire were the people who live here and love it.

As outlined in our initial proposal, FMS uses an 'asset-based community development' model, which means collaborating with community using a strength-based approach - individuals, community organisations and local businesses.

Our approach wasn't standard, and would take a little more work, but we had a great team of cast and crew including local production wranglers Imogen Semmler and Lee Arandale whose skills and dedication made a daunting task seem a little easier. We were grateful for local talent Phillipa Ryan and daughter Charlie, and Dylan Breen from Inverell who worked with us as actors.

FMS worked with experienced cinematographer Mark Doyle and seasoned drone operator Duncan Wilson to capture stunning footage of the Uralla township, localities and surrounding villages including Bundarra, Kentucky and natural areas such as the Wooldridge Recreational and Fossicking Area. With some wrangling we obtained a permit from NPWS and dropped a drone over the edge of Dangars Gorge. Three days later the deluge came. Oh well, you can't have everything.

It isn't only the majestic beauty of the natural region we wanted to capture, it's the unique charm of Uralla and its surrounds; the heritage streetscape that casts a spell on many a visitor. 'What is it about this place?' I often hear people say when they stop on a long-distance road trip. You can see them literally stop in their tracks and take it in. Most importantly, we wanted to capture the unique charms that are reflected in the people who live here. Perhaps it's the big sky country or the crisp mountain air, that allows folks to inhabit themselves more fully. Authentic; eclectic and friendly. And the way many different types of people don't have to agree all the time, but still learn to get along; a great reminder in these times of increasing polarisation. The response from the Uralla community to the project was (unsurprisingly) spectacular. Everyone said 'yes!' The ladies from the Uralla Bowling Club jumped in, the Vintage Car Club members turned up in all their internal combusive glory, grannies jumped on Harleys for us, we even got a cameo from Dale. Not to mention the comedy gold of local duo Grant and Harry Clark. We had the privilege of spending a morning out at Mount Yarrowick with Local elders Uncle Les Townsend and Aunty Pam Meehan.

Our intention was to create promotional videos that resonate with the warmth of a unique community, a bustling High Street and spectacular natural beauty. And I'm hoping this is what we've achieved, but best to see it for yourself. The 10-minute promotional video will be on display in the new Visitor Information Centre and the 90 second highlights will do the rounds on social media.

FMS will give an informal viewing for cast, community and crew at McCrossins Mill at 4pm on Saturday May 8.

**Susie Wicks, Digital Stories**



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## Uralla Community Street Store

3 - 9 May Uralla Historical Society

10 - 16 May Kentucky Memorial Hall

# Landcare event to celebrate trees, pasture and biodiversity for long-term resilience and profit

It has been 29 years since the Taylor family at Kentucky hosted more than 6000 participants at 'Treefest', a field day to showcase current understanding and techniques in broadscale tree planting of the time, in response to widespread New England Dieback.

To mark the anniversary, Michael Taylor, son of Treefest's original hosts Jon and Vicki Taylor, has partnered with Southern New England Landcare to co-host Silvopasture 2021.

Michael, now principal at Taylor's Run Silvopasture Farm, said the catalyst for the event was the 2019 drought.

"It was a year that eclipsed many of the previous droughts we have experienced in New England since western settlement in the 1830s," said Michael.

"Many people have witnessed not only groundcover loss but also the death of many trees in the landscape," he said.

"Ground cover and tree health are a big part of the engineered silvopasture system as well as the natural silvopasture ecosystems of the region that preceded our modern grazing enterprises," he said.

Silvopasture is generally recognised as a form of agroforestry where trees and shrubs are integrated with pastures for forage and grazing purposes.

This layered, diverse, and integrated farming approach provides economic, social and environmental benefits that are resilient and adaptable across whole landscapes.

Organisers originally planned the event to be held in 2020, but it was postponed due to Covid-19. Instead, it will now be held as a two-part webinar series on Thursday 6th and 13th May 2021.

An impressive line-up of specialists have been engaged.

Karen Zirkler, Executive Officer at Southern New England Landcare said, "Our keynote speaker is Rowan Reid, advocate for agroforestry, author of 'Heartwood' and founder of the Australian Master Tree Grower program and

the Australian Agroforestry Foundation."

"Professor Nick Reid, co-author of 'Nature and Farming: Sustaining Native Biodiversity in Agricultural Landscapes' will also present on the services that ecosystems provide to farms," she said.

Other local specialists on the program include David Carr, Fields Environmental Solutions, Kentucky Tree Nursery, and Scott Hall, who will provide sessions on seed collection, planting techniques, species selection, maintenance, succession and harvesting.

Tickets are now on sale and more information can be found at <https://snelandcare.org.au/event/silvopasture-2021-webinars> or by calling 6772 9123.

The event is supported by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

**Struan Ferguson, Southern New England Landcare**



**Photo: Michael Taylor "Taylors Run" Kentucky with timber harvested from his silvopasture enterprise. Courtesy of Southern New England Landcare.**

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# Bundarra Sewerage Scheme Outrage

Last Wednesday night 150 angry Bundarra Residents held a public meeting at the Commercial Hotel to give all residents a chance to air their grievances regarding the letters received from Uralla Shire Council and outrageous charges they have been quoted for their electrical upgrades some of which have been as high as \$9500 plus GST, this doesn't include the cost for de-commissioning the old septic systems and this is before we can even be connected to the new sewerage system. We didn't want this system in the first place and council were less than transparent regarding costs involved. We were told initially in 2016 that there would be some minimal costs involved and the running cost for electricity quoted in August 2017 was approx. \$20pa There is also a planned \$600 increase to our rates from 1st July 2021. In 2018-2019 council put a levy on our rates of \$570 each and collected around \$223,000 over the 2 year period where has that gone? We are also losing our grey water and to make this even worse Uralla Shire Council are increasing our water rates. The Bundarra residents agreed unanimously that we will not pay for the upgrades, we will put a submission to council that they apply for another State or Federal grant to cover all the electrical and plumbing costs involved, In Bundarra around 80% of us are on fixed incomes so it is simply impossible to meet these costs, it is simply unaffordable and is causing a great deal of stress, anxiety and hardship to our little community. We are very angry with Uralla Shire Council this scheme has been foisted on us without proper consultation or disclosure of costs involved in the sewerage scheme. We have called another public meeting on 8th May 2021 at The Bundarra School of Arts at 1pm, we have invited the General Manager, all staff, the Mayor and all councillors to front the community and answer our questions. We are all over this constant drain on our finances in these hard times. WE ARE NOT PAYING!

**Denise Goodall, Bundarra Resident**



**Joanna Dolan**

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# Community Calendar

Please email [urallawordsworth@gmail.com](mailto:urallawordsworth@gmail.com) if you have an event or meeting for Uralla, Kentucky or Invergowrie.

## Please check with Event Organisers about the Status of Listed Events

**Uralla Rotary Club** meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 6.15pm at the Uralla Bowling Club, dinner optional after the meeting

**Uralla Lions Club** meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 5/5.30 in the CWA Rooms

**Uralla Fire & Rescue** meet on Tuesday nights at the Uralla Fire Station from 6-7.30pm

**Uralla CWA** meets on the 4th Friday of each month at 10am at CWA Rooms in the Literary Institute

**Uralla Computer Bank** is open Mon, Tues & Thurs from 9.30am – 3.30pm at Uralla Shire Waste Depot

**Uralla Anglican Church** meets at 10am each Sunday for worship, prayer, fellowship and Johnno's (kid's programme) in Park Street

**Uralla Hospital Auxillary** meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 2pm, CWA Rooms in the Literary Institute

**Uralla Show Society** meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7.30pm at the Uralla Showgrounds

**Uralla Shire Business Chamber** meets 1st Thursday of each month at 5.30pm at the Top Pub

**Uralla Town & Environs Committee** meets on the second Monday of each month from 6-7pm in the Uralla Shire Council Chambers

**Uralla Tennis Senior Social tennis**, Wednesday 6.30pm at the Uralla Sporting Complex, everyone welcome (\$7 members, \$10 non members), Family Fun Night starts again from Friday 12th Feb 2021

**Uralla Men's Shed** is open each Tuesday and Wednesday from 9am - 1pm in the Old Scout Hall, Uralla North Rd (just off the Bundarra Road).

**Uralla Auto Club Inc.** meets at 7 pm on the first Tuesday of each month at The Bowling Club.

**Uralla Red Cross** meets on the first Friday of each month at 2pm in the CWA rooms in the Literary Institute opposite Foodworks

**Uralla Historical Society** meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5pm at McCrossin's Mill

**Uralla Brewery Book Club** meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 5pm at the Brewery

**Uralla RSL Sub-Branch** meets the last Sunday of the month at 10.30am at the RSL Rooms, The Uralla Memorial Institute, 55 Bridge Street, all veterans welcome

**Uralla RSL Sub-Branch Veterans and Families Drop in Centre.** Open to all Veterans and their families, each Thursday 10am until 12pm at the RSL Rooms, The Uralla Memorial Institute, 55 Bridge Street.

**Uralla Women's Bowling Club** 10am Wednesday for Club bowls. Mixed Social Bowls on Sunday mornings, all welcome, Bistro lunch available.

**Uralla Food Pantry**, Mondays 11am - 2pm, Uralla Neighbourhood Centre. Good range dry goods, and fruit/veg. Fill a supermarket coloured bag \$15. New members welcome. Further information from the Uralla Neighbourhood Centre, donations welcome. Ph : 6778 3277 or email : [urallaneighbourhood@bigpond.com](mailto:urallaneighbourhood@bigpond.com)

**Freemasons (Masonic Lodge of Peace #120, Uralla)** meet the 3rd Tuesday each month, interested persons, contact Dennis 0448 576 465 or John 0411 374 334

**Computer Bank New England** Computer Classes are each Friday from 9am - 12noon at the Uralla Community Centre. \$5.00 this includes morning tea

**Uralla Tigers Supported Playgroup** FREE, every Tuesday, 10am - 12pm, Uralla Neighbourhood Centre, contact Sue on 0419149244 or Geneva on 0430440171

## Events for May -

**Uralla Shire Council Budget Review & Finance Committee Meeting** Tuesday 4th May, Uralla Shire Council Chambers

**OzHarvest** Thursday 6th May, 2.30pm - 3.30pm, Uralla Showground

**Uralla Shire Council Ordinary Council Meeting** 12.30pm Tuesday 27th May, Uralla Shire Council Chambers

## Dine & Discover Venues

The following Uralla Shire venues are listed as accepting the Dine Vouchers :

The Alternate Root Cafe, 48 Bridge St, Uralla

Michael's Cafe, 98 Bridge St, Uralla

Subway, Shop 1, 50 Bridget St, Uralla

The Top Pub, 23-27 Bridge St, Uralla

Kentucky General Store, Noalimba Ave, Kentucky

Source : <https://mybusiness.service.nsw.gov.au/dine-and-discover/business-finder#dine>

## Candidates Forum

Come and listen to the candidates ahead of the Uralla Shire Council elections. The forum is scheduled for 18th August 2021 at the Uralla Bowlo, more details to come

Deadline for the next edition is 5pm on Thursday 13th May 2021. Please email all contributions including advertising, letters to the editor and articles to [urallawordsworth@gmail.com](mailto:urallawordsworth@gmail.com)

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

It was good to see such a great attendance at the recent community meeting, at the Bowling Club, to help prioritise the many great ideas put forward by our Uralla citizens. It would be wonderful if we could put them ALL into practice, but the NSW State Government's \$2M grant would certainly not be able to do that. However, we shall be receiving some annual funding from the companies involved with the Solar Farms on the outskirts of our town and this could be utilised by gradually putting all these projects into practice.

They would all help and benefit the growth & development of our lovely, historic town.

**Tricia McCrossin Stewart, Uralla Shire Resident**

To the Editor,

Following is a summary of letter I have submitted to council in response to the draft budget report.

I can't locate specific details that explain the announced deficit of \$1.3 million. *Could you or the Uralla Shire Council's CFO, please explain with evidence where that deficit exists?*

The response document (to the first draft) indicates that the Council's position financially is more positive than indicated. The report indicates where financial commitments have been made in areas that duplicate roles already existing within Uralla Shire Council's responsibilities. If our current General Manager was not employed when this money was committed, could she please indicate how the expenditure will result in a benefit to the Shire Council above normal operating process. Please provide answers to the following expenditures listed on page 6 of the report:

*Why was the "establishment of the Government service area" established when this responsibility is included in current staff positions and each staff portfolio is required to be across legislative obligations? If this position is an audit position, has that audit commenced? Are audits annual?*

*Why is there duplication in the human resource duties as listed in item 4 on page 6, "safety personnel administration per awards", and why is more expense going to HR support? Was it during an audit of responsibilities that the need for this position was determined?*

*The new appointment of a Communications Officer seems very important. Is this position directly under the oversight of the General Manager? Is the General Manager providing to the Communications Officer timely updates?*

The draft report clearly states the intention of the Council is to have available to the public the financial documents, many of which are online. However, *when the Council calls for a public response to a draft budget report, why are only partial reports made available on the web?*

**Regards Jann Karp, Rocky River Resident**

Dear Editor

Once again the term 'High Tea' has been misused to headline what was an 'Afternoon Tea in Uralla'. Perhaps this cartoon will help? I think Australians think High Tea is a posh Afternoon Tea, but it is quite the opposite.

Originally a hearty tea for miners and labourers when they came home from work. The English are very amused at this mis-use.

**Ruth Barratt, Uralla Resident**

Dear Editor

I would like to thank Burnet's Books for a wonderful ANZAC Day window display. It was great to see local business supporting our local school and to see the work of some talented Uralla Central School students. As a parent of a student at Uralla Central, this support from our community is much appreciated. Well done Burnet's Books and well done Uralla Central!

**Andrew Toomey, Uralla Resident**



**Burnet's Books ANZAC Day display**

## Breakfast Club Breakfast

St Johns Anglican Church will be running a breakfast club in their hall, Park Street, starting on Wednesday 21 April. It will start at 8am and finish 8:45. Initially this will be held once a week on a Wednesday, but may increase according to need, and any school age kids are welcome.

Please direct any enquiries to the Anglican vicarage on 6778 4906.

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# Focus Groups for Water Security Discussion

A wide variety of perspectives, from as many people as possible, is important to plot a course for water security in the Uralla Shire. ZNET Uralla's Let's Talk About Water project gives our community the opportunity to have their say.

University of NSW Professor Matthew Kearnes and The Global Water Institute's Professor Stuart Khan are running a series of Focus Groups in May to further broaden the range of experiences and ideas identified by Let's Talk About Water.

"The perspectives of everyday people, from many sections of the community, are necessary to identify effective water supply options that are most likely to be adopted by local residents and organisations," Prof. Kearnes said.

The first Focus Group will be held in Arding Hall on Thursday 13 May (6:00pm) to focus on rural landholders. Are you a rural landholder reliant on tank and bore water? Did you have to purchase water during the drought? Are you concerned about groundwater resources? This group is for you.

Two Focus Groups will be held in Uralla on Friday 14 May (1:30 and 6:00pm) for town residents. Uralla's town residents recently bore the brunt of the water shortages and lived on bottled water for months after traces of arsenic was found in the Uralla town water supply.

The final focus group will be held at Wilhelmshöhe on Saturday 15 May (1:30pm) for landholders in the Kentucky Creek Dam catchment.

To get involved in one of the focus groups, email [events@zneturalla.org.au](mailto:events@zneturalla.org.au) or phone 0413 565253.

"Everyone brings a unique perspective to the discussion and can help to provide a more comprehensive picture of the best water supply solutions," Prof. Kearnes said.

ZNET, in partnership with Uralla Council and UNSW Global Water Institute, is facilitating conversations across the community to hear about the impacts of the recent drought and to explore community options for water security. Funding support is provided by NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment.

**Sandra Eady, ZNET Uralla**



**L to R- Matt Kearnes, Adam Marshall, Sandra Eady and Stuart Khan**

# Veterans Suicide Royal Commission

Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said veterans and their families, ex-service organisations, peak bodies and other interested stakeholders are being encouraged to provide their input for the Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

"It is vital that residents involved in the Defence and veteran support system have their say through the Royal Commission. Over the coming weeks a public consultation process is being undertaken to ensure the Royal Commission is focused and based on the experiences and perspectives of those who have been impacted by Defence and veteran suicide," Mr Joyce said.

Any member of the community or organisation is able to provide their input regarding the broad themes released on Monday 19, April.

Mr Joyce has encouraged anyone with thoughts, ideas or experiences to share, to have their say, to work towards a better understanding of suicide in the serving and ex-serving community.

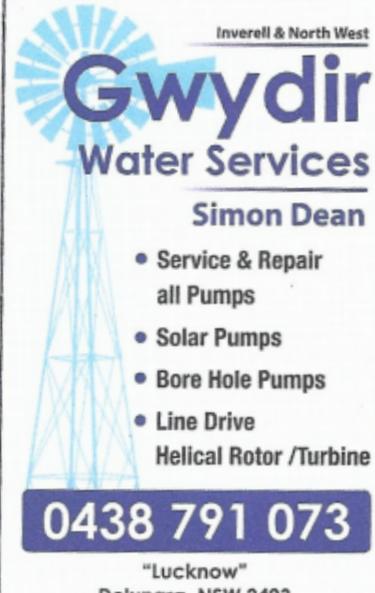
"Following consultation, all feedback will be provided to the Attorney-General's Department which will lead the drafting of the Terms of Reference," Mr Joyce said.

Interested individuals, groups, peak bodies, ex-service organisations and community members are able to review the broad themes for consultation on the DVA website and can contribute to the consultation process by emailing: [royalcommission@dva.gov.au](mailto:royalcommission@dva.gov.au) or via post to Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, GPO Box 9998, Brisbane, QLD, 4001.

For anyone who may find this process difficult, help is available. Current serving members can access support through their local Garrison Health Centre or by contacting the All Hours Support Line available 24/7 on 1800 628 036. Open Arms — Veterans & Families Counselling provides support and counselling to current Australian

Defence Force (ADF) members, veterans and their families and can be contacted 24/7 on 1800 011 046. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous can also contact Safe Zone Support on 1800 142 072. This is a free and anonymous counselling line established for veterans and their families who may have concerns about anonymity.

**Barnaby Joyce, Member for New England**



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# On-farm emergency water infrastructure rebate scheme extended further 12 months

Farmers impacted by drought will be given another 12 months to apply for funding from the On-farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme (EWIRS) to help them build much needed infrastructure to make their properties drought resilient.

Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia Keith Pitt said farmers will now have until June 2022 to utilise the \$50 million in funding secured for the EWIRS by the Coalition Government in the 2020-21 Budget.

Member for New England Barnaby Joyce said he had fought hard for this win for farmers and the funds will now be available for another year.

“The Coalition Government has listened to farmers in the New England and recognised the importance of the scheme by doubling the Federal funding available as well as extending the timeframes,” Mr Joyce said.

“This is great news for drought affected farmers as these rebates empower farmers to take proactive steps to ensure their properties remain drought resilient.

“This has been a hugely popular program that’s made a real difference for thousands of Australian farmers facing the devastating challenges of drought.

“I’ve heard and seen firsthand how drought affected livestock producers and horticulturalists with permanent plantings have put in bores, dams and pipes – now even more farmers will get this opportunity.

“While the program was and continues to be funded by the Federal Government, it was managed by the State Government, which allowed the program to be heavily oversubscribed and farmers left out of pocket.

“I want to assure those local farmers who have already invested money in good faith in this program that they will be prioritised to be reimbursed.

“It’s a pity our farmers have had to wait six months for their State Government to commit to the scheme so they can start work on new projects.

“This is something I believe was unconscionable and in bad faith and one of the reasons I fought so hard to provide Federal funding to right these wrongs.”

Federal Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia, Keith Pitt said that this extension came on the back of the Australian Government’s commitment of another \$50 million in October last year – bringing the total Federal contribution to support farmers to \$100 million.

“The scheme can be used to fund small scale on-farm drought proofing water projects, including buying and laying pipes, installing water storage devices, such as

tanks and troughs associated with stock watering and desilting dams and water bores,” Minister Pitt said.

“Farmers value the rebate because it helps them manage the here-and-now when it comes to keeping livestock watered and permanent plantings alive in a drought – but importantly it also improves productivity so they are better prepared for the next inevitable drought at some point in the future.

“This program is about helping farmers being drought prepared and drought resilient.

“So we’re making \$25 million of the Commonwealth’s \$50 million available in 2021-22 along with any underspend from this year.”

For more information on the rebate visit the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment website.

**Barnaby Joyce, Member for New England**



**Stock and Station agent at 37 Bridge St Uralla, circa 1965. Photo by Douglass Baglin. Uralla Wordsworth have tried to contact the estate.**

**Any other information about Messrs Copas and Philp or their business would be gratefully received by the editors.**

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# Lowering Energy Costs for Community Groups in New England

Community groups across the New England will be supported by a new Federal Coalition Government program to lower energy costs and support local jobs. The Powering Communities Program will fund up to 12 projects worth a total of \$67,700 in the New England. Grants of between \$5,000 and \$12,000 will be available to eligible community organisations, with no co-contribution required.

The grant will assist groups to lower their energy bills by installing solar panels or a battery, upgrading air conditioners, hot water systems or a refrigerator with more efficient models, replacing lighting with LEDs or conducting an energy audit.

Member for New England Barnaby Joyce said when not-for-profit groups invest in their community, it helps local economies to grow and supports local jobs.

“Energy bills are often one of the biggest overheads for not-for-profit organisations,” Mr Joyce said.

“Whether it’s a sports club, a senior citizens club or a charity group, by helping to reduce power bills, the grants will ease the financial pressure these organisations face so they can better focus on meeting the needs of our local community.

“We recognise the great work that many community groups across the New England do and know that many have done it tough during COVID19. The program will help them to do what they do best, which is serve and support the community.

“I encourage local community to groups to submit an expression of interest to my office by 28 May, 2021.” Local Federal Members of Parliament will help identify projects to be supported in their electorate, with the assistance of a committee that represents the local community.

Contact my office on 6761 3080 to obtain an Expression of Interest Form. Further information on the program, including eligibility guidelines, is available by visiting [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) or by telephone on 13 28 46.

**Barnaby Joyce, Member for New England**

# Budgies of Paradise

Call the paparazzi, the Budgies of Paradise have arrived!! Uralla Library is absolutely THE place to be. Fashionably late by a year these darlings are here to bring a fleeting smile back to the faces of all of us in spite of a tough world out there. Their friends, the Bees in Boxes, are also there for the party. If you are dazzled and smile, then my job is done.

The series was made as a response to the despair of the drought, then fires and then COVID-19. It was originally booked for May last year, then cancelled of course.

**Jan Clark, Rocky River Resident, [www.janclark.net](http://www.janclark.net)**



**Budgies of Paradise**

Jan Clark

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# Local community to be at the heart of the New England REZ development

THE views of locals will be front and centre in the development of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) with a new REZ Regional Reference Group launched by Member for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall today.

Mr Marshall said the forum would be the key channel to ensure the REZ delivered meaningful long-term benefits for the community and guaranteed renewable energy projects were developed with public support, in the right locations in the region.

“We are bringing representatives from our region’s local councils, Aboriginal Land Councils and the relevant State Government agencies to the table as part of the Regional Reference Group,” Mr Marshall said.

“With a predicted \$12.7 billion direct investment in our region over the next decade and more than 1,000 new ongoing jobs, this REZ has the potential to underwrite our community’s prosperity for generations to come.

“I want to make sure we secure every possible economic and employment benefit for our community in a way that supports existing land uses and local landholders.

“We warmly welcome renewables in our region, but it must not come at the cost of any of our existing industries or amenity.

“This is about working with the local community from day-dot to make sure the REZ is delivered in a way that boosts the benefits without compromising the assets that make our region so unique.”

The first meeting of the group will take place tomorrow in Armidale, with a call for registrations of interest in the New England REZ to follow.

“I’m looking forward to bringing everyone to the table tomorrow and getting cracking on planning and designing the incredibly exciting future that awaits us,” Mr Marshall said.

The New England REZ is a key component of the NSW Government’s Energy Infrastructure Roadmap – a co-ordinated plan to deliver the cheap, reliable and modern grid that will power our State into the future and do it in a way that creates jobs, drives investment and supports our regions.

For more information on the New England REZ and the new Regional Reference Group, please visit [www.energy.nsw.gov.au/government-and-regulation/electricity-infrastructure-roadmap](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/government-and-regulation/electricity-infrastructure-roadmap)

**Adam Marshall, Member for Northern Tablelands**



Above Bridge St. Below Kentucky Store. Both c1920. Courtesy of Rob Taylor, Birralee, from family archives.



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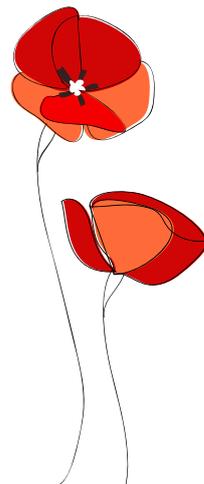
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