



# COASTAL CUSTODIANS

Volume 1, Issue 4

May 2001



Introducing: **Daniel Morgan**  
Aboriginal Trainee Field Officer.

Dan was a Temporary Field Officer on the Mumbulla Creek Falls Project. This role required that he do earth works, paving and landscaping.

Dan had been working with the National Parks and Wildlife Service for a number of years in a temporary capacity until eight months ago when he was the successful applicant for the Trainee Field Officer position. He is a part of the staff of the Central, Far South Coast Region and works out of Tanja and Narooma depots. He recently completed his chainsaw training locally and his four-wheel drive training in the Brindabellas.

Dan is well liked by other staff of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, he is quietly spoken, motivated, interested and always willing to learn.

Outside of work Dan is a keen surfer and fishermen.

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# *Our Readers Comments*

## Editors Comment

I welcome your views on issues, news and coming events. Your suggestions, input and constructive criticism is appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who contribute to this publication for your prompt response, effort and support.

Views expressed in *The Readers Comments* are not necessarily those of NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service. Preference will be given to short letters that are signed, provide contact details and a phone number (if possible). Letters will not be published without the writers' name or if they are defamatory or abusive in any way.

Patricia Ellis  
Editor

To Patricia Ellis APO NPWS Narooma. Thank you for the copy of the Custodians of the Coast. I find it informative non-political and a great advertisement for our Koori people in the service. This shows us that the narrow view of some is unwanted. The uniform does not change a person's heart. If we wish to make a difference in the views of the government and the general populations then we should encourage our sisters and brothers in the service. We should always encourage our young people to take full advantage of education and employment. It wasn't that long ago we left school at 6<sup>th</sup> class (no choice of own). So as a people work together, support each other and unite as a proud and honest race. Koori Congratulations Uncle Dave.

*David Smith-Tout YUIN ELDERS COUNCIL 21/3/01*

Dear Trish, Thank you for sending us copies of Coastal Custodian. It is good to be informed of what is going on. Yours sincerely.

*Alan and Mary Martina 17/04/01*



Dear Trisha, Congratulations on 'Coastal Custodians' – an informative and excellent publication. Yours faithfully.

*Yvonne Thomson Belowra 22/04/01*

# Kameruka Meeting

On Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> of March the National Parks and Wildlife Service held an Aboriginal Women's gathering and on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of May the service held an Aboriginal men's gathering at Kameruka Estate, Kameruka (approx. 16 kms south west of Bega).



Gloria Carberry and Georgina Parsons

Both Frank and his wife Odile joined the women's gathering for lunch and a chat.

On both occasions Frank Foster, the owner of Kameruka Estate, welcomed the visitor. He gave a brief history of the Estate and then led a tour and talk to the memorial of the Aboriginal man 'Doolin'.



Dave Tout, Frank Foster and John Mumbler

The very lovely caterers of the Candelo/Kameruka Red Cross attended to both day's meals. They were organised through Daphne Sweeney. Several of the ladies shared

stories with our group of people they knew in common.



Norman Parsons (rear), Ron Nye and John Broomhead

Aboriginal ownership issues were discussed in relation to Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks. 'Aboriginal Place Declarations' and 'Indigenous Land Use Agreements' were also discussed.



Dannielle Towers, Pat Ellis, Vanessa Mason, Mary Duroux and Margaret Cruse

Those who participated in the two days considered them to be useful in the sharing of knowledge, raising everyone's awareness of the issues and allowing the opportunity to have informal discussions

Further meetings are planned for June, July and August. Representatives of the Registrars Office and their consultants will be in attendance at these meetings as will the National Parks and Wildlife service.

Patricia Ellis



## ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS MEETING JINDABYNE – 19 APRIL 2001

Recently the NPWS Southern Aboriginal Heritage Unit held a meeting at Jindabyne in the Snowy Mountains designed to draw together a number of Aboriginal cultural heritage knowledge holders within the NPWS Southern Directorate area.

The Southern Directorate covers an area just south of Wollongong to the far south coast, along the Victorian boarder, across to Albury, up to Wagga, Young, Yass, and Goulburn. It includes all lands within this area except for the ACT.



Rod Wellington, Gary Currey, Mary Duroux and Christian Hampson

Aboriginal people who hold specific knowledge about Aboriginal sites and places in this area were invited to attend. The objectives of the Aboriginal Knowledge Holders Meeting were to:

- Provide direct advice to the NPWS Manager, Southern Aboriginal Heritage Unit on priorities relating to the protection and management of Aboriginal heritage within the Southern Directorate area.
- Consider issues relating to the recording of Aboriginal heritage information.
- Provide advice on cultural training of NPWS Aboriginal heritage and sites officers.
- Provide a forum for Male and Female knowledge holders to discuss their business with the view to raising issues with the NPWS.
- To act as a sounding board on cultural heritage issues which may be contentious.
- To provide advice and assist in the cultural education and interpretation of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage within all areas of National Parks estate within the Southern Directorate.



Simon Mumbler, John Mumbler, Pat Ellis, Dave Tout and Dannielle Towers

### **The outcomes of the meeting included:**

- To Develop a criteria to determine appropriate representation within future Aboriginal Knowledge Holders Meetings. Representation would include all cultural groups within the Southern Directorate boundary.
- Support for Aboriginal cultural camps.
- Support to Aboriginal women in the recording and management of women's sites.
- Aboriginal sites training for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- Recognition of the use of protocols when dealing with Aboriginal community people. First contact should be with elders.
- Consider increased employment and education programs across the state.



William Herrington, John Hickey, Alice Williams and Josie Williams

Once appropriate representation of the committee has been determined, it is proposed to develop an action plan which would detail specific issues to be addressed and set against timeframes or accountabilities.

Any further inquiries about this forum can be obtained by contacting Gary on (02) 62989736 or mobile 0417 270415.

Gary Currey  
Manager  
Southern Aboriginal Heritage Unit



Cecil Grant, Jo Erskine and Trisha Ellis

## Regional Manager's Report

I'm writing these words on the Friday before the final Aboriginal Whaling project meeting at the Eden Whale Museum. I'm looking forward to the meeting tomorrow which Robyn Kesby will write about in the next edition of Coastal Custodians.

This marks the end of almost two years work that aims to acknowledge the contribution of the Aboriginal Community to the whaling industry in Twofold Bay. It has the important result of ensuring that descendants of the Whalers are the recognized custodians of information, which was gathered in this project about their families.

We are also working with the Aboriginal Community on a number of other projects.

In the Bega area, community members have carried out Cultural Heritage assessments of the Koorool property. By the time the newsletter has been

printed, Bega Elders, landholders and the Service will have met to talk about the work and how the information can be used. Another survey will be carried out in the area between Burrogate and Towamba with Land Council Staff and Elders in the Eden Community.

A project to find and record Aboriginal rock art in the escarpment area has begun. Members of the Aboriginal Community and the Service will search for likely rock shelters in some of the more rugged bits of our area. The first searches will be in Wadbillaga National Park.

We've just found out that the Natural Heritage Trust has funded a project to carry out natural and cultural assessments of lands handed back to the community in the Eden Regional Forest Agreement. This will be a start in getting together the information needed for communities to manage these lands.

Around Narooma, an Aboriginal Ranger and an Aboriginal Trainee Field officer will soon be appointed to help manage the new Gulaga and Kooraban National Parks. Recently two members of the Wallaga Community have been employed to work on repairing track and trails on Gulaga.

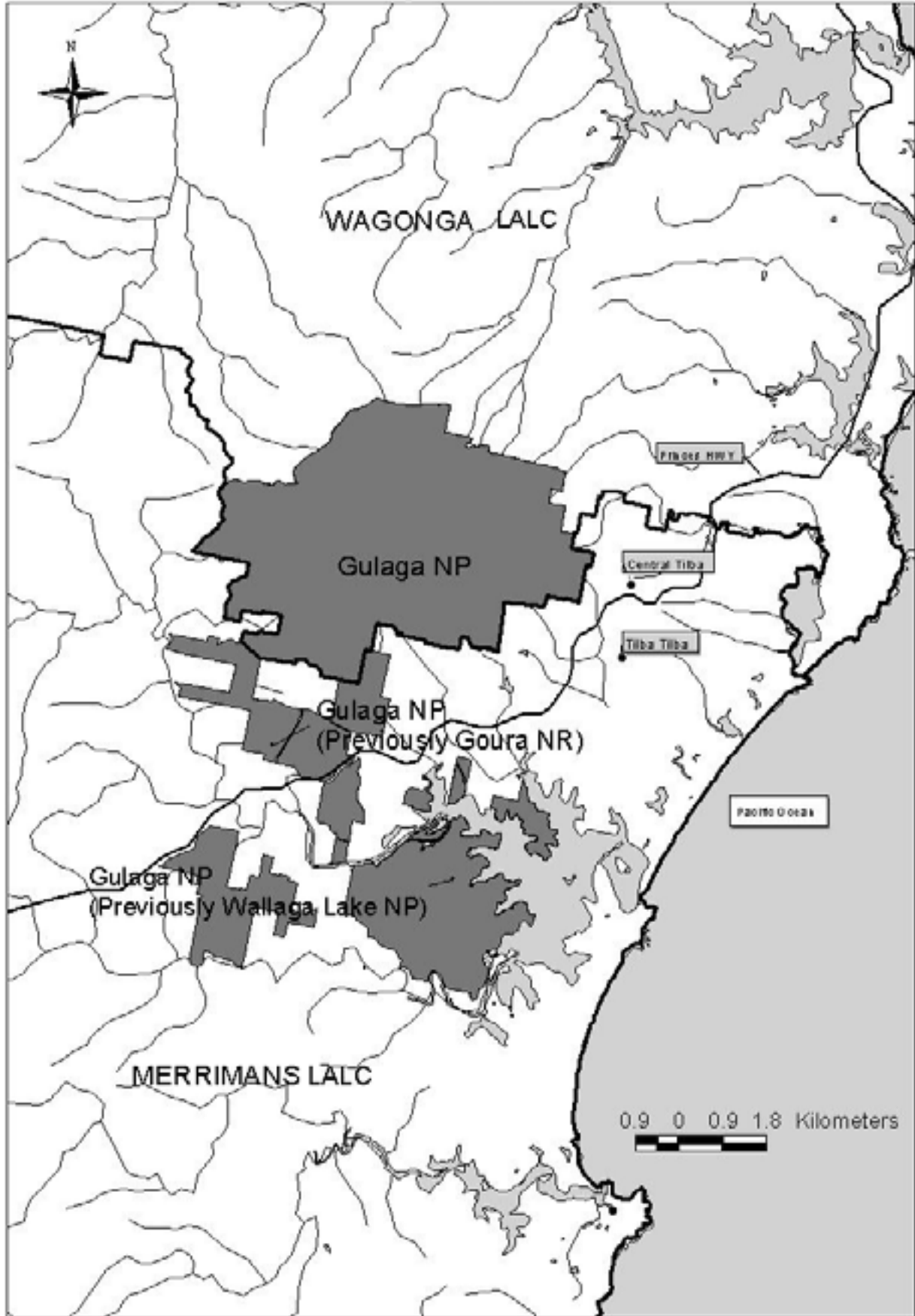
Another successful Discovery Program has been completed. One part of this program involves Aboriginal people carrying out Cultural Heritage programs for people visiting our National Parks.

There are still some other programs that I haven't written about, but the printing deadline nears. I'm sure that in future editions there will be new projects to talk about.

Tim Shepherd

Regional Manager

# Gulaga National Park



# Mammals of the South East Coast of NSW

Find -a -word

L	O	N	G	N	O	S	E	D	P	O	T	O	R	O	O
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E	C	O	M	M	O	N	W	A	L	L	A	R	O	O	B
R	E	D	N	E	C	K	E	D	W	A	L	L	A	B	Y

Bandicoot

Bat

Brown antechinus

Bush rat

Common wallaroo

Dingo

Dolphin

Dunnart

Dusky antechinus

Echidna

Flying fox

Forest eptesicus (bat)

Fur seal

Greater glider

Kangaroo

Koala

Long-nosed potoroo

Platypus

Red-necked wallaby

Ring-tail possum

Spotted quoll

Sugar glider

Swamp rat

Swamp wallaby

Wombat



## Coastal Custodians – May Hand Back: Biamanga and Gulaga Research Project

### The Projects:

The office of the Registrar – Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 started in May a research project to assist with the registration of 'Aboriginal Owners' for Biamanga National Park and Gulaga Reserve. Registration as an Aboriginal owner of Biamanga National Park or Gulaga Nature Reserve enables that person to be nominated on to a board of management for these lands. The research will commence in May and continue until September. During September and October, the Office of the Registrar will review the draft study report. In November, the study report will be further developed and completed by December. In December the process of registering Aboriginal owners will commence.

**This does not mean that people who are not identified by December will be left out, quite the contrary the Register is open at all times to add new 'owners'.**

In November of last year the Registrar held meetings in Bega, Eden, Mogo, Moruya and at the Umbarra Cultural Center to discuss the hand back process with south coast elders.

It must be emphasised that this is very much a pilot project, which will look at the nature of cultural connections or associations to Biamanga and Gulaga, and genealogical relationships of south coast families to the original Aboriginal inhabitants of the cultural area.

Spokespersons for family groups are being sought to make the process as inclusive as possible.

### Research Team:

The research team is composed of four very different kinds of researchers, all with research experience in New South Wales.

The research team is headed by Brian Egloff who 25 years ago worked with Guboo Ted Thomas on the Mumbulla Mountain study, which led to the establishment of Biamanga National Park. Since that time he has advised the Minister on the hand back first of Wreck Bay Village and then Jervis Bay National Park. He will be on study leave from the University of Canberra for the duration of the research program.

Nicolas Peterson, of the Australian National University, has some thirty years experience with Aboriginal land rights investigations in the Northern Territory and has recently worked on a Ngunawal cultural study. Nic will focus on the methods to be used and ensure that the study is undertaken in a uniform fashion. Both Brian and Nic are available to discuss the research project with family elders.

Assisting them with the archival research is Sue Wesson who has published an Aboriginal atlas of south eastern New South Wales and eastern Victoria. Through searching archival records, Sue has acquired a wealth of essential information. Amanda Markham, who has worked in western New South Wales with Aboriginal land claims, will be working with Brian, Nic and Sue interviewing family members.

Brian is available on 02 6201 2177, and Nic is on 02 6125 4727.

Should you feel that it is necessary to discuss the research project with the Office of the Registrar, please contact Rachel Lenehan on 02 9290 8748 or Adam Black on 02 9290 8745 or 0408 961 649. You can also get hold of us through your local Aboriginal Land Council or through the National Parks and Wildlife Service's Aboriginal Project Officer Trisha Ellis on 02 4476 0846.

Brian Egloff  
University of Canberra  
ACT 2601  
[Egloff@scides.canberra.edu.au](mailto:Egloff@scides.canberra.edu.au)



# KOALAS, KOORIS AND THE HANDBACK

Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks are amongst the most important areas for koalas protected by a reservation known in the south coast and hinterland areas of South East NSW. Now that these areas are being returned to Aboriginal ownership, the Koori community has a vital role to play in our efforts to try to conserve koalas in the region.

Koalas were once so abundant in the region during the early years of European occupation that thousands of koalas were shot for their skins and for dogmeat. Over the past 100 years koala numbers have dropped catastrophically. This is mainly because so many were shot, and also because their habitat has been degraded by clearing, intensive logging and probably by repeated burning. Dogs have also probably killed many koalas. In many other areas of our region koalas are now extinct and there is real concern that they may disappear from the areas where they remain.

Because of this situation we intend to undertake work that we hope will reduce the chances of koalas becoming extinct in the remaining areas where they remain and to enable them to re-establish in other areas.

We realise that the support of those who are the spiritual custodians of particular koala areas is essential for recovery efforts to be successful. We understand that the spiritual care of important koala areas was the responsibility of women.. We would like to share our knowledge about surviving koalas with those women and for Aboriginal people to be deeply involved in the recovery program.

One of the recovery actions that need to be undertaken will be regular surveys in and near to koala areas. We need to develop unobtrusive ways of assessing areas where there are koalas. The surveys need to be able to confirm that koalas are still present and continuing to breed, tell us the locations of breeding females and dominant males and whether or not koala numbers are continuing to decline. Answers to those questions will help us to decide the other actions necessary to ensure koala recovery and where these should be implemented. Aboriginal people may be able to advise the survey methods that should be used and of other areas where surveys should be undertaken.

We hope to organise a course for Aboriginal people to learn the skills needed for this work. One of the outcomes from this should be to bring together an appropriately trained team of Aboriginal people to take responsibility for koala surveys and management in those reserve areas that are being returned to their ownership.

I have been appointed to a temporary and part-time position by the NPWS until the end of June 2001. My job is to begin implementing some of the koala recovery actions, including some koala survey work in national park areas. I am seeking support and advice from Aboriginal people for this work. I am happy to discuss this with anyone, particularly those who know where koalas are surviving and/or who may be interested in participating in koala survey and monitoring work.

I can be contacted at the Merimbula NPWS office (64955027).

Chris Allen

## **ABORIGINAL PLACE DECLARATIONS**

An Aboriginal Place is an area that the Minister for the Environment recognises as being of special significance to Aboriginal culture. Under Section 84 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (NP&W Act)* an Aboriginal Place may be declared on any land in NSW if, in the opinion of the Minister, the area *'is or was of special significance to Aboriginal culture'*. The declaration of an Aboriginal Place provides a formal means for the NSW State Government to recognise the significance of an area to Aboriginal culture and to provide appropriate protection to ensure that the significance is not damaged or destroyed.

Aboriginal Place declarations are a way of formally recognising the cultural attachment Aboriginal people attribute to land. Aboriginal people and landholders throughout NSW are working collaboratively to protect places which are of significance to local Aboriginal people and which may be of educational value for current and future generations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The only requirement for a declaration is that the place is or was of special significance to Aboriginal culture. Such places may include:

- Land containing Aboriginal burials.
- Places that are identified by Aboriginal stories or celebrated by ceremony.
- Land which was once Aboriginal Reserve, Mission or other post- settlement living areas.
- Land, known from archival or historical records where important historical events took place, such as massacre sites.
- Areas which contain one or more Aboriginal 'relic' or a combination of cultural landscape features including culturally important plant and animal species.
- Archaeological sites where the importance to Aboriginal people requires special recognition and/ or which are regarded by Aboriginal people as being of importance to Aboriginal culture.
- Land, buildings or places significant to Aboriginal culture after 1788.

Under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*, the declaration of an Aboriginal Place affords that place the same protection as an Aboriginal relic. A 'relic' is defined by any deposit, object or material evidence, not being a handicraft made for sale, that relates to occupation by Aboriginal people in NSW both prior to and concurrent with the occupation of NSW by Europeans, this may include Aboriginal ancestral remains. Relics are accorded automatic protection under the *NP&W Act*. Many places of significance to Aboriginal culture do not fit under this definition and require other means of protection. This protection may be obtained through the declaration of an Aboriginal Place. Under Section 90 of the Act, an Aboriginal Place is provided the same protection as a relic and cannot be knowingly destroyed, defaced or damaged without the consent of the Director-General of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

*If you have any further questions on issues regarding Aboriginal Places, please call (02) 9585 6669 during office hours, or write a letter stating your query to the Manager, of Policy and Programs Unit, Cultural Heritage Division, National Parks and Wildlife Service, PO Box 1967, Hurstville, NSW 2220.*

# Mammals of the South East Coast of NSW

Find -a -word answers

L	O	N	G	N	O	S	E	D	P	O	T	O	R	O	O
D	U	S	K	Y	A	N	T	E	C	H	I	N	U	S	O
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S	L	F	B	C	B	D	T	L	C	F	W	D	W	D	W
U	Y	U	U	H	A	U	K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O	A
G	I	R	S	I	N	N	O	T	S	N	M	D	M	L	M
A	N	S	H	D	D	N	A	Y	A	Q	P	I	B	P	P
R	G	E	R	N	I	A	L	P	K	D	R	N	A	H	W
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L	O	L	T	F	O	T	E	S	B	A	T	O	G	N	L
I	X	O	S	P	O	T	T	E	D	Q	U	O	L	L	L
D	G	R	E	A	T	E	R	G	L	I	D	E	R	A	A
E	C	O	M	M	O	N	W	A	L	L	A	R	O	O	B
R	E	D	N	E	C	K	E	D	W	A	L	L	A	B	Y



Our charming Auntie's and Uncle who were the caterers at the Aboriginal Network Meeting held at Edrom Lodge/ Eden in early May (see article in next issue):

**Beryl and Ossie Cruse, Liddy Stewart and Shirley Aldridge**

## Calendar of Events

**June** Office of the Registrar and Consultants meetings scheduled for this month

Major weed research on **Montagui Island** kicks off this month

## *Next Issue*

- Our Readers Comments
- Biamanga/Gulaga update
- NPWS Aboriginal Employee Profile
- Aboriginal Networking Meeting
- Aboriginal Whaling History update
- Registrar ALR update
- Find-a-word
- Calendar of events.



## Subscription details

Please fill in the following details to receive your copy of this quarterly newsletter and forward them to:

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