

Festival of the Fleeces 2019

MERRIWA



7-9 June 2019
programme



MERRIWA



The Merriwa ROSTO Festival of the Fleeces has been an annual festival held every June long weekend since 1990. The festival showcases the beautiful country town of Merriwa and all that it has to offer while raising much needed funds for the vital emergency services - Westpac Rescue Helicopter and Merriwa and District Volunteer Rescue Squads.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram or visit our website to find out more.

www.festivalofthefleeces.com.au



FESTIVAL of the FLEECES



Friends of the Festival A special thank you to:



Lenores Quilting
Max' s Country Cut Meats
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Merriwa Shooters Association

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- Keith and Wendy

104 Bettington Street, Merriwa

WINTER TRADING HOURS:

Monday - Friday 8am-6.30pm; Saturday - Sunday 9am-4pm



Welcome to the 29th Rosto Festival of the Fleeces

The Festival is the largest event for the Merriwa district, bringing over 5,000 people to town each year including tourists from all over the state who come to experience country hospitality and authentic rural heritage.

This year the theme is Woolstock, think colourful, bright, psychedelic colours, Flower Power, 'groovy baby' - a bright and peaceful future within the community.

I am sure the imaginative people planning entries in the parade and window displays will also play with visions of the community's bright future, life after the drought and the love of our great land. The OH's will be performing at the opening night party.

Bush poet Carol Heuchan is a popular performer. Her works run the gamut of hilarious, quirky, contemporary, political, reflective, historical and moving. Carol will be performing and judging the Bush Poetry competition on Sunday morning. I encourage everyone to have a go, there's a prize pool of \$500 to be won.

The Festival has thrived thanks to the hard work of volunteers and the contribution of sponsors particularly our principal sponsor Rosto Olives.

Upper Hunter Shire Council is proud to be a long-time sponsor of the Festival, giving much behind the scenes assistance particularly through the Upper Hunter Visitor Information Centres (VICs).

Thanks also to everyone who has sponsored this event, served on the committee, donated prizes, bought a raffle ticket, decorated a float or a shop window, written a poem, or dressed up a child or a sheep. We couldn't do it without you.

For updates on the Festival visit www.festivalofthefleeces.com.au, like our Facebook page or follow us on Instagram @festivalofthefleeces

Cr Ron Campbell, Committee Chairperson and Upper Hunter Shire Councillor

The Festival of Fleeces - Poem by Rick Wright

You've heard of the tradition in Spain of running bulls,
Well this is somewhat similar; Merinos growing wool.
Perhaps you've heard of comebacks and even cross-breds too,
But Merino sheep at Merriwa grow fine wool just for you.
The Festival of Fleeces has one very special day,
Where sheep come out and get about in red socks on display.
These sheep have got their own back; the strangest thing to see,
Come and have a look yourself if you don't believe me.
If you've not been in a woolshed you may not understand,
The importance to Australia that wool is to our land.
The whirring of a motor with the bleating of the sheep;
The barking of the working dogs all memories to keep.

You won't begrudge the shearer he works as hard as hell,
He'll shear a hundred sheep a day before the final bell
The sound of cutters over combs, the swing of batwing doors,
And then the rousabout "picks up" his job's to sweep the floors.
The fleece then in a bundle thrown high up in the air,
And then it's skirted combed and spun to a fibre fine as hair.
Learn about this fibre, its staple and its length,
The microns and its quality and all its tensile strength.
The knitters are all lined up in a race to beat the world,
So you can see the story of an industry unfurled.



L D Campbell Pty Ltd

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History of Merriwa

This much-loved festival celebrates the Upper Hunter town's involvement with the wool industry. Merriwa relied heavily on the wool industry from its early days in the 1830s through to the 1960s.

The 'Brindley Park' woolshed built in 1880 for 10 blade stands, to shear some 100,000 sheep highlights the size of the industry in Merriwa in those years.

Merriwa District was first known as Gummun (or small) Plains. Distribution of land to white settlers in the Gummun District commenced in about 1830, but as early as 1824 white settlers were moving into the area from the west as well as from the Lower Hunter.

The first pioneer white settlers are believed to have come to the Merriwa district in the late 1820s. Messrs. J Blaxland, J Bettington, G Hall, A McKenzie and H Dutton were amongst the early settlers who came in search of good grazing land. Generally, new settlers occupied the more fertile lands along the various watercourses. The earliest buildings were simple slab huts, so it is doubtful if any still remain. Of the more substantial buildings which followed, the sandstone wing of "Terragong" homestead would be, from all indications, the oldest remaining homestead in the district.

John Oxley passed through the district in 1817.



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Merriwa Country Women's Association



Merriwa Branch

Proudly supporting the 2019 Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces.

Some significant dates in Merriwa's history

- 1850** The first church was built.
- 1846** There were 10 houses in the village.
- 1848** An inn was erected.
- 1849** First private school.
- 1850** First state school.
- 1851** It was stated that the township of Merriwa was rapidly rising in importance. During the previous 15 months, 20 new houses and an Anglican church had been erected.
- 1855** The church, a slab building was consecrated by the Bishop on the 19th March.
- 1855** A Roman Catholic church was being erected.
- 1858** A new court house was completed in November and the Catholic church, was finished at about the same time.
- 1858** There were 3 respectable inns, 5 stores, 2 blacksmiths, a few bush carpenters, tailors and shoemakers. Other inhabitants were predominantly carriers who chose the town as their home on account of the excellent pastures it afforded their cattle while spelling.
- 1866** Population 200.
- 1881** New Roman Catholic Church named St Anne's was opened by Bishop Terregganni on the 13th June.
- 1883** The hospital was built.
- 1884** The first hospital was opened, Mrs Paul being the first matron.
- 1885** Cobb & Co coaches began running between Muswellbrook and Mudgee passing through Merriwa.
- 1891** Population 437.
- 1907** First shire council was established.

- 1917** The railway line came to Merriwa.



- 1917** The rail link with Muswellbrook was completed. It is evident that the rabbit population was then large as the canning of rabbits for export was carried out at freezing works.
- 1933** Population approx 1,000.
- 1936** The town was supplied with electricity by M Campbell & Co.
- 1937** First electricity.
- 1958** Population 1,500.
- 1990** Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces commenced.
- 2016** Population is 1,761.
- 2019** The GrainCorp silos in Merriwa were painted by artist David Lee Periera. The image was chosen by the Merriwa community.





Leanne & Neville Hook
155 Bettington Street , Merriwa
6548 2031

Supporting the 2019 Festival of the Fleeces



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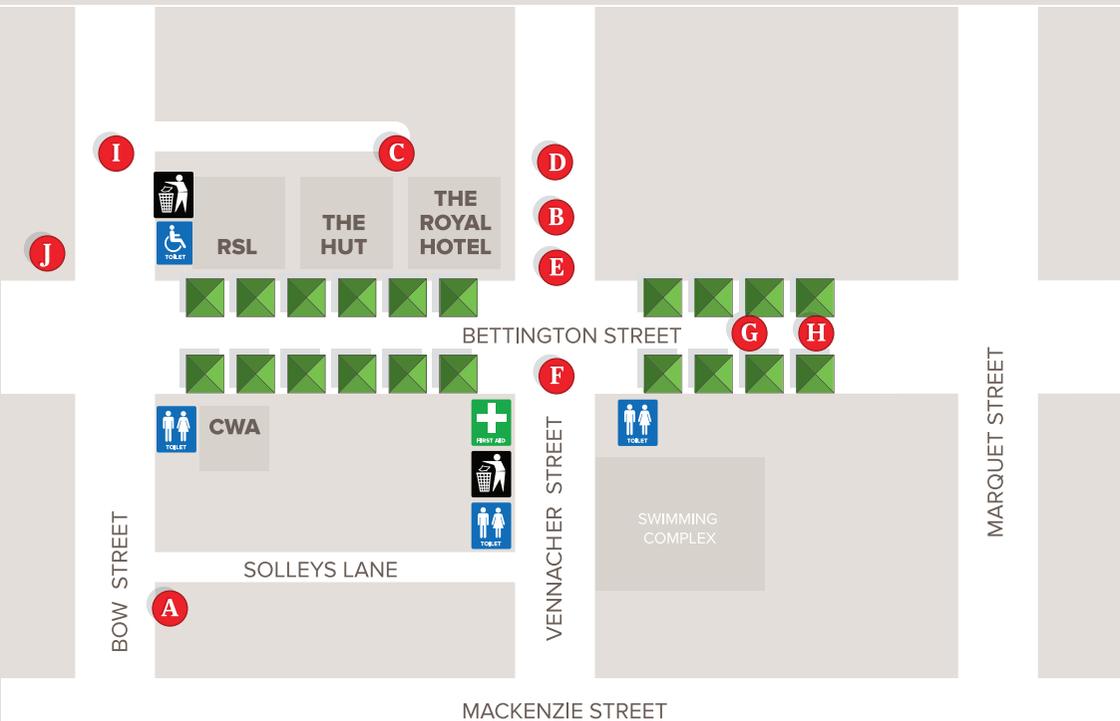


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FESTIVAL *of the* FLEECES

Stall Guide

- A** HANGING OF THE QUILTS
 - B** WORKING DOG DEMONSTRATION
 - C** VINTAGE MACHINERY DISPLAY
 - D** VINTAGE CAR DISPLAY
 - E** SHEEP SHEARING
 - F** DOG HIGH JUMP
 - G** EAT STREET
 - H** KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT
 - I** O'BRIENS MACHINERY
 - J** WOOD CARVING
-  STALLS





Friday 7th June

6:00pm until late

ROSTO Opening Night event – Family Music Show with “The Oh’s”

*Location: Merriwa RSL Club
Adult - \$20 / Child - \$10*

A fun filled family evening where you can enjoy the Oh’s.

Our festival will be officially opened and the winner of the window display, colouring completion and the Pam Power award announced.

Based in Scone, the Oh’s are Belinda and Ken, two very experienced entertainers. Belinda has worked in number of bands and duos in the Upper Hunter and Newcastle areas since the 90s. She has also won a number of awards for her singing and has appeared in musical theatre. Ken has played lead and rhythm guitar in various bands and duos in the pub and club circuit in Newcastle, the Upper Hunter and Central Queensland over the past 30 years. Ken and Belinda have worked together in bands and as a duo over the years and after a long break are now back together and ready to rock.

Featuring Belinda’s gutsy and soulful vocals, the Oh’s have a repertoire, aimed at a mature audience, which covers a mix of classic and modern female rock, country, jazz and blues presented with a big full band sound.

Saturday 8th June

8:00am – 3:00pm

Street stalls

Location: Bettington Street



A variety of street stalls will line the main street so come and sample everything and anything from fresh homemade produce, arts and crafts, clothing, hats and plenty of food and coffee will be on offer. There is something for everyone.

8:00am – 3:00pm

Kids' Corner

Location: Bettington Street

Kids' show attractions including jumping castle, ride ons and moving clowns

8:00am - 5:00pm

Hunter Valley Helicopters

Oval 2, Brisbane Street

8:00am - 3:00pm

CWA morning tea and lunch

Location: Bettington Street

Australian famous CWA scones, yummy cakes, soups and slices made by the local ladies from the Merriwa CWA.

7:00am & 4:00pm

Team penning

Location: Merriwa Showground



The Upper Hunter Team Penning competition starts at 7:00am, breaking for the parade from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

The Rosto Olives Festival of the Fleeces Challenge - team penning is held on Saturday with the presentation being held at 4:00pm. There is also the Battle of the Sexes Cut out Competition on Friday night. Sunday morning sees the Arena Sorting at 8:00am, Proceeds from competition entries go to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. All competitors must be members of UHTP or become 'Day Members', which can be taken out on the day.

8:00am - 3:00pm

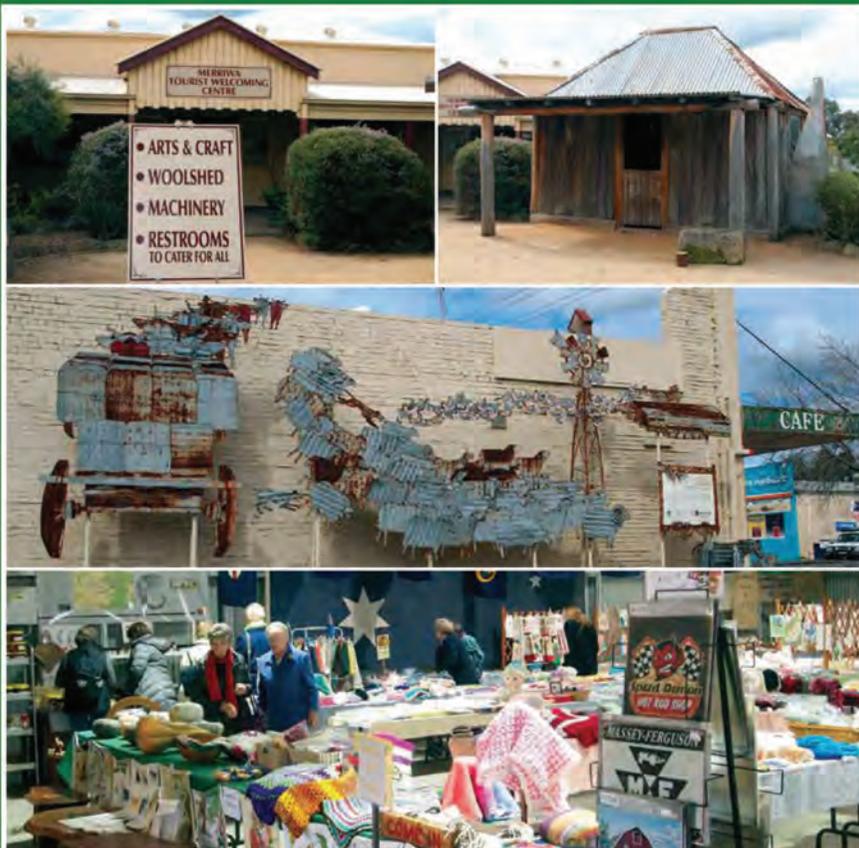
Modern day shearing display

Location: Vennacher Street

E



Observe the hard working shearers as they shear the sheep and throw the fleece.



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9:30am-4:30pm

Hanging of the quilts

Location: Bow Street
Quilt display - \$2 entry

A



Beautiful quilts from local quilters will be displayed all day. There is a chance to win a quilt of your very own as well as craft stalls to wander through. Felting and quilting demonstrations, colouring fabric as well as an opportunity to DIY decorate bags. Raffle drawn at 4:00pm. Supported by Lenore's Quilting.

9:00am - 3:00pm

Motoring vintage vehicle display

Location: Vennacher Street

D



You will be amazed just how perfectly these vehicles have been restored. Speak to the owners who restored these vehicles and enjoy the attention to detail.

10:00am - 3:00pm

Damper with cockies joy & billy tea

Location: Bow Street

J

See how real bread was made back in the day with cockies joy and billy tea. The historic cooking demonstrations will be on until 3:00pm.

11:00am - 1:00pm

The City of Maitland Pipes and Drums

Location: Bettington Street

Come and listen to the pipers as they play some rousing Scottish strathspeys and jigs!

11.50am

Welcome to Country

Location: Bettington Street

The Festival of the Fleeces committee would like to acknowledge the Gaewegal people who were the traditional custodians of the Merriwa region and surrounding lands, and the Kamilaroi people, the custodians today. The Festival committee would also like to pay respect to Elders both past and present of the Gaewegal and Kamilaroi nations and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people present.

The winning entry for the Vintage Vehicle Display will be announced after the 'Welcome to Country'.



12:00pm

ROSTO RUNNING OF THE SHEEP

See the famous sheep in red socks. Over two hundred sheep wearing red socks lead a procession of marching bands, school groups, community services, and local businesses through the main street of Merriwa. Thank you to the Campbell family for the generous use of their sheep and Merriwa Tyre & Service Centre for the use of their Can-ams.



1:00pm

Dog high jump

Location: Vennacher Street

F

Watch the athleticism of local farm dogs as they hurdle the jump to arrive on the back of the “work ute”.

Feel free to enter your four legged friend on the day.



9:00am - 3:00pm

Working sheep dog display

Location: Vennacher Street

B

Observe Zac Ede, as he works his dogs around the sheep, watch him communicate with his dogs through whistles and movements to bring the sheep into their pen.

From 3:00pm

Entertainment moves to the Merriwa Showground

Join in the fun with food stalls, and an afternoon of family entertainment.

3:00pm – 4:00pm

Gumboot throwing competition

Location: Merriwa Showground

Enter on the day. \$2 entry fee. Compete in open men’s, women’s, boys and girls; under 5, and over 60. Prizes to be won. View rules on the day.

3:00pm – 4:00pm

Sheep poo spitting competition

Location: Merriwa Showground

How far can you spit a piece of Sheep ‘POO’? Well the Festival uses jelly beans, just in case of accidental eating. Enter on the day. \$2 entry fee. Open men’s and women’s, boys and girls, under 5 and over 60.

3:00pm – 4:00pm

Lolly scramble

Location: Merriwa Showground

Buckets of lollies cannoned into the air! As much fun for the parents as it is for the kids! Thanks to Michael Nutt for donating the machine to the Merriwa community.

4:00pm

Team Penning presentation

Location: Merriwa Showground

6:00pm

Ka-Boom fireworks

Location: Merriwa Showground

Sit back and enjoy a spectacular fireworks display. The perfect end to a perfect day enjoyed with family and friends. Please follow directions from the Rescue Squad for your safety.

Sunday 9th June

8:00am

Team penning

8:00am

Location: Merriwa Showground

Prizes for 1st place in all 3 divisions. Top ten shoot out for top ten places over all 3 divisions for Saturday and Sunday runs to be held at the end of the Sunday competition.

9:00am

Anglican Parish 'blessing of the fleece' service

Location: Holy Trinity Church

Followed by morning tea. Church will be open until 3:00pm for visitors.

Eath art by Penny Dunston.

Bush poets breakfast

Location: CWA Hall, Bettington St

\$5 entry

\$5 breakfast.

The perfect way to finish the Festival. A walk up bush poet's breakfast with a prize pool of \$500. Special guest judge will be Carol Heuchan, whose poetry started of course with horse poems and in this field, she excels. But her work runs the gamut of hilarious, quirky, contemporary, political, reflective, impacting, historical and moving ballads right through to sheer nonsense! Enjoy a hearty breakfast while listening to the very entertaining bush poets for a wonderful Sunday morning experience. \$5 donation at the door plus \$5 breakfast.

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