



PEOPLE AND PLACES

MAD HATTERS IS NOT ABOUT HATS—By Susan Bennett

Madhatters is not about hats, although there is a lot of dressing up; it has nothing to do with Carrol's Wonderland, but it does involve adventures. It is a group of local people who like to act. We needed a name and someone suggested H.A.T.S. to stand for Highlands Amateur Theatrical Society. My immediate reply was, "We're more like mad hatters," and the name stuck.

Since 2005, the Madhatters have performed six plays, all original scripts, ranging from medieval to contemporary and always with a touch of humour. When it comes to writing, forget the ivory-tower notions of the playwright locked in his or her study, penning lofty thoughts whilst surrounded by books from great authors or gazing out a window onto an inspirational landscape. My experience of writing plays has been far more practical.



2010—"Kenny, Son of Kenneth"

I wrote my first play in 1989 for a school concert. As the new English teacher in a small, country school, it was expected that I would organise the Year 7-10 section of

the concert. The trouble was, no one told me this until four weeks before the intended performance date! The stipulations were that it must not run more than twenty minutes and had to accommodate as many students as wished to be in it. I hurried to the library where I failed to find anything that would fit the bill. The only solution – write my own play. This I did in the record time of two days and the result was 'Sir Kenneth's Quest'.

After moving to Caveat in 1998, I gave little thought to play-writing until I attended the Scribblers writing group where we were set the task of writing a short piece on the theme of 'colour'.

I wrote a scene using characters from 'Sir Kenneth', which centred on finding alternatives for the word 'brown' to describe the appearance of Gerald, the grotty peasant. From the reading of that scene, sprang the idea of starting a local theatre group.



2011—"Where there's a Will"

As with the writing, our rehearsals are short on pompous strutting (unless required by script) and are geared not only towards developing our characters, but most importantly, on having FUN! Cast members have come and gone over the years - some have returned for a second helping – others have been in every production. This year, we hope to present 'Golden Dreams', a story set in 1850's Victoria, during the time of squatters, bushrangers and the gold rush. The plot follows the lives and dreams of several characters: bachelor squatter, Charles Hunter, who is always short of cash; new-arrival, Mrs Anderson, who imagines 10,000 acres in the bush means luxurious living; pub-owners, Joe and Maggie, who dreams of a grand hotel to replace their bark shanty; and Jane, who longs for a career on the stage. Each has their own 'golden dream'.

We are looking for 3-4 adults (male & female) who would be interested in joining our regulars for this production. Contact Susan Bennett 5790 4333



WELCOME to ISSUE 15 2013
Contact editor@tgn.org.au 5790 4007

FARMING & ENVIRONMENT

GRACEBURN FARM

Over three generations, Graceburn Farm has aimed to create a balance between conservation, primary production and life-style on its 130 hectares (half a squatter's run).



Glenburn (Yea Valley)

The Abbott Smiths have been stewards of this small piece of Devonian sedimentary landscape (ancient and infertile) since the 1960s. Its rolling hills were cleared for cattle breeding, but significant areas of remnant bush along boundaries, waterways and drainage lines were retained, creating one of the first covenants under Trust for Nature for native wildlife corridors in Victoria.

During the last four decades, the farm has seen multiple changes to its infrastructure and management, including biological farming, biodiversity enhancement, pasture renovation and intensive rotational cattle grazing.

In mid-2012 Tom Abbottsmith Youl (the latest generation) began implementing his Paddock Eggs business to create another income stream.



Rotationally grazed cattle alongside nomadic 'paddock egg' chooks

You are invited to join Sally and Tom for a leisurely walk through the property, to show and tell Graceburn's story, and answer any questions on the various aspects of their successes and failures. on Sunday May 26th.

See details in 'What's On' column



The Trust For Nature is holding a **Woodland Birds for Biodiversity Field Day** at Mitchellstown, Nagambie and any local Twitchers, Farmers or others who are interested in our woodland birdlife might like to attend.

The flyer attached to this edition of TGN has all the details.

COMMUNITY "WHAT'S ON" CALENDAR - MAY/JUNE 2013

Friday 10th May 6:30pm	'DRINKS ON THE DECK' at Highlands Community Hall Bring food to share for a meal together and catch up with friends old and new. All welcome - especially new faces. Gold coin donation to cover power. Contact Judy Cameron 5796 9247
Friday 10th May 6:30pm	YEA WETLANDS COMMITTEE—Wildlife Photography Showcase Maranatha Hall, Lyons St., Yea 2 Course Meal, Coffee & Chocolates to Follow, Drinks at Bar Prices \$45 per person. Bookings essential. Contact Glenda Woods 5797 2417 or woodsygm@bigpond.net.au
Saturday 11th May 10am-12pm	BLACK MARKET Clearview Retreat, 404 Fairview Rd, Kerrisdale Swap & sell your home produce at this local food exchange and "open garden". Turn off Goulburn Valley Hwy onto King Parrot Creek Rd towards Strath Creek. Fairview Rd is 1st on right. Contact Paul Macgregor or Jocelyn Bennett 5797 0229 or diversity@diversity.org.au
Saturday 11th May 8:00pm	RUFFARTZ—THE ALEX BURNS and JEN HAWLEY BAND Ruffy Community Hall, Nolans Road This show is proudly presented by RuffArtZ and supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria. Tickets are available now from Glen George 5790 4318
Saturday 11th 8:00pm & Sunday 12th May 4:00pm	EUROA CINEMA "Zero Dark Thirty" 157 Mins (M) History/Drama ****4 stars For a decade, an elite team of intelligence and military operatives, working in secret across the globe, devoted themselves to a single goal: to find and eliminate al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden after the 2001 September attacks. His death at the hands of the Navy S.E.A.L. Team in May 2011 is documented in this long but powerful movie
Sunday 12th May 11:15am	St. DAVID'S UNITING CHURCH TERIP-RUFFY Ruffy Road Terip Terip We would like to invite you to a special Mothers Day Service which will include a baptism. After the service the congregation is cordially invited for lunch at Helen McKenzie's place in Terip. For any information ring Jennifer Penny on 5790 4233.
Friday 17th May 7:00pm	RUFFY HAPPY HOUR (or TWO!) Ruffy Community Hall, Nolans Road <i>"Come along and catch up with friends or meet someone new, everyone welcome!"</i> BBQ provided BYO meat/drinks and a salad or sweet to share Contact Sharron 5790 4329
Saturday 18th May 9am-1:00pm	EUROA VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET Rotary Park, Kirkland Ave., Euroa <i>"Meet, Greet, Eat & Shop"</i> A wonderful range of farm fresh produce from "local" producers. Contact Leah Jones 5795 1886 or hunaleah@mcmedia.com.au
Monday 20th May 8:00pm	RUFFY HALL COMMITTEE MEETING Ruffy Community Hall, Nolans Road Quarterly committee meeting and all welcome. Contact Sharron Batt 5790 4329
Sunday 26th May 11:15am	St. DAVID'S UNITING CHURCH TERIP-RUFFY Ruffy Road, Terip Terip The service will be conducted by our new minister, Reverend Glenys Gill. . For any information ring Jennifer Penny on 5790 4233.
Sunday 26th May 9:30am or 10:00am	GRACEBURN FARM WALK Graceburn Farm, 225 Burns Road, Glenburn 9:30am for Egg & Bacon or 10:00am for Farm Tour RSVP: Judy Brookes 5797 2563 or juncball@bigpond.com (to book for bacon and eggs) by 24th May Further info from Tom or Sally 5797 8283
Sunday 26th May 10:30am	HIGHLAND RAMBLERS Meet at Highlands Hall 10.30 am. This month's walk will be along Granite Hills. Contact Geoff Lade. 9739 4324
Thursday 30th May 5:30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS Old Caveat Church, Caveat-Dropmore Rd, Caveat Come along and have a casual chat with other local blokes. BBQ Tea Provided (Gold Coin) BYO Drinks
Saturday 1st June 6:30pm	HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL— WOOLSHED DANCE Habbies Howe Dropmore Rd., Highlands Back by Popular Demand, this terrific fundraiser for Highlands Primary School \$20 Adult—\$10 Child—\$50 Family Bookings Essential Contact Meagan Callander 5796 9208
Sunday 2nd June 10am-12pm	RUFFY WEEKEND WALKERS Monthly ramble to High Points of Interest around the district We're on a Mission to walk to all of the district's Piniger cairns. Meet at Ruffy Community Hall at 9:45am Contact Neil Doran 0457 253875
Thursday 6th June 10:30am-12:30	RUFFY PLAYGROUP Tablelands Community Centre (Old Ruffy School) Nolans Rd., Ruffy This Month it's Cut 7 Paste/Colouring Cost: \$3:00 per Family. Bring a small plate of food to share. Contact Sally 5790 4335
Friday 14 th June 6.30pm	LANDCARE COMMUNITY AWARDS DINNER Murchison Community Centre Free dinner and buses from Longwood & Euroa. All Landcare and Conservation Management Network members are encouraged to attend. Book your seat by contacting Janet Hagen 5790 4268

Classifieds & Community Notices

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Highlands Primary School Woolshed Dance



Back by Popular Demand !

Last year's Woolshed Dance held at Habbies Howe was a huge success. The historic Habbies Howe woolshed was packed and many locals commented that the community hadn't seen an event like this in years.

Highlands Primary School will run this terrific fundraiser again on Saturday 1st June. A schnitzel, steak and salad dinner will be served and wine, beer and soft drink for sale. This is a fundraiser for the school so we ask there be no BYO. Renowned singer Noel Pearson will ensure the dance floor is packed all night and there will be a raffle and silent auction. Funds raised last year went towards the school's swimming and camp programmes. This year we are raising funds to support the maintenance of our current staffing ratios.

We are very grateful to Julia and Scott McKay for the use of their woolshed again this year and their amazing support of this event.

Tickets are \$20 Adult-\$10 Child or \$50 Family. Bookings essential. Contact 5796 9208

Student of the Week Emillie



*For settling in, working hard
and her very positive attitude.
Well done!*

LOCAL GOINGS ON

Dynamic Guitar Partnership Here

Alex Burns and Jen Hawley are two exceptionally talented and skilled guitarists/singers that are the focus of the second show that is about to come to Ruffy as part of the RuffArtZ Season of Saturdays.



When asked to describe what audiences could expect Alex said "Imagine the crossroads where rural blues meets early jazz, the rhythmic dexterity resonating with elements of blues, jazz, gypsy swing, calypso and sega : the result is intelligent fun.

As for influences, the whole gang is here, from Son House, Robert Johnson, Mississippi John Hurt to Fats Waller, everyone from New Orleans to Django and Oscar Aleman. Throw in original compositions, a disarming talent for humour and rapport with their audience and the casual sharing of historical facts. We want to leave folks knowing more and wanting more."

See details in "What's On" column

Highland Ramblers April Walk

The day couldn't have been better for our walk from Caveat across to Don's hill, the site of the recent Dropmore fire.

The route took us via a large dam where platypus are often spotted, then beside a small creek with an impressive display of healthy tree-ferns, across Woolshed creek then around the south side of the hill where a fire-break had been cut. Whether due to the firebreak or not, the fire had successfully been halted here before it got into the thick bush heading towards Sprunts road. After lunch we climbed Don's hill for an almost 360deg view of the surrounding hills, then back down the hill to Caveat. The grass and bracken are flourishing after the fire, and many of the burnt trees are sprouting new growth from the trunks and look set to recover. Next month Geoff Lade will be leading the walk.



TRADING PLACES

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Wellness Retreat 2013 Flowerdale Estate

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Meditation Workshop

Kate James founder of 'Total Balance' will be joining us from Melbourne to lead the workshop.

To book your space

Contact Claire Clark 0432 144 755
or claire@yeafitness.com.au

FOX ON THE RUN HUNTING COMPETITION



The Hughes Creek Catchment Landcare group are once again running the "Fox on the Run" hunt competition over the month of June. Register yourself or your team by the end of May 2013 to participate. Proof of kill is required and details of exactly what is needed will be given in the week prior to the competition start. There is a grand prize of \$500 for the winning team/individual so get involved!!

Conditions do apply so contact Simone at hughes.creek1@gmail.com
5790 4146

FOX ON THE RUN BAITING PROGRAMME

The Hughes Creek Catchment Landcare group are seeking landholders who are interested in a subsidised fox baiting program. The subsidy would cover up to 50% of contractor costs subject to the number of landholders who participate as the funding is limited. This is a one off opportunity so get in fast to get your name on the list. Expressions of interest are required by the end of May 2013. Contact Simone on hughes.creek1@gmail.com

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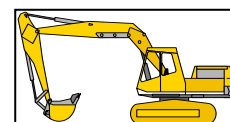
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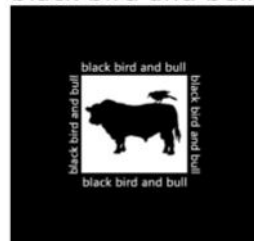
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