



PEOPLE AND PLACES

EDUCATING PETER

As I drove up to Ruffy for the first time in late February 1970, I was on a mission to educate farmers (after all, I did have a recently awarded Diploma of Ag Science).

But, first a diversion: I had to pull down the fences of the stocking-rate/fertiliser trial on 'Strathearn' run by the impressively named Ruffy Tableland Co-operative.

After a hairy ride up what I thought a dog track from Longwood and having nearly been run off the road by a local at the right angled bend before 'Innisfail', I arrived at Mr George Hunter's place at 'Brooklands' to collect the Fergy 35 to help pull down the fences.

I did a number of trips from Brooklands to Strathearn without seeing the thriving township of Ruffy. Oh, well, I will visit some other time.

My boss at Benalla was rightly proud of the research he had undertaken at Ruffy and the level of co-operation he achieved from the locals.

In particular, he often talked about one young bloke who used to fortnightly walk the range of fertiliser and stocking rate plots looking at the pastures and the sheep.

I soon established I had a lot to learn from the locals and my producer education was postponed.

This learning continued over the years from the likes of the Noyes at Creightons Creek, the Pennys at Terip, the Hills at Ruffy, the Hayes at Tarcombe and the Lades at Highlands. No doubt there are heaps of others as well and I will get into trouble for the omissions (how could I have forgotten Roger Strong at Dropmore!).

A side benefit of dealing with the Lades was that I was able to get one of Peg's famous sheep skin coats. I must ask Peg, next time I see her, if there is a guarantee on the coat – mine is starting to look a bit tatty after 35 years!

I learnt a country lesson at Tarcombe where I was espousing to Gilbert Hayes that the farmer I saw that morning, south of Seymour, was impressive. "I know, said Gilbert, he's my brother-in-law".

But my most enjoyable teacher was J.J. Hill of Ruffy.

John was a font of knowledge about the district and a great story teller.

No doubt, the family were sick of the stories, but I was a new willing listener.

Stories consisting of combating the rabbit problems in his younger days, the people he played cricket with and his uncle watering down his whiskey at the pub with gin accidentally put in the water jug were given an airing on a number of occasions while we did the soil sampling.

He admitted he used to join his ewes two weeks after Strathearn as he felt the foxes would have got used to going to their lambing paddocks by the time his lambing started!

John was a gentleman and he did not say nasty things about others. The closest he came to criticism was "he is a good sheep man but he could do a better job with his weaners".

Just before his death, I found John stuck on the side of the road in his little ute. I offered to pull him out but he preferred for me to drive him home. "One of the boys" would get his ute later on. But John was still on for a yarn and he insisted we divert the trip home so he could show me some trees that he planted. Vale John.

Oh, by the way, the young bloke who used to look at the trial site fortnightly was someone by the name of Stan Artridge. I wonder if he learnt anything from those inspections.

By Peter Hanrahan—Ruffy

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student of the Week *Emily*



***For her enthusiasm and
commitment to Boite.
Well done!***

Welcome Back: Welcome back to term 3, hopefully the cold weather is on the improve and we will start to get some warmer days. It sounds like everyone had a terrific break and is refreshed for term 3. Unfortunately I broke my leg on the first day of the holidays so have spent the two weeks immobilised and visiting orthopaedic surgeons. Hopefully I am on track and healing well although I will be absent from school for at least 2 weeks. Many thanks to Miranda, Pete, Di, Kathleen and Trish Bruere for holding the fort while I am away.

Wanted: Scrap hardwood that could be used for shelving in the aquaponics project. Graham, Rick, Luke and Lachie are doing a great job being the aquaponics unit. Thanks to Rick and Jack Hodge who came along and helped out last Friday. By Meagan Callander-Principal

HCCC FOX ON THE RUN TROPHY AND PRESENTATION NIGHT



This years competition was a huge success with over 400 tails submitted by teams and individuals. A dinner will be provided and a trophy presentation will be held on Friday the 9th of August at the Ruffy Hall to celebrate.

All are welcome to attend.

Please RSVP by Sunday 28th July
Contact Simone at
hughes.creek1@gmail.com
5790 4146.

HiArts Tenth Year Evaluation Wine & Cheese Evening

For Ten Years HiArts has brought to this community an experience rich in artistic diversity.

We think it is time to evaluate the future of HiArts. We would like you to bring your ideas and join us for wine and cheese on Saturday 10th August from 4pm to 6pm in the Highlands Hall.

Please Contact Stuart & Judy Reid 5796 9358



COMMUNITY “WHAT’S ON” CALENDAR JULY/AUGUST 2013

Friday 26th July 6:00pm	ROCKY PASSES TAPAS NIGHT Rocky Passes Winery 1590 Highlands Rd., Whiteheads Creek The popular Tapas Nights provide a relaxing way to end the week by enjoying great food & wine with friends. Contact 5796 9366 or Email contact@rockypasses.com.au
Friday 26th July 7:30pm	TABLELANDS FAMILY BINGO NIGHT Tablelands Community Centre@Ruffy Nolans Road Family Fun & Prizes—20 Rounds—\$1 per Playing Card Every Round Wins a Prize—Final Round Prize \$50 Everyone is Welcome Free Supper Provided Contact Sally 5790 4335 or 0407 904335
Friday 26th July 7:30pm	HCCC LANDCARE MEETING Tablelands Community Centre (Old Ruffy Schoolhouse) All local landholders are welcome & encouraged to attend. The meeting is relaxed & informative and Land-care is interested to hear your views about how we can deliver the most appropriate & effective environmental programmes to support the local community of flora, fauna and people. Contact Janet Hagen 5790 4268
Friday 26th July to Friday 9th August	RUFFY PRODUCE STORE CLOSED for 2 WEEKS Helen, Doug and Freya will be taking a Winter break for two weeks and re-opening on Friday 9th August
Saturday 27th 8:00pm Sunday 28th July 4:00pm	EUROA CINEMA “Song For Marion” 93 mins (PG) *** 3.5 stars Starring Terence Stamp and Vanessa Redgrave. This is an engaging movie about a moody, introverted grouch who has the most delightful wife, Marion, who enjoys her connection with a local choir of other older aged people. Marion is suffering from cancer and along the way Arthur is encouraged by the young music teacher to join the group. This will take you through all levels of emotion but there is singing (maybe not enough) and an enjoyable ride through the lives of this couple and their friends in the choir
Sunday 28th July 11:15am	St. DAVID’S UNITING CHURCH Terip-Ruffy Ruffy Road, Terip Terip All welcome. For any information Contact Jennifer Penny 5790 4233
Thursday 1st August 1030am-1230pm	RUFFY PLAYGROUP Tablelands Community Centre @ Ruffy (Old Ruffy Schoolhouse) This Month it’s Father’s Day gift making Cost: \$3:00 per Family. Bring a small plate of food to share. Contact Sally 5790 4335
Saturday 3rd August 9am-2:00pm	YEA COUNTRY MARKET Yea Railway Park, Station Street, Yea Showcasing local producers, growers and makers offering an array of stalls, the best in fresh local produce, arts and crafts, children’s activities, play ground and skate park. Gold coin donation entry
Sunday 4th August 10:00am	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
Tuesday 6th August 7:30pm	RUFFY COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP Tablelands Community Centre @ Ruffy (Old Ruffy Schoolhouse) AGM & General Meeting Everybody is Welcome & Supper provided. Contact Justus Hagen 5790 4268
Friday 9th August 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 9th August 7:30pm	HCCC LANDCARE “FOX on the RUN” Presentation Night Ruffy Community Hall Nolans Rd Ruffy Free Dinner for all and Trophy presentations to the successful Fox Hunters Please RSVP to Simone by 28th July Contact 5709 4146 or hughes.creek1@gmail.com
Saturday 10th August 4:00pm-6:00pm	HiARTS WINE & CHEESE NIGHT Highlands Community Hall Highlands We think it is time to evaluate the future of HiArts. We would like you to bring your ideas and join us for wine and cheese. Everybody is Welcome. Contact Stuart & Judy Reid 5796 9358
Saturday 17th August 9am-1:00pm	EUROA VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET Rotary Park, Kirkland Ave., Euroa “Meet, Greet, Eat & Shop” A wonderful range of farm fresh produce from “local” producers. Contact Leah Jones 5795 1886 or hunaleah@mcmmedia.com.au
Saturday 31st August 7:15pm	CHIZIA (Colossal Challenges, Quirky Quizzing, Terrific Trivia) @ Ruffy Hall. BYO drinks and nibbles. Memorable Ruffy supper. Meet your neighbours. Adults \$10, pre-teens free on pre-teens table with own activities.

Classifieds & Community Notices

CONVERSATIONS

ALL CREATURES GREAT and SMALL.....and a TREE

As soon as I entered John and Lesley Dalziel's home I could feel the warmth.

It was not just the crackling fire, the comfy couches with their throw rugs or the views from the windows facing the indigenous home garden; it was the warmth exuded by these two lovely folk who both welcomed me at the door although we had never met.

Lesley's home-made choc-chip cookies and fresh brewed coffee were irresistible and a great way to get the conversation started.

Many of our readers will have years of experience working with John, the Seymour based veterinarian and or with Lesley, the deeply passionate and effective champion of the landscape and environment.

As a young man growing up in California John was drawn to working with animals, particularly horses and he became adept as a farrier. His family really wanted him to pursue a career in medicine but was satisfied when John chose to study for his Bachelor of Science with a major in Animal Husbandry.

John had family contacts in South Australia and he had always harboured the desire to visit 'the outback' so in 1961 he made his first trip here and found himself on a station north west of Woomera not far from the Maralinga nuclear test range.

After this experience he decided to return to Australia in 1964 to take up studies at Veterinary School in Brisbane. It was here that he met Lesley who had come in from her home town of Mt Isa to study Psychology. They did some post grad work in Warwick Qld before going back to live in California, but John developed a yearning to return to Australia.

He and Lesley bought the Seymour veterinary practice in 1975 lock, stock & barrel. The practice, the house and even the car. In those days the nearest Vets were in Bendigo and Yarra Glen and John found himself working just about every hour of every day and if he got two hours of rest on a Sunday that was a bonus.

When asked if he observed any difference between US and Australian clients his instant response was "animal owners are the same all over the world". John believes that they all share a compassion for their animals, with farmers being just slightly more pragmatic than city dwelling pet owners.



John Dalziel with Border Terrier 'Meg'

While John was so busy with the practice Lesley was indulging her lifelong passion for the environment with her work as the Librarian for the Australian Conservation Foundation and her volunteer community work to secure and re-vegetate Seymour's Light Horse Park and Bushland Park.

After moving to their present home on 90 acres at Whiteheads Creek it would have been out of character had they not set about remediating the landscape. They have direct seeded road and boundary corridors to protect one of the few remaining squirrel glider habitats and they believe that there have been bush stone curlews on the property but they are yet to see or hear them so they ensure that fallen branches are left alone in the hope that the habitat will attract these quirky endangered birds. Many readers, including your correspondent, will be pleased to hear that the direct seeding took several years to get up and going, but when times were right everything just popped up and went ahead in leaps and bounds. Whew!

Lesley & John share a deep interest in all native fauna, particularly bird life and they have set up their garden to attract as many indigenous species as possible. Lesley relates the story of taking a walk through the gorge on Kulaba and seeing a Peregrine Falcon perched on a stringybark tree with three fluffy chicks on a rock face ledge nearby. She says this was one of the great moments in her life.

As a long serving member of the Seymour Agricultural Society, John joined with Richard Wallis to establish an annual scholarship for local students who have chosen to pursue tertiary studies in agricultural related fields and careers in rural Australia. He is also proud of the Californian redwoods that have been planted around the district, including the magnificent specimen he donated and Rob Hayes planted at the Ruffy School. This tree is now the centre of Ruffy's Family Christmas celebrations and is decorated and illuminated each Christmas.



Ruffy's Redwood donated by John Dalziel

After a lifetime of work and achievement John and Lesley are trying to lead a quieter life these days, but during our 90 minute chat the phones just kept on ringing, so by my reckoning achieving the quiet life is still on their 'to do' list.

By Don Cook

NATIONAL TREE DAY

Landcare Invites you to celebrate National Tree Day by joining a tree planting event along the High Country Rail trail on Sunday 28th July 2013. Starting 9am.

You can join a team starting at the Merton Cemetery or the Cheviot Tunnel car park. The two teams will join for a great lunch at the Molesworth Hall around 1.30pm.

Please bring your own gloves and spade. Morning tea and lunch will be provided. Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative support this event and urge members to attend and mingle with other Landcare people while enhancing & exploring the wonderful new rail trail. Bikes are an optional mode of travel on the day but most of us will be travelling by car. Please RSVP Judy Watts Upper Goulburn Landcare **5736 0105** or uqlandcare@qbcma.vic.gov.au

Missing Bunny Blaster

We are trying to locate the Landcare Bunny Blaster

If you know where it is could you please contact

Alistair Lade 5796 9276 or
al_lade@bigpond.com

FINDING 'FOXY'

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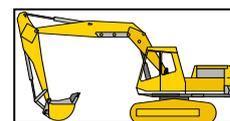
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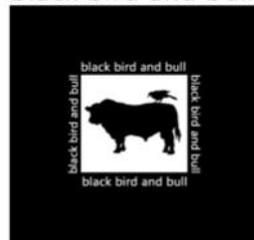
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