

# The Granite News

Whiteheads Creek  
Hughes Creek  
Caveat  
Highlands  
Ruffy  
Terip Terip

Highlands Primary School  
3025 Highlands Road  
Highlands 3660  
Highlands.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Ph: 0357969208  
Mobile: 0429969208  
FAX: 0357969307

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February 16th, 2007

## WELCOME TO ISSUE NO.5

.Thanks for the feedback, please keep the articles coming to miranda@activ8.net.au Remember the current deadline is Friday 9am but it does move around a bit depending on volunteer help available and other commitments.

## INTERVIEW WITH A LOCAL Eliot Neave - Postie

For the past twelve months Eliot has been delivering the mail for the Yarck Post Office on his motorbike.

Eliot arrived in the area three years ago, after driving all the way from Perth in a thirty three year old car he had restored.

He planned to spend some time with family here and then move on up the easy coast and do a bit of diving along the way. Instead, he bought some wild acres on top of the Black Range.

He has turned an old horse truck into a serviceable mobile home so he can spend more time on the property.

Eliot also makes jewellery but he has put it aside for the moment, so he can apply his skills to building a shelter and a studio with some of the best views around.



As you will see in the picture here, his surroundings inspire his designs.

When the studio is finished, Eliot plans to look for local gold and gemstones to make his next

pieces, and he will be inviting interested people to work with him.

Those of us on the Yarck mail run are lucky. We can be sure that whatever the weather, the mail always gets through.

In an interesting variation on the 'dog bites postman story' last week, when Eliot found a small dog running along the road, he took it on the rest of the mail run with him and then returned it home.

By Sari Wawn

## NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Helpers: We have been overwhelmed with offers of assistance from parents and community members. Currently we have Scott McKay working with many students on improving cricket skills, Teresa Hammond, Judy Cameron, Paula Lade and Tricia Graf listening to students read and still 4 more wonderful people who are waiting for the cry of help.

4/5/6 Camp: Thanks to Paula for volunteering to attend the senior camp at Lorne from March 20th- 23rd. If you are a parent of a senior student and would like to join in the fun of a school camping adventure, there are spare beds, please contact Miranda.

### Student Learning Awards:

Junior Room  
Home Learning: Laura, Imogen

Spelling: John,  
Cuchlainn

Tables: Jeremy, Laura,  
Imogen, Kassie

Reading: Walter

Senior Room  
Home Learning: Yasmine, Jack H

Spelling: Jack H, Kelly, Elliot, Ariel,  
Yasmine, Jack M

Tables: Daniel, Michael, Jack H, Elliot,  
Ariel



What is the only English  
word to end in mt? Dreamt

True or False: A jiffy is an  
actual unit of time for  
1/100th of a second

## Highlands Landcare members

If you are a financial member of Highlands Landcare, please put up one of our attractive signs which are available from Jono 57969344

## A Message from the Principal

Many of you may recall a working party forming together last year to submit and application to the Federal Government under the Investing In Our School Program. This application was following up a successful application in 2005, which allowed us to engage an architect to develop a set of plans for a multi purpose learning space.

Unfortunately our 2006 application for approximately \$132,000 to actually build the building has not been successful.

I have contacted the Hon Fran Bailey, who is following this up with her colleagues at a Federal Government level, in an attempt to have this decision changed or to possibly access funding from the State Government.

I will continue to keep you and the wider community updated with the progress of this 'fight', through the HPS News and The Granite News. By Allyson Mildren

## More Good Reads from The Ruffy Book Club

1. Diamonds in the Mud by Joy Dettman. Short stories in rural Australian setting- all very different but believable.
2. Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones. "Shows us that stories, even painful ones, may carry possibilities of redemption". Read it for yourself and see what you think.
3. Balanda by Mary Ellen Jordan. Set in Arnhem land, a very honest account of a white woman working in a community for a year- a very personal take on one of Australia's deepest dilemmas.
4. The Secret River by Kate Grenville. Beautiful writing that starts in London in 1806. They come to Australia as convicts then settle in the Hawkesbury but have no idea how to deal with the aborigines. How did these women cope?
5. The Kindness of Strangers edited by Don George, Lonely Planet Publications. Short stories of kindness from people who were at risk themselves, delightful and all positive!

## Classifieds & Community Notices

### EARLY DAYS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS

Joyce Waddell (Minchinton) is Caveat's oldest resident. I started school at Molesworth Gap - later Caveat - State School No 3693, in 1916, when I was 6 years old. My two older sisters, Mernda and Sylvia, were already at the school, which was only half a mile from our house, so of course, we all walked this short distance. The old fashioned desks, which had backless seats attached to the desk, seated 3, and I shared with Alma and Bernice Jeffery, who both lived on the old Molesworth - Dropmore Rd. Slates were used by Grades 1 and 2, exercise books being issued in grade 3, so that the teacher had a permanent record of the work. One other new pupil in 1916 was Eddie Moore, who was absent at the beginning of school. His older brother, George had been wounded in France (in World War 1). My first teacher was Mr Cole, who lived with his wife in a 2-roomed dwelling at Fort William, three and a half kms away.

### Dung Beetles

Dung Beetles, Africa & Mother Nature Nature is not wasteful. Given the opportunity, she will maximize the recycling of nutrients and the conservation of energy in all living systems. So, how does nature deal with huge quantities of manure? Africa has the richest dung beetle fauna in the world, the beetles having evolved (over the last few million years) to exploit the abundance of dung produced by the large mammalian herbivores for which the continent is so famous. About 2 000 dung beetle species are known in Africa, of which about 800 occur in southern Africa. Any southern African farm with good pasture and stock management can expect to have between 60 and 100 species of dung beetles!! Not surprisingly, with so many different types of dung beetle, dung decomposition is effective and efficient. All these African dung beetles would not have evolved and survived, if they didn't have a part to play in the recycling of manure. If this is nature's fine-tuned answer to manure recycling in Africa, then it's what we need too. Interested?

Contact us by phone/email and ask for a dung beetle project Information Pack.

Goulburn Broken Dung Beetle Project

70 New Dookie Rd,  
Shepparton, Vic, 3630  
Bertram Lobert 03 5790 8606,  
bertram.lobert@inet.net.au  
Karen Brisbane 03 5832 1133,

### THE TABLELANDS COMMUNITY CENTRE

(formerly the Ruffy Primary School)  
The Tablelands Community Centre Committee meetings will be held at the Ruffy Primary School at 8.00 pm on the second and fourth Mondays of each month with the next meeting being on Monday 26 February.

### The Ruffy Store

A bit of action in Ruffy on Tuesday with Channel 9 doing some filming at Adrian & Valda Martin's Orchard and then on to the Ruffy Store. A lifestyle program to commence in April on a Friday evening.

### Harmonic singing

Is there anyone wishing to learn harmonic singing and to experiment with sound? I have decided to let music back into my life. Thinking of an informal group, meeting once or twice a month to have fun singing. Call Leone 0500 500 088.

### WATER SAVING TIPS

Get a water efficient showerhead and you'll save up to 100,000 litres of water a year as well as use less energy. Short showers will save even more.



### Landcare trees

Indigenous Plants & Trees grown by Euroa Arboretum from local seed will be available again this year. Expressions of interest are now being taken for the 2007 planting season. Some orders from last season have been nursed over the summer and are ready for planting when it rains. Ring Janet to discuss your plans. 57 904 268. Number of plants and species preferred. Cost subsidized by Landcare.

### .Highlands CFA

A big welcome and thank-you to the 14 new members who have joined the brigade in the last 6 months. Your enthusiasm and commitment is most appreciated. Also congratulations to the following members who have recently completed CFA accredited training courses. Well done. Wildfire (minimum skills)

Rick McAlpin, Matt Smith, Shaun Gabrielle, Cameron Kirkham, Sharyn Shaw, Chris Bennett, Sam Strong, Matty McKernan, B

### WHOLE FARM PLANNING

A number of people in the area have expressed an interest in participating in a WFP course. If we have 12 people who are interested we could run a course at the Highlands Hall. Read on and if this appeals to you, please take the time to contact Kristy. Where are you going with your property?

Whole farm planning is a nationally accredited course that provides you with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions. An aerial photo of your property will help you plan and visualise what you want to do. The course takes you through a logical process of thinking and planning for your property.

The cost is \$220.00 per property and includes all materials. Some of the topics covered include land use capabilities, farm water supply, soils, fire prevention and awareness, native vegetation and biodiversity, pastures, pest plants and animals.

Feedback from participants completing the whole farm planning courses so far include:

"It is a fantastic introduction to land management"

"Gave us a course of action for farm direction"

"I now look at my property in a different way"

To register your interest or further information contact:

Kristy Youman  
Department of Primary Industries  
03 57840618 or 0419571208  
kristy.youman@dpi.vic.gov.au



Beinda Henderson, Nathan Simpson & Ross Hovey. If the last 4 names are unfamiliar to local residents it is because they are all Melbourne or Geelong based Rovers who, as frequent visitors to the Mafeking Rover Park, have offered their services to the local fire brigade.

Crew Leader

John Kirkham, Jeff Swain, Richard Wallis & Steve Matthews.

I believe after completing this course one never looks at trees in quite the same way

## Community What's On Calendar - February/March

Week beginning 19th Feb	Highlands CFA Crew A—Lt. Peter Roberts
23-25th Feb	Highlands—Caveat Crew Leader Course
February 23rd	Euroa Art Show: Grand Opening 7 pm Art, Wine, food, music @ Old Flour Mill Gallery (entry \$10.00) The Gallery will be also be open Saturday Feb 24 & Sunday Feb 25 from 10 am - 4 pm (gold coin /donation)
Sat 24th Feb	RuffArtz "A Season of Saturdays" Bohemian Nights 8pm Ruffy Public Hall Tickets on sale from Glen Ph 57904318
Sunday 25th Feb	Highlands Ramblers. Our first walk for 2007 will be in the Hughes Creek- Stewart's Creek- Glen Lyon area, depending on the weather. Meet as usual at the Highlands Hall at <u>10.30a.m.</u> , with your lunch and a drink, (and your bathers if it's hot !) Any newcomers are very welcome, - enquiries to Peg Lade - 57969222. (No walk if it is a Total Fire Ban Day )
Monday 26 Feb	The Tablelands Community Centre Committee meetings will be held at the Ruffy Primary School at 8.00 pm
1st March	HCCC Executive Meeting Highlands Primary School 8pm
2nd March	Clean Up Australia Day for Highlands Primary School children and community members.
3rd & 4th March	Hi Arts Weekend, Highlands Hall. In addition to art, poetry and music and children's activities, the exhibition will be having pottery and spinning demonstrations, sales of home ware, local produce seedlings and herbs. This year we will have a wide range of food, wine and beer. Saturday night BBQ will have a local band to dance, sing or just listen to. A new feature will be our guest artist Penny Jensz, more about her later. Those wishing to exhibit and still haven't registered need to contact Jill 5796 9331 pronto!

## 'A Season of Saturdays'

### 2007 Café Concert Series

Once again we are presenting an exciting line-up of high quality, professional musicians performing an excellent program of music from around the world. Dates for concerts are:

Saturday 24 February Bohemian Nights-  
Saturday 2 June Zulya & the Children of  
t the Underground  
Saturday 25 August Sanfona  
Saturday 17 November Gutbucket Jug

#### Band

All performances will be in the Ruffy Public Hall commencing at 8.00 pm. (Doors open at 7.30 pm.) You are welcome to BYO drinks and nibbles. Coffee and cake will be available to purchase at interval. Tickets for each performance will be \$26.00 each. We are giving you the opportunity to purchase a Season Ticket in advance. A Season Ticket which gives entry for an adult to all four performances will cost \$78.00 – great value! Please note the tickets are transferable but not refundable. Two weeks prior to each performance we will send you a reminder notice

### Help From A Handy Person:

If you are a handy person and have half an hour or so to spare fitting towel rails etc to the new staff bathroom, please give Allyson a call at HPS on 57 969 208. You will need to bring your own tools

A series of thunderstorms on Sunday 11th Feb. brought very scattered falls - 7 mms to the official gauge at Terip, and a lucky 15.4 at "Glentannar", Highlands. That also brought a 6-hour blackout - not so lucky. On 13th, more storms only supplied .2 mms to Terip and Highlands, but some fixtures, including a water sprinkler control box, were knocked out.

## BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS

Looking out on to the parched landscape surrounding us at the moment brings little joy, so the arrival last Sunday of a sacred kingfisher at a water bowl at the back door, was most welcome. This exquisite bird, about 20 cms in length with bright blue shoulders, rump and tail, and buff-white underparts and collar fluttered against the window for just long enough for me to study it closely and then it flew away. As well as admiring its wonderful colour, I noticed its beautifully carved black beak. and the dramatic dark band that sits below its eyes like a mask.

My friends in DSE also tell me that the bird is a focus species: that means their presence indicates of a healthy wide-ranging habitat. They live in forest and woodland habitats that have trees with large hollows, and prefer patches of at least 10 hectares, with wide (more than 50 metres) corridors of streamside vegetation.

I live on top of the Black Range, where there are still plenty of trees with hollows, although they too, like all the other flora and fauna, are beginning to show signs of stress: sightings of birds which like to be near waterways are rare around here.

This truly beautiful bird is closely related to the more common kookaburra and the smaller azure kingfisher.

A web search makes for some informative reading about its relations in and beyond Australia, and its migratory and other habits.

The books also tell me that the bird has a distinctive call of 'dek dek dek' and I think I have heard it, but would like to have an expert with me to confirm this. By Sari Wawn

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Thank you for supporting Highlands Primary School and our community.

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**5796 9355**

## **Ruffy Produce Store**

Breakfast & Lunch  
Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays  
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**First Friday BBQ- 2nd February**

**Need to book, call Helen or Doug**

T: 5790 4387

E: [info@ruffystore.com](mailto:info@ruffystore.com)

F: 5790 4209

## **RURAL FENCING**

**RICK MCALPIN**

**57969269**

**0427834546**

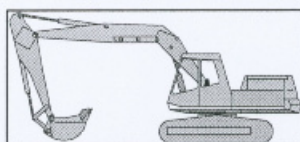
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Ph: 57 904 333

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