

The Granite News

Ruffy
Caveat
Highlands
Terip Terip
Hughes Creek
Whiteheads Creek

PEOPLE AND PLACES

DROPMORE Station, on Hughes Creek, was a vast run, an area of 44,000 acres, when it was taken up by John Webster in 1841. It included parts of present day Highlands and Caveat, right down to the Goulburn River. Lease-holders were able to annex "out-stations"-areas within a 3-mile radius of boundary riders' huts, and a dispute with the adjoining "Switzerland" station led to a caveat being put on the land. Hence the now well-known district of Caveat.

In 1849, Dropmore passed to William and Arthur Ruffy, who built the present homestead in the 1850s. Grice and Summer acquired the property in 1870, and James Chrystal bought the lease 13 years later, as well as Killingworth station near Yea, with his brother-in-law, Gotch, (of Gordon and Gotch.)

The next owners were James and Arnold Randell, then Younghusband, then Balfour. Clive and Betty Clarke bought it in 1932. In 1957, Geoff and Joan Strong with their young family, from Tallangatta, bought Dropmore, and it is now owned and run by their son, Roger. So the Strong family have held the property for longer than anyone else, this year being their 50th anniversary.

One problem of the past, for the Strongs, has been an Agricultural College Reserve of 460 acres, declared in the 1860s, and right in the middle of the best part of the property. After much negotiation, Roger was eventually allowed to buy all except 80 acres, which he now leases.

Although the homestead and buildings are very close to Hughes creek, the flats were often severely flooded, Roger remembering the last big one in 1974. To ensure good water, Clive Clarke built a concrete weir on Woolshed Creek, with a contour channel bringing water by gravity to the homestead and cottages, all of which he had built. This channel was eventually choked by weeds, and Geoff Strong put in a system of pipes. However, these have now silted up and deteriorated, the weeds have been removed and the water is still supplied by gravity, abundant and of excellent quality.

The Ruffys planted oaks and elms around the homestead in the 1850s, and the Clarks enlarged the garden. Emil Kopanica (Michael's father), and Betty Clarke did a lot of stonework

WELCOME TO ISSUE NO.35

Please send any articles, advertisements etc to miranda@activ8.net.au.

There will be no Granite News for the weeks of the 29th October and 5th November.

around the garden, the famous Edna Walling being involved in some of the design.

Geoff Strong was very progressive in pasture development and changed the 4 major paddocks, of over 600 acres each, into smaller ones. He also put in a hydro-electricity scheme on Boundary Creek in 1958, which worked very well for many years.

After leaving school, Roger jackarooed for several years, including 2 and a half years in W.A. He married Jenny Comeadow of Euroa in 1968, and worked with his father until Geoff retired in 1980.

The wool collapse in 1970s forced the Strongs to diversify, as 4 families were getting a living from the property. They bought 230 unwanted newborn Friesian calves, fed them for 2 years, then sold them for \$275 a head, and bought Hereford cows with calves at foot for \$160- just shows what flexibility will do!

Roger has been involved in the Grassland Productivity Programme, and the Sustainable Grazing System, and developed more paddocks, laneways etc, with Field Days providing a community.

Now, he has no permanent staff, but relies on casual and contract labour. He believes that to be a successful farmer, one has to be observant, flexible, and not afraid to incur a debt to do it!



Jenny Webb, Jennifer Webb and David Middleton at the Highlands AGM

Volume 1, Issue 35

15th October, 2007

Highlands Landcare AGM

Congratulations to Jenny Webb, Scott McKay, Jono Rumbold, Jill Maclean, Jeff Swain and Sammy Strong who were elected unopposed to the Highlands Landcare Executive.

The AGM was a terrific night with a highly entertaining and really fascinating talk by David Middleton. David was responsible for setting up the interactive animal hospital at Healesville Sanctuary. He had lots of interesting stories such as how to remove a fish hook that was swallowed by a tortoise. Did you know that our echidnas are the oldest mammal fossils in the world? He really made us think about challenging issues such as kangaroo culling, killing one common species to save an endangered one and how our changes to the environment have impacted so dramatically on so many species that are so similar to us in so many ways.

BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS

On a recent walk up Beulah Hill at Highlands, I was delighted to come across a party of WHITE-FRONTED CHATS. These are very small, black and white, mostly ground dwelling birds. The females are duller, and they live in pairs, or groups. They are found all over Southern Australia, and used to be quite common and sedentary here. However, like most ground dwellers, they seem to be disappearing, possibly due to foxes and feral cats. (Please keep your cats confined, especially at night!)



Classifieds & Community Notices

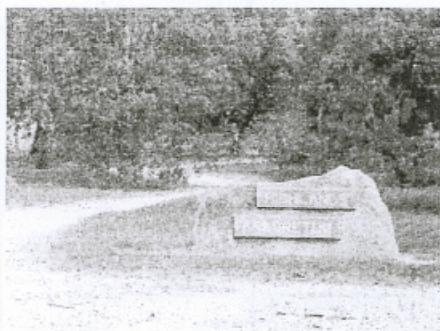
Cricket.

We are planning to play cricket at the Hume And Hovell Ground at Strath Creek (www.humeandhovell.com.au) on Saturday 22nd February 2008.

The cost for the day is \$55 head which includes Lunch and tea and you have to have your own whites. This is a unique cricketing experience. Please contact either Doug Mclean 57904387 or Scott McKay 57969259.

Highlands Arboretum

A 5 year plan is being implemented at the Highlands arboretum. Non indigenous trees are slowly being removed and replaced with indigenous trees. The goal is to establish a seed bank of indigenous trees for the community to access. Thanks to Greg Young for his energy and vision.



THE DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES TOGETHER WITH UPPER GOULBURN LANDCARE NETWORK INVITES YOU TO A WHOLE FARM PLANNING IN ACTION FIELD DAY

Sunday 4th November 2007

Greenslopes Road Trawool

Vic Roads Map 61 E3

(follow field day signs from Goulburn Valley Highway)

10.00am—1.30pm

Includes a free BBQ lunch

This introductory session explores:

Assessing land capability

Farm water supply

Native vegetation and biodiversity

Fencing and pasture management

Don't go hungry!

Please RSVP by Friday 26th October

Sarah Challis

Whole Farm Planning Officer

Department of Primary Industries

Phone: 57 611 573

E-mail: sarah.challis@dpi.vic.gov.au

This was Jono's recipe from the HCCC AGM competition. Jen Murphy won so it would be great to print it so send it in Jen.

ROCKCLIFF RABBIT

Ingredients

2 boned rabbits

6 cumquats

1 tablespoon of rosemary

1 onion

1 cup of sour dough breadcrumbs

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 slices of prosciutto

1 medium carrot

4 Desiree potatoes

1 egg

Olive oil

2 bunches of English spinach

A dash of Muscat

To prepare the stuffing, chop cumquats, rosemary and onion and mix with breadcrumbs, egg, Muscat and a dash of extra virgin olive oil and seasoning.

Parcel up each boned rabbit with half the stuffing each. Wrap each rabbit with three slices of prosciutto. Tie with two pieces of string into a tight parcel. Place in a baking pan, drizzle with olive oil and a few grinds of black pepper. Bake at 180 degrees for 35 minutes.

Prepare carrots by slicing into long match stick thin pieces,

Wash spinach carefully, steam lightly until wilted

To Serve

Remove string and cut rabbit in half. Place the half rabbit parcel on a bed of mashed potatoes with spinach beside.

Sprinkle with rabbit matchsticks.

Serves 4

Part-Time Job

Very much a part-time job available in Seymour. Three days one week, 1 1/2

the next, every 2 months. Involves bagging magazines for posting. Hours

9-5pm or possibly flexible. You don't even have to drive to Seymour if you don't want to, you can come with me. Contact Sue on 5797-6395 until 21

October or 5792-4000 b/h from 22 October.

CONGRATULATIONS

Many of our students won prizes at the recent Seymour Show.

Elliot Lade— 1st prize-essay competition
Laura Bennett-1st prize-colouring
Kassie Shaw-1st prize-painting
Emillie Stafford-1st prize painting
Jack Mitchell-Hon. mention— essay
Daniel Kavanaugh-3rd-colouring
Walter Geffert-2ndPrize-painting

Here is Elliot's prize winning essay

How the drought affected me

The drought affected me in many ways both this year and last year.

First, due to the drought grass for hard working livestock farmers is and was hard to come by.

We had to feed grain to all our 9,000 sheep for over two months so you can imagine the price of that. Selling livestock was also an extremely bad problem; some sheep only sold for \$1!

Second, prices of fruit and vegetables have risen dramatically because all the crops are dying from lack of water, so when it comes to the supermarkets it means pricy bills.

Third, sporting fields have dried up so some sports have been cancelled or delayed. That is so the players don't get hurt if they hit the ground in sports such as cricket and football.

I hope it rains soon because we could suffer again.

Hay and Silage Contractors

It's that time of year and hopefully there is rain on the horizon to keep our pastures growing and make for a decent season.

MacsHay is a local Yea and district silage and hay contracting business which is more than happy to take any inquiries from farmers regarding their hay and silage needs.

They offer a full range of processing with a range of final product size:

Large squares 8'x3'x3'

Rounds 5'x4' - 4'x4'

Small squares

Silage 4'x4'

Any inquires can be made to JOHN MCMASTER 57969267 or 0429861817

ADRIAN EVANS 0428972511

GLEN MCMASTER 0417529809

Community What's On Calendar—October/November

Week beg 15th Oct	Terip Terip mowing roster Alec and Marian Rowan, Peter Short and Betty Jenkins—Around Clubhouse and all 4 courts
Mon 22 Oct	(4th Mon Month) Harmonic Singing at Leone's All welcome 0500 500 088
Thursday 25th October	<p>Waterwatch Spring Bug Surveys with Glenda Woods Learn more about aquatic invertebrates with our local expert. 9.00am Hughes Creek at Picnic Ground number 1 .Hughes Creek Rd . Just off the bitumen coming from Seymour .</p> <p>Sunday 28th October (tentative date)1.00pm Creighton Creek at John Nielsen's property 3.00pm Creighton Creek at Jim Shovelton's property</p> <p>These dates/times may change slightly, so if you are thinking of joining me, please ring and let me know on either my home phone 57972417 or my mobile 0428321545.</p> <p>Bring gum boots or waders, reading glasses if you use them, a hat, blockout etc .Helpers always welcome .Look forward to catching up with some of you at some of the places listed above.</p>
26th October	Highlands Landcare General meeting, The Limnology students from La Trobe University have offered to take community members to the bogs to show their findings. Meet at the Highlands Hall at 3.30pm This will be followed by a BBQ Dinner at 6pm, meat and bread provided, bring a salad to share. BYO plate, cutlery and drinks. The talk by Tammy Weaver on Underground water will start at 7pm. The La Trobe students will then give a formal presentation at 8pm and are happy to answer any questions. Ring Jenny Webb PH 57969236 if you need more information. Please come and support this interesting evening.
Saturday, October 27th	Tastes of the Goulburn at the historic Seymour Railway Station and surrounds. 10am to 4pm. See article on page 2
Sat. 27 Oct.	<p>Saturday 27th October 10am-12pm at Rocky Passes 1590 Highlands Rd ... the BLACK MARKET returns. Why the "Black Market" you ask? When Leone Gabrielle was a young and naive traveller in exotic places, she kept hearing about the Black Market ... but she could never find it!</p> <p>Well, there's nothing sinister about this Black Market, except that it cuts out the middleman, side-steps transport and storage and has nutritious food! We kind of like the idea of the old, town square with it's local market for locals.</p> <p>It should get more interesting as the season progresses. If you have any excess home produce ... eggs, vegies, fruit, skills, opinions, songs to swap or sell ... or if you'd just like to buy ... come along. If there's nothing that takes your fancy, you can just sit in the sun and chat or play bocce.</p>
Sun. 28 Oct	Rocky Passes Cellar Door Open Sundays 11am - 4 pm
October 28th	Highlands Ramblers The next walk will be in the Switzerland Ranges area . Meet as usual at the Highlands Hall at 10.30 am. Enquiries to Peg Lade 57969222.
6th November	Cup Day lunch to be held at the Terip Rec reserve on at 1pm. BBQ - BYO drinks. Prizes for the best hat, raffles, etc. \$10 a head.
Friday 16th & Saturday 17th November	<p>Spring is sprung, The grass is riz Time for some more Mad Hatters' biz!</p> <p>Yes it's on again! Another Mad Hatters' production written by the prolific, the entertaining, the amazing Susan Bennett. When: performances on - mark your calendars now. Where: the usual 'theatre' Highlands Hall. What: "Life with Kiri" Kiri being a spoilt, middle-aged cat! Good fun, good food (BYO) good company. Tickets available soon.</p>
Sunday 18th November	Rocky Passes Cellar Door Open Sundays 11am - 4 pm
1st November	HCCC Exec Meeting Whiteheads Creek Hall, next to CFA shed 8.00pm. All welcome, come along and hear all the exciting activities that this group is involved in, it is a really dynamic group and an easy way to find out what Landcare is doing for you.
19th November	Highlands Landcare Executive Meeting Time. 8pm Location. Jenny Webb's. All welcome
Friday 14th Dec	Highlands Community Christmas Breakup. Format to be decided. Put the date in your diaries.