



PEOPLE AND PLACES

A few months ago Sari wrote to TGN about her feelings as she packed to move from the hills to the city. Here are her reflections on city life to date.

I have been trying to write about the traumatic upheaval of moving for some time now, but not finding the right words.

Some questions don't have satisfactory answers, but I'll try to explain how it feels.

Why did we move?

It should be about common sense or family, but it is only partly about either of these things. Perhaps it's best not to look for reasons, it is just the way things turned out.

Escaping from the city all those years ago felt like a privilege ... luck, a dream come true ... the trees across the road, power outages, bogging the tractor, smoky summers or driving home through the fog notwithstanding.

I never felt more alive than when we lived according to those rhythms of the seasons. Then there was the addiction of isolation and the opportunity to become one's self.

Then there are some things I daren't even talk about because I will always miss them so

So what's it like?

Melbourne is not the liveable little city I left not so long ago. It's a multicultural megalopolopolis. Pigeons, sparrows and seagulls ate no substitute for magpies, kookaburras or even cockatoos. The sea of rooftops I view from the balcony cannot replace the vistas from the plateau. Thank goodness we're near enough to the freeway to escape easily.

The only thing that hasn't changed is the weather. Still four seasons in a day. Can't drink coffee all day, and anyway, the tables in cafes are far too small to accommodate a newspaper. and I don't like shopping much, so life is still about finding a way to make home a retreat and a good place to be. I don't like to say that this is where I will stay forever, but the thought of ever moving again is far too difficult to contemplate.

P.S. The dogs are very happy. Their new kennel is very comfortable of course and they have made many friends. They regularly visit, when allowed, the newsagent and the wine shop.

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY

STUDENT OF THE WEEK



Walter : For cooperating with everyone, organising whole school games and superb behaviour on camp. Well done!

STRENGTHENING BASIN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Strathbogie Shire Council is currently completing a climate change risk assessment and adaptation planning for the whole of its municipality as part of the Australian Government's Strengthening Basin Communities Program to assist the ongoing planning for climate change.

The project has consisted of two main stages. The first was a prioritised climate change risk assessment that contains information about the ways in which climate change and climate change response may impact the whole of the Strathbogie shire and community. The second phase was the development of an adaptation plan in response to priority risks to assist the Strathbogie Shire in future planning.

The first two stages this project have now been completed and the adaptation plan drafted. To finalise this draft, two workshops are being held to invite feedback on this draft plan.

Wednesday 16th November, 2 to 4 PM (Nagambie Regatta Centre) AND Thursday 17th November, 6 to 8 PM (Euroa - Euroa Community Conference Centre, Bury Street)

Individuals and organisations are also invited to send written feedback to the Strathbogie Shire Council by 25th November 2011.

http://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page_Id=713&p=1

WELCOME TO ISSUE 33

Please send any news to me at mirandayorston@bigpond.com

Highlands Mowing Roster

Volunteers are required for the Highlands mowing Roster. The grass is growing. If you can help please contact Scott McKay 0357969259 or scottmckay@activ8.net.au

The Granite News is now being emailed from the Highlands website. This means that you can now go to the website <http://highlands.org.au> and subscribe or unsubscribe to TGN.

Rocky Passes Estate will be closed from Xmas to New Year, reopening on the 3rd of January. Best wishes Vitto Oles & Candi Westney

A DIFFERENT ROLE FOR SANTA. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The end of the year community barbecue is coming up on 9th December, to which all members of the community are invited. In the past there has usually been a visit by Father Christmas.

This year let's give Santa a different role! Instead of Father Christmas coming with a sack full of presents, he comes with an empty sack. Into that sack each child will be invited to place an envelope of money. The total amount would then be donated to an appropriate cause. For instance the money could be given to the new Royal Children's Hospital to buy books for its library. Each book could then be inscribed as donated by the Highlands community.

Of course there may be other causes that could be considered by the School or community. In practical terms this would mean that parents, instead of going out and getting 'another' present, could simply place the amount they would have spent in an envelope for their child to place in Santa's bag. There may be other people at the BBQ who would like to take part.

Clearly some explanations as to where the money goes will need to be given at some time during the evening. Maybe this is the task for Santa himself.

We would welcome reactions to the suggestion, especially from parents. Please give your comments to the School. Maybe this suggestion might take off in other places. Who knows?

Stuart Reid

COMMUNITY WHAT'S ON CALENDAR - NOVEMBER /DECEMBER 2011

Week beg 20th November	WHITEHEADS CREEK- TARCOMBE RFB TRUCK Peter Gremlick Lindsay Heffer
Week beg 21st November	Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Mowing Roster Neville and Sue Debney George & Trish Uden
Tuesday 15th November	Ruffy Rural Fire Brigade. Pre Season Meeting at the Ruffy Hall 8pm. Rosters will be handed out and general business pertaining to the Summer Fire Danger Period. All welcome. JJ Hagen SEC
Thursday 17th November	Ruffy Community Action Group – Meeting at Ruffy Hall, 8.00 pm. Apart from a general update on activities, the main topic for discussion will be the draft plan for Ruffy streetscape improvements. As this is the last meeting for the year, it will be followed by a light supper and a chance for a bit of social chat. Anybody interested in community planning for the Ruffy area is invited to the meeting!
Saturday 19th November	HCCC Landcare AGM 4.30pm meeting at Tablelands Community Centre (old Ruffy School) 6.00pm BBQ & pizza dinner at Ruffy Store Everyone interested welcome RSVP Simone 57 904146 or Janet 57 904268
Saturday 19th November	Wildflower Walk on bushfire affected property. At the property of: Lew & Cathy Soulsby 695 Spur Road Clonbinane 10am – 1pm followed by a free lunch & chat It's been two years since a walk was conducted on the property of Lew & Cathy Soulsby after the 2009 Bushfires. Want to see how it's recovering? Interested in what plants have bounced back? Would like to see what native plants are flowering? Then come along and spend time with well known native plant expert Peter Mitchell who will take us on a journey through the landscape for an informative morning of looking, seeking and finding indigenous species. Please wear appropriate gear for the weather and terrain. Limited places – please book for catering purposes & dietary requirements. Please contact: Sonia Sharkey 5734 6312 / 0409 515 630 swg_landcare@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au
Saturday 19th November	EUROA KINDER PRESENTS ITS FIRST EVER CHILDREN AND BABY FAIR! 9am - 1pm Euroa Kindergarten Wesley Hall Bury Street, Euroa Entry by gold coin donation * Beautiful hand crafted clothes and toys * Good quality pre-loved clothes, toys and books * Children's activities to make and do * Tables for Hire - Sell your own new or used items ALL FUNDS RAISED GO TOWARDS OUR NEW KINDER! Stall holder and other enquiries Phone Melinda Watson 0438 952 750
Sunday 20th November	White Hart Hotel 4.30pm - Real Gone Blues - Local favourites Alan & Ian bring us some fine Roots & Blues A: 63 Hill St, Longwood, VIC 3665 T: 03-5798-5203 E: info@whiteharthotel.com.au www.whiteharthotel.com.au
Friday 25th November	ROCKY PASSES Second Last Tapas Night for 2011 From 6pm Now the weather is improving, enjoy the view from our new paved outdoor area. To book, please call 57969366 or email contact@rockypasses.com.au
Sunday, 27th November	ROCKY PASSES Album Launch: Adam Dennis "F-35" 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM contact@rockypasses.com.au
Sunday 27th November	Highland Ramblers last walk for the year. Meet at Highlands Hall 10.30 am. Contact Louise Currie 9437 1504 or mlcurrie@bigpond.com
Saturday 3rd December	UPTON FIRE STATION OPENING The Captain, John McGregor, and Members of the UPTON HILL FIRE BRIGADE invite you to the official opening of the Upton Hill Fire Brigade's new station by Dr Bill Sykes MP Parliamentary Secretary for Primary Industries on behalf of the Deputy Premier of Victoria 11.00am Upton Road (1km north east of Tarcombe Rd junction) BBQ Lunch & Refreshments from 12.00 noon The opening will be followed by the end-of-year celebrations for both the Upton Hill Fire Brigade and the Burnt Creek Landcare Group. Please advise of your attendance for catering purposes by Monday 28th November as follows John McGregor 5796 2533 Sandy MacKenzie 5796 2088
Saturday 3rd December	You are invited to the Official Opening of the Tablelands Community Centre & The Ruffy Primary School time capsule opening , from 6pm at the old Ruffy Primary School - Official handover of the old Ruffy Primary School to the community of the Tablelands , Opening of the TIME CAPSULE that was laid down by the school children, teachers & community in 1986 (bring a note/photo to place in the new capsule to be opened in 2036) A free Family BBQ Dinner (please bring a salad to share) A Decorated Christmas Tree, a visit from SANTA, (for those who wish for Santa to give a small gift please give to a CFA member on arrival) All present & past community, past students & teachers as well as visitors are invited to this historic event. Enquires: John 0427 344 956 Email: furlanetto@activ8.net.au
Sunday 4th December	Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network AGM 11.30am Euroa Arboretum 12.30pm BBQ and salads lunch supplied A relaxing Sunday afternoon beside the big dam at the beautiful Euroa Arboretum RSVP Janet.Hagen@harboursat.com.au
Saturday 5th December	WHITE HART HOTEL White Goat, they'll be belting out all your favourite rock and pop classics, with a fair splash of their own material too. Join us on from 8.30pm. A: 63 Hill St, Longwood, VIC 3665 T: 03-5798-5203 E: info@whiteharthotel.com.au www.whiteharthotel.com.au
Friday 9th December	Highlands Community Christmas Gathering , Highlands Hall, 6pm onwards. BYO everything, BBQ provided. There will be no formal part to the evening, just come along, catch up with neighbours and enjoy yourself. Last year was a terrific evening with about 50 locals so let's see if we can encourage even more out of the woodwork this year. See you there.

Classifieds & Community Notices

RUFFY CLEARING SALE PAYS OFF

The Community Clearing Sale at the old Ruffy School on Sunday Oct 23rd was a winner for all involved.

35 vendors took the opportunity to sell their "rural treasures" and over \$90,000 of sales were booked. We saw more than 300 people attend and bidding was very competitive. The Tablelands Community Centre is on track to receive over \$10,000 as a result of vendor donations. The committee of the Tablelands Community Centre would like to express their thanks for the terrific support from the tablelands communities, whether they were vendors, buyers, parking attendants, bbq cooks, admin assistants, loader & unloaders or security staff. We have had a lot of encouragement to continue with this event and strong consideration will be given to doing it all again sometime in the future.

HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS

After two glorious walking days in previous months, our luck had to run out eventually. Admittedly it was only a light drizzle, and if we'd kept to tracks we could have kept quite dry.

Unfortunately our leader (ie me) led the team through the long grass and bracken of Mafeking Rover park in Caveat, resulting in wet legs and the discovery that only one of us (not me) had waterproof boots. The walk started with an impressive granite-paved hill which would have had beautiful views if the day had been clear, then through the trees and wet undergrowth along Kopanica creek. After lunch we voted to take the less wet way back along Gum Rd. In flower we saw rock isotome, clematis and a daisy I've been puzzling over for a couple of years. November will be the last walk for the year. By Louise Currie

NEWER VOLCANIC CONE AT 'KILLEEN'

Creightons Creek has evidence of volcanic activity similar to the Gooram Valley. If you drive along the Longwood - Mansfield Road between the Creightons Creek Rd and Ruffy Rd, you will notice a perfectly cone shaded hill on your left in the historic property Killeen. This is an outcrop of 'Killeen Basalt', part of the Victorian newer volcanic. The surrounding geology is our usual granite. Unfortunately the hill retains little remnant vegetation, the early squatters who took up the Killeen Run made full use of the fertile volcanic soil for cropping and pasture. By Janet Hagen (Photo to the right)

BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS

Brachycome daisy

Also spelt Brachyscome, this Australian genus of daisy flowers includes some species which have become popular as garden plants. The most common petal colours are purple and white but there are also species with yellow, pink or blue petals. Several species are theoretically found around Highlands, but I've only ever seen one, in Caveat, and I've had difficulty identifying the species. Thanks to Geoff Lade on the Rambler's walk I'm provisionally going with Brachycome graminea - grass daisy. I'd be interested to know if anyone else has seen any



BUSH RETURNS WOODLANDS TENDERS

The Expression of Interest period for the current Bush Returns Woodland Tender will finish on 2 December 2011. There has been an encouraging response so far but we would love to get more applications before the deadline arrives.

If you have or know someone in the Goulburn Broken catchment with Grey Box, White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum or Buloke Woodlands you only have a few weeks to get your application in. Successful tenderers will be paid to manage their woodlands for the benefit of the native environment with funds coming from the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country. For more information contact Dave Smith at DSE in Benalla on 57 611 514 (dave.smith@dse.vic.gov.au) or visit the GBCMA website (<http://www.gbcma.vic.gov.au>) under Bush Returns Woodland Tender.



MURRINDINDI COUNCILLOR COMMENT

Cr John Walsh, Koriella Ward

The Australian Government is undertaking a Regional Telecommunications Review. The last review was completed in 2008 and plenty has changed since then. The Review Committee has a desire to understand the capacity or otherwise of emergency communications within country areas. We have a lot of unfortunate experiences relating to localities with poor communications services and mobile telephone "black holes". The second major focus is on the potential use of NBN within Regional areas and the potential impact of the digital economy. The Council will be making a submission to the review. But to make the most impact, I encourage all communities and individuals with an interest in improving access to all forms of communication and wanting to take best advantage of NBN, to also send in a submission. The closing date is 1 December 2011 and details can be found at www.rtirc.gov.au.

BOOK REVIEW

On the Jellicoe Road -
Melina Marchetta

Melina Marchetta has written two outstanding novels for young adults and both have won the Australian Book of the Year Award for Older Readers. I have a feeling that her latest novel may make it a hat trick in 2007. There are three separate narratives throughout the story, which really don't coalesce until at least a third of the way into the book. That aside it is certainly worth persevering with as the characters of Taylor, Jonah, Santangelo, Raffaella and Ben confront and consort with each other to keep the boundaries safe in the territory wars between the boarders, the townies and the cadets. As well as facing the future both Taylor and Jonah need to delve into their hidden pasts to discover themselves. A compelling read. By Pauline Roberts

SEED COLLECTION DAY

Friday 9 December, 10.00 am Yea River Catchment Landcare Group is holding a native seed-collection morning at the Seymour Lighthouse Park (on the left just before you reach Seymour coming from Yea on the Goulburn Valley Hwy) and anyone is welcome to attend. This is prime time to collect seed and Cathy Olive will show the best collection techniques and discuss storage and sowing. Bring thermos and a small plate for a quick cuppa post-collection. RSVP Judy Brookes via email juncball@bigpond.com or 57 972 563

