



PEOPLE AND PLACES

A TRUFFERIE IN THE HILLS

Every time I look at those cloudy, misty and damp hills (at least at this time of the year!) around Highlands, I wonder if it might be the ideal environment and place to establish a trufferie.

I now hear you ask what is a trufferie? – well to put it simply it's the place where truffles are grown.

There are well established trufferies in Western Australia, Tasmania and even near Hoddles Creek in the Yarra Valley, mostly established over the last decade.

And truffles are hailed as a gastronomic delight because they impart a distinctive sharp earthy taste in cooking – to risottos in particular.

The Italians are the masters of truffle growing but Australian farmers large and small are seeing potential in them as a specialty crop.

Truffles or rather tuber *melanosporum* are the French Perigord dark red or black truffle and are quite simply a fungus; they grow underground to form in the Spring, for maturation from June to September and reach full size around the following March –April if the conditions are right.

As they mature they turn to a red or black inside with white veins and in doing so the truffle emits a powerful aroma that gives the added taste to foods.

The aroma is also important as the truffles are found in the ground, usually at a depth of up to perhaps 300mm and originally were found by pigs, but now are located or harvested with the aid of specially trained hounds able to sense the position of the truffle.

Ideally they need a temperate climate with well marked seasons.

Apparently cold below freezing winter nights don't pose a problem, an autumn that is not too wet and in summer regular thunderstorms are considered a bonus (and doesn't the Highlands climate fit these parameters?).

Growing truffles is seen as more as an art than a science and they are typically formed beneath trees like oaks, or hazelnuts, although in the local context there seems to be no specific tree type that is recommended.

But first you need to buy spores from a truffle nursery (there are several accessible on the internet) and of

course establish your tree grove.

Some semi-commercial groves have harvested black truffles apparently in as little as two years but it looks like it is normally six to eight years before commercial quantities of black truffles will be produced.

Here's the bonus though.

Freshly harvested truffles are like gold both here and in Italy in particular.

I have been reading about a Tasmanian trufferie in the Tamar Valley (see www.tamarvalleytruffles.com.au) where the owners planted about eight hectares with 3,000 trees from 2001 and harvested their first truffles in 2006.

Now they are supplying local Tasmanian restaurants and exporting to Asia by air freight.

Harvesting there starts in June and continues until September using their specially trained dogs.

After they are carefully dug up, they are washed, graded and quality assessed.

A potential advantage is that the southern hemisphere can probably meet the off season demand for truffles from Europe.

The truffles have a short shelf life but the price ranges from \$2,000 to \$2,500 a kilogram for good quality ones. A fine sliver perhaps one gram can sell for \$25. And the Tamar Valley trufferie has harvested individual truffles up to 960 grams in weight. I wonder if there is a local landholder seeking an interesting new enterprise who might take a look at establishing a Granite or Highlands trufferie?
By John Kennedy

CONGRATULATIONS TO ROCKY PASSES

Rocky Passes 2010 Syrah has scored 94 ... 5 cups and their winery rating is 5 stars :-). Vitto's a very happy chappy :-)

Wine Companion tasting note.

Rating: 94
Drink By: 2025
Price: \$18.00
Date Tasted: 19 Feb 2012
Alcohol: 14.5%
Good colour; a wine that builds on the promise of the '09, with a complex bouquet of leather, spice and licorice over black fruits, the medium- to full-bodied palate providing a replay of the bouquet, but with greater intensity; excellent cellaring potential, and outstanding value. James Halliday -
Published on 17 Jul 2012

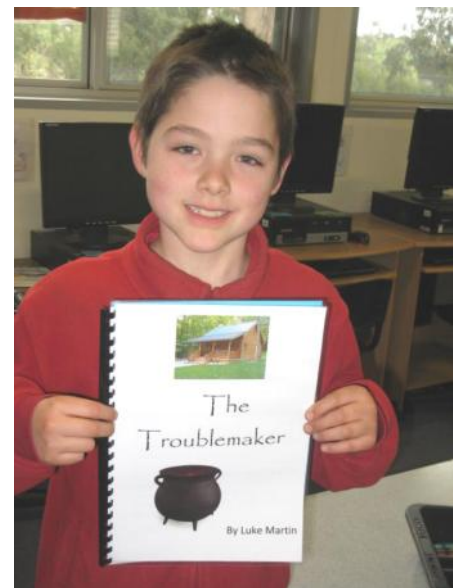
WELCOME TO ISSUE 21

Please send any news to me at mirandayorston@bigpond.com or ring 57969261.

If you would like to receive The Granite News by email www.highlands.org.au and just **subscribe, it is as easy as that!**

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY

STUDENT OF THE WEEK



Luke: For working hard to finish his book for the Children as Authors competition. He has written ten chapters, well done!

'SHARING HERITAGE IN KULIN COUNTRY'

Tuesday August 21st 1-2pm
Alexandra Library

Jim Poulter, is the author of several books on Aboriginal culture and heritage that are strongly endorsed by Aboriginal Elders. Jim's forebears settled in the Yarra Valley in 1840 and established close relationships with the Kulin people. Jim's grandfather and great uncle grew up immersed in aboriginal culture and in 1851 both boys were taken on walkabout to Hanging Rock, where they participated in the last ever male initiation ceremony at the Rock. In 'Sharing Heritage in Kulin Country' Jim explains totemic rules, the key Aboriginal concepts of Spirit, Flesh, and Skin and the sophisticated thought systems that govern Aboriginal religion and society. Join us for a stimulating talk and a chat with Jim afterwards.

COMMUNITY WHAT'S ON CALENDAR - AUGUST 2012

Week beg 5th August	Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Mowing Roster Jim & Jill Davidson Helen & Chris Bradbury
Tuesdays 31st July & 21st August	FEED BUDGETING AND TACTICAL MANAGEMENT Two Days Workshop Develop skills for; Making day-to-day pasture management decisions; Setting trigger points for planning ahead for seasonal feed excess and shortages; Monitoring productivity of paddocks across the farm and calculating fertiliser requirements; Setting up rotational grazing plans which cater for differences in productivity of different paddocks; Calculating and costing livestock. Contact Ashley Paech Mob. 0408 562 983 E: ashley.paech@dpi.vic.gov.au
Thursday 2nd August	HiARTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The HiArts AGM will be held at 7.30pm in the Highlands Hall. All interested in the future of HiArts are most welcome.
Aug 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Sep 7, 14, 21, 28 Oct 5th	MOTHER GOOSE @ Euroa Library Suitable for Birth to 4 years Join us on Fridays 10.00am - 11.00am At Euroa Library (62 Binney St, Euroa) To Register contact: Anne Tomietto Goulburn Valley Regional Library Ph: 58321622 or 1300 374 765 Email: annet@gvrlc.vic.gov.au All welcome This is a FREE program
3rd Aug-3rd September	GALLERY 34 invites you to a solo exhibition by Terry Swann 'Australian Landscapes on Location' Opening Friday 3rd August 6pm-8pm 34 High Street, Yea. Open Mondays 10-4pm, Thursday to Sunday 9am-4pm Contact Grace Leslie 03 57973222 info@gallery34.com.au www.gallery34.com.au
Sunday 5th August	RUFFY WEEKEND WALKERS will be walking from the Terip Ruffy Church to the Boathole via the impressive Emu Ponds. Meet at the Ruffy Hall at 9.50 to depart at 10am. There will be a walk around our wonderful part of the world every first Sunday of the month departing from the Hall. Walks will be short and not too strenuous! Coffee etc at the Ruffy Store afterwards is recommended! Contact 5790 4268 for details.
5th August- 16th Septem- ber	OLD POST OFFICE SEYMOUR – Agnes Szetey Exhibition Opening on Sunday 5th August 11am to 4pm The exhibition features oil paintings of Australia's history and heritage by this acclaimed Australian artist. On opening day the Gallery extends an invitation to enjoy refreshments and browse the work created by Agnes and other noted artists. Exhibition continues Wed to Sun 11am to 4pm & Wed to Sat evenings from 6pm to 9pm. Entry to the C1872 multi-roomed Fine Art Gallery is free at all times and browsing is welcome.
6th and 7th August	FIRST AID LEVEL 1 AND 2 With Leigh Munro. For Level 1 attend Day 1, for Level 2 attend both days. Requires a minimum of 4 participants to run. Book now! Time: 9am—4.30pm Cost: \$110 level 1, \$190 level 2 Venue: Yea Community House
Tuesday 7th & Wednesday 8th August	NORTH EAST BEEF SCHOOL The pathway to an efficient & profitable beef enterprise, features interactive presentations using live animals and concurrent sessions allowing participants to choose the topics most relevant to their business. The Beef School dinner will be held on the Tuesday evening with an Australian Year of the Farmer director after dinner speaker. Accommodation is available at Dookie Campus for participants seeking to stay on campus prior to participating in Wednesday's conference. For more information contact Julie de Hennin - GOTAFE Tel: 0412 433 499 Fax: 02 6020 1186 jdehennin@gotafe.vic.edu.au
7th, 14th, 21st and 28th August	POINT AND SHOOT PHOTOGRAPHY with the Yea Camera Club Join members of the Yea Camera Club to learn the art of photography over a 4 week course. A small manual will be supplied. Requires a minimum of 6 participants to run. Book now! Time: 7-9pm Cost: \$50 pp Venue: Yea Community House
Tuesday 7th August	HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY HALL Notice is given of a PUBLIC MEETING to be held at the Highlands Hall commencing at 7.30pm to nominate persons as the Committee of Management for the Highlands Community Hall for a term of three years. The current committee's term will expire on 23rd August 2012. All positions will be declared open and nominations will be accepted prior to or on the night. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Secretary, Judy Cameron on 5796 9247.
Thursday 9th August	RUFFY COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 7.30 pm, Ruffy Hall Talk by Geoff Starkey, Euroa Historical & Genealogical Society Light Supper All community members welcome!
Friday 10th August	'DRINKS ON THE DECK' at Highlands Community Hall from 6.30pm. 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
11th & 12th August	EUROA COMMUNITY CIMEMA "The Hunger Games" 140 mins (PG Drama/Mystery/ Science Fiction It is difficult to describe this movie in just a few sentences. The evil Capitol of the nation of Panem forces each of its 12 districts to send a teenage boy and girl to compete in the Hunger Games, a nationally telecast event. Pitted against each other until one survivor remains, these young people are highly trained and prepared for this all their lives. An action packed futuristic movie which will no doubt thrill...
Monday 13th August	TABLELANDS COMMUNITY CENTRE MEETINGS are held on the 2nd Monday of each Month, 7:30pm at the centre (formerly the Ruffy School) The next meeting will also be the AGM. All interested people are welcome to attend and contribute. For more information contact President John Furlanetto 0427 344 956

Classifieds & Community Notices

WETLANDS IMPORTANCE WILL BE INTERPRETED IN MANY WAYS

Telling the story of the Yea Wetlands will take many forms with Murrindindi Shire Council awarding the interpretive design consultancy to Hierophant Communications.

"We can now turn our attention to those elements of the centre that will tell the story of the wetlands, its importance to the natural diversity of Yea and the community efforts in creating a nature-based tourism attraction," Cr Walsh said.

The Tasmania-based Hierophant Communications has worked on a number of high profile campaigns including Tourism Tasmania's interpretive strategy for World Heritage nominated convict sites of Tasmania, Port Arthur Historic Site, Puffing Billy Railway and Flagstaff Maritime Museum's (Warrnambool) interpretation planning and guide training.

"The interpretive design will support the centre featuring static and interactive displays to inform visitors about the importance of water, local wetland ecology and biodiversity retention in supporting floodplain, catchment and water resource management," Cr Walsh said.

The \$2 million Yea Wetlands Discovery ECentre includes a Visitor Information Centre and the environmental interpretation component.

FOR SALE

Second Hand kitchen (no appliances) dismantled and available for pickup from Ghin Ghin Road Whiteheads Creek via Seymour 3660.

See www.ebay.com.au second hand kitchen section or email bhnh@bigpond.net.au for photos and details

STONE TOOLS WORKSHOP

You can read about the Stone Tools Workshop held at the Euroa Arboretum a couple of weeks ago, where 60 people enjoyed a campfire BBQ, shared stories about the artifacts they'd found and heard a bit about Taungurung history.

<http://www.strathbogierangescmn.com/>.

From Bertram Lobert



YEA COMMUNITY BUS IS BACK AND LOOKING FOR PATRONS

The Yea Community Bus is back on the road and is looking for residents to use the service.

The regular fortnightly trips to Seymour have resumed on the first and third Thursday of the month. The Seymour run leaves Council's Yea Office at 9.30am and returns early afternoon.

Council's Community and Customer Service portfolio spokesman Cr Cris Ruhr said the service opened a range of opportunities to people living in Yea.

"This service is ideal for people without transport to access medical and dental appointments as well as other essential services not available locally," Cr Ruhr said.

SOUTHEASTERN AUSTRALIA SEASONAL RAINFALL OUTLOOK:

Probabilities for August to October 2012, issued 18th July 2012

Drier conditions likely for large parts of southeastern Australia. The southeast Australian outlook for late winter to mid-spring (August to October) indicates that: a drier than normal season is likely for most of SA, western and central parts of Victoria and western parts of NSW. roughly even chances of a wetter or drier season over Tasmania, Victoria's Gippsland region and the eastern half of NSW.

This outlook is mostly a result of emerging warmer waters in the central to eastern Pacific Ocean, with warmer than normal waters in the Indian Ocean also having an influence. The chances of receiving above median rainfall during the August to October period are less than 40% over most of SA, the western half of NSW, western and central parts of Victoria and the northeast coast of Tasmania. Odds decrease to a less than a 30% chance centred over the northern Flinders Ranges in SA.

In other words, the chances of below normal rainfall are between 60 and 75%. Such odds mean that for every ten years with similar ocean patterns to those currently observed, about three to four years would be expected to be wetter than average over these areas, while about six to seven years would be drier.

Over the rest of southeast Australia, the chances of a drier or wetter August to October period are roughly equal.

From the Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology

LANDCARER OF THE MONTH AUGUST 2012

For the first Landcarer of the month award we would like to recognize Mark and George Noye for their fox control efforts. They had both recently entered the "Fox on the Run" competition which ended in late June and came a close second with 48 tails handed in.

The Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative would like to thank them for their efforts, not only for the competition, but for their continued dedication to fox eradication with their planned fox drives which are regular and well known and much appreciated local events.

Well done guys!!

THE TIME IS GETTING NEAR FOR HELICOPTER SPRAYING OF PATTERSON'S CURSE IN HIGHLANDS

The time is fast approaching us yet again when aerial spaying of Patterson's curse will be conducted in the Highlands area. The HCCC Landcare group is again offering a subsidy on the cost of the helicopter and a 50% subsidy of the chemical Agtryne that is required.

To get involved there are a few steps that need to be taken so please contact the Simone on (03) 5790 4146 or email hughes.creek1@gmail.com for further information.

BOOK REVIEW

Tom Jones saves the world
– Steven Herrick

Steven Herrick is an acquired taste because he writes verse novels – short poems that when read together tell a story as effectively as any prose. However once you become accustomed to his style, it's addictive. This one is for primary school age children, but he has written some outstanding young adult works as well. The Tom Jones of the title lives with his parents in a sterile new suburb called Pacific Palms, but wishes that he was back at his old place where his father had more time for him and where he went to the local primary school, rather than being bussed to the closest one. When Tom meets his grandfather at an auntie's funeral, and the subsequently decides to escape from Pacific Palms with a friend, Cleo, in order to go and visit him, his life picks up dramatically. And how does he save the world??? Well, his own little part of it anyway? You'll have to read the book to find out!

By Pauline Roberts

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