



BITS OF BOTANY & BIRDS

A TALL TREE STORY

In the early 1930s my father was working for Richard Meggitt, who lived at 'Glenfern', Terip Terip.

The Meggitts had properties in Ruffy, Terip and several in Caveat.

At one of the Caveat properties, a new strainer post was required in the fence line. After a brief look around it was decided to use the Yellow Box tree which was growing a short distance from the fence. The job of felling the tree and cutting the strainer post was up to my father alone and all he had to work with was an axe, a shovel, a crowbar and a cross-cut saw. The tree stood at a gateway to some good fishing spots on the Hughes Creek.

Some days later, Christopher (Chris) Richards, a good friend of the Meggitt family came through the old gateway to do some fishing and there he met my father. Chris offered to get on the other end of the cross-cut saw to help fell the tree. According to my father the tree was about 18 inches in diameter and after it came down there was still a small sucker branch growing from the stump.

Now, some 80 years later, this sucker branch would be close to 2 metres in diameter, it has completely encased the stump and it supports a magnificent Yellow Box that would be over 100 feet tall.

As it was a very dry season back in 1932, the Meggitt family built a 'rabbiter's hut' approximately 1/2 km from this tree near a creek with a good water supply. The chimney from this hut still stands today. After the hut was built, Chris moved in to it and trapped rabbits as they were a good price at that time. He was very happy there, but he didn't have a mailbox or anywhere for his groceries to be left so he decided he'd build one using the top end left-overs from the strainer post wood. This mailbox was large enough to sit in, roughly 3ft square by 4ft high, clad with corrugated & flat iron. It was painted brown with a name on it "DRIAZELL".

Unfortunately, there is now a large vertical split in the Yellow Box tree that looks like it's going to self-prune.

By Michael Kopanica



Michael Kopanica indicates the top of the original Yellow Box stump left by his father in 1932



The magnificent Yellow Box as it stands today 80 years after regrowing from a stump



WELCOME TO ISSUE 6 2013

Contact editor@tgn.org.au Ph: 5790 4007

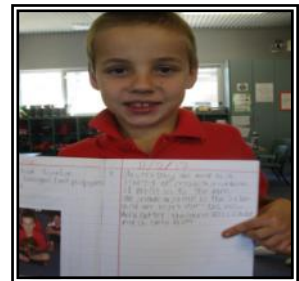
NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student of the Week

Angus

For making a huge effort with his writing and achieving great results.

Well done Angus!



Kaylam's Highlands Primary School Aquaponics Project

Aquaponics is the cultivation of plants and fish in a recirculation environment. The fish make waste in the water, and then the plants clean the water by drawing the nutrient out of it, and converting it to plant growth.

We are asking if people would be willing to donate recycled materials for us to use to build this project such as

- *Old fridges to use as grow beds
- *200 litre plastic barrels
- *1000 litre IBC container
- *Pine posts
- *Scoria or coarse gravel



**If you can help please contact HPS
5796 9208**

READERS' WRITES

Great to see the regular stories and anecdotes on our wonderful wildlife in *The Granite News*.

As a fairly regular visitor to the Ruffy area bird-watching, I too have detected many species of fascinating birds. Highlights have been a Powerful Owl, Painted Honeyeater, Brush Cuckoo and Hooded Robin. Your correspondent Lesley Dalziel mentioned observing the Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. This is certainly a bird normally only observed in the NW of Victoria, being recorded in southern and eastern Victoria in dry years only rarely. The 'Curlew' (Bush Stone-curlew) and Barking Owl Lesley mentions are some of Victoria's most rare and threatened woodland birds, so Lesley's observations are important sightings to pass on to the main plant and animal database - the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA). I encourage readers to send any interesting sightings (of all animals) onto the VBA via myself. I can send interested observers recording forms if it helps.

From Martin O'Brien, Wildlife Biologist, Melbourne. martin.o'brien@dse.vic.gov.au

COMMUNITY IMMINENT EVENTS CALENDAR - JAN/FEB 2013



CFA ROSTERS
W/C Feb 17th

- Whiteheads Creek/Tarcombe..... Driver: Doug Halpin Assistant: Carli Hall
- Ruffy 1st Lieutenant Travis Tilton's Team
- Terip Terip..... 2nd Lieutenant Ken Richard's Team

Exhibition Open until Monday 25th February	GALLERY 34 34 High Street Yea A Group Exhibition Titled 'On Home Ground' by Marion Bruere, Mary Hyde and Julian Bruere Gallery Times: Thursday to Sunday 9am-4pm Mondays 10am-4pm & Public Holidays 9am-4pm Contact Grace Leslie 57973222 info@gallery34.com.au
Wednesday 20th February 10:30am-2pm	POSITIVE AGEING Yea Chambers, Yea Shire Office Community Forum and Consultation Come along, get involved and enjoy the day Presentations from Local Organisations - Lunch - Entertainment - Community Consultation
Friday 22nd February 6:00pm	ROCKY PASSES TAPAS NIGHT 1590 Highlands Rd., Whiteheads Creek The popular Tapas nights are back. Come along for a relaxed evening. Bookings a must. Ph: 57969366 or Email: contact@rockypasses.com.au
Saturday 23rd February 9am-12noon	WORKING BEE at HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY HALL Preparation for 10th Annual HiArts Exhibition <i>Come and join us as we prepare the grounds of the hall for HiArts.</i> Weeding, pruning & brush-cutting are our main tasks. Bring appropriate tools. Contact Judy Reid 5796 9358
Saturday 23rd 8:00pm & Sunday 24th February 4:00pm	EUROA CINEMA "Skyfall" 143 mins (M) Action / Drama **** 4 stars What more needs to be said? This is another fabulous James Bond movie—in fact the 23rd movie since this franchise commenced some fifty years ago. James (Daniel Craig) is almost killed while attempting to retrieve a stolen hard-drive containing the names of NATO agents. This episode Stars <i>Judi Dench, Ralph Fiennes, and Albert Finney</i>
Thursday 28th February 5:30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS Old Caveat Church, Caveat-Dropmore Rd, Caveat Come along and have a casual chat with other local blokes. BBQ Tea Provided (Gold Coin) BYO Drinks
Friday 1st March Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd	10th ANNUAL "HiARTS ART EXHIBITION & FAMILY FESTIVAL" Highlands Hall, Highlands <i>"HiArts" is the district's pre-eminent Arts Festival.</i> The works showcased at HiArts are stunning, uplifting & inspirational. Be sure that you get there! For more info Contact Stuart Reid 5796 9358 or Email: kadumbra@mac.com
Saturday 2nd March 9am-2pm	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
Saturday 2nd March 5:30pm	MUSIC & TAPAS at ROCKY PASSES 1590 Highlands Rd. Whiteheads Creek "True Lies" live band plays Jazz, Blues & Roots music. Cost is \$40pp for Food & Music. Bookings Essential. Contact 5796 9366 or contact@rockypasses.com.au
Saturday 2nd March Showtime 8:00pm	RUFFARTZ Ruffy Hall, Nolans Road Ruffy. The evening presents a double bill Ventriloquist Sarah Jones performs her own work "Sarah Doesn't Play Well with Others" followed by Denis Coard with his sequel "The Umpire Strikes Back.....May the Farce Be With You" BYO Drinks. Coffee & Cake available at interval. Contact Glen George on 5790 4318
Sunday 3rd March 5pm-7pm	RUFFY WEEKEND WALKERS Monthly ramble to Points of Interest around the district Meet at Tablelands Community Centre (Old Ruffy School) Contact Neil Doran 0457 253875
Thursday 7th March 10:30am-12:30	RUFFY PLAYGROUP Tablelands Community Centre@ Ruffy (Old Ruffy School) Various Supervised Kids' Activities. This month "Easter Egg Baskets" Cost: \$3:00 per Family. Bring a small plate of food to share. Contact Sally Kubeil 5790 4335 or 0407 904335
Friday 8th March 6:30pm	"DRINKS on the DECK" 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
Tuesday 12th March 7:00pm	CEACA (Continuing Education & Arts Centre Alexandra) Annual General Meeting Venue: Old Courthouse 38A Downey St., Alexandra Further information Contact 5772 1238 Champagne Supper to follow. New Board members always Welcome
Saturday 16th March 9am-1pm	EUROA FARMERS MARKET Rotary Park, Kirkland Ave., Euroa <i>"Meet, Greet, Eat & Shop"</i> Contact Meggs Hannes 0407 860 320 meggshp@gmail.com

Classifieds & Community Notices

PEOPLE AND PLACES



TIME OF THE SIGNS

About four years ago, a council sign appeared outside Habbies Howe saying "Rough Road Ahead" and I thought to myself "what a waste of a sign....they're all rough roads around here".

Within a day or so someone crashed their way over and through the rough road. I thought "how could you not see the sign?"

That morning, I drove to Seymour and I began to wonder if I was suffering from OCD because I started counting the signs.

Signs go left; go right; curves; bridge signs; speed signs; T intersection; Neighbourhood Watch; school bus stopping and the list went on.

In 25 kilometres there were over 100 signs; that's one every 250 metres.

Admittedly the Highlands Road has a lot of bridges and Eddie McGuire has managed to get Collingwood's colours on the end of every one, but that bit of visual pollution aside, the fact is that each sign costs about \$400 to install.

So that's about \$40,000 of public money spent that most people hardly notice. It reminds me of the old saying "you can't see the forest for the trees".

Now I'm not against all signs. My favourite is on a house in London, which was a fake Heritage sign that said,

"Jacob Von Hogflume 1864-1909 Inventor of Time Travel lived here in 2063"
It was graffitied with *"and again in 1492"*.

My 2nd favourite *"Library is closed until opening time"*

Recently I drove into Ruffly to be confronted by brand new 50 KPH signs.

But those signs are preceded by what I regard as bureaucratic overkill, there are also enormous signs telling you there is another sign ahead!

Incensed by what I had witnessed, I approached a local about this blight on the landscape only to be reassured that they weren't really signs but windbreaks disguised as signs. That made me feel a whole lot better!

I'm not necessarily picking on Ruffly (though that it is one of my great pleasures) but I can't imagine the amount of time consumed on community consultation, the reporting to and approval from all of the different levels of government, the bureaucratic paperwork culminating in the significant cost to the taxpayer that must have gone in to the final decision to install those signs.

Ruffly is a great place but it's not exactly a thriving metropolis.

But why stop there?

Let's have a pedestrian crossing with traffic lights. (I might live to regret saying that).

Apparently sign overload is not a new problem as the "Five Man Electrical Band" sang in 1971

*"Sign, sign, everywhere a sign
Blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind
Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign?"*

I think I've had enough and I'm going to start a movement against signs and as my first act I'm going to put up a whole heap of Anti-Sign signs.

By Scott McKay



TRADING PLACES

Good stuff for private sale or wanted by friendly locals

For adverts in this column contact Don editor@tgn.org.au or 5790 4007

WANTED — PASTURE HAY

If you have some spare Hay,
I have some spare Cash.

Please Call Roger 5790 4166

COMMUNITY CLEARING SALE

Here's a chance to clear out all your stuff that needs re-assigning!

Take a stall at the
Highlands Community Clearing Sale
at Highlands Primary School over the
Hi Arts weekend 2nd & 3rd March

Stall fees are \$10 per 3 sq m site,
which goes back to HPS as a fund-
raiser. New 'stuff' also welcome.

Contact Leanne Pleash 5796 9200

FOUND

This little lost dog, a female, she is really a most gorgeous little dog. Someone in our area must own her, she was found footsore and thirsty on Kobyboyn Road after a day at the races (no-one there knew her) and she made the trip out to our place.

We are very keen for her to get back to her home.

People can learn more about the saga by calling **Lesley on 0428 339989**
By Lesley Dalziel & Ursula James



LOST—at DROPMORE FIRE

Steve Farrar loaned his UNIDEN 5Watt handheld UHF radio to someone at the recent Dropmore fire. It was last seen in the vicinity of the Highlands/ Caveat Tanker & an extensive search by Les Lawson has failed to find it.

If you can help, please call Steve
0447 775247



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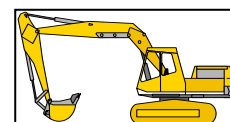
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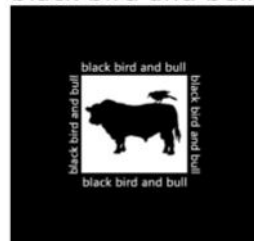
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