

THE GRANITE NEWS



The Granite News - serving the communities of Caveat, Highlands, Hughes Creek, Ruffy, Tarcombe, Terip Terip & Whiteheads Creek.



24th July 2022 | Volume 16 Issue 24

Welcome, Wumindjika & G'day

Another bumper week of articles and events to warm up this wet, windy winter. For those readers intending to go the Ruffy Christmas Dinner in July, this coming Saturday, NOW is the time to RSVP, as the catering needs to be finalised early this week. Pre-booking is essential - it will assure you of a seriously delicious meal. See p.5 for more details. Local artists' work will also be available for sale. Why not book now?

Now although The Granite News is an excellent forum for social events and happenings in the local HCCC area, with the recent release of the State of the Environment in Australia, it is probably timely to remember that this great weekly newsletter is actually sponsored by Landcare and features environmental issues as a matter of course.

For those readers who may have missed the report the 4 links below will give you different perspectives on this incredibly important document. Whilst all highlight various aspects of the report there is a common thread - the country we love and call home is in desperate need of TLC for its environment & the animals who live here. We have to act now to ensure its viability, and our own survival into the future.

<https://apple.news/AzMX0encrTtyVxekG5tU12g> The Age
<https://apple.news/Av7SKIX0nTQggvSR94L0rhg> Guardian Australia
<https://apple.news/AnoPhQdBETdOinLeerdORZw> TheConversation
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-19/state-of-australian-environment-report/> - ABC News

So, once again read on for another great issue... **Pauline**

And Kenny Koala...advertising Secret Men's Business THIS Thursday
NB: There is no HCCC Meeting in July, the next one is on - Friday 19th August @ 7pm @ TCC in Ruffy

Meet Alistair Lade from Highlands

Alistair's family was one of the six original European families to settle in the Highlands-Caveat area in the 1860s.

The Lades have been breeding sheep, fine wool merinos, for many generations.

And now... turn to p.3 >>

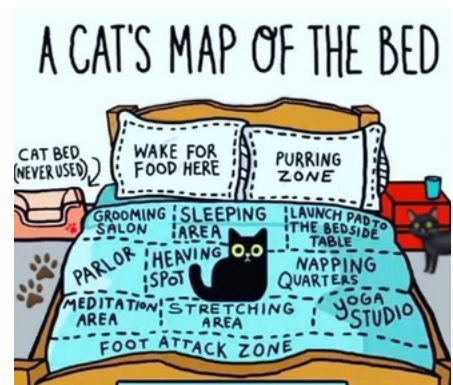


Feedback? - editor@tgn.org.au
or to subscribe on-line go to
www.highlands.org.au

The Granite News is an open but moderated community forum. Readers are encouraged to contribute articles and we also encourage you to air your views on things that interest or concern you within our community. We certainly welcome feedback from you, positive or otherwise on anything that is published in The Granite News

"Wine is sunlight held together by water."

Galileo (1564 - 1642)



State of the Environment

"More than 7 million hectares of habitat for threatened species (an area bigger than Tasmania) were cleared or substantially degraded between 2000 and 2017.

We are in an emergency situation for both diversity and climate."

Emma Johnston - Chief Author of the 2021 Australian State of the Environment Report

A note of correction from Jonathan - rain was previously measured in points and then converted to inches - thanks. **Ed.**

	NB: Fully vaccinated attendees are appreciated at all events.	What's On - July & August 2022
	Thursday 28th July @ 5.30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS at Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards a BBQ, BYO & chat
See p.6	Saturday 30th July 10-12.30	WHITEHEADS CREEK BIOBLITZ for NATIONAL TREE PLANTING DAY
See p.5	Saturday 30th July @ 6pm	RUFFY CHRISTMAS DINNER IN JULY @ Ruffy Hall \$45 for a 3 course, home-cooked traditional Christmas dinner. BYO drinks. Art Auction too For Bookings: Bill 5790 4262 or Henry 5790 4246 or j.eddy29@bigpond.com
	Sunday 31st July @ 10am	HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS meeting at Highlands Hall Everyone is welcome to come rambling and discover our local district. Enquires: Andrew Shaw 04372 49038 or Robyn Lingard 0409 528235
	Sunday 31st July	NATIONAL TREE PLANTING DAY www.treeday.planetark.org
Note NEW Date!	Sunday 31st July @ 7.00pm	TERIP TERIP TENNIS CLUB AGM @ Terip Rec Reserve It only happens once a year, so be there! Cindy Hayes temagong@bigpond.com
	Friday 5th August @ 6pm	FIRST FRIDAY of the MONTH BBQ at Tablelands Community Centre It's time to put the FUN back into Friday nights! Enquires: 0427 690970 or tccruffy@gmail.com
	Sat 6th & Sun 7th Aug 10-4	DARREN GILBERT's OPEN STUDIO Yea Butter Factory 13 Rattray St, Yea A unique studio experience at the historic Yea Butter Factory. www.monkeytaildesign.com
	Monday 8th Aug @ 11am	HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2022 at the same place—450 Caveat-Dropmore Rd, the same time 11am and with the same good company! BYO lunch and great tea & coffee will be provided. Enquiries? - contact Jan 5790 4361
	Friday 12th August @ 6.30pm	DRINKS ON THE DECK at Highlands Community Hall Starts at 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 power. Contact Paula 0419 551882
	Every Second Wednesday 10-30-12.30	MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE at Highlands Community Hall The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in?? YAY! The Mobile Library will be in Highlands on July 27th & Aug 10th and 24th.

Alistair Lade - WINS!!

Some of Australia's most outstanding producers have been recognised as finalists in Troy Animal Health's 2022 Woolgrower of the Year award. **And the winner is - Alistair Lade of Highlands!**

With a focus on production, customer awareness, sustainability and innovation, judges determined Dave and Angie Waters, Hillgrove, NSW, Alistair Lade, Highlands, Victoria, and David and Susan Rowbottom, St Helen as the three finalists.

Alistair Lade has bred a globally-revered ultrafine Merino flock, 20 years after being devastated by Ovine Johnes disease.

In 1998, the Highlands woolgrower was given the heartbreaking news to euthanise two-thirds of his Merino flock after rams tested positive for OJD.

He protected one-third of his breeding nucleus at another property and embarked on an aggressive embryo transfer and artificial insemination program, at a cost of \$120 a live lamb, or \$230 in today's value, to rebuild a devastated flock.

"We tried to re-stock with sheep purchased from across Tasmania, NSW and Victoria but all we got were sheep that were nowhere near as good and that bought in eight strains of footrot," Mr Lade said.

Twenty ewes of the remaining 2000 breeders were chosen for a five-year ET program, with some of the original breeders' genetics still evident in the flock today.

"One of the top ewes over the five programs ended up with 85 live lambs," he said.

"It was double what you could buy a ewe for but I knew the genetics was far superior."



He now operates one of the highest-performing Merino operations in Agriculture Victoria's Farm Monitor project, running 18 dry sheep equivalent a hectare, across the Lades' 900 hectares of grazable land. This includes 350 cattle and 10,000 ultrafine Merino sheep, which average 15.2-micron and yield 32,000 kilograms of wool annually.

"I wanted to be at the top end of the market so I began micron testing because there were significant premiums for the finer end 20 years ago," he said.

The clip is Authentico accredited and is currently in the process of Responsible Wool Standard accreditation, which Mr Lade said would allow more European processors to compete for his premium fibre.

"There is talk that the finer wool should be classed as a noble fibre than a commodity," he said.

"Now consumers and retailers are looking for naturally sustainable and environmentally friendly products and close to the skin, ultrafine wool fits that criteria well."

by Annabelle Cleeland - first published in Stock and Land



Wanted

Kind dog sitter (at your place) for our active and affectionate 2-year-old Jack Russell (Armin) while we are away. **(6 weeks commencing 28th August)**. He is accustomed to cuddles and being on the couch, is fully house-trained and vaccinated. Not very tolerant of cats. Can get a bit excited at times. We will provide all food and bedding.

Call Sue on 0411 010 379.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Re. wind Turbines Southern Strathbogie Ranges: Planning and Policy Guidelines - Part Two

Last week I outlined my research into the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) document - Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria - Planning and Policy Guidelines and the implications and issues with which we may be faced in the Southern Strathbogie Ranges wind turbines complex. In my first letter I discussed the need for an independent landscape based approach including public consultation to determine where or if Wind Energy facilities are appropriate in the area. The Planning and Policy Guidelines summarise the background and requirements for wind facilities contained in the Victorian Planning Scheme. Some key requirements for wind turbines and likely implications for the Southern Strathbogie Ranges Include:

TURBINES WITHIN ONE KILOMETRE OF AN EXISTING DWELLING: The wind farm developer is required to seek written permission to locate a turbine closer than 1 km. from an adjoining residence. Previously the Planning Scheme required a setback of 2km. As the planning scheme/guidelines were drafted for much lower turbines (lower than 100 metres) it would seem reasonable that the setback be increased to a minimum of 2km for the 200 to 250 metre turbines proposed. In urban settings the setback for new developments from neighbouring existing buildings is proportional to the height of the proposed development.

NOISE BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL: A wind energy facility can create noise due to:

- movement of the rotor blades passing the tower. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Cherry Tree Range turbines are extremely noisy at 300 to 400 metres distance on foggy, misty, or wet days frequent in the Southern Strathbogies.
- Electrical transformers and substations.
- construction noise - reversing vehicles beeping. one needs to ask the question whether the noise would be the equivalent of the construction noise of a 50+ storey building?

The Planning Scheme limits noise to adjoining residences to a decibel a maximum of 40db. equivalent to the lowest level of URBAN ambient noise or 5 decibels above the existing background noise. Modelling of noise projections is required However a recent landmark Supreme Court decision for the Bald Hill wind farm located on relatively flat land in South Gippsland established that the noise projections were inaccurate and ruled that the turbines should be shut down at night. In contrast to the flat land of the Bald Hill wind farm, the topography of the Southern Strathbogies is characterised by valleys surrounded by a landscape of steep hilly country making noise projections more difficult. A previous acoustic report for the area noted that the sound reflective qualities of the extensive exposed granite sheet hill faces may make acoustic modelling more difficult.

SHADOW FLICKER: Shadow flicker caused by the turbine blades casting a shadow over the landscape has been described as 'being like someone turning the lights off and on'. It affects locations east (setting sun) and west (sunrise) of the turbines. According to the Planning Scheme it should not exceed 30 hours per year. We all experience magnificent sunsets in the Strathbogies. Assuming 20 minute sunset, nearby houses could experience 90 flickering sunsets each year.

IMPACTS ON FLORA AND FAUNA PARTICULARLY WEDGETAILED EAGLES: The wind farm operator is required to maintain a mortality monitoring program for 2 years they must search for carcasses of birds and bats and report to DELWP. The pair of wedgetail eagles that nest on Looking Glass are an almost daily sight gliding over the Stewarts Creek Valley. In Tasmania where wedgies are endangered individual turbines have killed 3-4 eagles per year and similar mortality rates have been found around the Ballan wind farms. The Tasmanians have developed a device that senses the presence of an eagle and shuts the turbine down (fast enough I hope). I raised eagle fatalities with the FERA representative and the response was that they could relocate the Turbines to avoid flight paths. Maybe the eagles could lodge a flight plan with Civil Aviation. I would encourage readers to monitor their local eagle population. They can be recorded on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/victorian-biodiversity-atlas>
<https://publish.viostream.com/play/c-nu95w3n>

There are many other issues relevant to the Southern Strathbogies and readers are encouraged to read the 'Policy and Planning Guidelines'.

John Curtis

Ruffy Christmas in July - BOOK NOW!

Our LOCAL ARTISTS SUPPORT RUFFY HALL

The Ruffy Xmas in July Dinner and Art Auction promises to provide a delicious 3 course traditional Christmas feast with a selection of roast meats and vegetables followed a variety of traditional desserts including plum pudding, trifle and cheesecake, all homemade. Delicious vegetarian and gluten free meals will also be available, please let us know when you book if you require this option.

Showcasing the work of local artists, funds raised from the Art Auction will go towards the Ruffy Hall Restoration Fund. As an innovative fundraising idea two of the participating artists will be auctioning commissioned work. Andrew Bond is auctioning a painted portrait of the purchaser or a nominated person and Simeon Ayres is auctioning an opportunity for you to have your property mapped and turned into an artwork. You can meet both artists at the dinner and examples of their work will be on display.

Andrew Bond and his partner have lived in Ruffy for 10 years. He started off as an illustrator and designer in the commercial environment. After leaving the design world he initially painted plants, then landscapes and now he paints portraits. He says he enjoys portrait painting "since you get to know the person on the journey and it's all the little details that create the likeness." His portraits are not formally realistic in approach but more expressionistic in colour. His influences include Van Gogh, Arthur Streeton, Margret Ollie, David Hockney, John Russell, Giovanni Civardi and Ken Paine. Andrew exhibits in Melbourne and locally. All proceeds from the commissioned portrait auction will be donated to the Ruffy Hall.

Simeon Ayres is a long time resident of Strathbogie, he makes maps and drawings, writes and works in wood and found objects.

He is currently working on commissions mapping Sevens Creek near Gooram. This is his first love, interpreting land and ideas, living in the world where imagination and country meet.

Sim's work features maps representing the waterways of the Strathbogie tableland. As well as completed works he will also be auctioning a commissioned work, a fantastic opportunity for you to have your property mapped and turned into a unique artwork.

Either of these commissions would make a perfect gift, don't miss out on this opportunity to support our local artists, purchase something truly unique as well as supporting the Ruffy Hall.

For catering purposes BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL thanks:

Bill 57904264 Henry 57904246 or email j.eddy29@bigpond.com



RUFFY HALL FUNDRAISER

Christmas In July Dinner & Art Auction

Join us for a magnificent 3 course home cooked Ruffy Xmas Dinner with all the trimmings!

- Complimentary pre-dinner drinks
- Meet the artists
- The art show showcases the work of local artists and pieces will be auctioned to raise funds for the hall

6pm - Sat 30th July
\$45 per person / BYO drinks

Bookings are essential
Telephone Bill 57904264 or Henry 57904246
or email j.eddy29@bigpond.com





Foundation Murrindindi's vision is to see thriving, vibrant and connected communities within the Shire of Murrindindi.

Our Connecting Communities Small Grants Program aims to support our vision by enabling local groups & organisations to undertake community led projects and initiatives that help communities to stay connected during this pandemic and beyond.

Grant applications open 1st August & close 31st August

Further information is available on the website <https://foundationmurrindindi.org.au>

River

Water is the lifeblood of everything on Earth and rivers carry that vital liquid from source to sea. An excellent documentary - River - featured on ABC TV last week. with music by the Australian Chamber Orchestra & spectacular views of rivers from every angle. If you missed it - **iVIEW** is the way to go. The Making of River is a bonus 20 minute program.

WATCH OUT!!

Those readers who regularly drive the Longwood-Ruffy road would be aware that the gum trees along the road frequently drop limbs or themselves across the road.

If you need to use this road to get to the Hume Fwy please be aware of this occurrence and look out for unexpected road blockages by large gum trees.

Answers to last issue's quiz

Champagne - Great Western
Chill a Kanga - Coolaroo
Noisy Scotsman - MacLeod

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SAT 30TH JULY

What's on?
Plant some native plants with us
and get some to take home!

When?
Sat 30/7 from 10 AM to 12:30 PM

Where?
On Whiteheads Creek
along Abdallah Road, Seymour

Lunch will be provided
Please RSVP to
seymoururbanlandcare@gmail.com

Please wear appropriate gear
and bring your own gloves.
We'll dig the holes and provide all the rest!

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Strathbogie Granite Project

neil.phillips@bigpond.com

The Granite News is usually created on the lands of the Taungurung clans - First people of the Rivers and Mountains.



We thank the Taungurung ancestors and elders who, for millennia, have cared for this country on which we now live, work and play.
May the current generations of Taungurung, landowners and residents continue this important custodianship into the future.