



Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Many thanks to the two readers of TGN who pointed out a couple of things to me that were wrong in the last two issues. As I'm definitely NOT a fan of 'fake news' or alternative facts for that matter, my thanks to both Stuart and Angus for their perceptiveness.

So first of all Maths was never my forte at school, especially when algebra became a part of the curriculum. However my mistake was straight out subtraction so there's really no excuse. Although April 2020 was the third wettest April on record it actually needed another 36.3mm, not 6.7mm to top the 115 year old rainfall record. At least I got the 6 in the correct place.

Secondly, there was a lovely poem in TGN #13 as well as a prediction from Nostradamus in the last issue, both of which it appears have problems. Let's take Nostradamus first, because that's the easy one, the prediction attributed to him is not true. And the poem, was not written in 1869 but apparently only 2 months ago in March 2020 by Irish poet, Kitty O'Mara. Bearing this new information in mind I have included it again for a second reading as its sentiments, whether written in this century or the 19th, are universal.

Finally, if you would like to check out the websites that verify these facts they are listed below under the Websites of the Week.

Until next issue, take care and stay safe, **Pauline**

And Kenny? Always enjoys being social, this time with the Eastern Barred Bandicoot.



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

'Education is the treasure chest of growth and human development.'

**Ram Chandra
Betini Village Development
Committee - Nepal**

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**

Roadmap to Recovery

Another TGN reader, Erwin Weinmann, late of Ruffy, now resident in Mansfield has sent in the link to this independent report written by a taskforce of over 100 of the brightest scholars from 8 Australian universities.

"Covid-19 is not just a medical or scientific issue, it is something that affects each of us, and all of us."

The Group of 8 provides an ethical framework and two options for the pandemic response and the Executive Summary makes for a thoughtful read.

For instance, **"There are things we should not be prepared to sacrifice, whatever the circumstances. However the severity of this pandemic will force us to sacrifice some things we may not have ordinarily done..."**

The two options considered in the recovery report are **1. Elimination and 2. Suppress the illness to a low level and manage it.** https://go8.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Go8-Road-to-Recovery_Summary.pdf



WANTED

Border collie or kelpie pup as a companion dog. A good home is assured with lots of walks and cuddles. If you can assist ring **Michael 0429 804235**



Coronavirus 24hr Hotline

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Websites of the Week

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/kathleen-omara-1919-poem/> and

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/nostradamus-covid-19/>

Community Notices & Classifieds

CALENDAR of EVENTS — or something to look forward to...

<p>1st weekend of the month (not winter) 10-4</p>	<p>DARREN GILBERT's OPEN STUDIO Darren's studio, with his creative works is now open on first weekend each month. An inspirational environment where both art and sculpture come to life in a beautiful scenic countryside of Highlands.</p>	<p>2742 Highlands Rd, Highlands</p>
<p>2nd Monday each month @ 11am</p> 	<p>HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2019 at the same place. Caveat-Dropmore Rd, the same time 11am and with the same good company! BYO lunch & coffee will be provided.</p>	<p>contact Jan 5790 4361</p>
<p>2nd Wednesday each month @ 9.30am</p> 	<p>TERIP TERIP MORNING TEA This enjoyable social event is open to all. Bring along any books or home-grown produce to share.</p>	<p>Highlands Community Centre enjoy a cuppa, swap</p>
<p>2nd Friday each month @ 6.30pm</p> 	<p>DRINKS ON THE TABLE Starts at 6.30pm. A chance to catch up with friends old and new. All welcome, especially those who don't have a power.</p>	<p>Highlands Community Hall</p>
<p>3rd Thursday or Friday each month</p>	<p>HUGHES CREATIVE COLLABORATIVE MEETING The next meeting will be in 2020 commencing at 7pm. All welcome.</p>	<p>at ?????? Enquiries? - contact Justus 5790 4268</p>
<p>Last Thursday each month @ 5.30pm</p>	<p>SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat</p>	<p>at Caveat Church</p>
<p>4th Saturday each month 10-12 or 12-2</p> 	<p>HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other.</p>	<p>at 94 Old Highlands Rd Enquiries? - Clare 0428 969366</p>
<p>Every second Wednesday 10.30-12.30</p>	<p>MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in?? Please note the Mobile Library Service is temporarily suspended until further notice!!</p>	<p>at Highlands Community Hall</p>
<p>Every Monday @ 10 am</p>	<p>QIGONG AT RUFFY Vivien Watmough looks forward to welcoming you to the benefits of this ancient well-being practice. For bookings and enquiries please call Vivien or email: vivienwatmough@gmail.com</p>	<p>at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy</p>
<p>Every Thursday @ 7.30 (sharp) - 9pm</p>	<p>SWING DANCE CLASS Swing dances featuring Big Band music of the 1930s and 40s, and they are definitely all about having fun!!</p>	<p>at Euroa Uniting Church Hall Enquiries? Ray 0467 951559</p>

All these monthly events will be returning to a place near YOU, hopefully soon, but not until it is safe. Stay tuned

Postponed until further notice

Job Opportunities - Working for Victoria

Murrindindi Shire is encouraging any of its residents, whose employment is affected by the Coronavirus, to register their details on the **'Working for Victoria'** website to access new work opportunities. Those eligible to apply can use their skills in new roles or take up training opportunities for specific roles instead. Go to www.vic.gov.au/workingforvictoria for details. Quite possibly Mitchell and Strathbogie Shires are offering something similar, why not give them a call to find out more?

Coronacast - all yours for free!

In these times of instant social media and 'fake news' **Coronacast** is an accurate podcast that helps to answer your questions about coronavirus or COVID19. The latest news and research is broken down to help you understand how the world is living through an epidemic.

Listen for free on [ABC listen app](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Google Podcasts](#).



Wasn't this a GREAT idea...not!

On Christmas day 1859 Thomas Austin, a self-made wealthy settler, released 13 European wild rabbits on his estate, Winchelsea, Barwon Park, Victoria. They had been specially collected and sent to him by a relative in England.

However, this was not the first diffusion of rabbits on the continent. Andrew Miller, commissary for the First Fleet, listed five rabbits on the initial transport. They were probably silver greys, a popular breed for hutch rearing in England at the time. But they were never released into the wild.



The results of the release of the European wild rabbits at Winchelsea was quickly apparent. By 1866 hunters bagged 14,000 rabbits on the Barwon Park estate. With abundant food sources, good ground cover and a lack of predators, the rabbits raced across the landscape.

By 1880 rabbits had crossed the Murray River to New South Wales and had reached Queensland by 1886. In 1894 they had traversed the Nullarbor and populated Western Australia.

To put the dissemination into context, the spread of rabbits over Britain took 700 years while the colonisation of two-thirds of Australia, an area 25 times the size of Britain, took only 50 years. The rate of spread of the rabbit in Australia was the fastest of a colonising mammal anywhere in the world.

This is Timeless - Kitty O'Mara (2020)

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone medicated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absences of people who
Lived ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The Earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the Earth
Just as they were healed.



Let's Laugh

What's happening?
Why are all the humans
wearing muzzles?



Royal Spoonbill (*Platalea Regia*)

If one wanted to stand out in an avian crowd then the Spoonbill family of birds (Royal & Yellow-billed) certainly do that thanks to their very distinctive spoon-shaped beaks and thus their very obvious names. In fact a name couldn't be more obvious than Yellow-billed Spoonbill and the picture below is of both varieties with the Royal, black beak & legs on the left.

Although slightly smaller than its cousin the Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Royal Spoonbills are much more impressive, especially during mating season when they display a distinctive crest on the back of the head and nape of the neck. The crest is erected, during mating displays, to reveal bright pink skin underneath. Breeding adults also have a creamy-yellow wash across the lower neck and upper breast and a strip of bright pink skin along the edge of the underwings which is obvious when the bird opens its wings. Outside the breeding season their plumage is much less impressive, and even quite dull and 'dirty'.

The Royal Spoonbill is found throughout eastern & northern mainland Australia, although it is a rare visitor to Tasmania, it is also found in New Zealand, Indonesia, PNG & on some SW Pacific islands. Its habitat is shallow freshwater & saltwater wetlands, intertidal mud flats & wet grasslands, however it can also reside on sewage lagoons, dams & reservoirs.

It is most often seen wading in shallow waters, sweeping its submerged bill back & forth in a wide arc to find food which consists of mainly fish in freshwater, although it also eats aquatic insects. The structure of its bill limits it to feeding in water of less than 40 cm deep over sand, mud or clay, where it can sweep the water with its bill, which has many vibration detectors on the inside of the spoon. This means the bird can feel for prey items even in murky water & can feed by day or night. Once food is caught, it lifts its bill up & lets the items slide down its throat. If eating shrimps it will bash them against hard objects to remove their shells.

The Royal Spoonbill forms monogamous pairs for the duration of the breeding season and nest in colonies alongside many other waterbirds. A solid bowl-shaped nest is built of sticks and twigs lined with leaves and water plants, and is usually placed in the crown of a tree over water or among high reeds and rushes. Nest sites may be reused year after year. Both sexes incubate the eggs and feed the young.



Although their conservation status is listed as secure in every other state, sadly in Victoria it is vulnerable. (With thanks to Birdlife Australia for the text & Ron Litjens for the photo)

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