



# THE GRANITE NEWS

6TH MARCH 2022

VOLUME 16

ISSUE 8

WHITEHEADS CREEK • TERIP TERIP • CAVEAT • RUFFY • HIGHLANDS • HUGHES CREEK

## Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Another week and the world has shifted slightly. In the Ukraine a flagrant breach of sovereignty and a total disregard for human rights is happening while the world looks on and several hundred kms to our north flood levels are creating new records and impacting towns and localities that were inundated in both 2011 and 2021. A 1:100 years event seems to occur a little more frequently these days. Until the next issue of TGN... **Pauline And Kenny Koala** ... was hiding under an Omeo Gum, *Eucalyptus Neglecta*



Feedback? - [editor@tgn.org.au](mailto:editor@tgn.org.au)  
or to subscribe on-line go to  
[www.highlands.org.au](http://www.highlands.org.au)

## Happenings at the Highlands Hall

On Sunday 27th February Yea Arts Inc. hired the Highlands Hall for a sit-down lunch for 70. There was an hilarious comedy performance by Glenn Manson and Jim Lawson called 'Club Raffle' based on Australian Rules football.



It was great to see the hall looking so smart, thanks to a dozen wonderful locals who gave their time and energy to make sure the hall was in tip top shape for the visitors.

Last Saturday the 26th of February we had 12 very industrious Highlander volunteers cleaning the hall inside and out. We scrubbed away the cobwebs, dust, debris and mildew that had accumulated during the COVID lockdown.



Judy gave the garden a tidy up ready for the wonderful new activities we plan for the Highlands community.

## Italian Cooking Class coming to the Highlands Hall

Pina Mazzeo has very kindly offered to run an Italian cooking class

**Sunday 20th March**

**10:30 am to 12:30 pm**

Highlands Hall

**Max 8 people**

**Cost \$20 per person First in best dressed**

Email: [miranda.yorston@gmail.com](mailto:miranda.yorston@gmail.com) to join the class



**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**

"Life is short and if we don't live joyfully when we are alive, then there's no meaning for it."

**Thuli Sunuwar**

**81 yr old Nepalese street seller of parathas**

## Let's laugh







Month	Highlands	Ruffy
February	6 mm	8 mm
2022 Total	66.2 mm	112 mm
February	4 Days	5 Days

Rainfall in Feb has a huge variation (0 to 120mm) av. 47mm (**Alistair—Highlands**) Rainfall totals across the granite will vary wildly. Very dry compared to January, and very patchy with lots of small local showers. One of my neighbours received 10mm in one dump! (**Darryl—Ruffy**)

Please note: Thursday evening is the deadline for inclusion in the following week's TGN although this will depend on space and time constraints—thanks

## Community Notices

**WHAT'S ON — March & April 2022** NB: COVID—double vaccinated will apply to all events

 <p><b>Friday 11th March</b> <b>@ 6.30pm</b></p>	<p><b>DRINKS ON THE DECK</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span></p> <p>Starts at 6.30pm bring food to share for a meal together and catch up with friends old and new. All</p>
<p><b>Saturday 12th March</b> <b>9.30 for 10am start</b></p>	<p><b>FELTING WORKSHOP @ RUFFY HALL (re-scheduled)</b></p> <p>This fundraiser for the Ruffy Hall is happening!! See last week's TGN for details or call <b>Pam 0411 217476</b></p>
 <p><b>Monday 14th March</b> <b>@ 11am</b></p>	<p><b>HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB</b></p> <p>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 &amp; coffee will be provided.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enquiries? - contact Jan 5790 4361</b></p>
<p><b>Friday 18th March</b> <b>@ 7.30pm</b></p>	<p><b>HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT COLLABORATIVE MEETING</b> <span style="float: right;">at Whiteheads Creek</span></p> <p>Next meeting @ WhiteheadsCk will commence at 7.30pm. All welcome. <b>Enquiries? - Justus 0427 524473</b></p>
 <p><b>Saturday 19th March</b> <b>from 10-noon</b></p>	<p><b>HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET</b> <span style="float: right;">at 94 Old Highlands Rd</span></p> <p>Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other. <b>Enquiries? - Clare 0428 969366</b></p>
 <p><b>Sunday 27th March</b></p>	<p><b>HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS</b> <span style="float: right;">meeting at Highlands Hall</span></p> <p style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>Postponed until April 3rd</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enquires: Andrew Shaw 04372 49038 or Robyn Lingard 0409 528235</b></p>
<p><b>Thursday 31st March</b> <b>@ 5.30pm</b></p>	<p><b>SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS</b> <span style="float: right;">at Caveat Church</span></p> <p>All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat</p>
<p><b>Friday 1st April</b> <b>@ 6pm</b></p>	<p><b>FIRST FRIDAY of the MONTH BBQ</b> <span style="float: right;">at Tablelands Community Centre</span></p> <p>It's time to put the FUN back into Friday nights! <b>Enquires: 0427 690970 or tccruffy@gmail.com</b></p>
<p><b>Friday 1st April</b> <b>6-8pm</b></p>	<p><b>CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES &amp; ADAPTATIONS</b> <span style="float: right;">at YWDC, 2 Hood St, Yea</span></p> <p>The first in a trilogy of public information sessions - details on p.5 with more in next week's TGN.</p>
<p><b>Saturday 2nd April</b> <b>all day</b></p>	<p><b>CYCLE DINDI</b> <span style="float: right;">along the Great Victorian Rail Trail</span></p> <p>Cycle Dindi, a fully-supported, family-friendly bike ride is a great excuse to explore the GVRT. See p.5</p>
 <p><b>Every Thursday</b> <b>6—7.30pm</b></p>	<p><b>YOUR SURYA YOGA CLASSES in 2022</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span></p> <p>Come along to Sandra's yoga classes in Highlands. Bookings essential via website <a href="http://www.yoursurya.com">www.yoursurya.com</a></p>
<p><b>Every second</b> <b>Wednesday 10.30-12.30</b></p>	<p><b>MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span></p> <p>The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in?? <b>YAY! The Mobile Library will be back at Highlands in March 9th &amp; 23rd and April 6th &amp; 20th.</b></p>
<p><b>Every Monday</b> <b>@ 10 am</b></p>	<p><b>ONE TO ONE WELL-BEING CENTRE EUROA</b> <span style="float: right;">at Tablelands Community Centre</span></p> <p>Qigong classes, Shiatsu Massage, Counselling and Psychotherapy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>For bookings or further info contact Vivien 5795 3349 or 0405 612400</b></p>

### FOR SALE

Table made by Gary Male.

It is made of Jarrah and sits 12 comfortably.  
Designed so no one gets a leg.

Cost \$3500 to make will accept \$2000 or nearest offer. Contact Adele [adele@and.net.au](mailto:adele@and.net.au)



### Did you know?

One worker bee can visit as many as 2,000 flowers in a day!  
One in every three bites of food we eat is derived from plants pollinated by bees.  
Bees are the only insect that produce food eaten by humans.



**Note NEW Contact details for Highlands Hall**

Paula Lade—0419 551882 [pelade57@gmail.com](mailto:pelade57@gmail.com)

## Strathbogie Granite Project - UPDATE

We have been providing updates on this project for many years now, but this is our first news sheet since the onset of Covid-19. We are looking forward to continuing our geological field trips and community presentations this year.

The Strathbogie Granite Project is a collaboration between researchers from Melbourne and Stellenbosch in South Africa. The focus is the Strathbogie Ranges—the iconic granite hills and plateaux from Tallarook to Mt Samaria in central Victoria.

The project has been built around collaboration between Professor John Clemens at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, Professor Neil Phillips of the University of Melbourne, and their colleagues and postgraduates.

Regional communities have access to the research outcomes through community presentations, informal verbal reports, and geological input during field days and excursions. The granite studies are published regularly in scientific journals and copies are available from the project leaders. Two conferences have been held in Benalla to engage the scientific and regional communities in sharing ideas and results. The Victoria Undercover Conference of 2003 included 46 papers on aspects of land and landforms especially in NE Victoria; these included airborne and satellite surveys, aquifers, salinity, vegetation, soil, and underlying geology. The International Granite Symposium @ Benalla was held in 2017 with lectures, field trips, an abstract volume and keynote speakers from Australia and overseas.

Community presentations have been given at Tallarook, Yea, Seymour, Avenel, Euroa, Creighton Creek, Gooram, Strathbogie, Benalla, Melbourne and Bendigo.

One benefit of the research has been a regional geology synthesis that provides a baseline for ground water, soil, vegetation, rock cover and agriculture studies. Many of the immediate surface features that influence farming, and even whether the land is cleared at all, reflect subtle variations in the nature of the underlying granite rocks. For example, cracks in the granite lead to either tors (boulders) or pavements (slabs), or both, depending on whether they are predominantly horizontal or vertical, and these cracks influence ground water flow. Perched paddocks and elevated bogs are a feature of the Strathbogie plateau and have developed because of the horizontal nature of granitic sheets.

The Mt Bernard geological trek in November 2021 was a great success and ran twice on consecutive weekends. We are planning a follow up in 2022. The geology talk at Swanpool planned for late September will be rescheduled after the fire season.

Field work extending to much of the granite has only been possible because of the co-operation of land holders who have generously given access to their land. Thank you.

**Neil Phillips**, PO Box 3 Central Park 3145 Victoria  
[neil.phillips@bigpond.com](mailto:neil.phillips@bigpond.com) &

**John Clemens**, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa  
[jclemens@sun.ac.za](mailto:jclemens@sun.ac.za)

**February 2022.**





## Carbon Credits... are they worth it?

The following article was aired on Landline on 27/2/22. The program should still be accessible on [iView](#)

Farmers thinking their soil will be the new frontier of the carbon economy should think again, according to one of Australia's leading agricultural scientists.

### Key points:

- Experts believe Australia may be lucky to maintain its current levels of soil carbon because of declining rainfall patterns
- Under current offset methodology carbon must be measured through expensive soil testing
- A thousand farmers are predicted by June to join a farmer co-operative to trade in carbon

Richard Eckard, Professor of Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Melbourne and Director of the Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre, thinks there is a real danger in farmers being given the notion they can make a lot of money from selling soil carbon. He believes Australia may be lucky to maintain its current soil carbon levels because of declining rainfall patterns.

"Backing something like soil carbon, which is really just dependent on rainfall, is really tricky in a country that can't depend on its own rainfall."

### Banking productivity

Professor Eckard is considered a world expert on sustainable agriculture, climate change and carbon offsets. He developed the first greenhouse gas accounting tools for agriculture, and his research and expertise provided the science for six-carbon offset methods in Australia. He said even in cases where soil carbon could be measurably improved, the benefits were over-blown.

A recent case study in western Victoria showed the benefits of high soil carbon, such as increased nutrients and water holding capacity were worth as much as \$150 a hectare compared to \$15 to \$20 a hectare for soil carbon trades.

"And so," he asks the question, "If the inherent productivity benefit is \$150 per hectare per year of high carbon, why are we chasing \$15 to \$20 worth of soil carbon credits that lock you into long-term commitments rather than just banking the productivity and saying my farm is more sustainable as a result?"

He believes farmers would be better off saving any carbon credits for their own commodities as consumers increasingly demand carbon neutrality.

"The food supply chain is setting targets for farmers to achieve carbon neutrality in their own right. If farmers are starting to sell soil carbon outside of the agricultural sector, out of their farm, it's kind of a bank account. It's a stock. Once it goes to another entity like the coal industry who use it as their offset, what happens to that farm when the supply chain says we will only buy your product if it's carbon neutral?"

### Measuring carbon

One of the big challenges facing the emerging soil carbon market is measurement. Australia has hugely variable soil types, and they even differ across individual farms. Under the current offset methodology carbon must be measured through expensive soil testing. The nation's largest farming company, the Australian Agricultural Company (AACo), is currently working with the Food Agility Co-operative Research Centre on a remote sensing tool for estimating, mapping and forecasting soil carbon in the rangelands.



AACo's holdings cover 1 per cent of Australia's landmass, and at the current price of \$20 a hectare for soil testing, it would cost close to \$130 million just to baseline its entire operation. The CRC's chief scientist, Professor David Lamb, said the \$6.5 million collaboration with AACo used satellite imagery to estimate soil carbon.

"There are ways to infer what that variability is through, for example, looking at the above ground vegetation, your communities, your trees, your scrub and so forth," Professor Lamb said. "And the aim here is to use that sort of layer of data satellite imagery, for example, to stratify out that landscape into those different zones and then go sample accordingly."

[Article continued on p.5...](#)

## Cycle Dindi 2022

Cycle Dindi is on again along the scenic Great Victorian Rail Trail on Saturday 2nd April.

Organised by the Rotary Clubs of Yea and Alexandra, with assistance from Friends of the GVRT, it is a fully supported family friendly event for adults (seniors discount available) and children.

A variety of distances, starting places (Yea, Alexandra, or Merton) and starting times (8am – 11am) are available. It's also Market Day in Yea so come for a browse at the market.

Lunch is beside the Goulburn River – a location to relax, enjoy some food and coffee by mobile van Café Amore. The shearing shed at Nutfield is a popular place to stop for Devonshire Tea and watch working dogs demonstrate their amazing sheep yarding skills and is included in the entry cost.

CycleDindi22 is a major fundraiser to support Rotary youth projects. Entry forms available at Rotary website [www.yearotary.org.au](http://www.yearotary.org.au) and follow CycleDindi22 updates on Facebook. Queries to [cycledindi22@gmail.com](mailto:cycledindi22@gmail.com) and bookings via direct deposit or through [www.trybooking.com/BVQKG](http://www.trybooking.com/BVQKG) Non riders welcome at both Morning tea and lunch for a modest cost.



**Cycle Dindi**  
over the hills and not so far away

**SATURDAY 2 APRIL 2022**

A charity bicycle event along the Great Victorian Rail Trail

Registrations open January 2022  
E: [cycledindi22@gmail.com](mailto:cycledindi22@gmail.com)

The event on the Great Victorian Rail Trail will be centred on the lovely townships of Yea and Alexandra. There will be a choice of 3 starting points, all converging on the banks of the Goulburn River at Cathkin for lunch.

This event is a fund raiser for Rotary Youth Projects.

Cycle Dindi 22 is a COVIDSafe event, conducted in accordance with applicable Covid regulations.

**Rotary**  
Clubs of Alexandra and Yea and the Friends of the GVRT

**What do I get for my money?**

- Billy tea, damper and BBQ lunch at Cathkin
- Free admission to Nutfield a working farm, with free Devonshire Tea in the shearing shed, sheep dog demonstration and trailer ride.

**CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE**

DISTANCE	
Yea to Merton (return)	93 kms
Merton to Yea (return)	93 kms
Merton to Cathkin (return)	51 kms
Yea to Cathkin (return)	42 kms
Yea to Alexandra (return)	68 kms
Alexandra to Yea (return)	68 kms
Alexandra to Cathkin (return)	26 kms

**How Much?**

Adult	\$45
Senior	\$35
Concession	\$10

• Concession applies to school age children  
• Under school age free  
• \$80 – relevant Seniors' card must be held  
• Group discount available on request

**Interested?**  
contact Melinda (Alexandra) 0418 378 806  
Julie (Yea) 0447 762 557  
or Ross (Mansfield) 0439 046 199  
[www.rotaryalexandra.org.au](http://www.rotaryalexandra.org.au)  
[www.yearotary.org.au](http://www.yearotary.org.au)

## Adapting to Climate Change Challenges

Dates April 1st; April 29th; May 27th

In 2022 the Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre and 2030Yea will present a series of three public information sessions promoting community awareness and adaptation to climate change challenges. To view details of the program visit [www.yeawetlands.com.au](http://www.yeawetlands.com.au)

Please book online soon as these sessions will be popular!

Link to event: <https://www.trybooking.com/au/871747>

More details to come in next week's TGN.

## Climate Change - your input required

Murrindindi Shire Council is committed to fighting Climate Change and needs help to develop a Climate Action Plan. If you are interested in creating a roadmap that will help MSC achieve their goals and net-zero emissions by 2035 either ring 5772 0333 or complete this survey by March 28th

[theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/climateaction](http://theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/climateaction)

## Trading carbon Continued from p.4

Farmers such as Mike and Helen McCosker, who run a 1,200-hectare mixed farm at Wallangra, north of Inverell in New South Wales, are keen to trade their soil carbon as soon as possible. They have signed up with a farmer-owned trading aggregator called the Regen Farmers Mutual, which will operate like a co-operative where farmers retain their data and most of the profits from carbon trading.

"Instead of farmers losing anywhere from 30 per cent to 80 per cent of the transaction to the larger aggregators, with Regen Farmers Mutual, they'll guarantee that 80 per cent of that money will come back to the farmer," Mr McCosker said.

Two years ago, the couple started a charity called Carbon8 to help farmers improve their soil carbon and measure it for the market. They practise what is known as regenerative agriculture, which emphasises soil health and builds carbon without chemical inputs. They believe soil carbon credits will be just a start. The future will also bring other environmental credits for things like building biodiversity and water efficiency.

Helen McCosker, who is also an accountant, said consumers would drive the uptake of environmental service credits. "When they're buying their food, they [will] scan their food, they'll be able to see what the levels of carbon are in the soil, what the biodiversity is that's happening on the farm, how the water infiltration is going, and they'll also be able to see the nutrient density of their food, how healthy that is," Mrs McCosker said. "So that there will just be a game changer."



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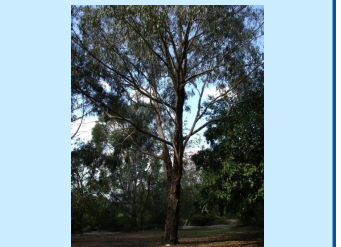
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