THE GRANITE NEWS



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



10th August 2025 | Volume 19 Issue 27

Welcome, Wumindjika & G'day

There is a brilliant poem that I enjoyed reading to primary school students a few decades ago called 'The Day McDougall Topped the Score'. Written by Thomas E. Spencer it's a merry romp about a local cricket match between Piper's Flat and Molongo, a canny Scotsman called McDougall and his faithful sheepdog Pincher.

But in amongst all the hilarity and frenetic pace, unusual for a cricket match, the first 6 lines very succinctly sum up life on the land if one is trying to make a living from it -

"A peaceful spot is Piper's Flat. The folk that live around,
They keep themselves by keeping sheep and turning up the ground.
But the climate is erratic; and the consequences are
The struggle with the elements is everlasting war.
We plough, and sow, and harrow - then sit down and pray for rain;
And then we all get flooded out, and have to start again."

Although penned in 1898 the sentiments are even more applicable in the 21st C with Global Warming a stark reality and the HCCC area susceptible to summer wildfires. We are also now more aware of the stress and mental health issues that go hand in hand with such unpredictable climate changes and financial insecurity.

When Leila McDougall decided to make a film focused on rural mental health just prior to COVID, it was her experience as both a farmer and a teacher that guided the message she wanted to convey and the form it took - **Just a Farmer** is the insightful result. (see p.3)

Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to be hosting another screening of this award-winning film at the Highlands Community Hall on Friday 22nd August at 6pm for nibbles and 6.30pm for viewing. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Please read on for another interesting issue, Pauline And Kenny? Was enjoying the Curry Night at Highlands.



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

"I have walked this Earth 30 years and out of gratitude want to leave some souvenir."

Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)

Post-Impressionist Painter

BRAIN AT 3AM:
I CAN SEE YOU'RE TRYING TO
SLEEP, SO I WOULD LIKE TO
OFFER YOU A SELECTION OF
EVERY MEMORY, UNRESOLVED
ISSUE, OR THINGS YOU SHOULD
HAVE SAID OR DONE TODAY,
OR IN THE PAST 40 YEARS!

DON'T FORGET...

You can now join the monthly meeting of the HCCC - Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative

PERSON

(next meeting at Highlands Hall) or via

ZOOM

Details for Zoom Link in next week's TGN!

Be there!

		What's On - August & September 2025
	Mon. 11 th Aug. @ 4.30pm	LONGWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AGM @ TCC Ruffy Everyone is welcome. Enquiries? robjamo54@gmail.com
Details? See p.4	Tues. 19 th Aug. 5.30-8pm	CAVEAT FOREST DRONE SURVEY Cnr Caveat-Dropemore Rd & Yurittas Rd Come along & discover how drone & thermal imaging has assisted the Last Stand Project
Hughes Creek Calchinent Collaborative	Thurs. 21 st August @ 7pm	HCCC MEETING @ Highlands Community Hall Everyone is welcome - in person or via Zoom See next week's TGN for Zoom details
Details? See p.7	Fri. 22 nd Aug. 12.30-6.30pm	HOME ENERGY EXPO - Meet Dr Karl and so much more!! @ Avenel Memorial Hall
Details? See p.3	Fri. 22 nd Aug. @ 6pm	JUST A FARMER - Screening of this Award-winning @ Highlands Community Hall
Details? See p.4	Sun. 24 th Aug. 2 - 4pm	THE LAST STAND - FINAL WRAP @ Highlands Community Hall Last year a unique project commenced with the aim to discover more about the Southern Greater Glider in the Strathbogies. Everyone is welcome to attend this presentation.
	Thurs. 28 th Aug @ 5.30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS @ Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards BBQ, BYO & chat.
	Sunday 31 st Aug. @ 10am	HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS WALK meet @ Highlands Community Hall Everyone is welcome to come and explore our stunning local area. Supported by HCCC Enquiries? Andrew 0437 249038 or Robyn 0409 528235
	Mon. 8 th Sept @ 11 am	HIGHLANDS SPINNERS @ 450 Caveat-Dropmore Rd Tea, coffee, friendship and laughs will be in plenty. Contact Jan & Ruby 5790 4361
	Every Second Wednesday 10-30-12.30	MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE @ Highlands Community Hall The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in? Forthcoming dates are 21st August and 4th & 18th September.
	Every Monday @ 6pm	MAT PILATES with ANASTASIA BYO own mat and water bottle - Cost \$15 cash @ Highlands Community Hall Enquiries? 0436 428065
	1st & 3rd Tuesdays 1-3	DIGITAL & ON-LINE LEARNING @ TCC, 27 Nolans Rd, Ruffy Just resting until September Enquiries? Bob - 0480 348788
	2nd & 4th Sundays	ST DAVID'S UNITING CHURCH - TERIP RUFFY 2nd Sunday 11.15am Pastor Scott Leslie / 4th Sunday 11am Morning tea & Study group
Statem reserved	Mon 8.45-9.45am	CUSTOM YOGA is BACK with Ingrid at the Tablelands Community Centre \$25 per hour long class BYO mat and blanket Enquiries? Ingrid ingstar.7@gmail.com



JUST A FARMER COMING TO HIGHLANDS

Missed the screening of 'Just a Farmer' earlier this year? Or maybe you just want to see it again?

Here's your chance! Council is hosting another showing of the award-winning film at Highlands Community Hall, 1603 Ghin Ghin Road, Highlands.

Join us on Friday 22 August from 6.00 pm for a quick nibble with the film scheduled to start at 6.30 pm.

RSVP's by Tuesday 19 August, with any special requirements, are essential for catering and safe venue capacity purposes, and without one, we may not be able to accommodate you.

To RSVP you can:

- visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/justafarmerhighlands
- · scan the QR code
- call Highlands Community Hall Secretary, Margaret Millburn at 0499 478 884
- · drop-in to one of our offices at Alexandra, Yea or Kinglake

Please note: This is movie is rated M, contains strong language, and is not suitable for children under 15. Please be aware, the content of this film addresses confronting issues, including mental health challenges in rural communities and may be disturbing to some viewers.

If you or anyone you know needs mental health care, please reach out to Lifeline on 13 11 14. Lifeline is a 24/7 crisis hotline service and can provide support and connect you with further help if needed.

Scan to RSVP



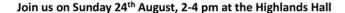
Murrindindi Shire Council is pleased to advise that funding for these sessions is made possible by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).







The Last Stand - Final Wrap





Beginning in late 2024 Strathbogie Ranges Conservation has been probing some of the secrets of the Caveat Forest to shed light on one of its secretive and rare inhabitants – the Southern Greater Glider.

What have we been doing?

- · 30+ km of nocturnal wildlife surveys
- 100+ ha of drone surveys
- Three community walks
- Built & installed 20 large, insulated nest-boxes
- ... and lots of research and pondering!

Join us to learn about the conservation status of the Southern Greater Glider in



Would-be gliders in the Caveat Forest!

the Caveat Forest, the reasons for its decline and what we can do to help

it recover. Let us share our discoveries with you over a delicious afternoon tea and a hot cuppa.

All welcome!

RSVP numbers and dietary prefs: text Bert - 0409 433 276, or Sam - 0417 576 30

Caveat Forest Drone Survey - community demonstration

Community members are welcome to attend a demonstration by Field Master Systems of how drone and thermal camera technology works and the way it's being used in The Last Stand project.

When: 5.30 to 8 pm, 19th August, 2025 Meet: Cnr. Caveat-Dropmore Rd and Yurittas Rd What to bring: warm and weather-appropriate clothes.

Numbers limited!

RSVP: Sam 0417 576 306, Bert 0409 433 276



Southern Greater Glider detected by thermal camera and drone, Caveat Forest

The Last Stand is project managed by <u>Strathbogie Ranges Conservation</u> and funded by the Landcare Australia Community Grants Program. This project is part of the <u>Glideways</u> in Central Victoria project led by <u>Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance</u>.















Are you interested in adding to the i Natutaliste's



environmental knowledge base of the local HCCC area?

If YES then download the App now, follow the instructions for use and start recording our unique natural wonders of both fauna and flora. It's an incredibly valuable resource.

Wombat Myths

Belief: There is a population explosion of Wombats.

Fact: Wombats cannot have "population explosions".

Bare Nosed wombats breed every two to three years and have one young. While it is technically possible for them to breed yearly this can only happen if the young lactating wombat is killed. Therefore, destruction or removal of young wombats leads directly to an increase in young born in a particular period.

Most studies agree that wombats have young in a 50:50 ratio hence of all young born and successfully reared in any period 50% will be male. The young females take two years to reach sexual maturity and are unlikely to breed until they have established a "territory". Hence, most females will not breed until their third year. There is some evidence that if they cannot establish a large enough territory (i.e. have access to a range of burrows not being used by other breeding females) they don't breed. **Trigg's, B. pp 91-96. 2002**.

A pair of Bare Nosed wombats can only produce the equivalent of one female every four years, so it is not possible to have a population explosion of wombats.

Why are where so many wombats on our roadsides?

• Habitat Loss and Fragmentation:

Roads and development reduce and fragment wombat habitat, forcing them to cross roads more frequently to access food and other resources.

• Food Availability:

Wombats are herbivores and may be attracted to the edges of roads where there is often a strip of green grass that hasn't been grazed by other animals.

• Nocturnal Behavior:

Wombats are primarily active at night, increasing their risk of being hit by vehicles, particularly during peak traffic hours, according to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

• Territoriality and Mating:

Wombats are territorial and may travel significant distances at night, especially during mating season, to find food and mates, leading them to cross roads.

Sarcoptic Mange:

While not directly causing them to be on roadsides, mange, a parasitic skin disease, can weaken wombats, making them more susceptible to vehicle strikes.

• Increased Traffic:

Higher traffic volumes, especially during peak hours or tourist seasons, increase the likelihood of collisions with wombats.

What can we do?

I have heard that wombats are discouraged by a hormone found in male urine. If you have males in the household, get them to start urinating in and around the burrows. This may keep them away. After that continue spreading some urine around the perimeter of the area you don't want them in. An old farmer told me this and it could work for you. This might be a business opportunity for someone in Ruffy township where human males are scarce.

Virtual fencing for wombats is a technique using light and sound to deter them from crossing roads, reducing roadkill. It involves strategically placed devices that emit audible alarms and flashing lights when activated by vehicle headlights, creating a "virtual fence" that warns wombats of approaching traffic. This method has shown promise in reducing wombat road fatalities and is being trialed in various locations. Map wombat crossing hot spots in our area and lobby the shire to trial these devises.

Join Land for Wildlife and plant wombat habitat away from roadsides, along creek lines and gullies. Fence these areas to exclude stock and encourage undergrowth and grasses to feed wombats.

https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/protecting-wildlife/land-for-wildlife

Ideas collected by Janet Hagen HCCC Landcare facilitator

Ruffy Vege Growers - NEXT Meeting

The next Ruffy Veggie growers gathering will be on

Saturday 30th August

at the Tablelands Community Centre 27 Nolan's Road Ruffy. 10 am -11.30 am

Melissa Honeydew of Rigby Cottage will be presenting Clever ways of growing fruit with espaliers, step-overs, tree clusters, tubs and barrels.

Melissa will also have a selection of fruit trees for sale on the day.

Afterwards we will be launching the Tablelands Community Gardens Perpetual Calendar and have them for sale (a bargain at just \$10.00)

but wait there's morewe will also be showing off our newly completed shelter shed verandah, which was funded by Strathbogie Shire's Community Grants' program.

The event is free and everyone is welcome. Please bring something to share for morning tea.

We look forward to seeing you there. If you would like more information please contact

Cheryl - 0409 019763 or tccruffy@gmail.com





Ethical Retirement Investments How Your Super Can Support the Planet

Community members gathered at the Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre on July 17th to learn how their superannuation can support sustainable and ethical investments that align with their values while ensuring strong financial returns.

Ethical superannuation insights: The event featured local accountant John Agostinelli and Market Forces advocate Munira Chowdhury discussing how Australians can invest their retirement savings responsibly, avoiding harmful industries and supporting sustainable ventures.

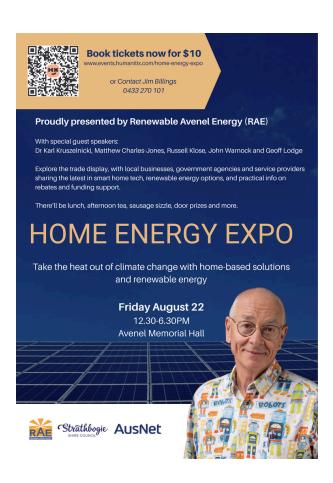
Responsible investing landscape: Australians have invested trillions in super funds, with a significant portion dedicated to responsible investing. However, challenges like greenwashing persist, though improved transparency and legislation are helping to clarify investment practices.

Activating change through finance: Market Forces encourages individuals to question their banks, switch providers if needed, and use shareholder power to influence financial institutions to reduce support for fossil fuel projects, highlighting recent shifts by major banks under public pressure.

Watch the video!

Although the event was for a small local audience, the conversation was big on ideas and action. A recording of the session is available on the 2030Yea website videos for those who couldn't attend but are curious about making their super work for both their future and the planet. https://2030yea.com.au/videos/







How to Reduce Your Energy Bill with Q & A

Presenters: Ron Litiens and Ian Tobin

6:30 - 7:30pm When: Thursday August 21

Yea Butter Factory, 13 Rattray St, Yea Where:

Join Ron Litiens and Ian Tobin to find out how the energy market works and how you can make it work for you ... or even make you money!

They will also discuss how understanding your energy usage can dramatically reduce your electricity bill and how there are many energy retailers offering different rates and peak times for electricity usage ... how do you compare to save?



Energy retailers purchase at wholesale prices and on-sell it to the consumer (you and me). Consumers can also buy directly from the wholesale market through providers such as Amber. Come with your questions!

This is a free 2030Yea community event.

Call or text 0428969366 to book a seat (and for catering)

Become a member of 2030Yea Inc here:

Scan to register

M 0428969366

Planning for Change in Landcare



Presenter: Kimberley Boswell

Kim is a Facilitator, Trainer and Coach with more than 25 years experience in community engagement, fundraising and volunteer program management.

Kim's involvement in Landcare and environmental volunteer groups spans 15 years having served as a Landcare Network president, group committee member, volunteer and in a working capacity at a network, state and national level.

Kim is a regular consultant and facilitator to the movement and the founder of Community Leaders Academy, an online community providing tailored support to professionals in Landcare and beyond.

Kim has over 150 skills-based trainings and facilitation of strategic planning sessions for Landcare and environmental groups.

What will be covered

Understanding barriers to change

By understanding the most common barriers holding us back, we can understand where we are resistant to change in order to move forward.

What's in it for me?



A selection of recommended free tools and resources that support groups by making things easier to track where they are, capture organisational knowledge and recruit volunteers in a planned and systematic approach.

WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE

ol: Tuesday 9th September, 1-5pm (lunch included)

Shepparton: Wednesday 10th September, 9-1pm (lunch included) Register: https://www.trybooking.com/DEFKT

Seymour: Wednesday 10th September, 4pm-8.30pm (dinner included) Register: https://events.humanitix.com/planning-for-change-in-landcare



kerstiel@gbcma.vic.gov.au

0437 310 840







CALLING ALL GUITARISTS - HIGH VOLTAGE IS COMING!

This is your chance to be part of something big, loud and community-powered. Join celebrated Australian performer Joseph O'Farrell (JOF) for an unforgettable mash-up of music, dance and performance featuring everyday guitarists like YOU.

Main Event: High Voltage Concert - Sunday 7 September, 4.00pm at Yea Shire Hall and it's totally FREE to take part!

How to get involved: Register your spot and you're in! To prep for the show, we are running workshops in Yea, Alexandra and Kinglake.

High Voltage project is led by Yea Arts and proudly supported by Murrindindi Shire Council to make it a Shire-wide celebration bringing local talent together for one HIGH-VOLTAGE concert to remember.

If you have any questions, please email us: eventsyeaarts@gmail.com or call on 0403 831 520 Visit the website: www.yeaartsinc.org/high-voltage





























CALLING FOR VOLUNTEERS

LONGWOOD TREE PLANTING EVENT

Grassy Grey Box Woodlands Project

9.30AM (REGISTRATION)
10AM TO 12PM
AUGUST 23RD 2025

FREE LUNCH PROVIDED.

BYO SHOVEL, however there will be some tools availble for use.

Registration of interest required for catering purposes.



The Day McDougal Topped the Score - Thomas E. Spencer

I couldn't resist sharing this bush ballad gem with readers - enjoy! Ed.

A peaceful spot is Piper's Flat. The folk that live around, They keep themselves by keeping sheep and turning up the ground. But the climate is erratic; and the consequences are The struggle with the elements is everlasting war.

We plough, and sow, and harrow - then sit down and pray for rain; And then we all get flooded out, and have to start again. But the folk are now rejoicing as they ne'er rejoiced before, For we've played Molongo cricket, and McDougall topped the score?

Molongo had a head on it, And challenged us to play A single innings match for lunch -The losing team to pay.

We were not great guns at cricket, but we couldn't well say no, So we all began to practice, and we let the reaping go. We scoured the flat for 10 miles round to muster up our men, But when the list was totalled we could only muster ten.

The up spoke big Tim Brady, He was always slow to speak, And he said - "What price McDougall, Who lives down at Cooper's Creek?"

So we sent for old McDougall, And he stated in reply That he'd never played at cricket, But he'd half a mind to try.

He couldn't come to practice -He was getting in his hay, But he guessed he'd show the beggars From Molongo how to play.

Now McDougall was a Scotsman, and a canny one at that, So he started in at practice with a paling for a bat. He got Mrs Mac. to bowl to him, but she couldn't run at all. So he trained his sheep dog Pincher, how to scout and fetch the ball.

Now, Pincher was no puppy; he was old, and worn and grey; But he understood Mc Dougall, and - accustomed to obey - When McDougall cried out "Fetch it!" he would fetch it in a trice; But until the word was "Drop it!" he would grip it like a vice.

And each succeeding night they played until the light grew dim; Sometimes McDougall struck the ball - sometimes the ball struck him! Each time he struck, the ball would plough a furrow in the ground, But when he missed, the impetus would turn him three times round.

The fatal day at length arrived - the day that was to see Molongo bite the dust, or Piper's Flat knocked up a tree! Molongo's captain won the toss, then sent his men to bat, And they gave some leather-hunting to the men of Piper's Flat.

The highest score was twenty-two, The total sixty-six, Then Brady sent a yorker down That scattered Johnson's sticks.

Then Piper's Flat when into bat, For glory and renown, But, like the grass before the scythe, Our wickets tumbled down.



Continued next page.....

The Day McDougall Topped the Score....continued

"Nine wickets down for seventeen, With fifty more to won!" Our captain heaved a heavy sigh -And sent McDougall in.

"Ten pounds to one you lose it." Cried a barracker from town; But McDougall said, "I'll tak it mon!" And plonked the money down.

Then he girded up his moleskins In a self-reliant style, Threw off his hat and boots, And faced the bowler with a smile.

He held the bat the wrong side out, And Johnson with a grin, Stepped lightly to the bowling crease, And sent a 'wobbler' in.

McDougall spooned it softly back, And Johnson waited there, But McDougall crying, "Fetch it!" Started running like a hare.

Molongo shouted "Victory He's out as sure as eggs." When Pincher started through the crowd And ran through Johnson's legs.

He seized the ball like lightning; Then ran behind a log, And McDougall kept on running, While Molongo chased the dog.

They chased him up,
They chased him down,
They chased him round, and then
He darted through a slip rail
As the scorer shouted, "Ten!"

McDougall puffed; Molongo swore; Excitement was intense; As the scorer marked down, "Twenty", Pincher cleared a barb wire fence.

"Let us head him!" shrieked Molongo.
"Brain the mongrel with a bat!"

"Run it out! Good old McDougall!" Yelled the men of Piper's Flat.



Continued next page.....

The Day McDougall Topped the Score....continued

And McDougall kept on jogging, And then Pincher doubled back, And the scorer counted, "Forty" As they raced across the track.

McDougall's legs were going fast, Molongo's breath was gone -But while Molongo chased the dog -McDougall struggled on.

When the scorer shouted, "Fifty!"
Then they knew the chase could cease;
And McDougall gasped out "Drop it!"
As he dropped within his crease.

Then Pincher dropped the ball, And, as instinctively he knew Discretion was the wiser plan, He disappeared from view.

And as Molongo's beaten men Exhausted lay around, We raised McDougall shoulder high, And bore him from the ground.

We bore him to McGinniss's, Where lunch was ready laid, And filled him up with ginger punch, For which Molongo paid.

And the critics say they never saw A cricket match like that, When McDougall broke the record In the game at Piper's Flat.

And the folk are jubilating
As they never were before;
For we played Molongo cricket,
And *McDougall topped the score!*

NB: Especially for Scott!

Illustrations - Credit John McIntosh



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MEETINGS





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The Granite News is widely distributed 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, play and grow.

May the current generations of Taungurung, HCCC residents & landowners continue this important custodianship into the future.