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Edition 342

My uncle Allan did as I did; born in the city, he moved to the country, did farm work for years, then he moved back into town. Except, Allan didn't get much say in it. Allan was born in Coburg in 1910, after my grandfather Charles married a nice girl from Lake Rowan. I now have a photo of the three of them, Allan bright-eyed and alert.

Charles and Ella began their married life in the Coburg house where Charles lived; along with his parents, two of his brothers, and a sister.

Within two years, the nice girl from Lake Rowan was dead, of diabetes. (Insulin was not discovered until 1921.) I wonder who looked after Allan then? Charles had his mother and sisters close by. And I wonder, when did they notice that Allan was a bit different?

When Allan was 10, his Dad re-married. My aunt, who could barely remember Allan, said that once my grandmother had a few children of her own, the difficult step-son was sent off to live with his mother's folk.

My father, Allan's half-brother, had stated that Allan was a bit retarded, and never worked; that he lived with an aunt, and after she died, he lived in an institution.

Evidentially he meant that Allan was never employed for wages, for it appears he earned his keep. The Electoral Roll records show that in 1931 Allan Charles Stevenson was in Tungamah, working for his aunty Eva and her husband on their farm; in 1933 he was a farm labourer in Corowa with aunty Ruth; in 1936 he was back in Tungamah working for his uncle Frank; and most years he was way up in Grenfell, NSW, with his aunty Annie.

Did he like living on the land? Might he have chosen something else, if he could? Did he love the smell of the earth after rain? Did he learn to shear? Would he have shared jokes about drafting Merinos? How did he get on with the working dogs? Did he travel alone, on the train, from North East Victoria all the way up to Grenfell, NSW?

In the 1950s, Allan's aunts and uncle began dying off; they were in their 70s and 80s by then. And so from 1954 through to 1980, the Electoral Rolls have Allan Charles Stevenson at 139 Atherton Rd, Oakleigh, occupation 'nil'. This was the 'institution'; the Christian Guest Home in Oakleigh. Did his father ever visit him? I don't know – my grandfather died

when I was 4.

When my uncle Allan died, I was 22. I barely knew he had ever existed, and never met him. Now, having taken up family history, I have a suite of cold hard facts about his life. But I have had the remarkable good fortune to contact a descendant of Allan's mother's family; even better, through her work she is familiar with various mental health conditions. She said yes, Allan Stevenson was remembered, and described as 'a bit different'. When her Mum told her the family kept Allan busy by getting him to dig a dam with a shovel and wheelbarrow (and that he enjoyed it!) she recognised he was most probably Autistic or had Asperger's. He was passed around the family, doing jobs on farms; he was very helpful at farm work, but could be "a bit of a handful".

That is the life of my uncle Allan. His mother dead when he was a toddler; passed around from home to home; twenty or so years working on the land; nearly thirty years shut away in an institution in the city. Goodbye, uncle Allan – I hope you found some happiness, and I am sorry I never visited.

- Andrea Stevenson



Charles and Ella Stevenson (Cowper) with Allan 1911

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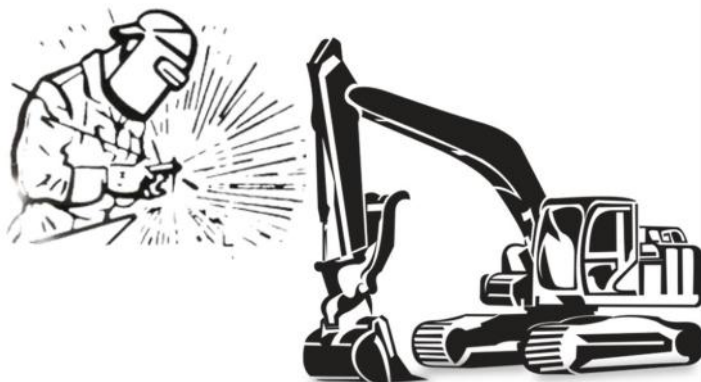
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## Garden Daze

The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago - the next best time is now

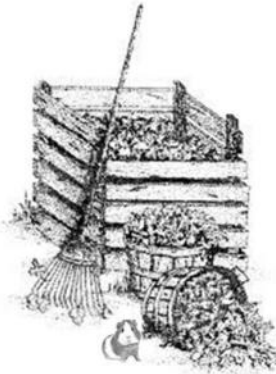
*Winter arrived with some very cold*

*mornings* - let's hope that it also brings some very welcome and much needed rain to fill the water tanks and dams.

Catching up with some garden jobs should help to keep us warm.

**Autumn** means falling leaves, and we have a lovely carpet of coloured leaves covering most of the garden.

I find that my small battery operated mower with its catcher is an ideal way to collect not only the leaves, but a mix of leaves and grass - which makes a great addition to the compost heap. Layered with collected, chook, cow, alpaca and even guinea pig poo - the heap heats up nicely - which will kill any unwanted seeds.



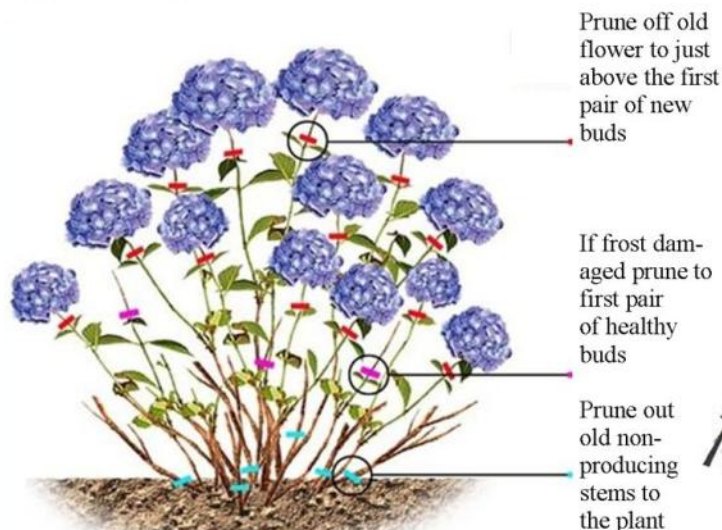
With rain (ever the optimist) come the weeds - this is the time to remove weeds before they mature and set seed.

Be careful to remove roots and all, and use a garden hoe or tiller for larger areas.

### Fruit trees can be pruned now.

We have been cutting ours back to be able to cover them with fruit fly netting when they have formed the fruit in Spring. This year the trees that were covered completely had no fruit fly damage. Winter is also a good time to prune for structure on young deciduous trees. Because these trees are without leaves, the form of the tree can be seen easily, so crossing wood, double leaders and a plethora of other problems can be picked up early.

Hydrangea pruning can also be done now the flower buds have set. The old wood can be pruned out and the shrubs pruned back to those healthy fat flower buds for a good display next year.



The saying is to **"Take time to smell the roses"** - well no flowers in winter so "Take time to prune the roses" - any time from June - July onwards is fine.

When the job is finished, an application of a seaweed-based product will condition the soil and help the plant with drought tolerance, resistance to frost and attack from pests and disease.



**Tidy up the Vegie Garden.** Enrich the soil with compost and start planning next season's crops. It's also a great time for planting brassicas (such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower), lettuce and Chinese vegetables.

**Consider starting something new.** A while back a segment on *Gardening Australia* featured the garden of an interior designer.

Here the designs were for garden rooms not interior rooms, but the gardener had used the same principles as he used for his interiors. I liked the effect and thought that I'd try to make a couple of our areas where we have tables and chairs more "room like".

See: *Gardening Australia Series 32 Ep 12 "Tropical Barossa"*

**A few more natives** added to the garden will help feed the birds, bees and butterflies. This will also do wonders for pollinating the vegies and fruit trees and reduce the number of pest insects. A couple to consider:



Sweet Bursaria



Leptospermum continentale (Prickly Tea-tree)

### Good Tip:

(again from Jane on *Gardening Australia*)

If you use liquid fertiliser, you will know that this can be quite messy and awkward to pour.

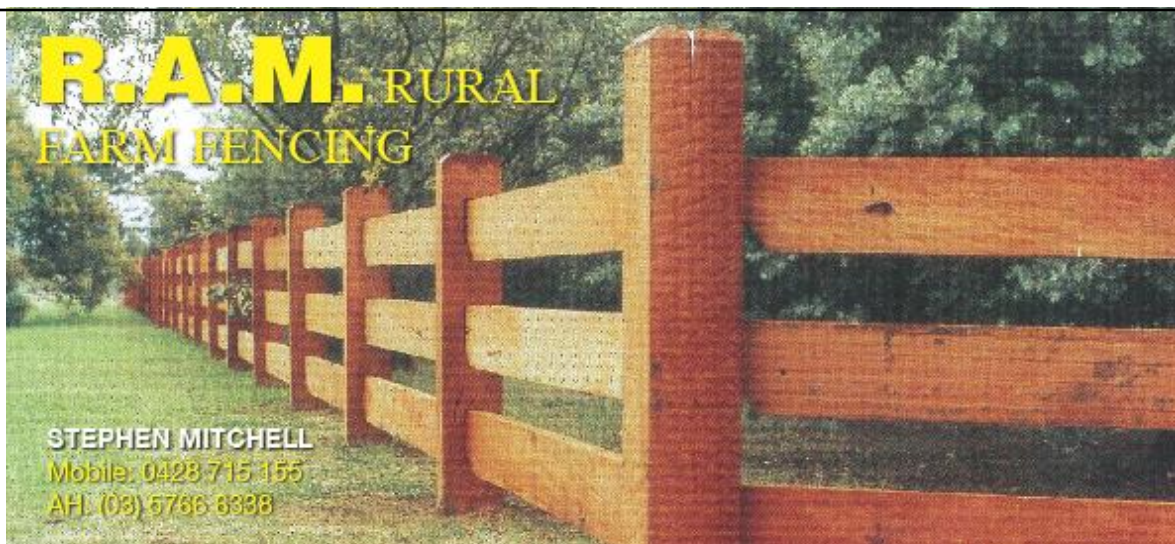
Replacing the cap with one from a plastic sauce bottle will fix the problem and can be sealed off with a twist.



Happy Gardening

Kathy Z





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### The Grand Sport of Table Tennis

There would not be too many people who have not played table tennis at some time because it is able to be played in the home, or a shed. Swanpool and District TT Association only conducts a winter competition and so the weather is not a problem because matches are played in the local halls of Tatong, Swanpool, Lima School, Moornagag and Molyullah. The season is limited to about 15 weeks from May to August and currently there are 7 - A grade teams and 6 - B grade.

Table tennis is the great team sport survivor when footy, tennis, cricket and netball have all virtually faded away in many small towns. I guess there is also the Tatong Anglers club that I should include in the great survivors list, Oh, and then there is deer and pig hunting and probably more that I have forgotten or don't know about. Sport has evolved, as society has done, and we don't seem to need gladiatorial style of contests so much anymore. The lack of suitable spectator sports, except from TV, could or should lead to more people actually involving themselves in the multitude of sporting and other physical activities of today. Virtually nobody comes to watch table tennis except family, occasionally. And imagine a group of spectators watching someone fishing or shooting pigs! Table tennis is great for me as an older person with not much endurance as it helps with fitness and provides strong social contact, even when trying to beat the opposition to a pulp!

Mike Larkin

**White  
Gate**



**Dates**

**White Gate Dinner @ The Tatong Tavern** in the first official month of Winter, alights upon Wednesday June 2nd. The fire will be roaring, and hopefully, as in May, chef Tammy will be compiling the meals (Yes! On a Wednesday!) Tammy came out to check we were enjoying ourselves (we were) and our meals (we did). Book yourselves in, arrive 6:30 / 7-ish, and if necessary, bring any rain incantations you know of. At time of typing, the BOM models indicate showers next Tuesday. I'll believe that when I empty them out of the rain-guage.

We must toast "Nan Faz" - Josephine DeFazio, Laurie's mum, gone to join the friends of her childhood in some other world. Such a life.

### White Gate Fire Brigade Roster:

Bruce Burgess	30 May	Andrew Marriott	27 Jun
Bill Ferguson	6 Jun	Terry Trounson	4 Jul
Norton Grimwade	13 Jun	Les MacLean	11 Jul
Terry Ryan	20 Jun	James Parton	18 Jul

- Andrea Stevenson, 0429 439 336

Important things to ponder upon.

Why do peanuts float in a regular coke and sink in a diet coke? Go ahead and try it.

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Can you cry under water?

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

Why do you have to "put your two cents in"... but it's only a "penny for your thoughts"? Where's that extra penny going?

Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?

How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up like every two hours.

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?

Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway.

Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast to a horrible crisp, which no decent human being would eat?

Can a hearse carrying a corpse drive in the carpool lane?

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?

If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons?

Why do the Alphabet song and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star have the same tune?

Why did you just try singing the two songs above?

How did the man who made the first clock, know what time it was?

If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?

Contributed by Sallie



## What's Happening at Molly Rose?

On the Molly Rose front it's been a bit quiet – chooks are moulting and laying about three eggs a week at the moment! So sadly you won't be seeing them in Fruits N Fare for a little bit. Even with the young ones I hatched out in spring eggs are sporadic at best.

I still have all the geese as I haven't gotten around to taking photos and putting them on gumtree. And as far as eating them goes, advice from our very own Molyullah mobile butcher was not to process them until they were about a year old. So they've got a few more months.

Permanent pens are needing more straw, hay, mulch, whatever, because the rains have not been kind to the pens and the geese make a terrible mess! Donations of spoilt hay and straw for the runs would be greatly appreciated.

Nibbler is a girl! Yay!! And she needs her wing clipped! After thinking we'd missed her at lockup one night we then discovered her on the roof of the pen! She's not the only duck escaping – I keep opening the door in the morning to find Lady Light and one of the Snowballs watching me. Of course, catching them to clip their wings is a tad difficult and knowing which Snowball is escaping is nigh on impossible, so I guess we are just gonna have to clip every white muscovy duck and Nibbler who is definitely not white.

On the sad side, we've got a few oldies who I don't think are gonna make it through winter, including Snowy, our white muscovy drake. Wonky is still wonky and wobbly but doing fine. Although he freaks out whenever he knows the people are near. I guess he's having a trauma response to all the times he was medicated. He spins in circles on the spot until he falls over so I've taken to grabbing him and making him sit so that his head finds the wheat and he calms down while he's eating. I think he forgets I'm there!

The sheep have moved on down the road where there is more grass and the lambs can be fattened up. Last night I had a dream that the lambs, geese and roosters were all being processed but we didn't have any room left in our freezer! I was getting a little bit panicked!

Recently I gave a talk at U3A on heritage poultry. That was fun. Everyone in the group got to share their chook stories and I got to learn some new stuff too. I also discovered that I'm only a few years off being able to join U3A!

In other news Broken River Writers are now meeting face to face again in the library, although we are only allowed to have ten of us. And Room at the Table is still taking most of my time and energy as we prepare for our Grand Opening on the 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> of May. We have our new logo, which we are putting up everywhere so I'm sure you'll see it in and around town.

Write you again next month!

Carla



he's having a trauma response to all the times he was



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## In memory of Mrs DeFazio who died on 14th May 2021 aged 97

### Whitegate Snapshot from 2005

Josephine DeFazio was born Josephine Ivone, in Decollatura, in the Catanzaro province of Southern Italy. There her father was a wage earner, and her mother tended farm land.

In 1925 her father came out to Australia, to join two of his brothers in walking with their swags in search of work. Only one of them could speak English, and life was tough during the depression.

In 1929 Josephine's mother brought her five children to Australia. The ship was so old that it was taken along the coastal route, and afterwards condemned. Josephine was only five, but her memories of the 42-day trip include massive waves. She saw camels for the first time, perhaps along the Suez Canal. There were little boats laden with bananas. Ropes were thrown down from the ship, and hauled up with bananas fastened. Then money was thrown down and people had to dive for it before it was lost.



In Australia Josephine's family lived at first in Myrtleford, at Milne's, renting a house on their big farm. Josephine's father cleared bush. Her mother cooked his lunch then took it to him to see that he was still alive. He was felling trees, and there were masses of snakes of all types. A five-year-old in the district was bitten by a tiger snake and died.

Although another four children were born in Australia, they were never hungry. Their mother was a gardener. Mr Robertson, who owned the grocery store in Myrtleford, lent Josephine's father 1,500 pounds and they bought some land.

They had chooks, and food to give away. A cousin of their mother's came to them for food for his family. While many went without, her Mum made cheese, butter, and clothes, mended chairs, and shoes, and cut hair. Josephine remembers, "Dad was a hard worker but he knew nothing about a hammer."

The children worked hard too, with no time to play. They made their own fun, singing and whistling while they hoed tobacco. Three years after arriving they had 40 cows to milk. The only games they played were cards, with ornate Italian card decks. One game was very like '500'.

They only went to school for 3 months each year, and loved it, even though they had to walk 3 miles there. In learning they caught up with the other kids.

At 21 Josephine married Manuel De Fazio. His family had known hers back in Italy, and in Australia he lived on the same side of Myrtleford. Manuel had TB, and later was in hospital for 9 months.

Josephine has worked hard all her life, but never for wages. She did farm work before and after she got married.

They had 5 children, 4 boys and a girl. The boys kept her on her toes. They lived in a small house with only two bedrooms, the four boys in one room. She would put them to bed, and then they would climb on the wardrobe and jump onto the bed.

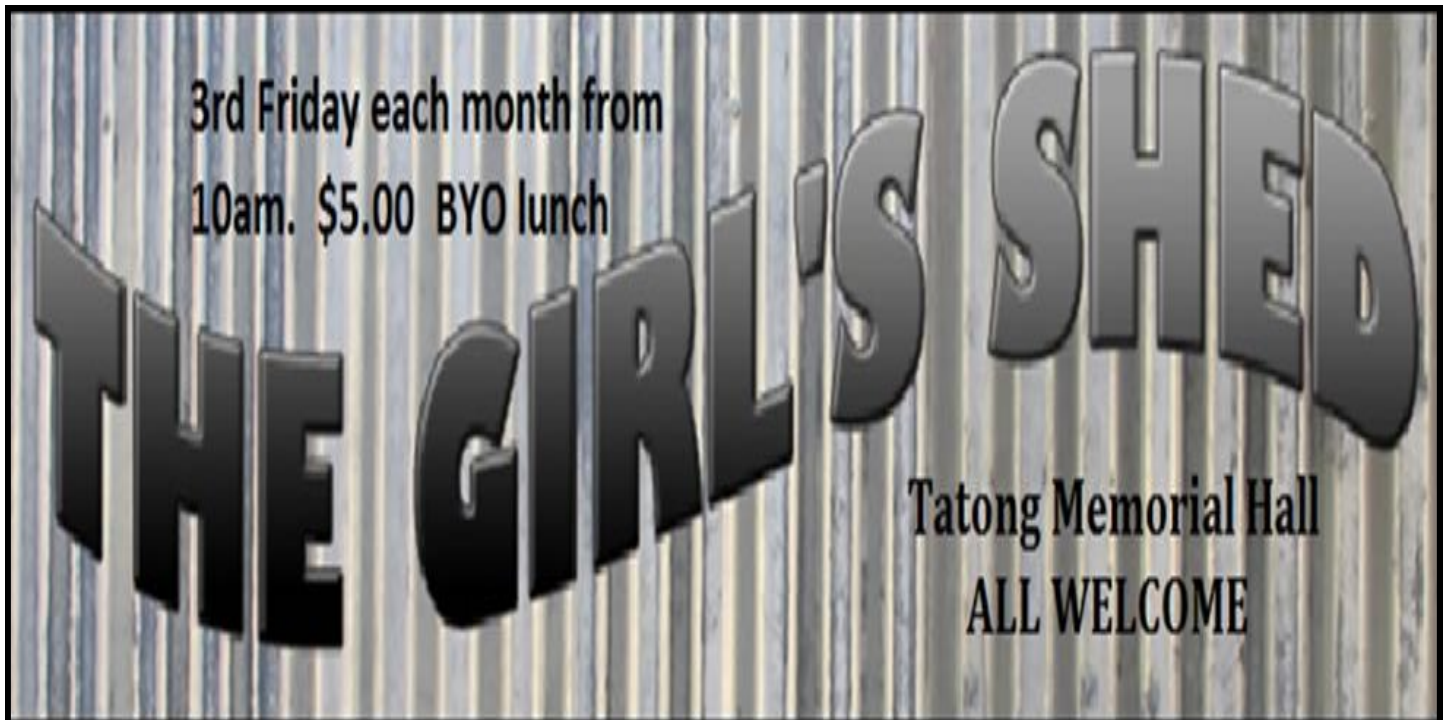
Manuel was looking out for a farm, and saw Sutcliffe's place in Smiths Rd, Whitegate. When they both came and looked at it Josie didn't say anything because women weren't meant to, but she loved it. They moved there in the spring of 1959, and later bought Charlie Smith's place, after he died in the late 60s.

When they first lived there, the phone line was a party line. Jack the operator would listen in to the conversation, and if anyone forget what was said Jack would put them right.

Josephine planted lots of trees. It gets dusty by the dirt road, and the wind really howls past her place, but she finds it a good place to live. She loves her family, which now includes 14 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. With cooking and gardening she is still working hard, but sometimes has a treat at the pokies. Her philosophy for getting through life is, "You've got to have a lot of patience. Forgive and forget. Make the best of everything."

*Interview by Andrea Stevenson, April 2005. Remembering Guiseppina Ivone / Josephine Defazio, 1924-2021.*





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### **The Tattler Team and Aspirations**

As a long term member of the Tattler team it is not before time to mention some of the background to our newsletter's production.

We currently have a committee of eight members with the usual roles of President, Andi Stevenson, Secretary, Darcy Hogan, relatively new to our district, and treasurer, Barbara Hussey Yeo, and for the newsletter production: Printing and distribution officer, me, and editor Geoff Rintala and to fill out the team three members without a particular role: Maeve Larkin, Linda De Fazio and Brian Vial. As well as the elected committee we have a volunteer proof reader, John Knapper, and with 16 separate delivery zones there is at least that many or more volunteers who deliver the Tattlers to around 340 households or other establishments in the district. The deliveries are done either by a single volunteer or a couple, so it will be at least 16, but almost certainly more.

The Tattler is currently in a good place financially thanks to reader donations, advertisement income and an efficient printing system whereby a Sharp, office type of printer is leased. The committee is currently contemplating either a colour front page or even the whole newsletter printed in colour. Having seen fully coloured newsletters from El Dorado and Greta we can't let our district fall behind! Nevertheless time will tell whether this can be accomplished or afforded.

Naturally we are keen to have lots of contributors to the newsletters articles and especially items of community interest such as births, eulogies, and wedding etc. Also stories about local personalities and events that tell us what is going on in the place we call home.

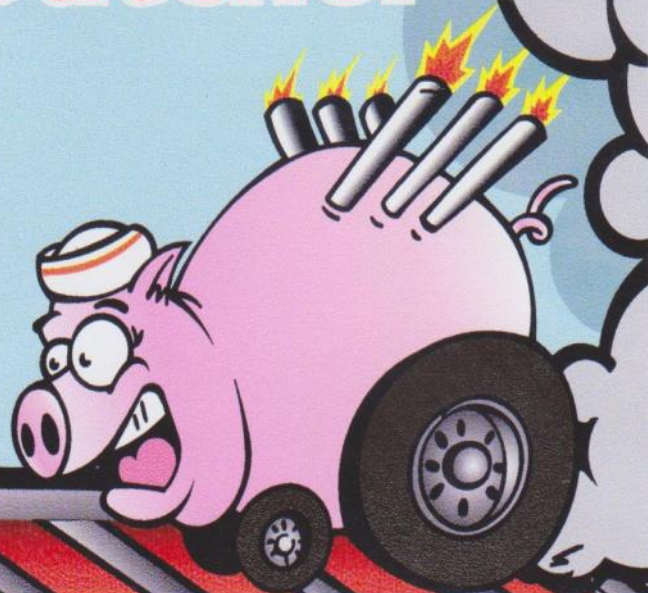
Tattler readers enjoy travel stories and while it might have to be travel within Oz, that's all the better. Just today, mid-May, a Melbourne suburban group of about 20 - 30 Pro-bus people stopped in Tatong to check out the murals. As I happened to see all the cars I decided to meet and chat with them and they were pleased to speak to the artist, not only about the art but the town, the Tavern, which some had visited years ago, as well as district industry and other news.

Mike Larkin

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## WHAT MAKES A PERSON GOOD OR NOT SO GOOD

This topic about being a 'good' person is in response to two Library books I have recently read. One is *The Lost Art of Happiness* by American academic Arthur Dobrin and the other *Anne of Avonlea* by Lucy Maud Montgomery, the author of *Anne of Green Gables*.

Dobrin quoted research done in Europe about the reasons why some people 'rescued' Jewish people from the Nazis while the majority were bystanders who turned a blind eye. I have seen other references to this issue over the years and so I am not alone in wondering why the catastrophe of war and genocide could happen to a society little different to ours.

I will mainly quote some passages from his book (I am sure, due to the nature of the book, that he would not mind my borrowings.)

The researchers Dobrin quotes are Samuel and Pearl Oliner. "They found one common psychological trait. Rescuers believed that they were able to influence events in their lives. They did not see themselves as impotent or as victims. Other Germans viewed themselves as victims, humiliated by defeat in World War 1 and its outcomes. These Germans willingly turned themselves over to Nazi ideology and the Fuhrer and while not necessarily anti-Jewish they found solace in giving up control and thereby avoiding responsibility. For many Germans theirs was a life built on resentment."

"An examination of the early family lives and personality characteristics of both rescuers and non-rescuers suggested that their respective wartime behaviour grew out of their general patterns of relating to others. Non-rescuers distanced themselves from others they considered burdensome. They closed off that which produced anxiety and uncertainty; rescuers opened themselves up to differences and took others in. The parents of these rescuer people used discipline with explanation. Physical punishment was used sparingly, instead they made greater use of persuasion and advice."

"At a time of worldwide upheaval, says Eva Fogelman in *Conscience and Courage*, when civilized norms were held in suspension, a few individuals held fast to their own standards. They weren't saints. Nor were they particularly heroic or all that outstanding. They were simply ordinary people doing what they felt had to be done at that time."

Dobrin summarises with this: "Moral education – learning to become a good person – is a lifetime task. While the groundwork is laid in childhood, the cultivation of ethical behaviour continues throughout adulthood. There are three main aspects to moral education: being sensitive to others, cultivating critical and independent thinking, and developing the inner courage to act on ethical values."

I think that I'm repeating myself somewhat about Montgomery but having just finished the book mentioned above, it is worth another rave about her and her heroine Anne. The books are revered by millions world-wide, including me. Within the character and personality of Anne is a person who, while not perfect, demonstrates the model of what most of us really would like to be. I put the ability of the author to depict such a person down to her discoveries of those qualities within her own nature. Like Anne, Montgomery was virtually orphaned when her mother died young and her father left her with her grandparents where there were no siblings or playmates till she was 8 years old. She lived partly in her imaginative world

and that of nature within which she found mystical communion and great joy. This is reflected in her books which are filled with vivid descriptions of the glorious natural world on Canada's Prince Edward Island. It is not just the natural world that is glorious but the unspoiled, original nature which resides within every person. Anne personifies these natural qualities such as consistent loving kindness, integrity and beauty. The author did not say that Anne was so much, physically beautiful, but that she radiated a beauty of a deeper and broader kind.

Unusually, it seems for a novelist, Montgomery placed a brief description of Anne's nature in the Book *Anne of Avonlea* and it went thus: "*Anne and her best male friend Gilbert are idly chatting about their dreams and goals when Gilbert said: "... I would like to add to the sum of human knowledge ... "Anne spoke dreamily, in reply, "I'd like to add some beauty to life." "I don't exactly want people to know more ... though I know that is the noblest ambition ... but I'd like them to have a pleasant time because of me ... to have some little joy or happy thought that never would have existed if I hadn't been born."*

"*I think you're fulfilling that ambition every day," said Gilbert admiringly.*

*And he was right. Anne was one of the children of light by birthright. After she had passed through a life with a smile or a word thrown across it like a gleam of sunshine the owner of that life saw it, for the time being at least, as hopeful and lovely and of good report."*

For me the character of Anne is no fantasy, she is fully human and represents that which is within the reach of every person given the circumstances, and the willingness to act upon the clues left by the great teachers and writers of history.

Mike Larkin

## MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA. APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR 2021

Congratulations to Joshua McCall who won the Regional Victoria Apprentice of the Year award

at the 2021 Master Builders Victoria Apprentice of the Year Awards held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May at Marvel Stadium.

Josh is employed by Shane and Janine Lewis Builders, Benalla. Shane said Josh has incredible passion and exceptional skills, so when you combine this with his wonderful work ethic, he is a great asset to their business. He listens and improves every day so we are thrilled he has taken out this award.

Congratulations must also go to Shane for training Josh with his skills and knowledge of the building craft.

In March this year Josh was also named North East Victoria Regional Apprentice of the Year by Master Builders Victoria.

Joan Lewis







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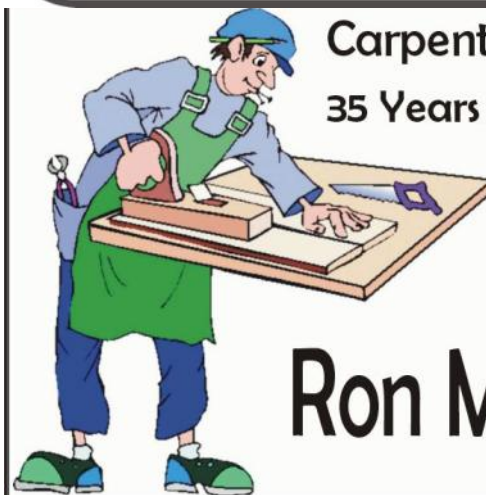
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Brian Vial presents an article written by a relative of his, of life just to our North, probably in 1938.

## A New Guinea Journey

by Leigh Vial; from the *Geographical Magazine*,  
March 1942                      Part 2

The day for us began at five, an hour before daylight, when everyone got up, had breakfast and broke camp. Soon after daybreak we moved off, and had the first rest about nine, and then rested more and more frequently as the carriers tired. Much of the travelling was across steep valleys, and often at the end of eight hours' march the previous camp could be seen only four or five miles away by airline, but there were many thousands of feet of climbing up and down in between. Camp was made

between noon and 2pm to give the local people time to come to us and bring food. At five the food was arranged in thirty equal piles and issued, and if we had a pig it was butchered and apportioned. At six the police paraded and watches were posted for the night.

Besides enabling an early start, and so an early camp, waking everyone an hour before daylight was a safeguard against surprise attack at dawn, which is the favourite hour with many tribes. This precaution, and the nightly posting of watches, were both unnecessary; we saw no sign of hostility and had an excellent reception from the people throughout.

On the ridge a mile or two above one of our camps we found a peculiar arch across the track. At the feet of the arch, in little shelters to protect them from the weather, were flat stones set in the ground and painted in various designs. The arch itself was of wood and through it two long spears

pointed outward. The natives who were guiding us said the arch was to keep away their enemies from across the river. The stones were magical, and any enemy coming through the arch would be affected by them, become ill, and die. An arch like this seemed a most useful thing to have, especially in the present state of world affairs.

I asked if it was effective, would not their enemies ignore it or go around it? "Oh no," they said, "they come along the track and see it and are so afraid that they run away at once."

When we came to the Jimi River it was in flood, and the bridge that our guides expected to find had been washed away. The river was roaring through a gorge, carrying tree-trunks and debris, and we saw the body of a drowned woman on the bank. We scrambled along the side to another bridge, which was old and in a bad state. It was made of lawyer vine, three bundles of vines in the shape of a V. One walked on the lower bundle and held the two upper ones. The cane was old and brittle, and some of the strands had broken. The carriers looked at

it and said that they would not cross it. They were all mountain men, unable to swim, and nervous of bridges and rivers. Perhaps we could have strengthened it with fresh vine, but that would have taken two or three hours, finding the vines and getting them into position, and there was the usual food problem – we had to reach a village before nightfall. The bridge looked as if it would stand our passage, so after trying it the police and I took the cargo across, a slow job as only one man could be on it at once, and he had to move with care. The carriers, finding themselves left, plucked up enough courage to cross. The last man over was a native constable and when he was in the middle one of the bundles of vines broke completely but he nonchalantly continued on the remaining two.

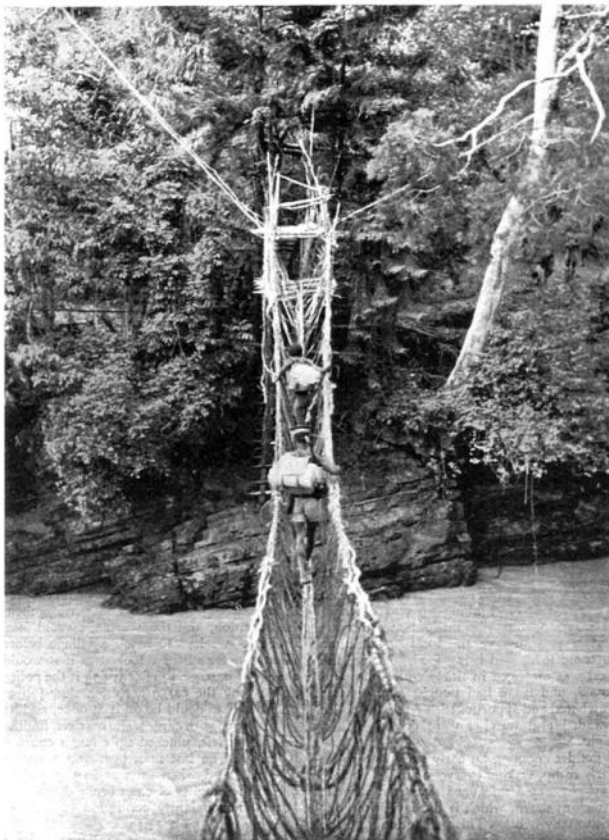
Whenever we camped in a village hundreds of villagers gathered to watch everything we did. They were a noisy, laughing crowd, shouting with glee at the sight of what to them were unusual things. The way we converted small bundles of tent flies into large weatherproof rooms amazed them, and closing and opening my telescopic camera tripod was always good for a gasp of astonishment and a laugh. I remember in one village, wanting to have a bath out of a bucket, I shooed the people away from the door of the tent, but they kept returning and peering inside. An old man, to whom I had given a present of a looking-glass, seemed to understand what I wanted, and speaking angrily to the others, fastened some leafy branches across the doorway to prevent anyone looking in, but crawled under them and sat down inside to watch me himself. We noticed, as we moved up the valley, that the ditched, 'chessboard' gardens became more common.

Another change was in the appearance of the people. In the upper part of the valley they were much better decorated than in the

Ganz, and wore head-dresses of cassowary or bird of paradise feathers, and many shells on the face and chest. A warrior in full decoration was fine sight with his bright feathers, white cowrie shells on a dark skin, and gleaming mother of pearl on his face and chest.

The ovens that we saw near each hut were constant reminders that this was the Stone Age. They were either holes in the ground, or large wooden pots which were filled with heated stones and food in alternate layers. The only other way of cooking, putting the food in the ashes of the fire, is used for hurried meals. No method of boiling food is known.

Often the villagers offered to help carry the cargo, and were given the heavier loads, which would be difficult to steal. Bush knives and tomahawks had to be watched carefully, and the natives were not allowed to carry them; the temptation to steal would be great, and one successful theft leads to others, and may lead to an attack on the party. Usually after an hour or two the temporary carriers would tire, be given cowrie shells or salt, and go back.



*Suspension bridges are often the only means of crossing the swift mountain rivers. The two pines at the end of this bridge over the Wagi River were specially planted to support it*

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The Chimbu Valley carries a large population on its steep sides; their gardens and plantations cover the lower slopes of the mountains

All photographs by Leigh Vial

After leaving the Ganz the level of the country rose, and nearing the head of the Jimi our camps were at five and six thousand feet. In the mornings we could see ahead of us Mount Wilhelm, the highest mountain in the Territory, with its many rocky peaks reaching over 14,000 feet. To the south-west of it was another high mountain, Herbert, and between the two was a pass of 11,000 feet, where a native trade route led back to the plateau.

We camped at the last settlement below the pass, and bought as much food as we could for the journey over the range. The natives said that they did it in one day, but with carriers we expected to take two. Next day we reached the top in eight hours and camped, hoping to obtain a view and compass bearings in the morning. It was foggy and raining steadily, and the carriers, exhausted after the climb, were dispirited and had to be driven into putting up shelters for themselves. Even the police were grumbling, and in the evening I overheard one say, "Oh, why wasn't I born a girl? Then I would have stayed in my village and not have joined the police, and not be here now." The laughter that followed this showed that things were not as bad as they seemed.



It rained all night and next morning it was still foggy and raining, so we began the long descent to the Koronigi River and the plateau.

We plunged and slipped down the steep track, gradually finding signs of humans – a snare for opossums on a branch across the track, a glimpse through the mist of a garden clearing down the valley, or footprints of pigs roaming up the mountain from a native's house below.

About 2pm we reached the first settlement, where friends of the carriers brought us sugarcane and helped with the loads. They shouted the news of our arrival from house to house down the valley. For the rest of the afternoon it was easier marching along better tracks leading to the flat open Wagi Valley and Chimbu Post, the end of the patrol. But all this seemed anti-climax; for the journey was over when, coming out beneath the clouds on the mountain-top, we saw in the distance, green and sunny, the familiar country near Chimbu, with its gardens and copses of casuarinas, and the carriers sang as we hurried down towards it.

Many thanks to Barbara Hussey-Yeo for typing this out.

## TATONG HALL TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

The Tatong Memorial Hall Committee of Management will celebrate this great occasion on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021 commencing at 2.00pm with a historical display, giving the opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours, and also meet new community members.

A high tea will be served at 3.00pm.

This is an occasion to celebrate the great foresight of the community of that time who had faith in the future enabling the locals to enjoy the fruits of this foresight over the next 50 years and indeed for future generations.

This is a community event and everyone is welcome to attend this historic afternoon.

For more information and to advise of your attendance for catering, please phone 0429877414 or 0419321630 .

We look forward to seeing you there.

The original hall was built in 1905 and served the community well for over 60 years The Hall Committee then decided it was time to upgrade.

This event was to have taken place on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020 but due to covid restrictions the Committee had to postpone it.

From The Benalla Ensign Wednesday September 2, 1970

*"An occasion Tatong will always remember"*

The new hall was officially opened on Friday 28 August 1970 with over 500 people attending to celebrate the occasion. Cr Jensen, Shire President when opening the Hall said Tatong could now boast the *"best hall in the Shire"*.

## CFA Meeting & Elections

Elections of Mandatory Office Bearers and Optional Functional roles.

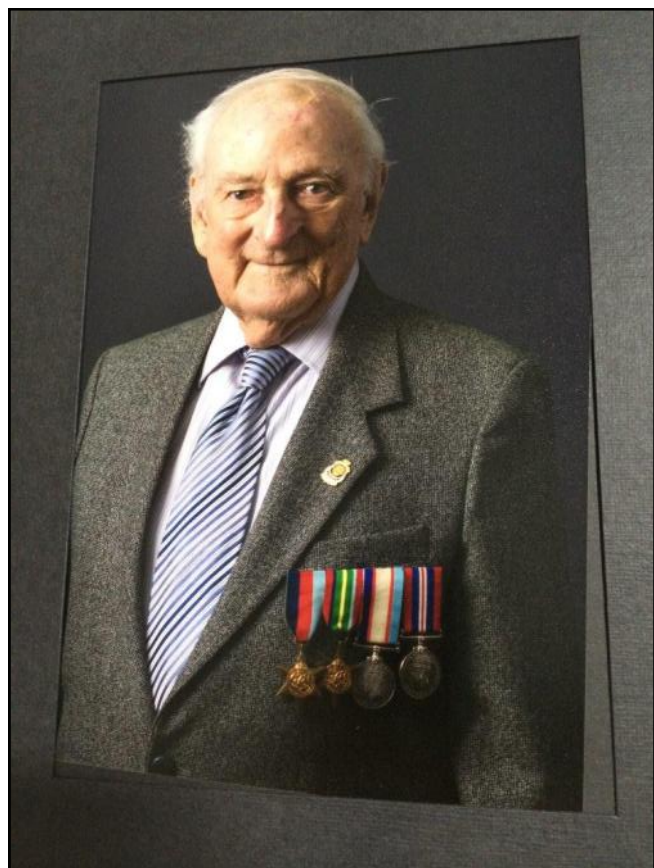
This includes positions of Captain, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Lieutenants and Secretary.

Date: Tuesday, 10th August 2021

Time: 6pm for Section 29 followed by the Election at 7pm

Venue: Tatong Recreation Reserve

## LEST WE FORGET COLIN HANDCOCK &amp; THANKYOU



I have been asked to provide an excerpt of the eulogy told for our father. Colin's family would like to take the opportunity to say thank you for the overwhelming level of support that continues to be received.

Colin Reginald William Handcock was born on 30 September 1921. 100 years ago, Nana would have been 3 months pregnant with our Dad. So, he did make 100 and 3 months!

Dad's story is worth writing about. His life was shaped by the events that he would come to experience. He started life as the second son of Frank and Esme Handcock. Lloyd his brother had already predeceased him passing as a babe. There were six brothers. Lloyd, Colin, Leon, Russell, Graeme & Stuart. Stuart too passed as a babe. He grew up with his 3 brothers. Dad's father was one of the 8 brothers from the pioneer family of Myrree to serve for their country in World War I. This had a major impact on the history of our family and has been documented numerous times by newspaper, radio, TV and the Australian War Memorial. The impact to the Handcock's and many other families changed the government's policy in WWII to limit the number of members to serve from one family ever again. Two of the brothers didn't return home. Dad's father was injured on a number of occasions shot several times the final incident resulted in the loss of his leg. His father suffered and Dad recalled on many occasions the nightmares and cries of pain. Frank took his life when Dad was 12. Although the boys didn't know how their father had passed when it happened, Dad came across a newspaper article in a photo album that documented the circumstances when he was 18. He never told his Mum

that he had learnt the truth, nor did he tell his brothers. He never told his children until he was almost 80. The reason I am telling you about this is when this happened in 1933 his mother had to act quickly before the authorities took her boys away. Women didn't have the right to keep their children when there was no father and no income. The boys were divided in to two groups oldest and youngest and were farmed out to grandparents, aunts and uncles and moved around to keep them away from authority's grip. Local MP Sir John Bowser fought for Nana to receive a War Widows pension. Pensions were generally granted to servicemen and it took more than a year of persistent advocating and finally Nana was granted a war widow's pension. Nana regrouped her family and she was able to bring her boys up on her own. This did not go unnoticed by her eldest living son Colin.

Dad had an interesting life journey. At 3 years of age he was with his family travelling in a model T Ford around Koo Wee Rup when the car hit a pothole and Dad was thrown from the car; both legs were broken. He was taken to a Melbourne hospital and when trying to treat him they thought to distract him by putting earphones on him so he could listen to the radio. It was reported in the Argus his reaction which was "Iza scared; Iza hear people from nowhere'

He recalled fun times with the family; all of course hop growers and the extended family are still are on the pioneer land holding. They'd fish, hunt, swim, ride.... He recalls when they lived at Boggy Creek being put on the horse with his brothers to go to school at Myrree. They were all young and would ride bareback and unaccompanied. His granny would heat rocks, put them inessian bags for them to hold. An attempt to keep them warm on cold winter mornings; then smack the horse on the rear and off they'd go.

After the family were brought back together and life became routine Nana bought him a Malvern Star bicycle. He would ride from Wangaratta to everywhere..... Chiltern, Winton, Myrree, Whitfield, Bright, Beechworth and Stanley to visit his many aunts, uncles and cousins or just to ride on his own. He'd fish. He'd explore; he'd contemplate. I said why did you ride so far, he said I wanted to see what was out there, what the world looked like. He was at home in Meldrum Street one day when a family friend Daniel Harvey, an agricultural implement manufacturer, came to visit. Dad was drawing a steam train from a picture perfectly to scale. Dan said, "how do you do that?" Dad said it's just proportionate scale. Dan said you can come and work for me. He finished school, and at 18 moved to Melbourne to work for Dan Harvey Pty Ltd as a draughtsman drawing designs for agriculture machinery and seed equipment for the Allis Chalmers tractor. This broaden to many makes and models. Nana took her sons to the Anglican Cathedral in Wangaratta but when Dad moved to Melbourne, he chose the Church of Christ in Box Hill and joined the youth group. Many a staff member at Coinda would hear him repeatedly say "I walked in and looked around and saw this girl and boom my heart was all hers" and that lady of course was Shirley May Rogerson.

Dad finished with Dan Harvey and started working for Vacuum Oil Company. WWII was declared. Dad & Mum, courting, learnt this when with several



members of the youth group from the church were on the train and at each station someone would lean out or jump off and scream out "what's the news" and someone would scream back "nothing yet" and this happened for a few stops until they reach Hartwell to learn the World was at war again.

Mum wanted to get married. Dad was adamant he would sign up. When endeavoring to do so he was rejected as he worked in essential services. He was needed at home. Dad persisted and after two years his boss signed him off and he signed up. Mum also persisted but Dad said no we must wait I won't leave you a widow probably with a baby. He'd seen how that played out. Mum continually persisted and they were married whilst Dad was on leave in 1944, then back to war! Dad served from 1941 to war's end.

He served in PNG and Bougainville. He was initially in 31 Camouflage unit but once the Japanese air force had been destroyed, the unit was no longer required. He was transferred to the 15th field company as an engineer. He served building numerous roads and bridges ahead of the front line in enemy territory. We still have the maps & drawings. The book Mad Mick's Mob is about Dad's Unit an interesting read. He returned home in 1946 - many soldiers brought trophies home and left their kits. Dad scrounge through the abandoned kits and brought enough tobacco home for 18 months! He signed up for the soldier retraining program to do Engineering. To do the course through Melbourne University his only option was to attend the Mildura campus. Mum was still working for Boeing and was on man's wages, so he chose to do a double diploma at Swinburne in civil and mechanical engineering and to remain in Melbourne with Mum. He said one semester he did 12 exams.

Dad gained employment with Australian Paper Mills (APM) now known as Amcor Ltd. He was at the forefront of the technology and industrial post war boom. They designed paper and cardboard packaging all sorts heavy duty, large to small boxes. They designed tissues and he was on the team that designed how they would come out of a box and separate. He kept the first sample produced in his wallet for decades but one of his children was to use it eventually. The design team were on a higher salary than their bosses they were the backbone of the company. When he visited Fairfield many years later he asked when pointing to a book in the library "do you ever refer to this book" response being "oh yeah all the time" Dad said those initials on the book CRH well that's me. It took him six months to write this book. No computers at that time so whenever there was a change in the production process he'd have to recalculate completely. He wrote the book as a reference tool to provide the processes to recalculate the flow rates for all liquid systems in the paper mill. Flow rates changed for different viscosities. His book detailed the process to adjust all flow rates even just to speed up the mill.

***Continued next edition***

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Barry Lewis who officiated in his 200<sup>th</sup> game on 17<sup>th</sup> April. Well done on your milestone and service to umpiring.

Barry umpires the Ovens and Murray Football League, the Tallangatta Football League and the Ovens and King Football League with the AFL North East Border Umpires.

He was very involved in the Tatong Football and Netball Club for 62 years in various roles as a player and official before joining the Umpires Group.

Barry also umpired with his grandson Flynn Lewis who is a boundary umpire. This was a very special day for both of them. Flynn is Shane & Janine's son.



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Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2011	107	177.3	65.0	36.1	62.9	47.1	84.5	81.0	67.3	32.0	88.3	46.3	894.7
2012	82.5	94.0	184.9	18.1	35	57.6	115.8	92.1	35.5	34	28	30.1	773.6
2013	1.8	52.4	85.5	8.4	43.0	60.1	112.1	141.1	61.2	27.5	26.2	65.3	684.6
2014	33.9	16.4	86.4	89.6	82.8	146.5	98.8	9.8	68.5	20.4	58.5	64.2	775.8
2015	44.7	29.1	5.7	87.4	70	33.7	97.3	69.4	25.7	13.7	55.5	81.7	613.9
2016	69.7	11.9	36.9	38.5	117.2	110.5	142.8	108.4	172.1	91.4	50.1	101.3	1050.8
2017	67.6	36.2	49.1	61.7	52.5	6.5	92.1	112.4	23.9	100.1	29.3	118.9	760.3
2018	34.3	6.4	24.9	13.7	49.8	67.2	52.8	81.2	25.1	22.3	75	73.1	525.8
2019	27.7	13.2	23.8	22.7	105	72.9	83.7	49.4	51.3	34.9	37.9	40.8	563.3
2020	63.6	35.6	88.4	207.2	53	77	43.5	66.8	49.4	132	34.1	40.7	891.3
2021	76.6	47.8	39.6	8.2									172.2

### WEATHER IN THE TATONG TOWNSHIP

Finally some much needed rain for May which at the 15<sup>th</sup> reads 36.2 in the rain gauge. At this same time in April there was only 6.5mm and for the whole of April only 8.2mm.

Mike Larkin

### Yet more personal observations. On ...

**Tree changers** - With more and more people 'escaping' from Melbourne to live in regional areas, might we see more and more demands to 'upgrade' our regions to make them more like Melbourne? This would surely negate some of the reasons the region was attractive to start with (?). I call it 'airport syndrome'? That is when people buy next to an airport and then want it closed down because of noise. One can often tell where they live because cameras go up and the gate gets padlocked (paranoia?).

**The good (?) ol' days** - 'When I were a lad' Mum would always buy clothing and footwear a tad on the big size. She would accompany the purchase with, "it's got a bit of growing room in it" or "he'll grow into it". Having aged somewhat since then, I now need to buy things a bit on the big side, telling myself, "the way I'm going, I'll grow into it".

### Rainfall

Rainfall is measured in millimetres (mm) not millilitres (ml) just as it was once measured in inches not pints.

Once upon a time I could wash the windows or the car, hang the washing out or leave a car window down – those things don't seem to make it rain anymore.

### Exercise -

A GP once told a group I was in, "we are all born with a certain number of heartbeats and I'm not going to waste any of them on exercise."

Whenever I get the urge to exercise, I lie down till it passes.

"Did you say exercise? Wash your mouth out – with chocolate!"

**Assumptions** - One should never assume – it makes an ASS out of U and ME.

**Hypocrites (?)** - Again I say that those asserting their faith most strongly (especially some politicians) are so often the ones that act in the least Christian and cruellest ways.

**Budget night presentations etc** – why bother? Everything is 'strategically' leaked in the weeks leading up to the day.

**Major award presentations** – there needs to be another category – an award for the best plastic surgeon.

**Ageing** – The thought of growing old never bothered me once upon a time – now, it terrifies me!

**Conspiratoriality** – a new phenomenon growing as the number of conspiracy theories increases (put conspiratoriality into your favourite search engine for more).

**Disappearing 't's** – as well as more and more people saying "impordant", I now hear "warder" instead of water – gee, I can whinge, can't I?

**Where pollies' priorities seem to be** – the recent announcement to finance the building of a gas-fuelled power generator, confirms to me that their main concerns are to look after their donors and to get re-elected.

John Knapper

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**Format for Tattler Submissions**

The Tatong Tattler is set up in Microsoft Publisher.

**Text** can be submitted in the body of an email; or in file formats such as .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .txt.

**Photos** (as jpgs) can be attached, to be laid out by editor.

If your layout is important, submitting your work in MS Publisher is ideal. (*The Editor may need to adjust your layout.*) If laid out in a **Word** document, the text & photos will need to be copied into Publisher; however the Editor will have an idea of your preferred layout.

The content of a PDF file can be difficult to extract.

If you require help, contact one of the Tattler committee.

**DEADLINE**

The Tattler Deadline is end of the **20th of the month.**

Submit via e-mail to tatongtattler@yahoo.com.au

or post to: Darcy Hogan,  
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PO Box 2038 Benalla West 3672.

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- ▲ Left in the Locked Box by the Tavern
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