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Edition 343

Historical Shed Art Underway

Mike Larkin is nearing completion of another wall art in the Tatong area. He has been commissioned by Robyn Hughs, the daughter of late farmer, Keith Hughs to paint an artwork of Keith from a photograph taken in 1948 demonstrating to observer, Rodney M Bride, usage of his powerful timber saw. The backdrop includes his trusted kelpie, livestock and the Tatong Valley hills.

Mike is enjoying his work on this art piece. He knew Keith well over many years and particularly loves the historical significance, blending colours to suit the environment and time period.

The mural will be visible from the Tatong Tolmie Road, and on completion, the original saw will be placed on display adjacent to the old shed. Robyn has numerous memories of her time spent in this shed as a child with her grandfather, Clarence Hughs, and remembers the many fox and rabbit skins hanging from the beams. He would bring her *bobs* or shillings when they were sold!

She is restoring the old shed with the help of local shed builder, Peter Mennen, using recycled materials. Robyn is eager to create a historical legacy of her family's time in the Tatong Valley following her father's death in 2017. She, being 4th generation, returns for extended periods to look after and renovate the old farmhouse and tend to the portion of land and small herd of stock she has kept.

If anyone recognizes, or knows of Rodney M Bride from this era (pictured in the photo with Keith Hughs) please let Robyn know as it would be good to have more information about the man who appears alongside her father in this shed art. Robyn Hughs



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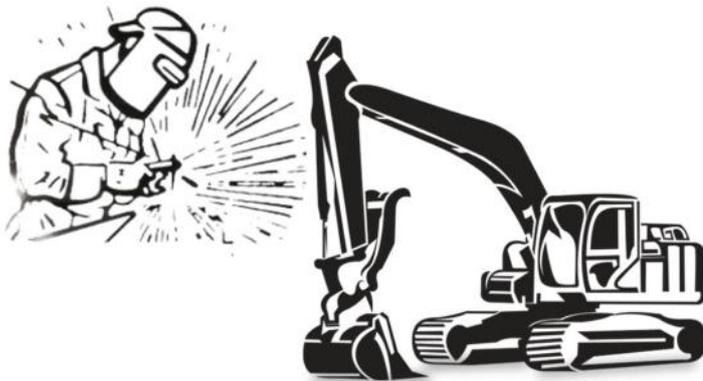
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HIGH TEA

TATONG HALL TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

The Tatong Memorial Hall Committee of Management will celebrate this great occasion on Sunday 19th September 2021 commencing at 2.00pm with a historical display and catch up with friends and neighbours, and 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 and who had faith in the future for the locals to enjoy over the last 50 years and for future generations to come.

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

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Email- tatongmemorialhall@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you there.

The original hall was built in 1905 and served the community well, but after over 60 years the committee decided it was time to upgrade.





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ODea Road, Molyullah - History of the Gates

The situation for the past 70 + years has been that O'Dea road has been closed off at approximately the 9km mark at the Molyullah end and a further closure about 1.5km along at the Tatong end. This was a historic situation – the Council had never extended the road through this section.

In the 1940's most of the land in this area was owned by the Wallace Family who owned a lot of land in Tatong and Molyullah. They used horses to move their sheep from this higher country down to their property in Tatong for shearing. What is now the Tatong gate (at the south end) was simply fenced off bush and grazing country in the middle of their holding which went all the way to O'Dea Rd in Molyullah. Picking out a way to access through to Molyullah was difficult for vehicles – the land being steep with large rocks and boggy areas. Horses could manage the country but it was difficult for the vehicles.

After the war, in the late 1940's my Uncle, Lex Devitt, worked in Molyullah for the O'Dea family and in the 1950's for the Hill family. In the early 1950's, when he purchased 926 O'Dea Road from the Wallace's, there was no passable track in from Molyullah – O'Dea road pretty much finished at about the 6km mark from Kilfeera Road. This was to the back of the O'Dea property after whom the road was named.

Lex set to, with the help of a young Bill Hill (a past Mayor of Benalla) and pushed a track through to his block. Bill always said what hard work that was – they would cut down saplings and lay them in the mud forming a corduroy surface. Lex learned a bit about making tracks during his war years in New Guinea. When they got to about the 9km mark it was so bad (and they had other commitments) it was gated at the Molyullah end and the track further on was considered impassable. However Lex, in his trusty ex-army Landrover, could now access the Molyullah end of his land.

When we visited for holidays my older brother remembers thinking the driveway started after the last house (Beard's) - some 3 kilometres from Lex's cottage. In the 1950's we never went to the Tatong end (no 4wd's in those days) as there was no easy access.

In the late 1950's and the 1960's Lex continued to push a track through where and when he was able. This enabled him to access his acreage at the top (Tatong/southern end). He put a barbed wire gap in the top fence (Wallace's old fence) to enable access if need be for animals who strayed. This also enabled access for neighbours and emergency services – however they had to use his track as the road had not been built.

Over time Lex worked on the track – he told us that one time an Army truck came through with a dozer on it and he convinced them to run a blade over his track.

In 1964 Lex purchased the property on the East side of the track (933 O'Dea Rd) previously Wallace land but now owned by Bill Fock. This land had always been accessed by Bill from the Tatong end.

As Lex's cottage was at the Molyullah end, he accessed this grazing land from his cottage via his track. With constant use and maintenance on his part the track looked authentic albeit pretty rough. I recall as a young teenager having to collect rocks during winter and put them in the slurry that was the track. Getting bogged was always on the cards. Later the Council grader occasion-

ally came through and, with a bit of encouragement, ran a grader blade across the track from time to time (amazing what a slab of beer would do!).

The 933 property had never been fenced along the road as there was no "true" road. If Lex fenced the track he was aware that it would not be in accordance with the Title. It would criss-cross the title boundaries. Until the road was put in place, the property was secured by the gates at either end. I recall Lex's horror in 1987 when the power came through and the power pole was put in the middle of the gazetted road. They must have thought the track was the gazetted road. This pole is still there in the middle of a rocky patch of clearing that should have been the road.

The monumental task of fencing the road through steep, rocky and bushy terrain was left until things were sorted. Neighbours never complained to Lex but no doubt cursed the awful barbed wire gap in which you could very easily get tangled. Anthony Hill recalls it with amazement – particularly the time his car had an altercation with the gap! Another neighbour (sadly no longer with us) would come back from the pub this way and when he stopped to open the gap, would have to think about it for a bit and end up dozing off.

In the 1990's I took over 933 O'Dea road (East side) from Lex. More locals would have used the track but the barbed wire gap was off putting. My husband John thought we should change it to a gate to make it easier when neighbours had to use it to get stray animals out or if it was needed for emergency services. This was an improvement for anyone who had to go through. The gates were still a deterrent from the rough and sometimes dangerous track. Whilst many people turned away at the gate there were those who went through and suffered damage to their sumps or got into bother on the very rough track.

In 2007 many will recall the major bushfire that started with a lightning strike. There were up to 40 fire trucks going up and down the track each day. It is a really necessary access road in the event of an emergency such as a bushfire. It was noted how poor the track was by the many emergency workers. We went away for a break later in that year and had friends "farm sitting". We were amazed when they called to say there had been about nine truck loads of road surface trucked in and laid. Apparently it was funded with flood recovery money as there were floods that year after the fires. The track was now really starting to look like a road!



In 2010, after Lex passed away, I found myself owning property on both sides of this terrible road. This was a problem we did not want to leave for anyone else. In 2013 we offered the Council that they could put the road where it should be and we would fence off our land, or they could have the road reserve re-aligned and titles changed to reflect the current situation.

Had we simply fenced to our Title the Council would have had to put in a new road which would have been costly for Council and inconvenient for traffic. They thanked us and decided to have the Road Reserve re-aligned and the Titles changed. Surveyors spent a hot February working on the boundaries and then it was over to government departments and the Council. This took some three years! We were unable to fence, sub-divide or anything until this was done.

With title changes completed in early 2017, the huge job of moving and establishing fences was begun. Some fairly new fencing on the 926 property had to be taken down and re-done in the new correct place. All the fencing had to be done at our cost as governments do not pay their share. We are hoping the Council, for their part, will slightly move the road where the road abuts our cattle yards as the road is centimetres from our title boundary.

Council have decided the gates must now go. The road is still dangerous – in parts you have a big ditch on one side and a steep fall on the other side of a narrow track. If you meet someone coming from the other direction one vehicle has to reverse up or down the narrow track until passing is safe. Our grandchildren say it is “the worst road in Australia”.

Many locals and neighbours at both ends are sorry the gates are going as we have all enjoyed a most peaceful existence. We all hope the Council commitment to the repair and maintenance of this road is serious and ongoing. The upside maybe that we will feel better with a well maintained road in future fire seasons.

Good-bye Gates!

With thanks to all who helped confirm this story,
Janette Knapper



How Lucky Are We

This morning I spent some time watching a wedge-tailed eagle – yes, there is an eagle in the photo. It flew in from the east and found a thermal close to the house. No need for the flapping of wings now, just 'lazy circles in the sky'. I've no idea how long I watched as it slowly rose in the sky.

John Williamson, in one of his songs, wonders if they know how wonderful it is to fly.

I never cease to be amazed at how much time Janette and I can spend watching our local bird community.

From the kitchen window we watch bower birds tuck into the remnants of our pumpkin crop while the parrots 'thin out' our fruit trees. Aren't the ravens amazing how they can eat an orange or mandarin through a small hole (keyhole surgery?) sometimes without even removing the fruit from the tree.

Ours is stringybark and box country which is excellent habitat for our native fauna. The shrubs we've planted around the house have encouraged a host of small birds to set up home. Is it good to wake up to wombat and wallaby poo on the front and back verandas? Most people would think it is. We do.

I couldn't help but think, “What a privilege it is to be able to live in what is still a pristine environment.” Whilst we have feral animals in the bush these days eg deer, rabbits, hares and pigs, we only have the usual feral plants, Patterson's Curse, St John's Wort, thistle etc. All are weeds that we battle with each year to keep them under control. To the best of my knowledge, we haven't got anything in the area yet that has become an invasive weed.

Australia does have a history of 'imports' going feral. Besides the obvious rabbits, foxes, deer and pigs etc, Prickly Pear and Cane Toads are more recent mistakes. Prickly Pear ended up covering some ten million acres before being controlled. Its seeds were dispersed by birds and animals, but it also grew from bits broken off the parent plant and being spread.

Our driveway is edged by agapanthus. They provide a lovely floral display each spring and summer. When flowering is finished, Janette deadheads them and disposes of the seed heads. This is to minimise the chance of seeds 'going bush' and becoming invasive.

We need to be very conscious of plants that could become weeds.

Along with the privilege of living here there is an equal responsibility to care for our home.

John Knapper.



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Garden DAZE

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



Winter Solstice on June 21 has the days getting longer - but warmer is still a way off. . .

Bare Rooted trees - are just that - instead of actively growing in a pot with potting mix, bare rooted plants are dormant and sold "pot-less". This can only be done with dormant deciduous trees and shrubs.

A small tree with "twigs and roots" is cheaper (up to 50%) than one in a pot. Making them easier to transport and often allowing the purchase of a larger plant.

Even though the plant is dormant there is still the risk of the roots drying out, which could cause it to die. If it is not possible to plant straight away it is important to keep the roots moist. This can be done by keeping them in a bag with a bit of damp saw dust or potting mix which will do for up to a week or more - check that it doesn't dry out. Another option is to bury the roots in a shallow hole to keep them moist until you're ready to plant.

If planting on the same day you receive your tree, soak it in a bucket of water while you prepare your planting hole.



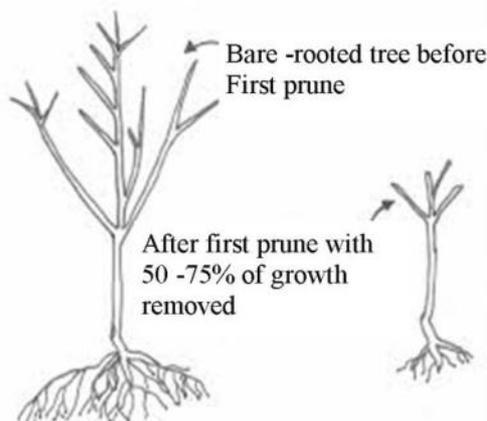
Dig a hole wider than it is deep and incorporate some organic matter. Mound the soil in the hole so the tree will sit at the same level it did previously then spread the roots over the mound evenly.

Do not put damp sawdust used to store the tree in the planting hole!

Backfill gently and wiggle slightly as you go - this will help the roots make good contact with the soil.

Water it in well and stake if necessary.

Pruning is an essential part of successfully establishing bare rooted trees! When it's dug up in the field it loses a significant portion of its root system. If you don't prune the branches back, the tree's root-to-shoot ratio will be unbalanced when entering active growth in spring, causing it to suffer.



Prune back to half a dozen buds when you plant. It might look a bit drastic but the tree will recover and establish more quickly had it not been pruned back hard enough.

What is it? Out in the garden and particularly when lifting up large pot plants I have come across a strange looking "worm" about 6 cm long and a deep navy blue with a pale stripe down its back, bright blue underneath and a pink or red tipped head end. These "worms" are also very slimy as I had never seen them before, finding out "What is it?" Would be a good idea.



The Australian Museum to the rescue - they get a few enquiries about these creatures around about this time of the year. Seems these strange creatures are the most common type of terrestrial planarian worms the Blue Planarian, *Caenoplana coerulea*.

After wet weather these exotic-looking flatworms can emerge in large numbers. Part of the confusion of "what is it" is based on their appearance and partly on their movement. Being flatworms they move on a slime track like a snail or slug's and their movement resembles that of a snake as they don't contract and elongate as an earthworm does. Their long slimy shape and prominent stripe superficially resembles land leeches but their action on land is very unlike the leech's 'inchworm' or looper caterpillar action.

Related to the flatworms much talked about in biology lessons as 'super regenerators' - chopped into tiny pieces each has a good chance of regenerating into a new worm. Slit the head lengthways and the worm will grow two heads,



and so on ?? Really! (GardenDaze has no intention of experimenting)

These land-dwelling relatives are larger than those used in the biology lab but just as able - quite a few species seem to reproduce by fragmentation and subsequent regeneration.

Interestingly they are all predators, and the wet weather brings them out hunting. Blue Planarians use their viscous slime trails to trap small animals like slaters and millipedes. The planarian cruises along old trails and drowns any victims in slime before sucking out their insides with a mouth located on its belly. If this all sounds a bit ugly, consider that the planarian digestive system has only one orifice - all wastes must exit the same way the food went in, via the mouth.



So now I know.

Happy Gardening

Kathy Z



Tatong Heritage
Group General
Meeting 26th July,
4pm. Tatong Hall

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GRANDSON MANI'S PROGRESS

Mani, our lower leg sarcoma survivor, is doing ok overall but still battling a bit with school, mobility and moods. He is now on only one crutch which must give him hope for normal mobility eventually. Maeve sees him on her weekly overnight stays while his mum Anita works either in Shepparton or Melbourne. His other gran stays other days as needed. He attends school part time still and has formed friendships, which helps as it is a new school, St Brendans. He is limited with play because he can't run like the others.

Not sure if I did mention, in a previous Tattler, his need to know that he is loved and would be missed if the worst happened. I'm sure it is easier for grannies to 'prove' their love for children while a man expresses it through subtle and not so subtle action, sort of like "well I'm only giving you a medium hiding today, instead of what you really deserve so I must love you, not that I would ever say that 'cos it's not done, if you know what I mean." When he told Maeve that I probably would not even cry if he died I told her to tell him that the fact that he believes that, is what really would make me cry!

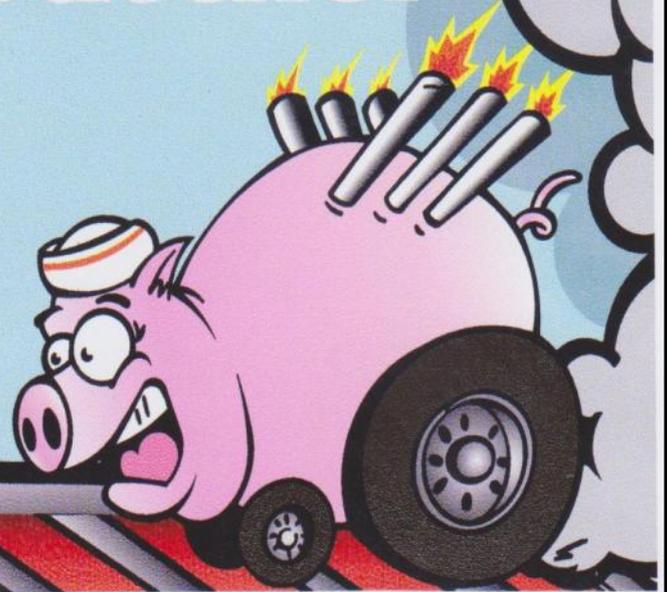
Strange how people can be so unaware of the love within families, and communities, and it will only be when a family member has departed this life that realization dawns.

Mike Larkin

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It is recommended that septic tanks are pumped out every 3 - 5 years



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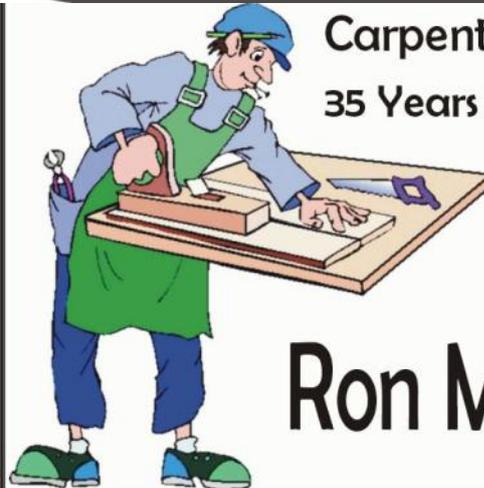
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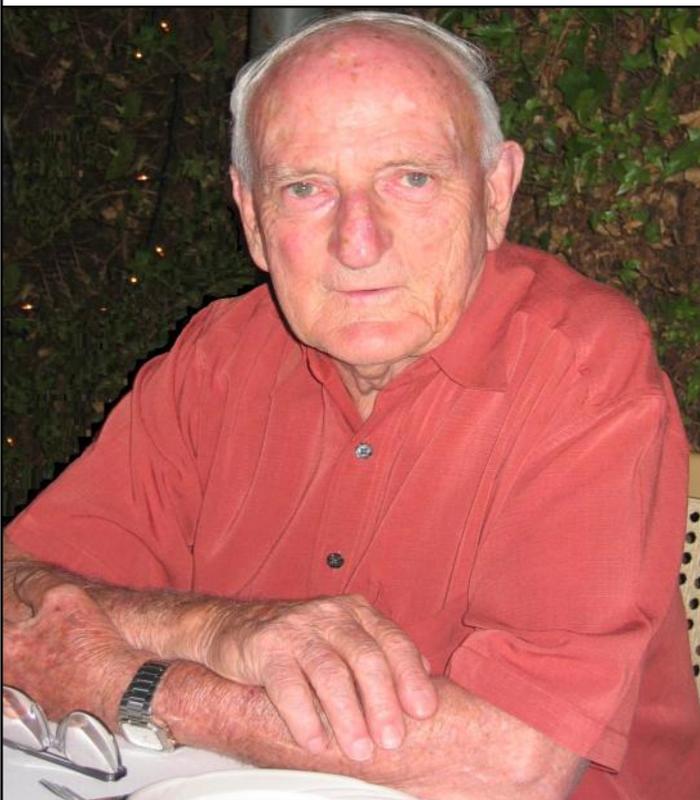
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The church was home for Dad & Mum. Their Minister, Glenys Gill, put it very well in describing Mum & Dad when she met with Fred & I this week "your mother would be going at full pace in whatever was her priority and your father was the rock behind her bringing her back to simmer". They met through the Youth Group. They both embraced everyone they met, Mum more flamboyantly than Dad. Great memories were had by many of us at the Wandiligong Camps and various groups throughout the church. A major part of this stage in their lives was the work parties they did with Ray & Lorraine Wittingslow their dearest friends; along with Don & Joan Sargeant and Olive & Graeme Brown and Merle & Graeme Basten – not everybody attended every journey. Many times, it was just the four of them, Mum & Dad and Ray & Lorraine. They worked all over sometimes weeks even months. Solomon Islands '81 & '83, PNG '87 & '91, Townsville '95, Hughenden 2001, St Philips Alice Springs in '98 & 2003, the latter was to be their last work party. As friends, Mum & Dad and Ray & Lorraine travelled to the Gulf- far Nth Qld, Norfolk Island, Lord Howe Island, Broome & down the West Coast and Canada and the Rocky Mountains. Oh, the stories the memories.

They did slow down a bit to travel to visit their children. At one stage four of us were in WA now it's Annie & Jenny and families. Viv in the Gold Coast. There was always somewhere to travel; wherever their 5 children, 10 grandchildren and at the time 4 great grandchildren were living they travelled to be with them. Dad fare welled the love of his life in 2015. Since then he solely had the joy of knowing 4 additional great grandchildren. I've recently re-read various articles written of him when he was quoted saying "Very early in my life I learnt this mantra and applied it as often as I could: Good better best, never let it rest, until your good is better and your better best."

Lest We Forget – Dad; Colin Handcock and his wife, our Mum, Shirley.



White Gate



Dates

White Gate Dinner @ The Tatong Tavern in July lands upon Wednesday the 7th. The 7th is thereby squashed. The shortest day of the year will be over two weeks behind us at that point, and the day length will be a whopping six minutes longer! But don't throw your hat & gloves away just yet.

At time of writing, more rain is forecast. All those requests from back in April are finally being acted on. The weather gods must employ the same bureaucracy as various government bodies use. May your stock snuggle together & keep warm until that tinge of green finally becomes an impenetrable forest, and items left in plain sight on the ground, vanish.

White Gate Fire Brigade Roster:

Andrew Marriott	27 Jun	Angus McMillan	25 Jul
Terry Trounson	4 Jul	Hamish McMillan	1 Aug
Les MacLean	11 Jul	Laurie Defazio	8 Aug
James Parton	18 Jul	Alan Stafford	15 Aug

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Catching up with Friends at the Bus Stop

Chloe Brosig-Welsh waits each afternoon for her brother, Jett, to arrive home from school. The calves in the paddock adjacent to the bus stop on O'Dea Road, Molyullah wait each afternoon for Chloe. They seem so pleased to see her and ... curious? ... or are they just after her banana?



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THE GIRL'S SHED

Tatong Memorial Hall
ALL WELCOME

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	66.5								238.7

WEATHER IN THE TATONG TOWNSHIP

It's all about rain, mud and dirty cars this month of June where it has been raining eight out of the 15 days, bringing the half monthly total to 55.8mm. The total for the whole of May was a solid 66.5mm.

Fortunately I have a good store of dry firewood, prepared at a time when I had far more free time than now. One reason for the busy-ness being mural painting and there may be an example in this edition sent by my current customer, Robyn Hughen, daughter of very well-known local farmer. Keith, (dec.)

Mike Larkin

FIFTY YEARS SECRETARY – MR D H COGHILL'S RECORD from Benalla Standard 21/3/1956

At a recent public meeting at Tatong to elect trustees for the Recreation Reserve, the Secretary (Mr D H Coghill) was congratulated on his remarkable record.

Mr Coghill has held the position for 50 years, and a minute of appreciation of his many years of service was recorded.

The original trustees, appointed for life (now altered to three years) were elected on May 26, 1906 – just under 50 years ago. They were Messrs M Larkin, A McIntosh, J Sullivan, H J Wallace, W Worrell and D H Coghill.

The sole remaining original is Mr Coghill, who has been secretary for the whole period. With Mr Worrell, he secured the land for the recreation reserve.

At the meeting the following were appointed:- Messrs T I Sullivan, J Urquhart, D H Coghill, J Mitchell, P S O Clements, W McCauley and Howie Lewis.

Mr T H McCauley sen. retired from the trustees, and was thanked for his many years of service to the reserve and other public matters.

THREE YEARS PROGRESS

The three year's balance-sheet showed receipts as £63/17/3, and expenditure, £60/2/3.

However, this does not show improvements made by voluntary effort. The pavilion for the footballers was erected and paid for by the Football Club; the road into the pavilion was also formed and shingled – a total of over £350.

Fencing was also erected between Monaghan's and the reserve.

** Hence the road into the Recreation Reserve being named "Coghill Road"

THE LAST OF A PIONEER FAMILY

From Benalla Ensign November 14, 1973

The last member of a pioneer Swanpool family, Mrs Maud Coghill, passed away on November 1, at the age of 94.

Deceased was the youngest daughter of William and Eliza Heaney who settled in Swanpool in 1865.

She married D H Coghill in 1900 and they went to live at Tatong, where they carried on farming for 56 years, Prominent in all district community efforts, the late Mrs Coghill was organist for both Anglican and Methodist churches for many years, while she also supplied music for local dances and functions.

She was a keen horsewoman and gardener using the flowers from her garden to raise money for the establishment of the first Benalla Bush Nursing Hospital for which she was an ardent worker. She was also a foundation member of Benalla CWA.

Mr & Mrs Coghill left Tatong in 1956 and retired to Shepparton where her husband pre-deceased her in 1962. Members of the family are Doris (Mrs Runge deceased), Neil (Yaluma NSW) and Colin (Mornington).

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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

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*A donation of \$1 per issue, or \$10 per year,
is appreciated & helps cover costs. The Tattler is
produced and distributed entirely by Volunteers.*

Donations can be:

- ▲ Given to Committee Members
- ▲ Left in the Locked Box by the Tavern
- ▲ or EFT'd to GMCU, BSB 803 078, A/C
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