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During last summer's dreadful fire season (2025-26 on) January 5th a suspicious fire started near the storyboard approximately 5km south of Tatong on the Tatong Tolmie Road.

The storyboard, describing the Tatong School's Pine Plantation (and Ned Kelly Letter Box) had been painstakingly created, paid for and erected by the Tatong Heritage Group. Members were devastated by this mindless vandalism.

Then recently, the burnt sign was removed, and a tree planted. If anyone has any idea what is going on, the Tatong Heritage Group would be relieved to understand.

We have since been notified that the sign was removed by DEECA.





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Memories
& Lifelong Friends*



FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 25TH



2PM



DINNER
\$TBC



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THE STORIES, AND THE FRIENDSHIPS
that last a lifetime.

TATONG TOPICS – JULY 1926;

Benalla Standard 2nd July 1926 (abridged)

DESTROYING RABBITS. Fines Imposed. Henry Tully inspector under the Act. charged E. Court at the Benalla Court of Petty Sessions on Tuesday, before Mr. Williams, PM. with failing to comply with a proclamation issued on 24th February to destroy vermin on Allotment -43 parish of Rothesay. 124 acres, together with half width of adjoining road. Defendant pleaded not guilty. Inspector Tully stated that he made an inspection of this property on .March 26th and saw rabbits and burrows. In consequence of which he served a notice on defendant as an additional warning. He visited the property on 7th May and counted 105 rabbits and 15 burrows. There were no signs of any work having been done.

Defendant said he worked away from the property, and had no time to destroy the rabbits, he had owned the property for three years Fined £3 with 5/6 costs. A stay of 28 days was allowed.

J. V. Harrison was charged similarly in regard to 528 acres, Tatong riding. Mr. Home appeared for defendant. Inspector Tully deposed to visiting the land in question on 2nd March, and to counting 187 rabbits and 30 burrows. To Mr. Home: he sent a notice to the defendant on 10th January, and received a reply, in which defendant set out what he intended to do. J. V. Harrison, defendant, said he poisoned on 11th and 30th March, using two buckets of apples. After poisoning, he picked up two-thirds of the baits, he had made great efforts to get rid of the rabbits, and had dug out (burrows) this year.

Walter Prayle stated that he was engaged . digging out for defendant, and had put in 75 hours digging out for month. The P.M. held that defendant had not done sufficient work. The rabbits were numerous in spite of the little attempt at poisoning. Fined £4, with 5/5 costs. A stay of 28 days was allowed.

North Eastern Ensign 2nd July 1926:

Cr A. Harrison, of Tatong; has been appointed a justice of the peace for the northern bailiwick. The appointment was made at Tuesday's meeting of the Executive Council. Mr Harrison has received many congratulations on his appointment.

Albury Banner-Wodonga Express 2nd July 1926; (abridged)

A wedding was solemnised at the Presbyterian Church, Corryong, on June 22nd, when Miss Ivy Kearney, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Kearney, of Upper Towong, was joined in the bonds of holy matrimony to Mr. Arthur Howe, of Myrtleford. Rev. About 120 guests sat down to the wedding breakfast which was served at Upper Towong. The bride travelled in a gown of brick-coloured velvet with hat ensuite. The future home of Mr. and Mrs. Howe will be at Tatong.

Benalla Standard 6th July 1926 (abridged):

Committee Report:

"Dealing with the matter of timber for case-making from the Benalla-Tatong line to Shepparton and adjacent stations, the distance from Tatong to Shepparton via Benalla. Devenish and Dookie is 73 miles, and the freight, per ton (360 super, feet) is 8/10. Via Benalla and Mangalore to Shepparton the distance is 116 miles, and the freight 12/2, a difference of 3/4 per ton, or about 1/- per 100 super feet. To the Committee, it seems doubtful that a possible reduction of 1/- per 100 super feet will induce a largely augmented demand for the timber from the Tatong district, especially when it is considered that much of the timber used at Shepparton now for case-making comes from Noojee a distance of 202 miles, as compared with Tatong, 116 miles.

"It is calculated that the proposal from, ' Dookie to Devenish or Dookie to St. James would involve a loss of nearly £4000 per annum, while a connection from Katamatite to Yarrawonga would mean a loss of between £500 and £6000 for the first year of operation. The interest charge at 5 per cent, (which is the prevailing rate for railway construction estimates) on the £92,000 necessary for the Katamatite-Yarrawonga- construction is alone is £4830 and to this must be added a substantial additional cost for interest on the expenditure for locomotive, carriage and truck stock. The Committee, for the foregoing reasons, is of the opinion that it is not expedient at the present time to connect the Dookie-Katamatite line with the Benalla-Yarrawonga line."

Benalla Standard 16th July 1926:

The ordinary monthly meeting of the Tatong Railway Trust was held at the council chambers on Monday afternoon, there being present Crs. Green (chairman) Walker, Dallas, Cleary, Day, Heaney. and T. Harrison. The secretary, Mr. Murray, reported a general credit balance of £243/5/6, and a credit to the sinking fund of £5347/16/4. The rates outstanding were £1118/15/4. Since last meeting he had collected £500 in rates. Accounts amounting to £54/8/2 were passed for payment. It was decided that final notices be issued for the collection of rates and arrears of rates, giving 14 days clearance, when the names of those still delinquent will be handed to the trusts solicitors for collection.

The Argus 24th July 1926:

Application for transfer of licence for the Tatong Hotel. I Frederick Beale in the Benalla Licensing District and I. Michael O'Halloran of 5 Sydney avenue, Geelong hereby give notice that we will APPLY to the Licensing Court at Melbourne on Monday the ninth day of August, 1926 for the transfer of the licence to Michael O'Halloran Dated 21st July, 1929.

Compiled by Barry O'Connor. Tatong Heritage Group.

White Gate News & Dates



The next White Gate dinner @ the Tavern is predicted to fall on Wednesday July 1st, with a 99.73% probability of actually taking place. Unless, like recent rainfall events, the probability slowly morphs into the Mad Hatter's morning tea-party, then into two mouthfuls of cake, and finally vanish entirely up somebody's algorithm. - *Andi Stevenson*



This month on the De Fazio Dairyfarm we have had the best start to the new season for some time. There has been such lovely soaking rain and we have planted out several crops.

We have had many enquiries as to why the Dairyfarmer is spending so much time standing motionless in the paddock. That staple of the bush, the scarecrow, is not seen so much these days but perhaps that and the very annoying scare gun may mean we have some seed still left to germinate. - *Linda De Fazio*

White Gate Fire Brigade Roster:

Henry Thorne	21-Jun	James Parton	19 Jul
Andrew Marriott	28 Jun	Angus McMillan	26 Jul
Terry Trounson	5 Jul	Hamish McMillan	2 Aug
Dave Sweatman	12 Jul	Laurie De Fazio	9 Aug

Mushroom Musings

You know that famous Keats line about autumn being the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness"? Well, it's also the season where all sorts of weird, wonderful, and often toxic fungi start popping up. (Or in the case of pricey truffles, staying teasingly hidden underground!)



Usually around this time of year, we get one or two fly agaric mushrooms popping up on our front lawn down here in Hampton. But this year, we got a bumper crop of about thirty of them. Here's a picture of just one little group with their distinctive white spotted red caps. They're the classic "magic mushrooms", but they aren't native to Australia. It's thought they hitched a

ride here on tree seedlings from the Northern Hemisphere. You won't find them near eucalypts, though—ours always set up camp right next to our silver birch trees. Apparently, the two have a bit of a symbiotic relationship going on.

Now, a quick disclaimer: they're pretty toxic if you eat them, though actual fatalities are rare. Historically, shamans would dry them out and powder them to use as powerful hallucinogens in their rituals. This has led to some interesting folklore. There's even a (mostly debunked) theory that people under the influence saw reindeer flying, which is supposedly where Prancer and friends pulling Santa's sleigh came from. In fact a lot of the folklore seems to come from Sweden, Finland and Russia - countries with vast expanses of birch trees. And, if you've ever seen a garden gnome sitting next to a red-and-white spotted mushroom, you're looking at a fly agaric. In folklore, gnomes are the guardians of the earth, while the mushrooms represent a mix of magic and danger.

But my favourite piece of trivia has to do with *Alice in Wonderland*. Remember when the Caterpillar tells Alice that eating one side of the mushroom will make her grow, and the other side will make her shrink? As it turns out, ingesting fly agaric doesn't just cause hallucinations—it specifically warps your perception of size. That explains quite a lot about how Alice managed to fit down the rabbit hole and managed to talk to all manner of strange characters. Some people swear Lewis Carroll must have experimented with them himself. Others are more sceptical, arguing there's no proof he took drugs. Then again, he was an Anglican deacon, so it's not like he was going to brag about it in the church newsletter.

Even pop culture loves them. In the *Super Mario Bros.* games, Mario doubles in size to become "Super Mario" after eating—you guessed it—a fly agaric mushroom. And as for the name "fly agaric"? It's actually rather literal. In the past, people used to crush them up and use them as a pesticide to kill flies!

Steve Ingram

The Drummonds of Samaria

Soldiers were in the last three graves marked by the Tatong heritage group. Each served in a different era. Colvin Murray joined up for the 2nd world war. George Dennis was in the First, or Great war. William Drummond of Samaria was in the Mounted Rifles.

The "Victorian Mounted Rifles" are no longer celebrated, and barely remembered, though it was they who adopted the Slouch Hat to their uniform.

In 1870 the British declared that the Colonies were to take responsibility for their own defence. At the time it was feared that Russia was looking to invade Australia's gold-rich cities. Some in the media played to this fear. And so, some 15 years before Federation, the colonials set up the Victorian Mounted Rifles and prepared to defend Australia. William Drummond, head teacher at Samaria State School, initiated the Samaria Corp, and gained a commission as Lieutenant. When he died aged 41, from 'consumption' (tuberculosis), he was buried with the full honour of a military funeral.

At Moorngag cemetery, the local Victorian Mounted Rifles led the coffin in, followed by the school children, then 42 buggies, and upwards of 40 horsemen. What a moving sight it would have been! But they never gave him a gravestone.



William lies in an enclosure beside his daughter Rosie. Rosie does have a headstone, "Sacred to the memory of Rosie Drummond, who died at Samaria, 16th Oct 1898, aged 13 1/2 years."

The National Library's wonderful stash of old newspapers, Trove, tells a little more about the Drummonds.

In 1886, W. A. Drummond, secretary Moorngag Cemetery, asks permission to cut down certain trees, to obtaining timber to fence cemetery.

Little Annie, aged 13 1/2, died of tuberculosis two years before her father.

In 1910, her younger sister Emma, on "returning home from the picnic at the Monument last Saturday in company with several other riders... was thrown heavily to the ground, but fortunately escaped without injury."

The real gem is a letter to the "Melbourne Leader", dated March 7th 1898, by Rosie's sister Gertrude Maude. It was written some months before Rosie died.

"Dear Cinderella, — I spent my Christmas holidays at Melbourne, and I enjoyed myself very well. My two sisters, and my Father, went with me.

We went to Geelong by the steamboat "Edina." The Bay was smooth going over, but coming back it was very rough.

My father teaches the Samaria School, and there are about sixteen children on average going to it. I am in the

rough.

I have four sisters and one brother. My sisters names are Maggie, Rose, Lititia, and Ellen. My brother's name is John.

We have two pet birds. A magpie which can talk splendidly and a canary.

Rose has a lot of birds eggs, namely, sparrows, magpies, wagtails, minahs, Derwent jackasses, woodpeckers, eagles, plovers, curlews, and others.

Santa Claus gave me a Christmas stocking. My Father gave me a book entitled "Daisy in the Field" it is a very nice book.

Father was very sick during the first week in December and he has been very weak up to the present time.

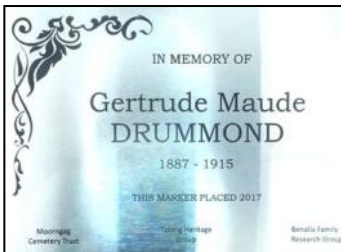
He asked for a month's holiday, and a relieving teacher came, his name was Mr. Sweetman.

I am sending some cards and pressed ferns to the little sick children in the cot.

Please put my letter in "The Leader." I remain Dear Cinderella Your affectionate friend GERTRUDE MAUDE DRUMMOND. 10 years 4 months."

She got the reply, "The cards are very pretty Maudie, and the ferns really beautiful."

Gerte died in 1915, aged 28, and is buried near her sister and father.



Vale Frank Fischer



It is with great sadness the Molyullah Fire Brigade recognises the passing of Frank Fisher.

Frank was a member of the Molyullah Brigade for almost 25 years. Throughout that time, he made a significant contribution to the brigade and our community through a range of roles, including Crew Leader,

Lieutenant and firefighter.

Frank was a quiet and steady presence around the brigade, always prepared to do his part. His commitment, experience and support will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of serving alongside him.

We extend our sincere condolences to Frank's wife Pauline and family at this difficult time.

MOLYULLAH FIRE BRIGADE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

When - Monday 20 July 2026 at 6pm

Where - Molyullah Hall (some nibbles and drinks will be supplied)

Business will include:

Captains Report

Treasurers report (FY 24/25 & FY25/26)

Delegation of Authority for Brigade Management Team – Approval

Elections (for some positions)

We will need a quorum (min 15 members) for the approval of the financial reports, delegation of authority and election.

We look forward to seeing you there.



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COME ALONG TO

THE GIRL'S SHED

The next Girls Shed will be held on Friday 17th July at 10am at the Tatong Hall. The Girls are busy working on their projects for a display at the Tatong Market to be held at the Tatong Recreation Reserve and Community Centre which is set down for the 1st November 2026.

For enquiries phone 0434812598.

Recipes by Sue



Apologies to anyone who intended making the No Fail Cheesecake in the April Tattler.

Recipe is as follows:

NO FAIL CHEESECAKE

2½ cups crumbed sweet biscuits

⅓ cup butter

500g cream cheese

1 tin condensed milk

⅓ cup lemon juice

Method: Combine biscuits & melted butter, mix well, press into base of tin, then refrigerate. Beat cream cheese until smooth, add condensed milk & lemon juice, mix well & pour over base. Before serving, decorate with fresh fruit.

LAST MINUTE SAVOURY DIP

1 block cream cheese

2 tablespoons soy or teriyaki sauce

2 tablespoons sesame seeds

Method: Punch holes in cream cheese with a fork. Pour sauce over cheese. Top with seeds. Grill until soft. Serve with Jatz or similar crackers.

PUMPKIN & CORN SOUP - Microwave

1 kg butternut pumpkin, peeled & diced

2 onions, chopped

60 g butter

3½ cups chicken stock

440g can creamed corn

3 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

½ cup cream

Method: Combine pumpkin, onion & butter in microwave proof dish. Cover loosely with glad wrap, microwave on HIGH for 3 minutes. Add chicken stock, cover, microwave on High for further 25 minutes. Puree in blender, add corn, sauce & cream. Microwave on HIGH a further 2 minutes.

Serve with nice crusty bread.

MINCE PIZZA

500g minced steak

½ cup crushed cornflakes

2 large ripe tomatoes, peeled & sliced

2 large bacon rashers, chopped

2 eggs, beaten

¼ cup milk

1 cup grated cheese

Sprinkle of oregano & marjoram

Salt & pepper

Method: Mix meat with cereal & salt & pepper. Press firmly into 20cm tart plate. Bake in a hot oven for 15 minutes. Pour off excess fat. Slice peeled tomatoes thickly & place over meat base. Sprinkle with Salt & pepper. Cover with cheese & bacon. Sprinkle with oregano & marjoram. Beat eggs & milk & pour over top. Bake in moderate oven 20-30 minutes.

GLAZED CHICKEN WINGS - Microwave

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon dry sherry or lemon juice

½ teaspoon ground ginger

8 chicken wings

1 tablespoon tomato sauce

1 tablespoon honey

Method: Mix soy sauce, sherry or lemon juice in a bowl. Add wings, turn to coat & leave for a few hours. Lift wings from marinade & arrange in a shallow dish. Mix tomato sauce & honey & brush some over the wings. Cover dish loosely with plastic wrap & cook on HIGH for 5 minutes. Remove from the microwave, turn, brush with more honey mixture & cook uncovered on MED-HIGH for another 5 minutes. Serve with rice & a salad. Serves 4.

FRUIT & COCONUT COOKIES

1 cup SR flour

1 cup sugar

1 cup coconut

1 cup mixed fruit or chocolate chips

1 egg, beaten

125g margarine, melted

Method: Mix together flour, sugar, coconut & fruit or chocolate chips. Add egg mixed with the margarine. Place spoonfuls on tray & bake in moderate oven 10-15 minutes.

I'd be interested to hear if you have made any of the recipes that I have submitted to the Tattler over the last 12 months.



Winter is the perfect time to eat in season vegetables. They are at their very best in frosty conditions, are super nutritious and cheap when in season.

Cauliflowers are beautiful now, firm with tight florets and tender stems. I love cauliflower roasted, deep fried, baked in a marinade, sautéed with garlic and finished with a dash of cream before mashing and just plain old cauliflower cheese which goes with anything you have to hand. Left over cauliflower cheese makes a wonderful soup just loosen with chicken stock and blitz with a stick blender or food processor – then heat and serve with crunchy garlic croutons – perfect for a quick lunch or serve with a salad entrée for dinner. When cauliflower are at their best and super firm I love to make them into steaks for a vegetarian meal. Remove the outer leaves and stem then cut a small slice/wedge off opposite sides leaving a hunk of cauliflower which I cut through the middle through the stem into either 3 or 4 large flat pieces. Dust these in flour, dip into beaten egg then cover generously with panko crumbs pressing firmly to coat. Fry in a mix of butter and oil in a fry pan making sure the surface area touches the bottom of the fry pan. This may mean frying individual steaks if you don't have a large fry pan. Cook on both sides until golden. Remove from pan onto kitchen paper. When all steaks are browned transfer to an oven sheet and bake on baking paper for 10-20 minutes until steaks are tender but still firm enough to hold shape. Serve with a tomato passata and grated parmesan – a cauliflower parmigiana or top with good mayonnaise, Japanese kewpie mayo comes to mind, or with a fresh herb pesto lightened with a dash of cream. Baked Indian style Cauliflower is also easy and works with left over roast chicken or lamb. Simply mix store bought Tandoori paste with Greek yogurt to make a loose paste. Break the cauliflower into large florets. Blanch in boiling salted water for 4 minutes. Marinade the drained and cooled cauliflower florets in the paste making sure they are fully coated and leave for half an hour or so. Place in a single layer in a baking dish and bake in a preheated 200 degree oven for 10-15 minutes until cauliflower is tender and slightly crisped on the outside.

Fennel is also super crisp and delicious during colder months and can be baked, roasted, sautéed or used raw, fine sliced into a winter citrus salad – goes especially well with blood oranges or mandarins. A quick and easy bake that I love to serve with almost anything is a mix of sliced fennel wedges, sliced red onion wedges and quartered super ripe truss tomatoes, mixed with a good glug of extra virgin olive oil, well seasoned with cracked pepper and salt flakes then baked until tender. Sometimes I'll add peeled garlic cloves or red capsicum wedges to the mix and then serve with wilted cabbage for a complete vegetarian meal.

All leafy greens are at their best now so look out for small leaf Cavolo Nero or Tuscan kale. I usually strip the leaf from the stem. Chop and sauté the stems in melted butter with plenty of chopped garlic for a few minutes then add the green part and sauté until tender, making both parts tender at the same time.

Sprouts, especially the small baby ones are a fantastic addition to a toad in the hole. Clean and make a cross in the stem as usual, then roast with the sausage pieces before adding the batter. You can use frozen baby sprouts for this but I would suggest defrosting and adding to the hot pan when you add the batter.

Last but not least potatoes and celeriac. Both make a wonderful mash individually or married together. Thin sliced celeriac which has been dipped in acidulated water also makes a great pie topping instead of sliced potatoes. And blanched potato wedges added to the above fennel and tomato bake – we'll say no more – Yum !

Moorngag Cemetery News

It's been a while but over the last few months a few longer-term projects have been completed at the cemetery. The first is the placement of the final 3 markers from the unmarked graves project. These graves were for Servicemen, and the markers were put in place on ANZAC day. Our thanks to the Tatong Heritage Group for this fantastic work.

We have also completed a wayfinding board which is in the small rotunda near the front gate.

If you go for a walk towards the large rotunda and the lawn section, you will also see 2 new niche walls for ashes. We were successful in a grant application to fund this project. The rea-

son for the new walls is that there is limited room in the wall by the front gates, and we need to plan for the future.

We know that cremation is now chosen by approximately 50% of families in Benalla. This new area will be known as the reflective garden and some landscaping has been completed.

A future project, as identified on our master plan and due to enquiries will be the establishment of a natural burial section.

Any feedback about what you think the cemetery might need would be appreciated.

Helen Mitchell. moorngagcemetery@outlook.com.



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De Fazio Salami Making Day 2026



Salami making 2026,
many hands make light work



Even had our own personal coffee van!!



Salami making 2026,
many hands make light work



Salami making 2026,
many hands make light work



Salami making 2026,
many hands make light work



Salami making 2026,
many hands make light work

Miscellaneous Announcements

The next Girls Shed will be from Friday 17th July at the Tatong Memorial Hall.

The next Tatong Dinner will be on Wednesday 8th July at 6.30pm at the Tatong Tavern.

The next Whitegate Dinner will be on Wednesday 1st July at the Tatong Tavern

Swanpool News

We have welcomed the recent rain, which has certainly greened up the landscape! Our combined Table Tennis Clubs are enjoying their season, and have just invested in a new table, whilst the Oval Committee at the Albert Heaney Oval are busy refurbishing the venue, and renovating the kitchen, never a dull moment in Swanpool!

Whilst the Bowls Club is in recess they are hosting delicious casserole nights, with the July date being Friday 17th July, 6.30pm. If you'd like to enjoy a range of tasty homemade casseroles in friendly company, call Marg Blake on 0438 453 040 to let her know you are coming.

The Oval pizzeria continues in full swing, with a range of delicious pizzas cooked on the premises by a wonderful band of volunteers, available to eat in, or take away. A huge range of flavours, including everyone's favourite Supreme, Hawaiian, Margherita, Sea food, meat lovers, and cheesy garlic! The July Pizza night is on Friday 24 July from 5.00pm. BYO drinks, payment by cash or card. Any queries, call Marg on 0438 295 060.

As the Cinema has finished another successful season, it is hosting the iconic Swanpool Environmental Film Festival on Saturday 11 July. 11.00am-8.00pm. This annual event will feature 4 films, outstanding speakers, and delicious lunch, afternoon tea and dinner. Bookings are essential for this event, via www.trybooking.com/DMLQZ

And a heads up for two popular events scheduled for Saturday 1st August, the Swanpool Crafters Day at the Swanpool Pavilion during the day, and a fantastic Trivia Night to benefit the local Swanpool CFA, to be held at Swanpool Hall that evening. More details next month!
Deb



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Tatong Heritage Group



Doug Brockfield of Milawa receives the Tattler, and forwarded the story on Millers in Tatong to a friend who grew up in Benalla. Milton replied: Thanks for the Tattler.

Would you believe the story on page 2 about Mr and Mrs Bob Hunter being farewelled is about my Uncle and Aunt.

Auntie Marg was my Mum's sister. I can remember going to that store in the early 60's when it reverted back to a shop.

Uncle was Pipe major of the Benalla Caledonian Pipe band and it was he who took us to Beechworth from camping at Bright when the first capsule was buried in the park at Beechworth.

Uncle Bob worked for the Soil Conservation in the 60's/70's and he contour ripped the grassy hills at Everton that head towards Beechworth.

HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED

As with most older people, including me, times have changed and usually for the worst. Nevertheless I could, somewhat carefully, find some improvements in our life-style since I was a lad. (A good topic for a future Tattler article.)

I have just been musing about the solo hitch-hike holiday I took at about 20 years of age, which is 62 years ago.

Two mates and I usually took our annual two-week hols to travel interstate but for this particular year neither mate was available so I decided to go somewhere anyway and I would find company with the drivers who picked me up, plus it's a cheap way to travel!

This notion of hitch hiking was seen as normal and safe at the time.

I knew of people in Mildura (my brother's mate's family) and a 'ten pound pom' who was a sparky I worked with in Yallourn and who had moved to the Snowy Mountains hydro project. I decided to travel to Mildura via Melbourne, Adelaide and Broken Hill and then across to the Snowy area so that I could get an overnight stay in at least two places. I had never been to these places before and as the ultra-cheap traveller I took a 2 man tent, basic cooking gear plus camera and odd necessities in a rucksack. At the time I was a Scout leader in training so I was familiar and practiced in the outdoors and rudimentary daily living.

Generally speaking I had no trouble getting rides especially with solo drivers such as truckies at a time when there were no mobile phones and they valued a bit of company. There was some slightly weird drivers and coincidences but I can only remember sketchy details. For instance I got a ride with a farmer who told me stuff about his life and then the very next lift was with what I guessed was his brother who filled out the gaps in the first brother's news, without me letting on!

The longest wait for a ride was 6 hours on the outskirts of Broken Hill and luckily I got a ride with what might have been the only truck travelling the route that day. When I arrived in Mildura all I knew about the family friends address was that they grew oranges, as did nearly everyone else! It was getting dark and somehow within only a couple of inquiries I found the people I was looking for and of course they were only too happy to welcome me for an overnight stay, even though I only knew their son. (Tragically that son and another of my brother's mates were both killed together later on in a car accident. And to make matters so much worse we as Catholics were not allowed to enter the Protestant church for these young men's combined funeral service.)

I can't remember many details about the Snowy stopover but again I found the Scotch mate Ian somehow and thanks to him stayed overnight in a workers hut in what was Cooma, I think. I then travelled down to the Princes Highway and home through Gippsland to Hernes Oak and my parent's house on the outskirts of Yallourn (no houses could be privately owned in Yallourn.)

We considered Yallourn to be our home town even though we were more than 2 km apart. It is still a much loved place in memory mainly because the town which had a first class picture theatre, beautiful gardens, library and Olympic standard swimming pool, (with 2 diving boards) and many clubs, churches and special interest activities has since been removed to make way for coal retrieval. Facebook (Meta) often has posts, stories and photos from its many former dwellers.

Mike Larkin

Gawn to Town

"So; what do *you* do with chops?" asked my second-sister-up. I was swamped with a vision of what all the chops I've ever cooked would look like in one pile.

My second-sister-up was genuinely interested as to just what do with chops. She became vegetarian when she was 14. She has acquired marvellous food skills, and in recent years has began eating meat again.

I became vegetarian when I was 17, loving Melanie's "I don't eat animals and they don't eat me." And I didn't really miss meat, except when I smelt bacon cooking. But after a year I arrived at the conclusion that we all die sooner or later, that plenty of animals eat meat, and that quite a few would eat me given half a chance. Maybe I lack depth of philosophy, and commitment to idealism.

At that time, I fled the city and went to the rural lands... and ended up on a sheep farm. You can guess what gets eaten a lot on a sheep farm. Forequarter chops, loin chops, forequarter chops, chump chops, forequarter chops, cutlets, roast lamb, lamb shank and more forequarter chops. The neck and the flaps get eaten too, but mostly by the dogs.

The first time I walked into an old farm homestead and saw the skun carcase of a sheep lying on a bench, I nearly went back to being vegetarian. But over time I became blase about every aspect of butchering sheep, except cleaning up that fat. And our merino wethers weren't nearly as fatty as the sheep from the butchers, back then anyway. Writing on the freezer bags isn't as easy, when the freezer bags are greasy (there's a poem, somehow, but I won't pursue it now.) For bagging up a killed sheep is an art form, and writing on the bags, so that the contents can still be identified if frosted up. Forequarter gets rendered as "4Q".

And they were lovely, handy chops. BBQd or baked, plenty of fat to sizzle over the meat, along with any attendant onions and spuds. Baked with apricots picked fresh off the tree. A slow combustion stove is good for roasting meat, being self-cleaning. That forequarter chops spattered everywhere didn't matter.

Sometimes one was on first-name-terms with the newly-departed sheep. If dear little lambs remained lovable that would be a problem, but they get less pathetically cute, and more rather obnoxious, as they rocket towards adulthood. So it doesn't matter to find a bag in the freezer that says, "4Q, Albert".

Merino wethers no longer caper outside my window, and we killed our last sheep 10 years ago... Well, the butcher killed it, we'd long since given up butchering ourselves. Such neat labels come back on the bags! Then there was the time we wondered if that was really our sheep...

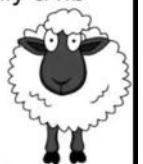
And the last time I BBQd forequarter chops, I decided I was getting too old for all that fat.

Then my second-sister-up, having taken up eating dead animals again, wanted to know what her sisters did with chops? And the answer, now that I'm a townie, is "not much". BBQing is about it. I'm not baking them any more, I'd have to clean the oven.

But I remember our Auntie Shirley grilling chops as her stand-by meal. And my mum's wonderful "Braised Chops", in the pressure cooker. Back in the days when chops were cheap. (Thought: a T-bone steak is essentially a loin chop, and a rib steak is basically a rib cutlet. But for some reason, chopped up moo-cow is not called chops. Imagine a restaurant menu with those entries under "Steak")

And incidentally - what do *you* do with chops?

- Andi Stevenson



Recycled in memory of Kathy Z



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.



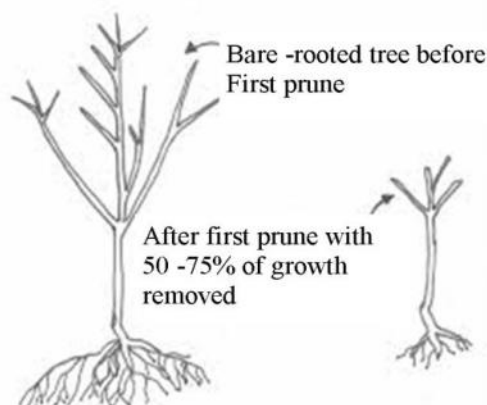
Dig a hole wider than it is deep and incorporate some organic matter. Mound the soil in the hole so the tree will sit at the same level it did previously then spread the roots over the mound evenly.

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

July 2021

Kathy Z

Wordsearch 'Wondrous Creatures...'

Native Wildlife In Our Area.

Puzzle Tip: Words can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal and/ or reversed.

S P O I E N E R W Y R I A F H
 Q O A E C H I D N A D A C I C
 U W U R A I N M O T H R V A R
 I E T T D R A G O N F L Y T E
 R R H I H A G E C K O I P O P
 R F O M X E L K N I K S L R E
 E U R E I O R O P F A E A R I
 L L N W S X B N T U P L T A R
 G O B W E G A L B E A I Y P A
 L W I T R E E F R O G U P G U
 I L L N S Q W M K Q O Y U N Q
 D Z L T O O C I D N A B S I C
 E M I C R O B A T A E K O K A
 R O T I N O M E C A L W I O M
 O E E B D E D N A B E U L B K

BANDICOOT
 BLUE BANDED BEE
 CICADA
 DRAGONFLY
 ECHIDNA
 GECKO
 KING PARROT
 KOALA
 LACE MONITOR
 MACQUARIE PERCH
 MICROBAT
 PARDALOTE
 PLATYPUS
 POWERFUL OWL
 RAIN MOTH
 SOUTHERN BOOBOOK
 SKINK
 SQUIRREL GLIDER
 FAIRY WREN
 THORNBILL
 TREE FROG

The Tattler welcomes another puzzle from contributor Amanda Greene.



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Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
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.
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.	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	99.3	154.9	51.5	92.6	66.5	111	40.5	855
2022	219.3	4.8	72.7	81.4	42.5	102.5	49.7	126.6	111.9	232.2	139.2	25	1217
2023	25	18.7	61.1	62.8	59.2	197.6	51.1	67.2	25.2	120.8	57.1	98.2	846
2024	156.4	17.6	14.7	26.9	73.8	53.1	76.7	47	42.2	46.4	167.7	48	770.5
2025	22.5	13.5	66.5	8.9	20.9	81.8	118.2	51.9	34.4	49.7	74	70	622.3
2026	0.5	52.8	50.3	40.4	54.5								198.0

WEATHER IN THE TATONG TOWNSHIP (for April to June '26)

Because I was unable to access my rainfall records in last month's Tattler (due to events following my fractured arm accident) I will include all the missed rainfall totals in this report. Starting with April's total for the month and that was a reasonable 40.4mm. Next, and the total rainfall for May was an even better total of 54.5mm. At the time of writing this Tattler report (15th of June) I have recorded a very good 85.4mm for the first half of June which, while it might be too much for some it is probably good for farmers. In regard to the status of my fracture and just a couple of days ago I found that I could touch type with both hands again, albeit awkwardly. I have 11 days left before the cast is removed and hopefully the bones are healed. I would hate to have to get a new splint after the inconvenience of the last nearly 5 weeks. Naturally for me, I pushed my luck a bit as I did whatever I could get away with before hitting the pain limit.
Mike Larkin

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

If you require help, contact a Tattler committee-member.

DEADLINE

The Tattler Deadline is end of the 20th of the month, January-November. Non-digitised items which need scanning or typing, by the 15th.

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Submit via e-mail to tatongtattler@yahoo.com.au, leave in the Tattler Mailbox beside the Tavern, or send by post to the Secretary.

Secretary: Linda De Fazio, PO Box 588 Benalla 3671,
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A donation of \$1 per issue, or \$10 per year, is appreciated & helps cover costs. The Tattler is managed, produced and distributed entirely by volunteers.

Donations can be given to committee members, left in the locked Box by the Tavern, or sent by EFT (see above).

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