

June 2025

Be Careful What You Burn!



As the weather cools and conditions for burn offs in regional areas improve, EPA Victoria is alerting the agricultural sector in particular, not to mix their prunings and felled timber with other forms of waste.

“We issued several reminders last year after receiving reports of farms, orchards and vineyards mixing their legitimate burn off materials with waste like treated timbers, plastics and other common farm waste that should have gone to a licensed landfill or recycling facility,” said EPA Regional Operations Director Martha-Rose Loughnane.

“Disposal of waste by burning is illegal. Common farm waste, like treated pine posts, agricultural plastics, hessian, concrete, metal, waste tyres and mattresses, must be disposed of lawfully and at a place that is licensed to accept it,” she said.

EPA has a handy guide available from its website on farm waste management – visit epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/iwrg641-1

“Everyone has a duty to protect the environment. That means that if we find anyone mixing waste into their legitimate burn off material, EPA can take action, and we can issue fines of more than \$9,000 for burning anything other than vegetation-sourced matter like timber and crop stubble,” Ms Loughnane said.

“No smoke is good for you, but smoke from burning farm waste like old tyres and treated timber can lead to harmful effects on human health, particularly for people with asthma or other lung conditions, older people, pregnant women, babies and young children,” she said.

Learn what can and can't be burnt from EPA's farm waste guide to avoid being a nuisance to your neighbours, causing a hazard to the environment or getting a fine from EPA.

You can report pollution to EPA's 24 hour pollution hotline at 1300 372 842 or online at epa.vic.gov.au/report-pollution



What's On

May 31 Remembering Leunig p6

June 29 1 Club Golf learn to play p16

Every Last Saturday of the month - Strathbogie Golf Club Community Meals.

Every First Monday of the month - Strathbogie Tableland History Group meets 1.30pm, Strathbogie Memorial Hall. strathbogiehistory@gmail.com

Every Second Wednesday of the month - Strathbogie Memorial Hall Committee meets 7pm in the Soldiers Room.

Enq Mary Wynne 0419 592 211

Every Wednesday - Material Girls - usual times 10am - Rec Ground BYO lunch. Newcomers welcome Ph: Jill Smith 5790 5159.

Every Wednesday - 7.30pm Strathbogie Singing Group - St Andrews Church Ph: Di Mackrell 0439 008 500

Every Second and Fourth Sunday Church service at St Andrews Church - Strathbogie 11.00am

Every First Wednesday of the month - 1.30pm Strathbogie Garden Group. Co-ordinator Kay Righetti 0418 171 439

Every Fourth Saturday of the month - Australian Plants Society Group meeting Pete 0402 882 959

Every Third Sunday of the month 9.30am STAG Committee at the Hall. All welcome.

Tennis at the Recreation Reserve. Enquiries about social tennis: Secretary Mayra Walsh 0423 475 564

Every Second Thursday 2pm starting. Spinning / Craft. Wajuna 0455 230 317

Every Monday during school term - Strathbogie Community Playgroup 9.30-11.30am at the Rec. - Sharna 0401 445 675

Swanpool CINEMA

Tickets \$14 / \$12 / \$8 trybooking.com

Picnic at Hanging Rock PG Jun 1 5pm
Green Card PG Jun 1 7.15pm
Bob Trevino likes it PG Jun 6 10.30am,
Jun 7 6pm, Jun 8 5pm
Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Assassin PG
Jun 7 8.15pm, Jun 8 7.15pm
The seed of the sacred fig M Jun 13 6pm,
Jun 15 5pm
Swanpool Environmental Film Festival
Jun 14 1pm
Small things like these M Jun 21 6pm,
Jun 22 5pm
Better Man MA15+ Jun 21 8.15pm, Jun 22
7.15pm
The Salt Path PG Jun 27 10.30am, Jun 28
6pm, Jun 29 5pm
No other land M Jun 28 1.30pm
Spit M Jun 28 8.30pm, Jun 29 7.30pm

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info@bohosouthhall.org



Euroa Cinema

Tickets \$12 at box office or <https://events.humanitix.com/euroa-community-cinema>

The Penguin Lessons M Jun 1
4pm
Flow G Jun 7 7.30pm, Jun 8 4pm
A working man MA15+ Jun 14
7.30pm, June 15 4pm
With or without you M Jun 21
7.30pm, Jun 22 4pm
Tina (Mother) M Jun 28 7.30pm,
Jun 29 4pm

For information regarding the Violet
Town Village Voice or to get an
emailed copy each month contact
Abbey Ferguson at
villagevoice@violettown.org.au
online at www.violettown.org.au

Jokes for Kids

Q: What kind of music do
mummies listen to?

A: Wrap music.

Q: What falls in winter but
never gets hurt?

A: Snow.

Q: How many months have 28
days? A: All of them!

Q: Why was the broom late to
school? A: It over-swept!

Q: What is the strongest
animal in the sea?

A: Mussels.

Contribute to Tableland Talk

Our community newsletter relies
on community contributions to
publish. We are all about sharing
and enjoying Tableland stories
and activities. Send us your local
tall tales and true, photos and
sketches, community and
business advertisements. We love
to hear from community members
of all ages. See email below >>>

Strathbogie Recreation Ground

All bookings are to be
made with
John O'Brien
0439 818 366
rec@strathbogie.org

Tableland Talk is a community newsletter run by volunteers.

This newsletter is entirely made up
of contributions. Contributions to
this newsletter are published as a
forum for public discussion.

The opinions expressed are the
opinions of the contributors and
not necessarily the opinions of the
TT Team. By publishing
contributions this newsletter does
not give its authority to the truth or
validity of the material contained in
contributions.

Readers are reminded that all
contributions **MUST** be submitted
with the name and address of the
writer.

We would appreciate it if all
invoices for advertising are paid in
full, and promptly - we have to pay
to publish.

The TT Team

Library Service

The library service
Mondays 10.00—12.00
in the Soldier's Room at
the Hall. Next:
June 2, 16 & 30.

[GVMobileLibraryTimetable.pdf](#)

gvlibraries.com.au



Your Gambler's Help



Your local Gambler's Help service
agency is Primary Care Connect.
We offer free, confidential
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Ph: (03)58233200
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arranged.
You can also contact Gambler's
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gamblerhelp.com.au 24hrs a day
for immediate support.

The Deadline for the July edition of Tableland Talk is Thursday, June 26, 2025.

e: tablelandtalk@gmail.com, m: 0400 019 607

Preferred formats: Word or Publisher files, font Arial 11, convert pdf to jpeg, images <250k. TT Team.

The STAG report

STAG – Our purpose

We embrace a set of core values that guide our interactions and shape our collective identity. We believe in fostering a welcoming and inclusive community that celebrates diversity, respects every individual, and supports the well-being of our community members. We are committed to preserving and protecting nature, and to promoting environmental sustainability for the benefit of present and future generations. Together, we strive to create a community that thrives on these principles.

Respect, Inclusion, Support, Diversity, Environmental and Economic Sustainability

In embracing these values, we foster a vibrant, harmonious, and inclusive community where every individual can thrive, and our environment is preserved for future generations. Together we make a positive impact by respecting, supporting, and embracing the diverse voices that enrich our shared experience while working toward a sustainable and environmentally conscious future.

The following notes are from our most recent Strathbogie Tableland Action Group meeting, which was held on Monday 19th May 2025 at the Strathbogie memorial hall.

- STAG arranged a meeting for local community group members to meet with Jean McKinnon, The Strathbogie Council Community Development Officer, to develop a strategic approach to applying for grants for local community projects. The meeting at the general store was very well attended. At a follow up meeting, a grant application matrix was prepared to maximise the opportunities for our community groups to obtain grants which the Council provides.
- Some of the projects for which we are applying for funding is the renewal of our Community Directory, power be made available to the oval at the Strathbogie Recreation Reserve for better lighting and an electric BBQ, Community strengthening events and the Strathbogie Cup Weekend festival.
- The Festival of Fungi – Puff Ball, was held at the Strathbogie hall on Saturday 17th May. The event was a huge success with over 130 people attending.
- Community bus service project: Marion is waiting to hear back from the Strathbogie Shire Council to further advance this project.
- Crowe advised that the Safer Roads Strathbogie (SRS) is looking at providing information for motorists on what to do when they hit an animal with their car.
- An old AED (defibrillator) which requires a new battery and pads is available for any community group/hall if they wish to purchase these items.
- A working group has been formed to organise a community strengthening event and they'll be meeting to come up with a fun way to do this.

The next meeting we will align STAG's focus with the Community Action Plan.

Stuart Bridgman

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Call for Volunteers

Our annual **Strathbogie Festival** will once again be held over Cup Weekend in November this year.

If you would like this fun social activity to continue with much needed funds raised for the community, please help the committee by volunteering your time/skills.

If you are available to help at all, please sign the roster sign up sheet in the general store. All assistance (big or small) will be greatly appreciated.

Any questions please contact me: *Deb McKie*

Chair, Strathbogie Festival Committee

Debmckie7@gmail.com

Strathbogie Ranges
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natural history

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Bogie Tree

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Bogie Tree is our unofficial Strathbogie Tableland bush telegraph. It is an email list based on Gaggie Mail and covers a fair percentage of the Tableland population and friends (both transient and permanent). Through this, we share the following information and more:

- Lifts / rides / car shares
- Requests for assistance
- Offers of assistance
- Local job advertisements
- Lost / missing animals or people!

- Announcements of social activities / get-togethers
 - Fire sightings / road washouts
 - Any other thing you might want to contact other Tablelanders about
 - Information on your local business or service
- +++++
- To learn more or join Bogie Tree, please send an email to Stuart on stuartb446@gmail.com or call on 0422 408 915



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Strathbogrie Shire Council Raises Concern Over Emergency Services Levy Impact



Strathbogrie Shire Council has joined a growing number of regional councils voicing concern about the Victorian Government's proposed Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF), which will replace the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) from 1 July 2025.

The new levy, which will be collected through Council rates notices, represents an increase in charges for many ratepayers — particularly those in

rural and agricultural areas. Under the proposal, the levy rate will increase from 8.7 to 17.3 cents per \$1,000 of a property's Capital Improved Value (CIV), allowing the State to raise an estimated \$2.1 billion more than the current FSPL.

Strathbogrie Shire Mayor, Claire Ewart-Kennedy, said Council was blindsided by the announcement, with no consultation from the State Government prior to the public release of the proposal. "This is not a Council-imposed charge — it's a State Government tax that we're being asked to collect on their behalf," Mayor Ewart-Kennedy said.

She went on to say Council's initial modelling indicates the following estimated increases:

- Residential properties valued at \$750,000 could pay around 99% more.
- Commercial and industrial properties may face 34–100% increases.
- Primary producers could see a 189% increase.

Mayor Ewart-Kennedy also raised concern about the lack of clarity around proposed exemptions for emergency services volunteers and the added administrative burden that would fall on Council staff and systems. "The State is shifting both cost and responsibility onto local government, without any support or detail about how exemptions will be applied or resourced," she said.

Strathbogrie Shire Council is calling on the Victorian Government to:

- Abandon the proposed ESVF legislation and levy increase; or
- Remove the requirement for Councils to collect the levy on behalf of the State, with the State Revenue Office instead taking on this role.

If the proposal proceeds, Council will also request:

- A review and recalibration of the levy formula to avoid unfair financial impacts on rural and regional communities.
- A guarantee that funds raised from regional Victoria will be reinvested directly into emergency services in those same communities.

Strathbogrie Shire Council will continue to advocate through Rural Councils Victoria, the Municipal Association of Victoria and directly to government to protect the interests of its ratepayers and ensure fair treatment for rural communities.

For further information:

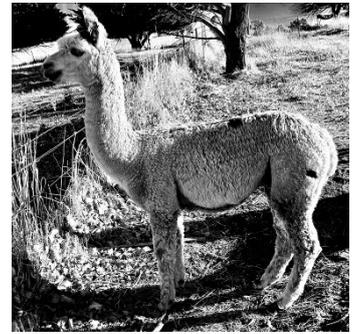
Michelle Harris Michelle.harris@strathbogrie.vic.gov.au Ph: 0419 386 082



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- Be part of building our community playgroup
- Older siblings welcome; please keep in mind playgroup is screen free

REMINDER: REMEMBERING MICHAEL LEUNIG

**BOHO STH COMMUNITY HALL,
SAT, MAY 31, 2PM**

Come carrying a chair, a story & some fare to share. Hot drinks will be available. Wear your long johns, and gather under the falling leaves around the fire pit on the last day of Autumn.

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Drones helping threatened species in Strathbogie Ranges

Drone technology is making a big impact on our understanding of wildlife issues in the Strathbogie Forest. While typically used to locate feral species like pigs, goats and deer, of late drones have been flying through night skies in the Strathbogie Ranges searching for tree-dwelling mammals, in particular the endangered Southern Greater Glider.

The Southern Greater Glider is the largest gliding mammal in the world and the Strathbogie State Forest is a Victorian stronghold for the species. Over the last 10 years local community groups have invested considerable time and effort surveying the forest on-foot for these special animals. These surveys have advanced our understanding of the importance of this forest for the species, but surveying the forest on foot has its limitations. On a good night, a single observer on foot in the Strathbogie Forest can survey perhaps 10 ha of forest. By comparison, in the same amount of time a drone can survey perhaps 80 ha of forest and across all types of terrain. The type of data the two survey types collect does vary, so the survey techniques are not completely interchangeable, but if the goal is to detect Southern Greater Gliders and the other larger tree-dwelling mammals then drones do an excellent job.

How, exactly, is this achieved? Just as surveying on foot uses a white spotlight and infra-red/thermal detection, drones do the same, with some added tech. The drone flies above the canopy, scanning the trees, shrubs and forest floor with the thermal camera. The drone operator watches the scene remotely on a screen at the launch station, looking for heat signatures of forest animals. When an animal is located the drone flies closer and uses a powerful spotlight to illuminate the animal and switches to an 'ordinary' RGB camera to identify the animal. Video and stills can be recorded and a rangefinder identifies the exact location of the animal and adds the GPS location to the photo/video. This information can later be displayed as a map or spreadsheet linked to the visual media. The drone information can't assess the type or quality of habitat and it's not quite as much fun as a tranquil walk through the night-forest, but it is a very efficient way of finding these gliders.

With drone technology now becoming affordable and penetrating most areas of land management, we were able to engage local drone experts Field Master Systems to conduct these surveys. Their knowledge of the forest and experience of drone wildlife survey made for a successful outcome. FMS flew their drones to survey 220 ha of the Strathbogie Forest and detected 120 Southern Greater Gliders, along with Common Ringtail Possums, Koalas, Mountain Brushtail Possums, Common Brushtail Possums, Sugar Gliders and Feathertail Gliders.

In one particularly rich area the drone survey found 41 gliders in a 40 ha survey and it's likely 41 is a minimum number given that these surveys almost always miss some animals. Such a high density of these endangered animals across large areas is almost unprecedented in Victoria and underlines just how important the Strathbogie Forest is for future conservation outcomes for this species. Along with the good fortune of having this important population on our doorstep comes the responsibility of speaking up and advocating for its wellbeing.

For more information about these surveys visit:

<https://strathbogiesustainableforests.wordpress.com/>

<https://strathbogierangesnaturereview.wordpress.com/>

SAVE OUR
STRATHBOGIE
FOREST

Bertram Lobert



A Southern Greater Glider detected with drone thermal imaging.



The same Southern Greater Glider in the tree



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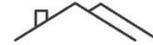
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**“Hi” to all newcomers to our
beautiful Strathbogie
Tableland & Community**

STAG (Strathbogie Tableland Action Group), has prepared a number of Strathbogie Tableland Welcome Packs, which are available for all newcomers to our Tableland community.

The pack contains information on local committees and community groups, local events, bushfire emergency information, an edition of Tableland Talk (our local monthly newsletter), our local website (strathbogie.org), a local business directory, maps, some local goodies, etc.

If you would like one of these packs, please contact:

Kath Handasyde: kathstuart60@gmail.com

or

Pennie Beard: clanepennie@gmail.com

Water restrictions in effect

In response to unseasonal prolonged dry conditions, Stage Two water restrictions will be introduced in Euroa and Violet Town from Wednesday 28 May 2025. Goulburn Valley Water has determined the measure is needed to safeguard supplies and ensure the system has sufficient water until storages recover.

The Euroa area has experienced a very hot and dry summer, followed by one of the driest starts to autumn on record. Storages have declined to their lowest level since 2019, falling to below 20 per cent during May – compared to 77 per cent at the same time last year.

Acting Managing Director Daniel Flanagan said the stage two restrictions are aimed at best managing storage levels and ensuring that the wider community is using water efficiently and wisely. This is during what is normally a period where storages are allowed to recover. “As the area is acutely aware, we just haven’t had the autumn break we so desperately need”, Mr Flanagan said. “We’ll cart drinking water to Euroa and Violet Town to supplement supply when restrictions begin, and work with the Strathbogie Shire Council to supply alternative water for parks and sporting reserves. We will also continue to closely monitor storages, usage trends and rainfall forecasts, with an eye to lifting restrictions as soon as we can. However, it is important to note that we may need to escalate restrictions if the dry conditions continue.”

Euroa and Violet Town storages are harvested solely from the creeks fed by the Strathbogie Ranges. This makes the water supply vulnerable during extended dry periods in summer and autumn. Goulburn Valley Water has invested in storage improvements in Euroa in recent years, constructing an additional storage. The storage came into use late last year and was ready to be filled at the start of autumn. Unfortunately, Goulburn Valley Water was not able to harvest any water to fill it due to low creeks flows. This storage will be filled when creek flows reach a level that allows harvesting.

Forecast growth, and a changing climate, means more investments will be made to maintain reliable long-term supplies in the area in the future.

What do stage 2 water restrictions mean? The key changes under Stage 2 water restrictions are:

- Residential and commercial lawns cannot be watered at any time.
- Gardens can be watered using a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, bucket or watering can at any time, on any day.
- Use of watering systems is only permitted between 6am and 8am and 6pm and 8pm on alternate days, i.e. even and no numbered properties may water on even dates, odd-numbered properties may water on odd dates. All properties may water on the 31st of the month. (Councils and schools can water sports grounds and gardens in accordance with the prescribed times.)
- Cleaning windows, hosing down hard surfaces and washing vehicles is restricted.

Please note, restrictions do not apply to recycled water or tank water. The very dry conditions have had impacts across the wider Goulburn Valley Water region. Several towns across the service area are supplied with water harvested from rain-dependent rivers and streams. Water storages in these systems are at record low levels – about 60 percentage points lower than at the same time last year. Residential demand accounts for the majority of water use, meaning reducing household water use can have a significant impact. By making simple changes inside and outside the home, like taking shorter showers, fixing leaks, washing with full loads and not watering gardens in the heat of the day, customers can lower water and energy bills, and help the environment – every drop counts.

For more information visit www.gvwater.vic.gov.au/restrictions or call 03 5832 4800.

Helen Murdoch Phone: 0419 006 124 Email: helenm@gvwater.vic.gov.au



A DANGER PERIOD FOR NATIVE ANIMALS - May to October



Strathbogie is home to many native animals, some of the more visible species are: kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, koalas, phascogales, brushtail possums, bobucks, ringtail possums, sugar gliders and greater gliders. Many of these animals are most active at dawn and dusk as they forage for food.

In these winter months, with the shorter days, people are also more active on the roads at dawn and dusk. Like the animals, we too need to make our way to and from the places we need to go, and unfortunately, this convergence results in an increased number of road kills at this time of year.

We cannot avoid all collisions, but we can take responsibility for our driving behaviour and reduce the number of road accidents.

Drive cautiously and attentively.

Slow down in high-risk areas such as creeks and gullies where animals come to drink and feed. In the dry conditions more animals will be drawn to these areas and road verges seeking nourishment. Driving slowly will give both yourself and the animals time to react.

While high beam lights are helpful for spotting wildlife, they can blind and baffle animals. Once you have spotted an animal, slow down or stop, and turn your lights to low beam until the animal is safely off the road.

If you do collide with an animal, or find a deceased animal on the road, please stop and check the pouch. Be prepared - keep plastic gloves in vehicle and a pillowcase or small blanket for transporting baby to carer.

If possible, please remove the animal from road for the safety of all road users.

If you find an animal in need of help, contact **Wildlife Victoria's Emergency Response Service 8400 7300 and please put this number into your phone now.** Local wildlife carers request that people do not ring them direct, as they are regularly caring for wildlife at all hours and the Wildlife Victoria system is efficient when finding the closest available carer.

Thank you for helping our roads to be safer places. *Claire Noonan on behalf of Safer Roads Strathbogie*

Quiz Question of the Month

Q: In which year was the film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* released?

Answer: 1975

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Walk of the Month

The Old Weir Walk, Boho

Railway Reserve or Boho Camping Reserve - 470 Harrys Creek Rd, Boho 3669

2 km, 45 minutes, intermediate difficulty.

This walk takes you to Honeysuckle Creek above the confluence with Harrys Creek and upstream of a weir prettily spanning a narrow ravine. It follows Honeysuckle Creek Water Frontage Crown Land to circle the holding basin shoreline above the wall. You can also discover the remains of the historic pipeline that used to provide the water supply for Violet Town and surrounds.

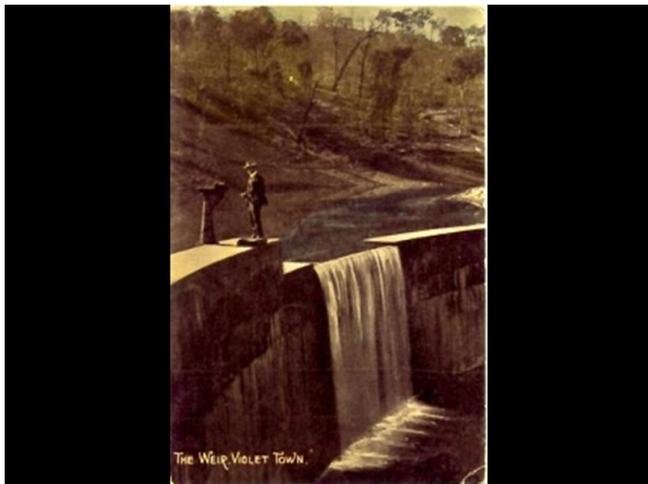
Enter Railway Reserve approximately 5km from Violet Town. The entry is not easy to spot, so look on the Harrys Creek Rd roadside for the Railway Reserve Project sign provided by Warrenbayne Boho Land Protection Group Inc. Park down in the Reserve to start, then cross the first Honeysuckle Creek ford of the walk to begin the short ascent to The Old Weir.

As you walk this section, you will notice invasive species have made their mark. Woody weeds such as pines, elms, willows and blackberry, ground invaders such as phalaris and thistles have become established after years of neglect of this once popular spot. Fortunately, you will also see evidence of the Landcare Group's Restoration Project to re-establish the original pre European habitat and make this a haven once again for the likes of Powerful Owls, Phascogales and Squirrel Gliders.

The weir itself was built in 1906. It is a lovely spot for all sorts of outdoor activity and contemplation, but don't just stop here. Walking upstream as far as the small second weir will take you past tumbling cascades beneath a riparian woodland canopy. The winding waterway spills, bubbles and gushes through rocky crevices, across granite sheets and over tree falls as it makes its way.

The walk will vary considerably according to the season. Water flows can be high after sustained rainfall - it may not be possible to cross the ford. Winter may result in slippery slopes along the way. Spring sees lush green grasses and many wildflowers can be found. Summer can be very hot and dry. Autumn delivers fungal displays. Pick your day.

The walk is not without hazards. There is remnant fencing from past grazing, slippery slopes are close to open water and the ground is uneven. Fording the creeks by foot is required. Take care. *Sean Mathews*



Strathbogie Memorial Hall Report

May was a very full month for the Hall. The Hall was chosen as the venue for hosting a wedding, putting on a ball and screening a movie. The fairy light from the wedding stayed on for the Puff Ball with additional fungus themed decorations. The movie showcased our new projector and screen, which worked quite well for those attending.

June sees a quiet month at the Hall, so it is a great time for maintenance. The committee are keen to update the website and are looking to add current images. Does anyone have any good photos of events at the Hall, inside or outside? Please email to: memorialhall@strathbogie.org *Dana Last*

The Bookshelf – notes from the Bohomians Bookclub

Yellowface by R. F. Kuang, William Morrow, 2023



Authors Juniper Hayward and Athena Liu were supposed to be twin rising stars. But Athena is a literary darling while June is a nobody. ‘Who wants stories about basic white girls?’, June thinks. So, when June witnesses Athena’s death in a freak accident, she acts on impulse, stealing Athena’s just-finished masterpiece, an experimental novel about the unsung contributions of Chinese laborers during World War I.

So what if June edits Athena’s novel and sends it to her agent as her own work? So what if she lets her new publisher rebrand her as Juniper Song—complete with an ambiguously ethnic author photo? This piece of history deserves to be told, whoever the teller. That is what June believes, and *The New York Times* bestseller list agrees.

But June cannot escape Athena’s shadow, and emerging evidence threatens her stolen success. As she races to protect her secret, she discovers exactly how far she will go to keep what she thinks she deserves (Goodreads synopsis).

The Bohomians were deeply divided on this novel. On the negative side, it was seen, variously, as: a book for younger readers, who are more in touch with the world of social media; a book where none of the characters are at all likeable; a book that is too ambitious in its critique of the American publishing industry, and, by definition, all publishing industry; and, a book that is unconvincing in its overblown characters. On the enthusiastically positive side, *Yellowface* was read as a satire, almost a spoof, where the characters assume sinister proportions in their relentless quest for recognition. Thus, the rapid style of the novel and the somewhat absurd poor decision-making on the part of June is fitting with the desperation that is, in reality, rife in the world of wanna-be-famous authors. The emphasis on financial returns for publishing companies is set against the lonely and at times deluded quest of the protagonists. It’s a tough world out there and plagiarism and betrayal lurk close to the path. When this slick fiction ‘descends’ into the Gothic, it is entirely fitting with the desperation of the characters: fame and reputation at all/any cost. A fun read for some.

Rebecca F. Kuang is a Marshall Scholar, translator, and award-winning, #1 New York Times bestselling author of the Poppy War trilogy and *Babel: An Arcane History*, among others. She has an MPhil in Chinese Studies from Cambridge and an MSc in Contemporary Chinese Studies from Oxford; she is now pursuing a PhD in East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale.

Next month: *Lessons in Chemistry*, Bonnie Garmus, 2022

Ruth Fluhr

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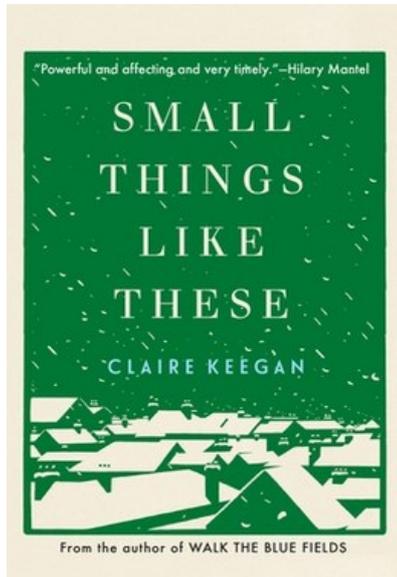
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The Bookshelf – notes from the Bohomians Bookclub

Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan, Faber, 2021

This little novel is one of those books every aspiring writer must wish they could write. The storyline, the characters, the locale, the interactions are all small, and yet a raised eyebrow, a hollow smile, a silence, a sob allow the reader to form a clear picture of each of the few characters contained within these 100 or so pages.



Set in a small Catholic community in 1980's Ireland, Bill Furlong, a coal and timber merchant, is the hard-working husband of Eileen and father of their five daughters.

Orphaned as a young boy when his single mother dies, he is brought up in the house of Mrs Wilson, the relatively wealthy Protestant and benevolent former employer of his late mother. He knows nothing about his father.

Bill Furlong has done well and has risen above the spite and bullying of his school peers; he has tolerated the strong thread of small-mindedness and bigotry that runs through his community when confronted by the very idea of children born out of wedlock. Their unmarried mothers, no matter how young, are consigned to a 'community' of sinners and judged as outsiders by the 'good' townspeople. Bill is a good employer, a good husband and father, and appears to have consigned himself to fulfilling these roles, unquestioningly. He delivers coal to the large convent which sits above the town; indeed, the convent itself assumes the character of silent moral authority for the townspeople below.

Inadvertently and unintentionally, Bill becomes aware of deep unhappiness within the walls of the convent. Minimal signs and sounds point him to an awareness of the plight of young girls imprisoned within the convent walls. He raises this troubling awareness with Eileen, who warns him to leave things as they are; she indicates the power that the church has in all aspects of town life. However, Bill is unable to set aside what is troubling him, and this eventually leads him to act.

This powerful little book draws on the scandal of the infamous Magdalene laundries, where unmarried mothers were sequestered away and made to work as servants, often suffering horribly at the hands of the moral authority, the Catholic Church of Ireland. It leaves us with a quiet, but strong statement to ponder: *the power of quiet acts of kindness and the moral responsibility we have to help others, even when it's difficult or unpopular.*

The novel was made into a film with the same name and released in 2024.

Claire Keegan was raised on a farm in Wicklow. She completed her undergraduate studies at Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana and subsequently earned an MA at The University of Wales and an M.Phil at Trinity College, Dublin.

Her first collection of stories, *Antarctica*, was a Los Angeles Times Book of the Year. Her second, *Walk the Blue Fields*, was Richard Ford's book of the year. Her works have won several awards including The Hugh Leonard Bursary, The Macaulay Fellowship, The Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, The Martin Healy Prize, The Olive Cook Award, The Kilkenny Prize, The Tom Gallon Award and The William Trevor Prize, judged by William Trevor. Twice was Keegan the recipient of the Francis MacManus Award. She was also a Wingate Scholar. She lives in Wexford.

Ruth Fluhr

What's worth finding out on www.strathbogie.org?

History

When the selectors arrived in 1877, they brought an end to the massive land holdings, for but a few. From 1842 squatters took up large tracts of land in the rugged Strathbogie Ranges and ran thousands of sheep and hundreds of cattle. Read more

Find the page here: https://strathbogie.org/?page_id=248

STAG Communications subcommittee



A small act makes a big impact.

For information regarding upcoming changes visit our website, download our app or phone us
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December 2019

Kirsty Harris, Violet Town



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Strathbogie Tableland Landcare Group

Strathbogie Landcare

Join our Bridge to Bridge trail winter maintenance program

Strathbogie Tableland Landcare Group has a sub-committee who look after the Bridge to Bridge trail along Sevens Creek below the Strathbogie township. This involves, among other things, trimming grass and bush, removing fallen branches, and generally keeping the trail open and accessible.

Strathbogie Landcare was fortunate recently to receive support from Strathbogie Council for the purchase of a new electric 'whipper-snipper' after the old one wore out. Our particular thanks to our Council and councillors for their support.

We are about to start work again on the trail and we are seeking volunteers to help. If you could spare some time to help with this great project, usually on weekends, please phone or text Peter Righetti on 0418 148 511

Recipe of the Month

Apple and Mint Lamb

Prep time 30 minutes,
serves 4.

- 1 lean shoulder of lamb boned and butterflied
- 1 finely chopped onion
- 1 green apple grated
- 3/4 cup fresh breadcrumbs
- 2 teaspoon chopped mint
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 potatoes chopped to serve
- 1/2 butternut pumpkin chopped to serve
- 400g green beans



Preheat oven 180C. Trim off lamb fat and lay flat. Combine onion, apple, breadcrumbs and mint. Spoon over lamb roll and tie with string. Place on a rack in a baking dish. Brush with honey and cinnamon.

Roast for 30 minutes per 500g for medium, 35 for well done.

Roast potatoes and pumpkins in a separate oiled dish.

Steam or microwave beans for 4 minutes.

Melting Moments

The open sky night cold can bite you here. It is sharp and crisp and penetrating. In the feinting light of a cloudless, moonless, starlit landscape; in the hard nocturnal contrast of a sheer black and white moonlit wash; in the shelter of a darkening bedroom as the wood fire fades. It stabs at you through layers of winter wear, through lap rugs and thickened bedclothes; it targets your knees, your thighs, a hip or shoulder, whichever is most exposed and least endowed with a warming blood supply. It ices your brain.

But finally, the morning comes. The frozen grass cracks under your feet. The puddles and birdbaths are glazed and crazed and the world is a frost rimed wonderland of dazzling white light, of reflective crystal and hoar. The night was worth it.

Slowly rises the sun over the tree lined horizon. Golden shafts start breaking through the cold barrier of ultra transparent clear air in scattered beams of raw illumination. Light sprites and misty wisps arise from every ice glazed surface they touch.

Then gradually, just past the commencement of their flashy dance, crystals are replaced by translucent silvery droplets mirroring the world around them in fresh formed glassy globules polished to a clarity through which is revealed in each its own individual sunburst.

As the enveloping rich thermal bath of undiluted sunshine begins, it bathes our world in a warming yellow glow, washing from our memory the cold that was snapping at our heels such a short time ago. We revel in it. We revere it. We relish the transition from the sharp-edged winter's night to the slow melting morning, melting our hearts with the immersive onset of another glorious Northern Victoria winter's day.

Sean Mathews



Fun
Easy
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Learn to Play Golf Nobody cares if you are crap!

Where: Strathbogie Golf Club
When: Sunday 29th June, 10:30am start
Cost: Free
Equipment: Everything Supplied

What is 1Club? People make golf too hard and complicated, when really it's just hitting a ball with a stick. In this two-hour session you will have heaps of fun and just learn the essentials of how to share this beautiful place with others and get around the course.

Who is it for? People who have never played before, tried it but found it hard for some reason or golfers who would like to introduce a friend or family member.

We Guarantee: you will leave with the confidence to come back and play again

We apologize in advance: for any colourful language you may hear

We will supply: all the equipment you need plus a sausage sizzle at the end

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Best of all, it's free and no commitments required

Click on these 2 links below to learn more

https://youtu.be/XPTR6fz4J1E?si=07qw6e_ww8yMXldH

<https://youtu.be/TSI2RevlyC8?si=z22eBYrp0xyltiWi>

Please phone or text Grant Pearce at the Strathbogie Golf Club to register your interest on 0448 219 552