

**Community Groups Visiting**

In September 308 Army Cadet Unit from Sale stayed at Strathfieldsaye for 4 days, camping out in the field and conducting training in first aid, field craft, and engineering and radio procedures. There were 13 Cadets and 3 adult staff participating in the event.

At the end of November the Bairnsdale 4WD club came out for two nights. Club members visited the property two weeks prior and assisted with mowing and general garden maintenance. There were 5 ride-on mowers, 5 whipper snippers and the tractor all cutting and slashing the very long grass. The club mainly used the large grass area in front of the Disher Lab for their caravans and tents. There were 43 club members present for end of year BBQ on the Saturday night.



The Avon CWA visited for their annual Christmas luncheon and held their November general meeting in the main dining room. With 16 members present a lovely shared lunch was enjoyed and Christmas presents exchanged. One of the CWA ladies wrote an article about their visit which was published in the local paper.

**Maintenance Works**

There has been quite a bit of maintenance carried out all over the property in the past couple of months. A bird managed to get down the chimney in the Shearers Cottage and caused an awful mess before being removed. All the accommodation areas were thoroughly cleaned as well as the whole homestead in preparation for all the visitors over the past couple of months. Unfortunately, the chimney repairs have still not begun. I may need to try and find another contractor.



Richard & Cindy got onto the roof of the managers house to figure out why there was a length of plumbing pipe which had come down. What we found was a lot of left over roofing material and old nails and screws had been left behind on the roof and was beginning to cause rust spots on the new roof. The design of the roof is terrible in regards to keep left debris out. We cleaned about 8 large buckets of leaves and branches from the small rear verandah part of the house. There are many other gutters on several buildings which also need attention.

There is a tree in back yard of the homestead near the water tank which has died. We will need to get a tree feller in to remove it as it is too big and quite unsafe.

Paul has continued to maintain the fences as best he can. The electric fences may need to be turned off very soon as the grass is getting too long and as it dries out the risk of fire is high.

Some minor emergency repairs were carried out on the stockyards. This is an area which needs to be fully replaced in order to safely hand large numbers of stock.

### Kangaroos

During the Cadets visit one of the staff snapped this great shot of a white kangaroo down near the Perry River Reserve. The pet food program has been very successful and a report from Wayne tells me that he and his team have harvested 6,099 kg of pet food to the end of November.



### Agistment

Kimberly and Aiden spent two long days marking all the calves at the start of December. She reports there were 111 heifer calves and 77 bull calves. There were 14 dry cows and 5 bulls returned to Shane on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, which should leave 188 cows with calves at foot on the property, plus the remaining bulls.

There is plenty of feed for the animals as the season has been particularly good for pasture growth. We have had regular good rainfalls and it is not showing any signs of easing too soon. Total rainfall for October was 51 mm and 162 mm for November.

### Machinery maintenance & repairs

There has been quite a bit of work done in machinery repairs and maintenance. Danny saved a lot of money when the clutch in the tractor needed to be fixed. He was able to order a kit online and replace the worn parts for a fraction of what a tractor repair place would have charged. Richard has serviced all of the Strath vehicles again, and carried out some minor repairs on the quad bike.

## Storms

With the storms in the past couple of months we have had large branches come down from the cypress trees & gum trees on the driveway, as well as one at the Managers House. Richard, Danny and Thomas cleared these and added to the huge bon fire pile.



Unfortunately the storms have also caused more damage to the Wool shed with some more iron coming off. The Machinery shed also has some loose sheets of roofing iron. These roofs are too steep and the timbers not structurally sound enough for the volunteers to repair. A professional with the correct safety equipment will need to be used.

Have a Merry Christmas

By Cindy Crisp – Strathfieldsaye Volunteers.