



## Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group



# Newsletter(second edition of two)

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## ***Ronald Kent: Ballooning in Balliang***

Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016 1930h,

Balliang Hall

Balliang-Bacchus Marsh Road (opposite CFA)

You see them on a still crisp morning: you can't believe your eyes! You look a couple of times ... and yes ... like something from "Round the World in 80 days" that has blown in from the nineteenth century, it really is a huge multi-coloured tear drop, drifting slowly and majestically across the withered landscape of Balliang.

We have been lucky enough to persuade **Ronald Kent**, a magnificent man out of his flying machine, to come down to earth and talk to our Landcare group at our next meeting.

Ronald and his colleagues are qualified pilots who have licences issued by the Australian Balloon Federation after undertaking a course of flying-based instruction and a series of theory related exams.

Ronald is a professional pilot who regularly flies tourists for "Picture This Ballooning in the Yarra Valley".

He is also an instructor and examiner for the Australian Balloon Federation and holds an Australian distance record in the small one man balloon class.

Over the last year or so, Ronald has been regularly flying over, and landing in, Balliang. A few members have found themselves hosting small groups of unanticipated visitors as the balloons come to ground, and have been fascinated to see the balloons up close and in operation. Ronald and his colleagues have very generously taken some of the hosts on balloon trips over the last year. This has allowed a few members of the executive an excellent opportunity to see Balliang from the air, noting very carefully the extent of our revegetation activities.

Ronald is a great speaker with a wide collection of yarns about his flying career. He will tell us about the ups and downs of his unusual interest which involves not only aeronautics, but also a deep knowledge of meteorology, aerodynamics, our local topography and lots more. Ronald will bring a balloon basket along as a demonstration piece that will stimulate some interesting and interactive discussion.



## New funding opportunities

There are a number of funding opportunities around at the moment covering more than just tree planting.

The Melbourne Water stream frontage program is always a good option if you have a waterway but there are at least another two good programs in our area with funding for habitat protection and/or improving biolinks.

All you need to do is to fill out a simple expression of interest form with your contact details and a sketch map of the area proposed. Your project will then be assessed against the criteria for these and other suitable funding if agreed. It is well worth the small effort required: pretty well all proposals that meet guidelines get funded.



Some examples of eligible projects would be:

- shelterbelts along fence-lines
- protection of old paddock trees
- fencing / revegetation around wetlands, swamps, drainage lines, creeks, rivers
- fencing and revegetation to protect existing patches of vegetation.
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(Thanks to Bart Bartholomew, Secretary.)

Ronald Kent and colleagues aloft

## Australia Day Celebration in Balliang

Local Residents enjoyed a friendly Australia Day breakfast at the recently rejuvenated Balliang Hall. The sight of fresh green grass drew many appreciative comments and the new Hall Committee's hospitality was very welcome. Hearty fare was the order of the day and neighbours had a great get together. Let's hope it is an annual event. Thanks to helpers from the Landcare group and Hall Committee who spruced up the grounds in preparation for the event!

