

Floods, wind farms lead news in 2011

By RENEE ROBINSON

IT BEGAN with devastating floods and has ended with urgent fire safety warnings.

2011 in the Hepburn Shire saw natural disasters, a new community-owned windfarm come to fruition, Hepburn Shire Council resignations and sackings, rate pain and a rise in homelessness, new banking opportunities, new football coaches, spy-cameras and Vodafone tower applications.

Here is a snapshot of the year that was 2011, as seen through the eyes of *The Advocate*.

January

THIS was a month the residents of Clunes and Creswick will be happy to forget. Rainfall over 300mm caused creeks and levies to overflow, resulting in devastating flooding throughout the region.

February

- Concrete was poured at Leonards Hill in preparation for the community-owned wind turbines.

- Two Hepburn Shire general managers resigned: general manager sustainable development Robert Jennings and general

manager community development Martin Walmsley.

- This summer was declared the wettest summer ever in the shire.

March

- Clunes caravan park faces closure.

- The first turbine at Leonards Hill goes up.

- A couple are fined by council for a noisy early rising rooster.

- Potato farmers get a price increase after a four-day standoff with McCains.

- The Daylesford Municipal Brass Band changes its name to the Daylesford Community Brass Band after council axes funding.

April

- Jubilee Lake Holiday Park labelled a run-down mess as leaseholder Australian Tourism Park Management signals intention to withdraw.

- Author Andy Griffiths visits Clunes.

- Vodafone looks to Creswick for a new phone tower.

May

- Jubilee Lake Co-operative plans to take over management of the holiday park.

- La Finca operators are locked out of their

business over liquor licensing laws.

- The Palais is set for a revamp.

- The Prime Minister Julia Gillard and former Prime Minister Bob Hawke visit Clunes Booktown.

- Clunes' famous son Bob Davis dies at 82.

- Daylesford community food

gardeners oppose sale of Rae Lands Park.

- Trentham's Redbeard Bakery named Australia's best bakery.

- Daylesford Secondary College students suspended for "planking".

June

- Cr Tim Hayes resigns, forcing a by-election for the Cameron Ward.

- The Palais re-opens.

- Hepburn Wind wins Premier's Sustainability Award.

- Clunes Museum funding furore, claims of false declarations.

- Daylesford ARC to close its doors for lack of funding.

- Residents demand better consultation from Hepburn Shire Council.

- Premier Ted Baillieu visits Creswick.

- Meals for the needy launched by The 5000 Club.

July

- Rates rise by six per cent.

- Daylesford Fire Brigade celebrates 150th anniversary.

- Rae Lands Park is handed over to the public by council.

- The Creswick Creek firebug is convicted.

- The plug is pulled on the Clunes market.

- A six hour siege at Hepburn Springs ends peacefully.

- Daylesford experiences a 23 per cent rise in tourists, according to Tourism Victoria.

- Coach Shane Robertson quits Burras, effective from the end of the season.

- Creswick secures a PGA championship deal.

- Library services across the shire are at risk following the dissolution of the Central Highlands Regional Libraries.

- A council worker is sacked after posting comments on Facebook.

August

- A three-way contest for Cameron Ward councillor between John Sayers, Dennis Twentyman and Neil Newitt.

- A Smeaton woman

tragically dies following a car accident.

- Creswick makes plans to build a natural playscape.
- Trentham opens first bank after a 14-year absence with the launch of the Trentham and Districts Community Bank Branch.
- Hepburn Shire spends 64 per cent of ratepayers' money on staffing costs, not including consultants.
- Yandoit Primary School turns 150.
- Vodafone submits a planning application for a tower at Creswick, to be located within 23 metres of nearest house.
- Neil Newitt wins Cameron Ward by-election.

September

- Jubilee Lake Co-operative takes over management of Jubilee Lake Park.
- Clunes' favourite son Spike Jones wins Pride of Australia medal.
- Daylesford Football Club seniors reach the Central Highlands Football League grand final.
- Spy-cameras are found in public bushland in Eganstown.
- Hepburn A-grade netballers and Creswick under-15 footballers win CHNL and CHFL grand

finals.

- Hepburn residents voice fire safety concerns following no designated Neighbourhood Safer Place - Place of Last Resort for the community.
- Daylesford Community Bank branch shares are launched.
- Daylesford wins the Ballarat District Soccer Association reserves cup.
- The Victorian Auditor-General slams management of the Hepburn Shire Council in a report tabled in parliament.
- Input is sought for a Vincent Street revitalisation project.
- The Farmers Arms Hotel in Creswick goes up in flames.

October

- Hepburn Shire Council CEO Kaylene Conrick quits.
- The housing crisis escalates in Daylesford.
- Creswick Woollen Mills sets a new world record for the longest picnic rug.
- Troy Auld is appointed the new senior coach for the Hepburn Burras.
- The Daylesford and District Food Bank gives away 64,000kg of food in its first year of operation.
- The Herald Sun Tour sweeps through Hepburn Shire.
- Trentham ratepayers demand

a fair go from Hepburn Shire Council.

- Daylesford senior cricket is in limbo until January.

November

- SES unit controller David Wellings and Clunes business owner Jane Clark meet Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip.
- Clunes loses its after-hours nursing service.
- A fixed library service for Trentham becomes a reality.
- A defibrillator is donated to the Clunes Football and Netball Club by local pharmacist Jim Kerin.
- Hepburn Wind is officially launched.
- The beleaguered Daylesford New Year's Eve Parade is saved by volunteer organiser Anne Stewart.
- The Emergency Services Commissioner Michael Hallows visits Lyonville.

December

- The Clunes railway station is re-opened.
- Eddy Comelli becomes the new CHFL president, heading a new seven member board.
- Cr Sebastian Klein becomes Hepburn Shire's youngest ever mayor, aged 27.



SEPTEMBER: Jubilee Lake Co-operative takes over management of Jubilee Lake Park.



MARCH: Dave Carr from G.R. Carr Building Contractors and Hepburn Community Wind Farm project officer Tracy Anthony beside the turbine pad at the Leonards Hill wind farm.