

The NORTHERN Times

24 SCORESBY STREET, KERANG - PHONE: 52 1733.

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REGIONAL WEATHER

TEMPERATURES
Monday minimum 2.8 degrees, maximum 15.2 degrees. Tuesday 5.2, 16.6. Wednesday 5.7, 18.4. Thursday 6.4.
RAINFALL
Nil. Month to date, 98.6 mm. Year to date, 416.4 mm. (1992 to October 14, 434.2 mm).
SALINITY
Loddon River at Kerang, 819 EC. Kerang

Weir daily from October 8, 1368, 1355, 1353, 1290, 1224, 1323, 1300 EC. Barr Creek at Capel's Crossing, 4470, 2000, 1687, 1500, 1500, 2410, 2400 EC.
FORECAST
Fine apart from early morning fog patches. Mild, mostly sunny day with a light wind. Saturday: Mainly fine, mild.

MORE RURAL READERS

THE Shire of Kerang's book depots are proving much more successful than the former book van service, Kerang Shire Council has been told.
Kerang Public Library librarian-in-charge, Mrs Julie Smith said the book depots in outlying parts of the shire had now been operating for 12 months and were proving enormously popular.

"They are far more successful than the book van service was," she said.
She said Lalbert residents had developed the habit of providing useful and constructive information which assisted library staff in the selection and delivery of suitable stock.
"Responses back from the community makes the service better," she said.

Prolonged river flood poses uncertain threat



Farmer Murray McNeil and shire deputy engineer, Mr Steve Wickes inspect a levee topped with sandbags separating floodwaters in the Gutterum State Forest from farms in the Myall area during a tour by emergency service personnel.

THE sustained high level of the flooded Murray River poses an uncertain threat to landholders in this area.

The duration of high levels - rather than the expected peak height - may weaken levees and aggravate the predicament already being faced by many rural residents.

Emergency service officials do not expect Barham and Koondrook to be seriously threatened by the expected peak next week, but are concerned about the prospects of maintained high levels.

A warning of moderate rural flooding remains for the area around Barham, rising to a major flood level next week.

Kerang shire engineer, Mr Peter McDonald told a meeting of emergency service representatives on Wednesday that the district was in a state of preparedness, but stressed that Barham and Koondrook's flood levees had coped with previous floods close to the expected peak and would be expected to do so again.

"Our main worry is that it's going to hang on for a long time and may affect (rural) areas where weak spots show up", he said.

Benjeroop farmer, Cr Brian Drummond said that most areas should cope with the flooding, but said that some landholders had done no levee maintenance since the 1975 floods.

Cr Drummond said that many landholders in his area are alarmed about the possible consequences, but Rural Water Corporation and Victoria State Emergency Service officials

are confident that most areas will cope.

Victoria State Emergency Service, police and shire officials inspected levees at Koondrook, Myall, Murrabit and Benjeroop on Wednesday.

Filled sandbags have been stockpiled at Kerang, Koondrook and Barham and services are prepared to respond to any emergencies.

The Murray River height at Barham/Koondrook yesterday morning was steady at 6.03 m and receding slowly. The Bureau of Meteorology predicts that the peak next week will be 6.15 m - 3 cm higher than the 1975 and 1956 floods.

The major flood peak at Echuca on Tuesday was 2 cm higher than the 1975 flood.

Local emergency officials are concerned that publicity about the Echuca flood problems, which were confined to low-lying areas, will lead new residents and visitors to erroneously believe that there is a "wall of water" approaching, when the river actually spreads out through forests, tributaries and farmlands before reaching the area.

Landholders on the New South Wales side of Murrabit experienced record heights after the torrential rain almost a fortnight ago and thousands of hectares remain inundated.

A minor flood peak on the Loddon River has passed Appin South, but is not expected to reach minor flood status at Kerang. Slowly receding water in the lower reaches will also ease the threat of water backing up from the Little Murray River and Murray River.

"We are prepared as well as we can be", Mr McDonald said.

Weir lock gates open

THE lock chamber gates at Torrumbarry Weir were opened on Thursday to assist the passage of the high river flows in the Murray River.

While the gates are open and with the Weir Trestles still in place navigation of the waterway would be extremely hazardous and presents a threat to both the vessel and the Weir structure. Accordingly, the passage of river vessels past Torrumbarry Weir will not be possible.

FLOODING INFORMATION

* Recorded information about flooding is available by calling Kerang 52 2307. Information is updated regularly.

* If urgent assistance is required, call 52 2266 and wait for the call to be diverted to the duty officer.

* Information is also available at Barham by calling 53 3200.

Centenary and a half Showtime on the border

CENTENARY celebrations in Barham and Koondrook start tomorrow with the promise of community togetherness and family fun.

Scheduled for tomorrow, Sunday and Monday, the celebrations involve a variety of events including school reunions, old time dances, historical exhibitions, a street procession from Koondrook to Barham, a community barbecue, bus tours, creek trips on the Wetlander cruiser and a special dedication ceremony in Barham's Riverside Park on

Sunday afternoon.

The street procession begins at the Koondrook Post Office at 11 am on Sunday and will proceed to Barham via Main street to arrive at Riverside Park in time for the barbecue.

About 20 floats constructed by local organisations will be supported by a vintage car convoy, the Echuca Marching Girls, the Kerang and Echuca District Bands, pony clubs and children on decorated bikes.

The New South Wales Member for Murray, Mr Jim Small, MLA, will conduct the dedication ceremony at Riverside Park at 2 pm on Sunday.

Wakool Council Mayor, Cr Jack Keck, a lifetime resident of Barham, said the thoroughly planned celebrations will go ahead as normal despite the rising flood waters of the Murray River.

Cr Keck said floods in the Echuca region have not affected the Barham/Koondrook area and the fine warm weather forecast for the weekend will only add to an eventful and memorable weekend.

IT'S showtime on the border tomorrow. The 33rd annual Barham/Koondrook Show will provide the local farming community and show patrons with an action-packed day of fun and agricultural excellence.

Show society secretary, Mrs Maben Grainger said all was in readiness for the show, with the gates at Barham opening at 9 am and closing at around 5 pm.

The animal nursery will be a major attraction as animals of all descriptions vie for prizes under the watchful eye of their owners.

Farm produce, pig-eons, poultry and beef

and dairy cattle head a long list of exhibits, while the pavilion houses a variety of produce including jams, preserves, floral arrangements and what promises to be an extremely large photographic section.

Patrons can indulge in helicopter rides, side-shows and the many food and drink stalls on site, while observing a series of horse and pony club events in the main arena.

Yard dog trials, conducted in specially constructed pens adjacent to the main arena and trotting events on the nearby trotting track are additional attractions.

The New South Wales Tug-Of-War Championships, the ever popular Teddy Bears' picnic where youngsters dis-

play teddy bears of all sizes and colors and the Show Girl events add a contrast of muscle and glamour to the day.

The Show Girl contest also contains the Miss Midi, Miss and Master Tiny Tot and Miss Teenage contests that are always popular with show patrons.

Showbags will again be in plentiful supply, as will the dulcet tones of country and western singer, Dave Mathieson as he provides a wide range of lyrics and backing music.

A woodworking display and the Back-to-Barham/Koondrook centenary tent supplying a range of wares from Ken Robertson historical tapes to colonial souvenirs completes a busy 1993 Barham/Koondrook show day.