



# Scone Update



**EPICENTRE:** Scone, the national headquarters of the stock horse.  
— Picture by Sophie Jeffries

## Australia's favourite breed of horse

By SOPHIE JEFFRIES, NATALYA CATZIKIRIS, EMILY TOWLER and JOHNATHON LARKING

SCONE, known as the Horse Capital of Australia, is often associated with the thoroughbred and racehorse industries. However it is the Australian stock horse that is dominating proceedings at the 2007 Upper Hunter Horse Festival.

The Australian Stock Horse Society was established in 1971 to promote and develop the breed.

Jen Bowcock, the sports, events and marketing co-ordinator for the Australian Stock Horse Society, says the stock horse is Australia's most prominent breed.

"[It] is renowned for its intelligence, which means they are easy to train," Ms Bowcock says. "They have a quiet temperament, they are versatile and can do a number of different things."

The stock horse is featured in many events during the festival, which began on May 4 and will continue until Sunday, May 20.

The Horse Festival program includes the King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge, an international three-day event, a horse training and breaking school, and the Bushman's Campdraft and Rodeo.

The Upper Hunter Horse Festival will end with Scone PS's Picnic by the Lake, held at Lake Glenbawn State Park. This is a fun-filled day that ends with a fireworks display at dusk.

# Green energy the rage

By NICOLA WHITE, LUKE PORTER, MIKAELA TILSE, PIA WYLIE and BAILEY BURKE

DURING the past decade, people in the Hunter Region have been working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by tapping into a wind farm in Newcastle and a solar farm at Singleton.

"The wind turbine on Kooragang Island, Newcastle, generates enough energy to power approximately 230 houses," said Peter White, an EnergyAustralia electrician.

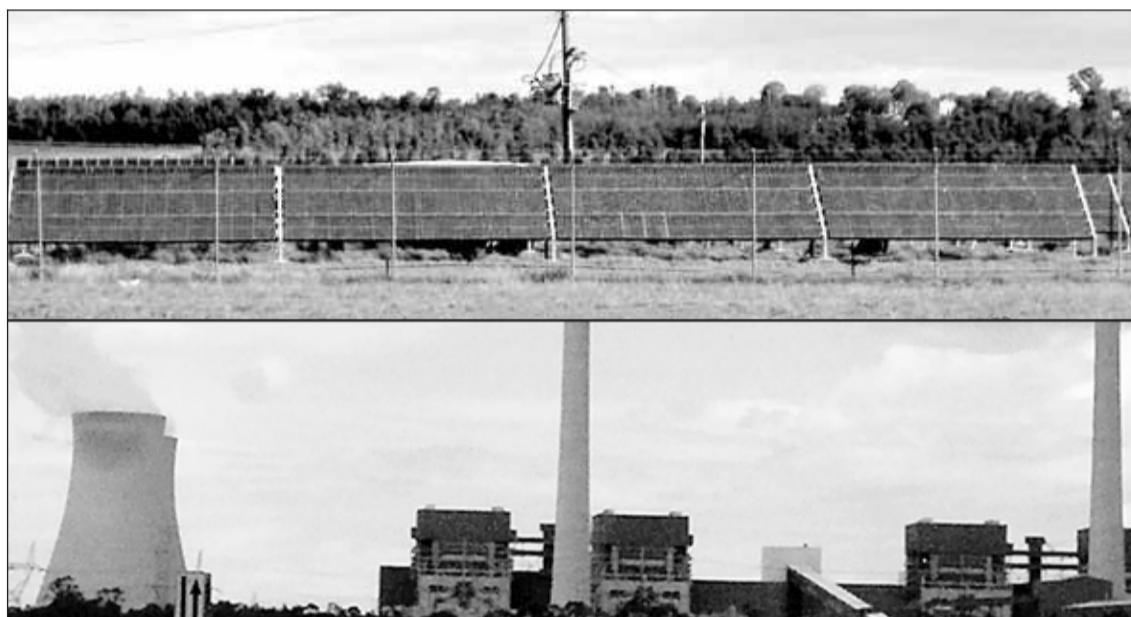
Mr White said there was a solar farm south of Singleton that was one of the largest in the southern hemisphere and it produced enough energy to supply electricity to power approximately 70 houses.

In addition to the solar farm, Mr White said some buildings in the Upper Hunter area had solar panels installed.

Each of these produced enough energy to power about 20 standard light globes.

Some installations had the ability to sell the energy they produced back into the power grid, Mr White said.

"The Upper Hunter Shire is discussing a proposal to erect a wind farm with four turbines on the Liverpool Ranges near Murrurundi and it would have the potential to provide enough



**GREEN OR COAL:** Solar panels, top, and coal-fired power stations, above, are just two of our many energy options.  
— Pictures by Nicola White

energy to power approximately 900 houses," Mr White said.

EnergyAustralia offers customers the option of buying Green Power, which is generated from accredited renewable energy sources including solar, wind, biomass and hydro.

EnergyAustralia has teamed up with the Newcastle International

Sports Centre Trust to help EnergyAustralia Stadium go green for the 2007 NRL season.

Renewable energy such as solar power will play a major role in this EnergyAustralia initiative.

Mr Tilse, a Scone builder, spoke of a NSW State Government initiative called the Building and Sustainability Index (BASIX),

which outlines requirements for new homes. Some of the requirements include the installation of solar hot water systems and insulation batts.

"Each house that has the BASIX requirement has its own water tank, which is connected to gutters for rainwater collection," Mr Tilse said.

## Children dancing all day at Scone

By ABBY JONES, GRACE COLLISON, EBONY TAYLOR and KATE BYRNE

ON Tuesday afternoons, Scone PS is awash with black tops and hot-pink skirts as children gather for their weekly dance classes.

The owner and teacher of Dance Allday, Melissa Day, teaches four classes with students aged from four years to adult.

"I enjoy all dance styles from

classical ballet, tap dancing, contemporary and modern jazz," Miss Day said.

"I chose to have the dance school in Scone because there is no other dance school in the town and a lot of people were travelling to other towns to attend lessons."

Miss Day's dance qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Creative Industries: Dance Teaching from Queensland University of Technology.

"I have been very lucky to win a number of different awards, including the Dance Achievement Award for the Muswellbrook Dance Centre and one for the Scone Academy of Dance as well as different trophies for the Muswellbrook Eisteddfod," Miss Day said.

"My greatest achievement was having my Higher School Certificate dance choreography piece selected as one of the best in NSW."



**MOVEMENT:** Melissa Day's students strutting their stuff at Scone.  
— Picture by Abby Jones



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# Farmers cash in on Russia's shortfall

## Editorial

By **ABBEY-ROSE WINTER, GEORGE GILLFEATHER, MITCHELL TURNER, CAMPBELL JONES, ANTHONY BEER and LACHLAN DUWAKIN**

THE decision by the Australian Beef Industry to export pregnant heifers to Russia should be welcomed with open arms by Australian farmers.

This new international market will be an immense boost to Australia's economy.

This is an exciting addition to the current Russian export market, which is already purchasing cattle for meat consumption.

The Russians are happy with the quality of our beef, as their plan now is to use our bloodlines to interbreed with their own cattle, which will ultimately improve their herds.

Cattle bred in Australia must be world-class. In a competitive international market our beef producers will need to make sure they keep an emphasis on the quality of the beef exported.

Cattle purchased by the Russian delegations will be trucked to shipping ports, where they can be loaded onto ships. Some smaller herds of cattle may be flown to Russia to keep transport costs to a minimum.

This will have flow-on benefits within the Hunter community. Jobs will be created and this will undoubtedly encourage the next generation of farmers to stay on

the land, instead of moving to more populous areas looking for work.

The Russian delegation is planning to buy 60,000 pregnant heifers. These will be sourced from across Australia, bringing benefits to many communities.

We are all aware of the financial hardships and the uncertain futureS faced by our country cousins and the prospect of new overseas money must be a relief to all involved.

Whether farmers are a part of the export trade to Russia or not, they will still reap the benefits of the export trade at local sales yards because breeders will gain higher prices for their cattle as extra demands are placed on supplies.

As well as increased markets for farmers, demand will be increased for agents, animal welfare workers, feed production supply, artificial insemination technicians and quarantine officials. More work for these groups means our economy keeps moving.

As a side industry the Russian delegation will be looking at breeding through artificial insemination. It is much cheaper and quicker to ship a container of bull semen to Russia than it is to export the live bull.

The artificial insemination gives the Russian people access to our highest quality bloodlines to help improve their cattle genetics.

Hopefully the people involved in this new venture have taken into consideration the animal welfare issues involved with live exports. We recommend a close eye is kept on this situation.



**BIN BUSY:** Red Cross ladies emptying the charity bin. — Picture by Cameron Stewart

# Cows do fly as Aussie stock exports

By **ANGUS ROBERTSON, HOLLIE COLLISON, HEATHER LUCAS and CADE CUST**

PREGNANT Australian heifers are being flown to Russia in an effort to improve the quality of Russia's breeding cows.

"A shortage of beef breeding cattle numbers in Russia, in conjunction with Russia's high demand for beef, has presented the Australian Beef Industry with an exciting market for the export of beef breeding cattle," said Doug Robertson, a Scone cattle breeder.

A Russian delegation visited Australia in late March to start pursuing 60,000 pregnant heifers. These cattle will be purchased from all over Australia.

"As recently as late April, Russian delegates have been visiting areas of Northern NSW to inspect cattle with a view to improve Russian beef herd numbers," Mr Robertson said.

"The cattle would be sourced from farms and saleyards. Depending on the quality, prices would range from \$800 to \$1500 per head."

Jim MacCallum, a Scone Stock and Station agent, said the exports were good for the nation.

"It allows Australia to develop our image of producing top quality, clean healthy product and allow our genetics to be tested in another climate," Mr MacCallum said.

Editorial, at left.

# Helping the less fortunate

By **LUCY KEMP, STEVEN REID, CAMERON STEWART and JESSE SUMNER**

THE Red Cross is an organisation that raises money to help less-fortunate people.

The Scone Red Cross is looking for volunteers, especially younger people, to work in their shop.

"Right now Red Cross has many volunteers who are in their more senior years," said Red Cross volunteer Erica Bailey.

Clare Claydon, president of the Scone Red Cross, said the branch had 85 members with 40 active working members.

"We are trying to encourage the younger generation to come in and help us. After all, the children are

our future," said Mrs Bailey.

Mrs Claydon said that the Red Cross existed to serve and help underprivileged people.

After attending a natural disaster forum Mrs Claydon learnt that the Red Cross sent co-ordinators to disaster sites and that money was sent "to help purchase the items which are considered necessary at the time".

"The Scone Red Cross has helped families who have been affected by fires," Mrs Claydon said, "with the clothing and household utensils which have been donated."

The Scone and Aberdeen Red Cross branches are celebrating their 80th birthdays this year, with the annual conference to be held in Scone.

# Scone man a dedicated, volunteering hero

By **SOPHIE DAWSON, MATT ST HILL, RACHEL PITTMAN and TOM QUINN**

A SCONE man who has devoted much of his adult life to helping others has warned that the community may face problems as volunteers age.

Jim Clark, an Order of Australia medallist and Olympic torch bearer, is aware of the problems facing organisations that rely on volunteers.

"The volunteers today, we are all getting older,"

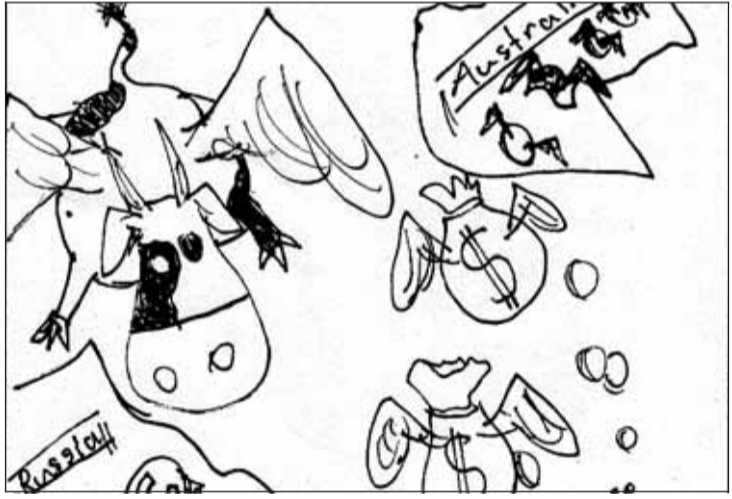
79-year-old Mr Clark said. Through tasks including shopping for groceries, being a companion and assisting with transport, Mr Clark's involvement with Community Care has revealed how important volunteers are within a community.

"Government funding gives only so much, but much more comes from the community itself through fund-raising," Mr Clark said.

"The Scone Nursing Home isn't big enough, we are trying to keep people in their own home but this costs money."



**DECORATED:** Jim Clark with his OAM medals. — Picture by Sophie Dawson



— Illustration by Mitchell Turner

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