

TONIMBUK NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2015

Did you know?

That there was a large, well attended meeting at the Bunyip Hall where the committee (Mt. Cannibal and District Preservation Group Inc.) opposing the establishment of a huge granite quarry at Bunyip North presented its most up-to-date information. A representative of the ABC's Rural Country Group also attended the meeting. This small committee has been doing an unappreciated job on behalf of the local community for nearly ten years and they would have been pleased to see about 150 people turn up at their meeting. They have consistently asked Hanson to provide information about their plans for the proposed quarry and also tried to maintain public interest in their reasons for opposing it. In the first week of October, Hanson's made their official request to the Victorian Government in which they detailed some of the aspects of their proposition.

Hanson are the 3rd largest quarry group in the world and, as such, are probably well used to getting their own way. Certainly, if they had made this proposal 50 years ago, there would have been little opposition to it. However, Garfield North and Bunyip North have changed dramatically in those fifty years and there are now some 70 houses within one and a half kms of the site of the proposed quarry. That is a lot of people who will be directly affected. In addition, everyone who uses Tonimbuk Road will suffer the consequences. Hanson claimed that only 3 houses would be affected. When they did finally meet with the local committee, Hanson made it quite plain that they did not want an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) as a result of their application. An EES would investigate flora and fauna issues, aboriginal history, effect on water supplies, silica dust and its danger to humans, road-works and traffic problems, social impact etc., in fact every potential effect of the establishment of such a huge change to the local environment.

Hanson's own figures suggest that they will be removing 2 million tonnes of rock per year and the life of the quarry will be 70 to 100 years. There will be up to 400 truck and trailer movements on Tonimbuk Road each day plus up to another 100 other vehicles. Hours of work will be 6am to 6pm, 5 days a week and 6am to 12noon on Saturday. Dust control will be a major issue and presumably, large amounts of water will be needed to combat this. Where will the water come from?

After presentations by committee members, the audience had the opportunity to ask questions and these were wide-ranging with a few positive suggestions thrown in which the committee were quick to accept. Members of the Mount Shamrock Quarry (Pakenham) group which oversees the operation of that particular quarry were present and they had been through this whole process before from fighting against the establishment of the quarry to finally becoming the public watchdog that minimises the effects of the quarry on the local population. They thoroughly supported the committee's stance of 'no bargaining' at this stage with outright opposition to the establishment of the quarry as its only focus. A small group of residents from Ellis Road, represented by Tony Knight, appeared to favour a "Plan B" approach that included

bargaining but were clearly outnumbered by the majority after the Mount Shamrock spokesman related their experiences.

Tracey Parker from Cardinia Shire was present to answer questions on procedures in case an EES was called for or in the event that the Minister decided to do without one. The committee has a very good website, STOPTHEBUNYIPNORTHQUARRY, which you are urged to access for latest news and communications. They need signatures on a petition to present to parliament and, more importantly, they need people to write to the Minister for Planning, Hon. Richard Wynne with a copy of the same letter to local Member for Narracan, Gary Blackwood. It is most important that the Minister is aware that Mr. Blackwood is receiving a copy. There will be a pro-forma letter on the website which you can copy or alter to put it into your own words. Basically, you should be asking that the Minister should insist on an Environmental Effects Statement for this application. A Social Impact Statement would also be beneficial because this proposal will affect everybody. Do yourself a favour and write a couple of letters.

Hon. Richard Wynne

Minister for Planning

P.O. Box 1474

Collingwood

Vic. 3066

Mr. Gary Blackwood MP

Member for Narracan

Suite 3, Mason Street

Warragul

Vic. 3820

Proposed Burning at Tonimbuk

In response to a local request, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have scheduled a preventive burn north of Tonimbuk Road and at the junction of the two entries to Jolley Road, locally known as the Triangle.



The bush south of Tonimbuk Road and south of Jolley Road is not to be burned. The proposed burn should help protect Tonimbuk Hall and several nearby houses in the event of a wildfire. Some doubts have been expressed by a few people following the Lancefield fires but my answer to them is ‘would they rather see this area burned by wildfire in the middle of January or February?’ That would be a frightening experience. Two experienced DELWP staff have put in a week preparing for the burn. They have swept the edges clean with a bulldozer and pushed over various dry trees and tall shrubs in an effort to keep the flames at a low level. They will refill their water tankers from our big dam. Now they only need suitable weather to be able to proceed. Let’s hope it happens that way because it looks like being a bad summer ahead after a dry spring.



It may look like a disaster but it is intended to prevent one by keeping flames close to ground level.

A Tonimbuk Visitor

During the Black Saturday bushfires, the only Tonimbuk resident to lose his home and property was Fred Wailes. His property was on Wailes Lane north of Jolley Road. Peter Izzard and his wife looked after Fred for a couple of years until he eventually moved into Hillview at Bunyip after finally selling his farm. It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise to see John Simcocks (a former Tonimbuk school bus driver) come into our driveway with Fred Wailes as a passenger. Fred bought his property in the 1950s and qualified as one of the oldest surviving Tonimbuk residents until he moved into Hillview. He is now in his 90s and, even last year, he could still walk along A’Beckett Road with the aid of his walker frame. He single handedly built the first extension and kitchen at Tonimbuk Hall and was an important committee member for many years. He was a great supporter of the monthly old-time dances at Tonimbuk



Next to Elizabeth Izzard, Fred Wailes is Tonimbuk's oldest resident and there is a lot of local history in that head. Fred still lines up for his cups of tea until the teapot is empty.