



# COMMUNITY

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### OFFICE HOURS

Monday: 8.30am - 4pm  
Tuesday-Thursday: 9am - 4pm  
Friday: 9am - 3pm

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### Booking Deadlines

#### Tuesday's Edition

Display: 5pm Thursday  
General Classifieds: 10am Monday  
Deaths: 11am Monday

#### Friday's Edition

Display: 5pm Tuesday  
Classifieds: 10am Thursday  
Deaths: 11am Thursday

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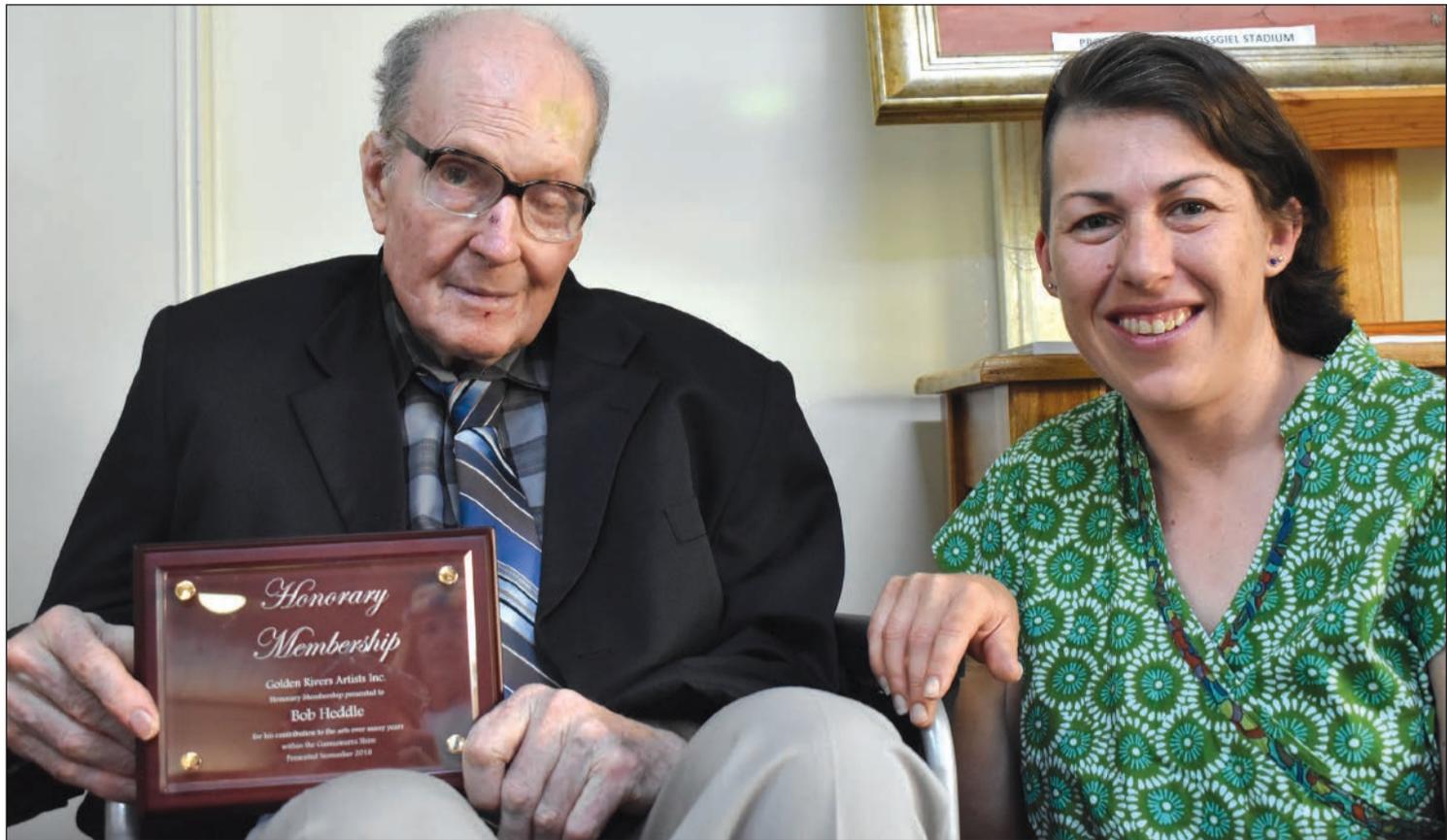
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#### Classifieds

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for our publications at our Kerang Office,  
Cohuna Newsagency or the Swan Hill Guardian



**HONOURED:** Bob Heddle received his honorary membership plaque from Golden Rivers Artists president Danida Heitbaum-Ferres.

# Family instinct for art

JENNY DENTON

THE ARTISTIC career of Kerang children's book author and artist Bob Heddle has been recognised with an award from the district's art association.

Golden Rivers Artists president Danida Heitbaum-Ferres presented Mr Heddle with an "honorary membership" plaque at a ceremony at Northaven aged care facility, which was attended by a small crowd of supporters.

"Bob's made an incredible contribution to the community in visual arts over many years," she said.

"His name is mentioned quite often when people are talking about visual arts here."

The self-taught artist is perhaps best known locally for a wetland painting series that hangs in the ANZ Bank and more widely for a trilogy of children's books set in real locations in the Mallee that feature wondrous, mythical creatures.

"I just liked to do it. I had to do it, because it was in my mind," said the creator of such entities as the Gannawarra Goppo, the Manangatang Mountain Munyip and the Mischievous Witch of Wychitella - all of whom have been immortalised in the beautifully illustrated books.

As well as channeling an offbeat imagina-

tion and irreverent sense of humour, Mr Heddle's work reflects a great love for country people and a deep empathy with their challenges.

For most of his life the father of three worked as a wool buyer around Kerang and southern New South Wales, and while art was a constant in his life, which made him happy and brought in income, it was always just a hobby.

Lindsay Maplestone said he recalled his friend hefting huge 180-kilogram bales of wool around the sheds for days on end then going home and spreading his art materials out over a couple of tables.

According to Mr Heddle, it was something he had "a family instinct" for.

A watercolour of a ship painted by his grandfather, a ship captain, hangs in his room at Northaven, and his father also used to paint and draw.

"I was good at it in school," Mr Heddle said. "People liked it and I kept doing it."

The septuagenarian was touched but understated in his acceptance of the Golden Rivers honour.

"Thank you very much, you mob. I'm quite flattered with this. I like writing and illustrating books," he said, before trying to talk the assembled Northaven residents into getting involved in co-writing a new book.

"It's about a galah that talks so much it becomes Prime Minister of Australia," he said.

The award, which has been funded through a grant from Gannawarra Shire Council, will enable the art group to provide logistical support to Mr Heddle to show and transport his work, Ms Heitbaum-Ferres said.

Although not doing much work these days, Mr Heddle is still enthusiastic about art, and his paintings and books continue to bring him happiness, as they do many others.



'Rain dance on the Mossgiel Stadium' by Bob Heddle.

## Weather

### Temperatures

Thursday: minimum 16.2 degrees, maximum 20.6 degrees.  
Friday: 12.1, 22.2.  
Saturday: 13.0, 24.1.  
Sunday: 14.5, 26.5.  
Monday: 14.6.

December minimums: lowest 10.6 degrees [3rd], highest 28.6 degrees [7th], average 15.8 degrees [long-term average 13.7 degrees]. Lowest on record: 4.1 degrees [6th, 2002]. Highest on record: 30.0 degrees [20th, 2015].  
December maximums: lowest 20.6 degrees [13th], highest 40.0 degrees [7th], average 30.8 degrees [long-term average 29.5 degrees]. Highest on record: 45.0 degrees [31st, 2005]. Lowest on record: 14.3 degrees [1st, 1969].

### Rainfall

Thursday: 8.6mm. Friday: 21.6mm. Saturday: 1.6mm. Sunday: 6.0mm. Month to date: 41.2mm [long-term average 26.7mm]. Year to date: 227.0mm. Last year to December 17: 386.6mm. [long-term January-December average: 370.5mm]. Highest on record: 180.8mm [1992]. Lowest on record: 0.0mm [1889].

### Evaporation

Weekly pan evaporation: 40.2mm.



Source: Bureau of Meteorology.

### Forecast

Today: Sunny, 16-33  
Wednesday: Partly cloudy, 18-34  
Thursday: Partly cloudy, 18-31  
Friday: Sunny, 14-27  
Saturday: Sunny, 12-27  
Sunday: Sunny, 14-29

### Daylight

Today sunrise 6.03am sunset 8.38pm  
Wednesday 6.04am, 8.38pm  
Thursday 6.04am, 8.39pm  
Friday 6.05am, 8.39pm  
Saturday 6.05am, 8.40pm

### Ultra-violet index

Sun protection recommended from 8.50am to 5.40pm, UV Index predicted to reach 14 [Extreme].

### Fire danger

Mallee: Low-moderate [The Shire of Gannawarra is in the Mallee fire district].  
Northern Country: High [The Shire of Loddon is in the Northern Country fire district].  
• Fire ban and fire restrictions information is available at www.cfa.vic.gov.au