

Catchment research

A FORMER Chatham High School student is leading a multi-national team of scientists working on ground-breaking research in the Goulburn River catchment area.

Dr Jeffrey Walker, now of the University of Melbourne, is head of the 30-strong team that is working with farmers in a co-operative effort to improve the spatial resolution and accuracy of remote sensing of soil moisture.

The group includes scientists from the United States' National Aeronautical Space Agency (NASA), the European Space Agency and

representatives of other European universities and institutes.

The aim of the work is to allow farmers access on-line via satellite to high quality real-time data about their soil and forecasts to enable more informed decision-making.

The work is especially important given the ongoing issue of water availability in Australia and its effective use in agriculture.

Dr Walker left the region to advance his studies in Victoria and still has proud family members and friends in the Manning.

Toy and tucker run

THE roads between Wingham, Taree and Forster-Tuncurry will roar with the sound of hundreds of motorcycles on Sunday as the annual Toy and Tucker Run drives by.

The run is open to anyone with a motorcycle who wants to take part.

Led by the man himself, Santa, on his trike, the run collects donations of toys and non-perishable food for the Salvation Army and will begin at Wingham Plaza at 11am. Organiser John Nicholls said about 200 people (and their bikes) turn up each year but this year he hopes to double that amount.

Donations of toys and food can be made before the day at the Central Garage, Wingham or before the start on Sunday at the Salvation Army van at Wingham Plaza.

The bikes will travel from Wingham to Taree, stopping outside the Taree RSL and Golf Club before moving on to Coleman's Plumbing Supplies at Chatham, McDonald's Taree and opposite the old police station courthouse at Cundletown. From there it's on to Tuncurry, over the bridge to Forster and then back to John Wright Park, Tuncurry for a sausage sizzle. For information call John Nicholls 6554 8659.

This project is jointly funded by the NSW and Australian Governments

Coopernook Bypass

Funded by the NSW Government

Construction activities – November 2005 to January 2006

Works are well advanced on the 4.2 kilometre Coopernook Bypass project. Erection of Super-T girders at the Lansdowne River bridges has been completed.

During the next three months, the following activities will occur on the sites:

- Changed traffic arrangements continue near the Coopernook cemetery.
- Construction of the bridge decks and parapets at the new Lansdowne River bridges.
- Completion of construction works at the new Harrington Road and Coopernook Road intersections and opening of the intersections to cross traffic.
- Further construction work on the new southbound carriageway at the northern tie-in.
- Construction of pavement on the approaches to the new Lansdowne River bridges and commencement of final asphalt surfacing works.
- Demolition of the old Ghinni Ghinni Creek bridge.

The RTA and Abigroup Contractors appreciate your patience during this period and will endeavour to minimise any inconvenience whenever possible.

Abigroup Contractors Pty Limited

For more information please contact the construction hotline on (02) 6556 3847 or visit the website www.rta.nsw.gov.au

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