

Eight million border crossings, 977,000 kilograms of fruit seized from 557,000 vehicles...

# Yamba fruit fly block turns 50

By ALAN ERSKINE

HALF a century of fruit fly detection will be recognised today with a commemorative ceremony at the Yamba roadblock in South Australia.

The significant milestone in the fight to protect the Riverland against the fruit fly pest will be attended by Government, industry and transport representatives from a wide area.

Yamba, with its huge distinctive semi-circular tyre landmark, has been at the forefront of fruit fly protection on the Sturt Highway since being set up in March, 1957 to protect the State from any fruit fly outbreaks in Mildura.

Records only go back to 1980, but since then, almost eight million cars have crossed the border checkpoint into SA.

Of these, 557,000 were carrying fruit, with a total weight of almost 977,000 kilograms confiscated.

There have been just 227 cases of fruit larvae detected, but any one of these had the potential to wipe out, or cause significant losses to the SA fruit industry.

Initially the Yamba roadblock was staffed on a rotating basis by six Department of Agriculture inspectors and five police officers based in a car-

van located at the South Australia-Victoria border.

Today's commemoration ceremony is being held at the current roadblock east of Renmark, with both past and present fruit fly and plant health inspectors as special guests.

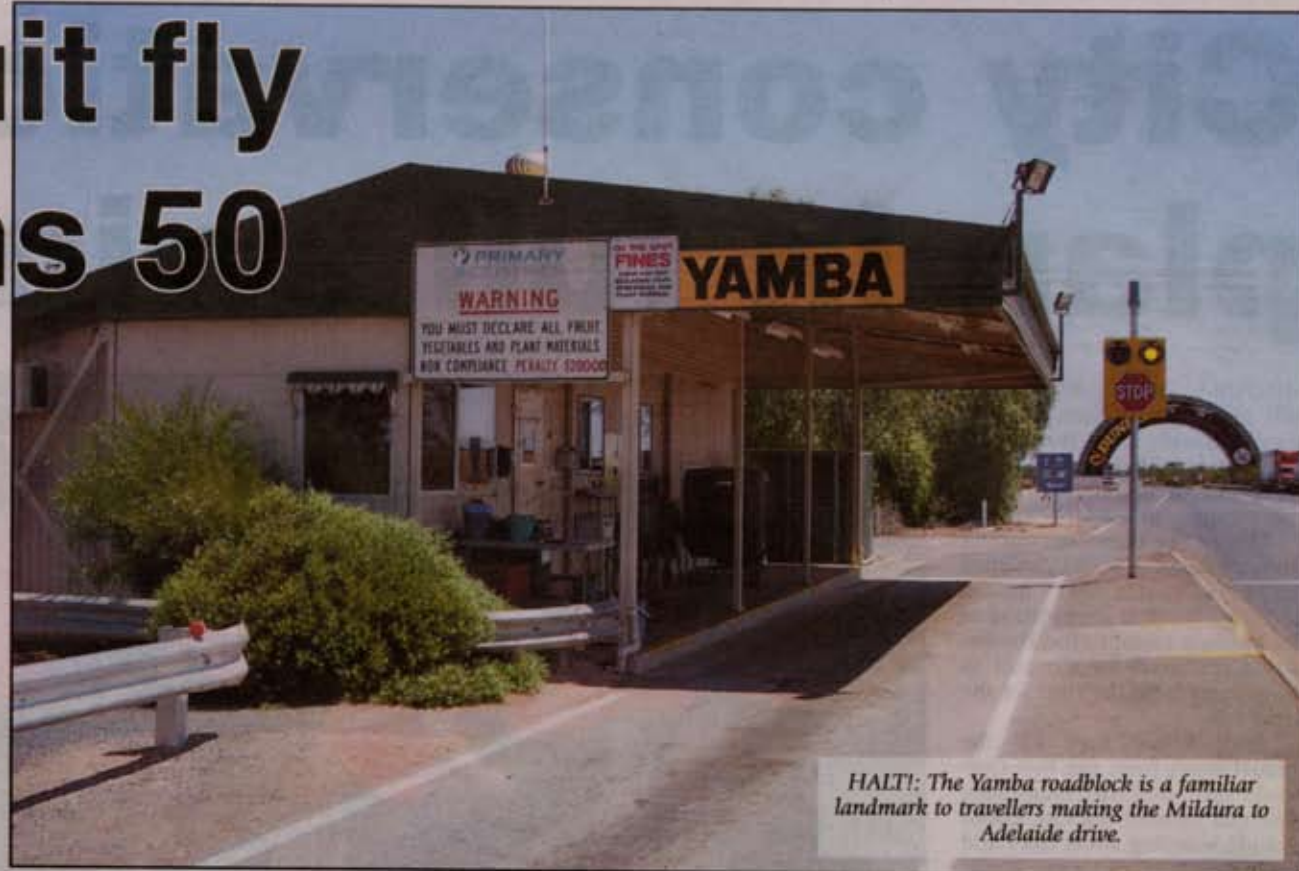
Historical photographs, newspaper clippings and archival cartoons will be on display. Two of the original inspectors who set up the roadblock will be at the ceremony, along with the current longest serving inspector who has been working at Yamba for 32 years.

South Australian Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister, Rory McEwen, who will attend the ceremony, said the Yamba roadblock had provided important front-line protection against infested fruit coming into South Australia.

"South Australia remains fruit fly free, and it is important for our vital commercial fruit and vegetable industries and our home-grown fruit and vegetables that we keep it that way," Mr McEwen said.

"This protects our state's \$250 million fresh fruit and vegetable industry, and our fruit fly free status ensures we maintain valuable export markets."

Mr McEwen said the message today was just as important as 50 years ago – don't



HALT!: The Yamba roadblock is a familiar landmark to travellers making the Mildura to Adelaide drive.

travel with fruit and vegetables into South Australia, as you may be carrying pests and diseases.

"The history surrounding our fight against fruit fly is fascinating," he said, "and I pay tribute to the frontline Yamba inspectors and other staff, who over the past 50 years, have helped us keep this pest out of South Australia."

"Our partnership with industry and the wider community is a very important weapon in this ongoing fight. Their support is vital, and I thank the public for their part in keeping South Australia fruit fly-free."

## Seniors sought for advisory group

SENIORS living on the Victorian side of Sunraysia are being encouraged to apply to become a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council of Senior Victorians (MACSV).

Member for Mildura, Peter Crisp, is keen to see seniors in his electorate nominate and contribute to the formulation of policies and programs that improve the quality of life and well being for older Victorians.

"Age should never be a barrier to enjoying a full and productive life," Mr Crisp said. "And this is a great opportunity for seniors to be involved in decisions that directly affect their lives and the lives of others."

"Potential MACSV mem-

bers should be able to consult and represent a wide range of views, analyse information, have good communication skills and the capacity to understand the needs of Victorians from diverse backgrounds to contribute to the development of Ministerial advice.

"The Department for Victorian Communities advised they are encouraging nominations from rural and regional Victoria, culturally diverse backgrounds, Indigenous elders and those who can bring to the council varied life experiences which may include different family and housing circumstances, health status, occupation, income and education."

"It is important to note

that members are appointed as individuals on the MACSV and are not expected to represent specific views or be accountable to any organisation.

"Seniors make valuable contributions in regional communities and this advisory council is one way to ensure they have input into the services and programs that are needed to fulfil their desires, ambitions and commitments."

Application forms and terms of reference are available at Mr Crisp's office at 35 Deakin Avenue, Mildura, telephone 5021 2828 or can be downloaded from [www.seniors.vic.gov.au](http://www.seniors.vic.gov.au).

Nominations close next Tuesday, March 13.

# End of Season