



YOUR FREE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER SINCE 1972

AFTER the SCOTSBURN FIRES



Clockwise from top left: David McCallum with part of the melted engine of his car, sometimes you just have to say it, David Wells' quickly rebuilt hay art and some members of the Elaine Brigade: Tristan Mair 17, Brady Dunne 16, Natasha Ford 16, Anthony Young 17, Matthew Wetherall 21. Sam Lewis Brigade Captain says some of these young firefighters have come up through the ranks of the junior brigade and have now joined the senior brigade. This was their first major fire and their training stood them in good stead.

Read Marg Cooper's account of the human impact of the fires on page 5.

inside



- What's Mum Knitting??
 - Broadband Meeting in Meredith
 - A New District Wildlife Shelter
 - Time to Apply for Community Grants
- ...and the usual *much more!*



CONNECT

There are lots of special interest groups in the district. Make a call and **connect** - *you'll be glad you did.* (And let us have any corrections or additions.)

**ADVANCE
MEREDITH**
☎5286 1291

ANGLING CLUB
☎0419 423 960

BLUE LIGHT DISCO
☎5286 1222

BOOK CLUB
☎5286 8201

CFA
(000 for fire calls)
Elaine
☎0417 533516
Meredith
☎5286 1502
Morrisons
☎0417 770 765

CHILDCARE
☎5286 1348

**COMMUNITY
CENTRE**
☎5286 1348
CRICKET
Elaine
☎0418 535713
Junior Under 14
☎0418535713
Meredith
☎5286 1434

CUBS & SCOUTS
Anakie
☎5281 9497

FOOTBALL (seniors)
☎0408 545246
(juniors)
☎0430 587674

GOLF CLUB
☎5341 5748

HISTORY GROUP
☎5286 8201

LANDCARE
☎5286 1250

LIFE DRAWING
☎0430 318322

MEMORIAL HALL
☎5286 1545

**MOTOR CYCLE
CLUB**
☎0437 009250

PLAYGROUP
☎5286 1348

POLICE PADDOCKS
☎5286 1273

RED CROSS
☎5286 8222

RSL
☎52861 452

**SENIOR CITIZENS
CLUB**
☎5286 8232

TENNIS
Elaine
☎0448 291074
Meredith
☎5286 1211

SEW 'N' SEWS
☎5286 1348

**FRIENDS OF THE
BRISBANE RANGES**
☎5286 1252
**LIONS DISTRICT
CONTACT**
☎52 815391

EMERGENCY

Police, Ambulance, Fire
(from mobile phone) **000 or 112**
Meredith Police Station 5286 1222
Power Failure 132 412
Nurse-On-Call 1300 606024
Mental Health Advice 1300 280 737
Poisons Information 13 11 26
Barwon Water 1300 656 007
SES flood & storm help: 132 500
24 Hour Helpline 1800 629 572
24 Hour Drug & Alcohol 1800 888 236
Kids Help Line 1800 551 800
24hr 5-18yo

Golden Plains Shire 1300 363 036
A.H.: all services 5220 7111
Bannockburn Vets 5281 1221
Golden Plains Vets 5281 2226
Injured Wildlife 1300 wildlife
Pets and Horses 24/7 0421 617 238
Wildlife Rescue 0459 379915

JUSTICES of the PEACE

Mr R Cooke Meredith 52 861 346
Mr H Woerner Meredith 52 861 402
Mrs S W Dynon Steiglitz 52 819 223
Mr P Ryan Elaine 0409 861 296

SERVICES

**CEMETERY
TRUST**
☎5286 1550

**MATERNAL &
CHILD HEALTH**
☎5220 7230

HALL HIRE
Meredith I
☎5286 1545
Elaine
☎5341 5596

PRE-SCHOOL
☎5286 1227

Elaine Rec Res
☎5341 5703
LIBRARY VAN
☎5272 6010

PRIMARY SCHOOL
☎5286 1313

**RECREATION
RESERVE**
☎0429 841399

The Meredith and District News is published by a volunteer sub-committee of the Meredith Community Centre comprising: Jim Elvey, Dawn Macdonald, David Jones, Trudy Mitchell, Stefania Parkinson and Ian Penna

NEWS & VIEWS

Subject to the conditions outlined below, contributions accompanied by the contributor's name (which will also be published) and contact details, are most welcome. Please email to news@meredithnews.com.au or deliver to the Meredith Corner Shop.

DATES AND DEADLINES

The Newsletter is distributed on the **first Thursday** of each month (except January). All advertisements and submissions must be lodged by the **last Thursday** of the preceding month, but earlier is **really** appreciated.

ADVERTISING

Advertising in the M&D Newsletter is a great way to let district residents know about your business. Contact us for full details and lodgement forms. Rates are as follows:

	B&W	colour
Business Card	\$14	
Quarter page	\$25	\$60
Half page	\$40	\$100
Full page	\$80	\$180

Note: Colour not available for all issues. A \$20 loading applies for preferred position Classifieds are **FREE** for personal notices up to 25 words from residents. Otherwise \$7.50 or \$5.00 if paid on lodgement. Community Groups can have a 1/4 page ad for free or a \$25.00 discount on larger ads. (Cond. apply)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you are outside our delivery area you can subscribe for \$25.00 p.a. (11 issues) and get the Meredith and District News posted to you anywhere in Australia.

CONTACT US

Post Office, Meredith, 3333

(BH ONLY please)

Editorial: Trudy 0429 430646

Advertising: Ian 0409 016815

Accounts: Dawn 0428 861274

WEB

You can check back copies and lodge comments at meredithnews.com.au

ONLINE PHOTOS

We do not publish children's photos online. If you would like any other photo that you appear in withheld from the online edition, let us know in writing by the second Thursday of the month of publication.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publishers. The publishers may edit or reject contributions and accept no responsibility for errors or omissions.



"I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd
but three summer days - three such days
with you I could fill with more delight than
fifty common years* could ever contain."

~John Keats

*Sadly, the poet John Keats had only 25 years, but at least some were far from "common" They were his butterfly years.



COMMUNITY

Meredith Christmas Carols

Meredith Christmas Carols 2015 was held on Sunday December 20th- the weekend of the terrible fires in our district. It was an opportunity for those who were able to , to come together to think about those who had been through the most harrowing experience probably of their lives and also to give thanks for the courage and selflessness of the fire men and women and emergency workers who work so hard to protect us.

The day had everything, extreme heat, howling wind, then rain and cooler wind. The clouds lifted and the evening was a very pleasant one for families to gather on the grass of the Meredith info centre, and join in singing the familiar carols which we have all grown to love. Kym Ivory led us in song and Christmas stories and jokes assisted as always by the wonderful and generous Dawn Macdonald, who provided the music. Kym's rendition of "HOLY NIGHT" was once again a highlight. We are so fortunate in Meredith to have such talented and generous people. And of course Santa was very busy on the fire engine that night, and didn't quite make it but he managed to leave great bags of lollies for all the children (and some adults) to enjoy.

Many thanks to the members of the Meredith Lions Club for providing the barbeque before the carols.

A cuppa and the sharing of Christmas greetings completed the evening.

Meredith Senior Citizens

Jim Hynds

With 2015 "done and dusted" Meredith Seniors look forward to a great year in 2016.

The Seniors held their Christmas Celebration on December 14, 2015. A good turnout of members and guests were treated to a fantastic two course meal supplied by the P.F.A.. Many thanks to the ladies and the four school children. We were then entertained by the band "Whisky River" throughout the afternoon with lots of sing-alongs. The Christmas hampers were drawn throughout the day with lots of happy winners. These hampers are supported by local businesses including Woolabrai, Mortimer's Roadhouse, Meredith Corner Store, Foxy's, Royal Hotel, Back Creek Café, Meredith Dairy, Margaret Hearn and many more. Without the support of these businesses we would struggle to run these raffles. So a big *thank you* from the Seniors. Another big *thank you* to Jo Primmer and Heather Banks who put the hampers together and decorated the hall.

Jo Primmer dressed up as a Fairy and had the Seniors in fits of laughter throughout the day. Overall it was a great Christmas celebration!

Members are reminded that our first luncheon for the year will be held at Back Creek Café on Monday, February 8th, 2016. We look forward to a good turnout.

Meredith Corner Store

We would like to announce it is with mixed emotions that we have sold the Meredith Corner Store and LPO. We would like to sincerely thank you for your patronage and support over the last 11 years, we will certainly miss our interactions with you all.

We would like to thank our wonderful staff both past and present, we have certainly appreciated their effort. Staff will be offered a position with the new owner.

Finally we would like to wish the new owner Matthew all the best in his new venture and trust that you will make him feel welcome.

Thanks again, all the best and goodluck

Gus and Jo.

...and

We extend our thanks to Gus and Jo for their generous support of the newsletter in many ways, including the provision of a pick-up point for our readers and helping us with distribution in other ways. Best wishes in your future endeavours.

GP Festival Tix for Locals

An allocation of tickets for Golden Plains Music Festival will be made available for locals living between Elaine and Lethbridge to purchase from the Meredith Corner Store (15 Wallace Street) from 9am on 9 February. Three per person limit. For more information contact us on 0430 091 120 or via auntym@mmf.com.au. Website: www.mmf.com.au.

Classifieds

First insertion of small ads are FREE to district residents

Lost Monday 18th January on Mt Mercer Road. Red/silver stepladder, engraved Meredith Maintenance on back. Please ring John 52861550

Firewood FREE Cut your own firewood, cypress. Felled trees available. Please ring Doug 52861283 or John 52861550

Church News



ANGLICAN

Weekly Services, baptisms, weddings, funerals, pastoral care, bible studies. Contact: Rev. Elizabeth Bufton, 5281 2224; 0437524864
Church Office, Byron St. Bannockburn 5281 2553

Service Times;

Church of Epiphany Meredith.

11.00am 4th Sunday each month, Holy Communion at Anglican Church. 11.00am 2nd Sunday of month, Holy Communion at Uniting Church

St James. Morrisons:

Contact: 0429 146 566 or 5368 2730. The Rev. Glen Wesley

1st Sunday of the month at 5pm and 3rd Sunday of the month at 9am.

UNITING CHURCH

Monthly Combined Holy Communion services.

2nd Sunday, 11am at Meredith Uniting Church

4th Sunday at 11am at Meredith Anglican Church

1st & 3rd Sunday at 9.30 at Buninyong Uniting Church

Enquires Doug McFarlane 52861283.

Rev. Lindell Gibson 53413 200

SERBIAN ORTHODOX : Fr. Theodore—Ph. 5341 5568

Holy Liturgy 10am every Sun, Sat & Major Feast Days.

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA.

St. Marys House of Prayer Elaine Solemn mass Sundays 10.00am.

Rosary and Vespers Saturday 5.00pm. Confessions by appointment

Fr. James Ph. 5341 5544

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PARISH

Mass times for

St. Joseph's Catholic Parish

Mass times for February/ March 2016

Winchelsea every Saturday @ 6 p.m.

Inverleigh(Bannockburn) every Sunday @ 9 a.m.

Anakie Sunday @ 11 a.m. February 7th/21st March 6th/ 20th/ 27th (Easter Sunday)

Meredith Sunday @ 11 a.m. February 14th/28th March 13th/ 26th (Easter Saturday)

Ash Wednesday Mass and Ashes Wednesday February 10th

Meredith 11 a.m. Winchelsea 5p.m. Inverleigh(Bannockburn) 7p.m.

Mass at Bannockburn Aged Care Facility 2nd Friday of the month @ 11 a.m. Family Mass 1st Sunday of the month @ 9 a.m. at Inverleigh(Bannockburn)

Enrolment for the Sacraments of 1st Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation will take place on Wednesday February 17th at Bannockburn cultural centre at 5.30 p.m. followed by a sausage sizzle for children and parents.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2016

This special day celebrated in hundreds of countries throughout the world will take place in Meredith on Friday March 4th at 2p.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Lawler Street Meredith. followed by afternoon tea. Please bring a small plate of afternoon tea. This year's service focuses on the people of Cuba particularly those suffering from domestic violence. **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY MARCH 4TH at 2P.M. @ ST. JOSEPH'S LAWLER ST.**

St. Joey's OP SHOP

Rear of St. Joey's Hall. Lawler St. Meredith

Wednesdays and Fridays 10am -4pm

Great bargains-A wide range of baby furniture is available FREE- prams, cots, portable cots, change table etc. Get in early as these will not last.

Thank you for your donations but at the moment we are not in need of any more summer clothes.

Come and browse. Volunteers very welcome - Ring 5286 1230



Meredith Community Centre
working for our community

Hi Everyone,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2016.

Many of you like myself will have spent the weekend of the Scotsburn fire watching with concern whether my staff were impacted. Jo and her family evacuated but fortunately were not affected. As I travel to work through that area I am sobered to see the devastation caused by the fire. I have not at this point discovered if any of our Centre users and supporters has been affected. From the staff and committee our thoughts are with you if you have been. If the Community Centre can help you in any way please don't hesitate to give us a call.

By now you should have well and truly received our new Course Guide for the first term or you can see all of our activities on the website or our Facebook page. We have quite a few returning programs as well as some new ones including a dry garden workshop in Teesdale with Ian Nash. Ian's last workshop was very popular and we had to limit the numbers so if you are interested get in early.

We are organising a trip across to the Dressmaker exhibition at Barwon Park and meeting Anthony Hamilton Smith who is going to tell us about his involvement in the production. We will also be enjoying afternoon tea. I have not been to Barwon Park before so I am really looking forward to it.

Those of you with school aged children will know that we have a very short first term so most of the classes will be starting a week earlier than usual. So make sure you don't miss out. It is amazing how frequently we have people coming in to book for classes after they have occurred or just saying to us darn, I wanted to do that. So make it your resolution not to put it off. Do it now.

Please check our website or brochure for the times for occasional care this year as we have added some longer and extra sessions to the timetable. We are looking forward to seeing how it goes.

There is lots more I could include but Trudy will be trying to fit it in so I had better finish.

Bye for now, till next month.

Pam

Meredith Community Centre
4 Russell Street Meredith 3333
Ph 5286 0700

learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au

Open: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thurs 9.00-3.00. Fri Closed

Scotsburn Fire

A fast moving blaze began on Finns Road at Scotsburn on Saturday, December 19 and devastated an area of about 4,600 hectares of land. It was reported that the fire destroyed 12 homes, damaged others, destroyed many sheds, infrastructure and animals. Extreme weather conditions caused the fire to travel very fast and a wind change during the fire caused much grief (but saved others). The fire was brought under control when the wind dropped with the slight cool change that hit the area on Saturday night, but by then it had burnt from Finns Road at Scotsburn beyond Horsehill Road, and Woolshed Road near Williamsons Creek and was heading towards Blue Bridge Road, with several spot fires reported closer to Elaine.

But, amid the blackened landscape, with loss and devastation there is humour, kindness and hope. A couple of signs appeared within days; in front of a destroyed home on the highway was a sign saying “Bugger” and David Wells and his children replaced the Hay Art, that got burnt with new Hay Art with signs saying “Thank you “and “Merry Christmas”.

David McCallum who lives in Lumsden Lane relates that soon after the fire passed, a man arrived with fencing panels to make a temporary yard for his alpacas, someone else arrived with hay and someone came with fresh water. Children of his friends noticed that all his garden was black so they went home, got two brightly flowering plants and planted them in his garden. And now three weeks after the worst day in his life the very scorched wisteria on his back veranda is shooting green growth. His house was saved but everything else on his block was destroyed including three cars. One car was in a shed that had a slightly sloping concrete floor. The engine of that car melted and ran out behind the car and reset into extraordinary silver shapes that David intends to erect in his new garden as sculptures. His new bike, a chainsaw and ride on mower are skeletons in a buckled, but still standing shed.

Murray and Cheryl Arnel tell how their house caught fire three times, 8 hours, 16 hours and 24 hours after the main fire front had passed. Each outbreak was extinguished but each outbreak caused more damage to their home. Amazingly, their chooks and chook pen survived and the chooks have not stopped laying. Their garden watering system has been restored and green grass is appearing in their lawn and the agapanthus are flowering on. Cheryl was surprised and delighted that the new white undies that she bought only days before the fire survived on the clothes line.

To drive through the area on the Midland Highway is very “sobering” and reminds us every time we take the trip of our vulnerability in this land of flood and fire and sweeping plain. It also reminds us of the generosity, bravery and dedication of all who fought the fire and all those who helped during and after.

*Core of my heart, my country!
Land of rainbow gold,
For flood and fire and famine,
She pays us back threefold,
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness,
That thickens as we gaze.*

“My Country” by Dorothea MacKellar (Verse 5)

From the Mayor

Cr. Des Phelan



2016 Australia Day Awards

Council held its 2016 Australia Day Awards Ceremony on Wednesday 27 January, and I am happy to announce the award winners are:

- Citizen of the Year – David Bruce
- Senior Citizen of the Year – Jill Wheeler
- Young Citizen of the Year – Matthew Kinnia
- Community Event of the Year – Live @ Turtle Bend 2015

You can find out more information about all these deserving winners in this month’s Gazette or on our website.

Community Grants applications are now open

Does your community organisation have a fantastic idea that would benefit your community? Applications for Council’s Community Grants Program 2016/17 open on 1 February 2016. These grants enable community groups to further meet the needs of the wider community in a partnership with Council.

Applications can be submitted online goldenplainsdigital.com.au or a hard copy form can be provided on request.

Have you completed our Community Engagement Survey?

Council would like to hear more about your priorities for Community Engagement in Golden Plains, which will be used to feed into the development of a new Community Engagement Strategy for 2016-2020.

I would like to encourage you to have your say today – you can fill out the survey online at goldenplainsdigital.com.au/consultations, or fill out the printed form which will be included with the February edition of the Golden Plains Gazette.

Keep an eye out for our redeveloped website

It is very important to Council that residents have access to Council information and resources and to that end, Council is redeveloping its corporate website to provide a more customer-focused, contemporary digital service to our community.

The updated site will run alongside the existing site for a period of time, and Council would greatly appreciate any feedback on the new site – keep an eye out for it.

Recreation



Meredith Golf Club Results

On 22/11/2015 Par: Vin Drew, square; Jeff Cooper, -1.

Nearest the Pin on the 9th, Denis Gear: nearest the pin on the 14th, Jeff Cooper.

On 6/12/2015, Stableford: Charlie Osborne, 40 points; Danny Jury, 38 points.

Nearest the Pin on 14th Danny Jury.

On 13/12/2015, Stableford: Denis Gear, 37 points; Danny Jury, 35 points.

Nearest the Pin on the 2nd, Danny Jury: nearest the pin on the 9th, Jeff Cooper: nearest the pin on the 14th Denis Gear.

On 27/12/2015, Stableford: Lyn Drew 35 points,; Mike Colvin, 33 points.

Nearest the pin on the 14th, J Clarke; nearest the pin on 2nd, Vin Drew.

The weekly competition on Sunday now starts at 10.30 am. So if you can make it at that time just turn up and join the field and be home early!

IMAGE OMITTED FROM ONLINE EDITION

Cricket Victoria staff member and Central Highlands U14 Boys Assistant Coach Daniel McDonald attended Elaine CC junior training on Thursday 14th January, in a show of support after the fires that recently impacted our community. The kids thoroughly enjoyed the coaching tips provided by Daniel, and a good time was had by all. Thanks to Daniel and Cricket Victoria for your support!

Back row; Murray Arnel, Daniel McDonald, Nicholas Pantzidis, Kyle Ettridge Front row; Tom Flood, Dylan Lyons, Trent Miller, James Parkinson, Arron Miller

Meredith POLICE news



Firstly I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all readers of this first Meredith and District News Letter for 2016.

Before I go into any detail regarding crime and offenders recently caught I would like to say how very pleased I am with driver behaviour in the area during the Christmas and New Year Period. Although I have taken some annual leave during the Christmas and New Year period, I know that it has been a long while since I have attended or been made aware of any serious motor vehicle accidents in the Meredith area, and it seems to be less often that I am finding drivers travelling over the speed limit on the Midland Highway. This is without doubt a pleasing statistic.

In Recent editions I have praised those in our community who have assisted me with information regarding a 44 year old Norlane male, who I have arrested on three separate occasions over this past 6 months for multiple Thefts, Possessing the Proceeds of Crime and multiple other serious criminal offences which I have previously reported on. This investigation has been very lengthy and extremely time consuming however Paul Mathew COOK of Norlane was convicted at the Geelong Magistrates Court on the 19th January, 2016 and was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. An excellent outcome which was achieved with the community working together.

COOK will again face the Geelong Magistrates Court on the 16th February in regards to various other serious Criminal matters resulting from my recent arrests.

On the 11th of January, 2016 I was re called to duty at 5 a.m. where I was tasked to attend on the Shelford – Mt Mercer Road to assist at a traffic matter where a suspected broken down tractor was parked stationary on the side of the road. A short time later I arrived at the location where initial enquiries established that the tractor was registered to an Inverleigh farm but was not stolen. After making further enquiries I was able to establish that the \$30,000 tractor was in fact stolen and that the offender had crashed through farm gates when he stole it.

After speaking with the male who initially reported the tractor I commenced a mobile patrol of the Inverleigh area. Sometime later I located the offending male on the Shelford – Inverleigh Road and recovered the tractor key from his possession. He was arrested and charged with the Theft of the tractor and Criminal Damage. He has been bailed to appear at the Geelong Magistrates Court on the 1st of March, 2016 and the tractor was returned to its rightful owner.

“BLUE LIGHT DISCO” – Due to circumstances that were out of my control I was unable to run any Blue Light Disco's throughout 2015. I am pleased to announce that I am looking to run at least 2 Blue Light Discos through 2016. The dates will depend greatly on the availability of “Disc Des”. Please stay tuned for further details.

I encourage people in our great community to keep up the great work as was seen through 2015. Any Information can be given to me directly either by phone message or by leaving a note under my police station door or anonymously. Alternatively contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Kindest Regards Greg KITCHEN

Officer in Charge – Meredith Police Station.

Vale to Fr Des Cameron

9/7/1922 – 18/12/2015

Raymond Kelly

Thirty priests, three bishops and Mgr. Greg Bennet Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Melbourne co-celebrated the Funeral Mass for Fr Des Cameron at Sacred heart Church, Newport on Tuesday, 29th December, 2015. The principal celebrant was Bishop Mark Edwards O.M.I. Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Father Cameron was born at Spotswood, one of four brothers. His father was a fitter and turner. The family moved to one of the southern bayside suburbs and after attending St Kevin's, he entered Corpus Christie Seminary in Werribee in 1942 to train as a priest. He was ordained by Archbishop Mannix in July 1950.

Fr Cameron came to Meredith in 1959 for five months when Fr McCarthy returned home to Ireland. Although Fr Cameron's stay in Meredith was only brief there are parishioners who still remember him. His first appointment as Parish Priest was to Yea in 1962.

While Parish Priest of Werribee from 1969 to 1973 land was purchased for catholic purposes in Hoppers Crossing when the area was open farm land. It is now the site of a church and school. Fr Cameron was Parish Priest of Newport and Spotswood when he retired in 1998. He was reputed to be an excellent sportsman and fishing along the Murray River with a group of fellow priests was a favourite pastime.

Fr. Cameron passed away at Anglesea Aged Care on December 18, aged 93 years, in the sixtieth year of his priesthood.

Vale to Janis Robertson

Marg Cooper

Janis married Max Robertson when he was 18 years old and she was 16 years old. They lived in Geelong, then built a house at Morrison before they moved to Mercer Street, Meredith. They had a family of Margaret, Kevin and Kym, had 6 grandchildren and some great grandchildren. Most of his working life Max drove trucks, locally and interstate. The family holidayed each year. As the children grew up they ventured further afield in their caravan and Max and Janis were planning some extensive travelling after he retired. Alas this was not to be. Max died on June 24, 2009. Max and Janis had celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary on June 10. Janis lived on in Meredith and made some close friends. Every year she helped Doreen Thompson with her dogs at the Annual Foxie Dog show at Elaine. She died on December 28 after battling cancer for some time. Friends tell that she wanted to reach her 71st birthday which she celebrated on December 21.



Keep Knitting Mum

Marg Cooper

Marj Powell (who grew up in Meredith) has been knitting for her daughter. But this is knitting with a difference!

Marj's daughter Maxine works at the Women's Hospital in Melbourne in the "breast feeding clinic", teaching mothers how to breast feed their babies. She asked Marj to get her knitting needles out and to knit breasts in many different sizes and colours. They found a pattern on the internet but Marj has experimented with replacing the knitted or crocheted back with a pretty material. She also tried knitting the pattern on bigger needles as Maxine told her they wanted bigger breasts as some ladies are very big. They are stuffed with toy fill to make them soft and pliable. A friend of Marj's knits bonnets for premature babies. Marj said that both bonnets and breasts are simple to knit and that they are happy to help.



Golden Plains Mobile Library

Is at the Meredith Primary
School every
Thursday from 9am to 10.30am



Meredith Playgroup

Meredith Playgroup meets every Thursday from 10am.

Enjoy new activities every week

All welcome



Chris McKenzie's

Garden Notes



Today I spent some time in my garden shed enjoying a large pot of tiger lilies flowering in filtered green light beneath a flourishing grape vine. The shed opens along one side to a garden that contains a jumbled planting of scented lilies, crinums, ginger lilies, a potted gardenia, all protected from the beating sun and wind by a wall of vine leaves. Beneath the shed's roofline I have an array of buckets and assorted water containers to catch any rain that falls. Tending these few exotic treasures in defiance of the blasting heat of summer is balm for this gardener in a challenging summertime environment. When it is too hot outside I withdraw to the old camp bed in the shed to contemplate and this is where some of my best gardening is done – in my mind. I lie back in this breezy retreat, gaze out into the small patch of greenery, and dream.

Outside the garden is exposed to the full sun all day and scanty rainfall has barely left a trace of moisture in the seemingly lifeless leached earth. This is a new reality then. Already we inhabit a tired and worn patch of soil in this old gold mining district, and now the consequences of global warming force us to rethink our gardening practices. This year with little rain to speak of, our productive spring garden faded quickly after a few glorious weeks, so planning for a long dry summer became an exciting project. And isn't this the pleasure of gardening? That it is an ongoing challenge and experiment and cause for deep research.

Here at Steiglitz we discussed the value of wicking beds but have not yet constructed one, however the lesson from the wicking experiment is about the conservation of water. (<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/wicking-beds/>) This summer I have not attempted to grow an extensive vegie garden. I have grown half a dozen tomato bushes and a few zucchini plants close to the house. These highly productive vegetables love the heat and benefit from the washing up water, tossed on the earth a couple of times a day, supplemented with water from the washing machine. An extravagance is lucerne mulch that I have soaked in a tub for a day or so. The water is saturated with goodness which then goes onto the vegies.

A good crop of mixed salad greens has been grown in a well-composted and mulched plot about three square yards covered with shade cloth. This does not please me aesthetically but the lettuces are delicious, crisp and fresh. I water only once a week and stagger the planting of seeds to ensure a continuous supply. Half of a 44 gallon drum near the kitchen door and filled with good soil and compost keeps us going with a lush yield of basil. On hot days I throw

a shade cloth over the tub. There is no doubt that shade is the answer here, along with regular additions of well composted organic matter. These make the need for watering less frequent, and the soil is protected from sunburn. For those areas of the garden that cannot be protected from the worst heat do not forget the joy, and the culinary delight of herbs – many will thrive in poor soil with little or no water.

An aside: even through the harshest summer a beautiful posy can be plucked: a friend recently presented me with a nosegay of the seed heads of parsley, dill, sprigs of time and olive tips – a gardener's delight.

Happy gardening.

Chris



CONLEYS

BED & BREAKFAST
ACCOMMODATION



Fully furnished Victorian era, 3 bedroom home, with full self contained kitchen, short and longer term stays welcome, open 7 days.

Located in the Elaine township.

For bookings and enquiries

Ph Simone 0432024509

Lion's Licola Wilderness Village

Marg Cooper

The township of Licola, at the gateway to the Alpine National Park 254 kilometres east of Melbourne on the Macalister River, is owned entirely by Lions Clubs of Victoria and southern New South Wales. The web site explains that it is the only privately owned town in Victoria and the only one not on mains power. It generates its own power, pumps and treats its own water and is responsible for its own waste management. Most of the town consists of the Wilderness Village which has been running for over forty years. It was built especially to give camp experiences to disadvantaged and special needs groups, mostly during school holidays. The camp has its own chapel and the town has a general store and a caravan park.

Brian spoke to the Meredith Lions about the camp and invited members to volunteer to be camp parents. Mary and Greg Foster accepted the offer and set off by a bus from Geelong on January 4. Mary said this camp was for children from the Geelong Region. 139 children and 32 leaders attended the camp and the children were kept fully entertained during its five days duration. Activities included swimming in the unheated pool, a giant swing, canoeing, raft building, woodwork, the leap of faith, disc golf, archery, a flying fox, obstacle course, cooking damper and writing a letter to their sponsor, as Lions Clubs raise money to sponsor children to the camp. There were three theme days, "rainbow", "crazy hair" and "pirate" day. At the end of the week each group of six children and their "parent for the week" performed a skit or item at a concert and each group had a turn to set-up for and clean-up after meals.

Most cabins slept twelve children with two "parents" to care for them. Greg and two other men cared for eighteen, eleven year old boys in their cabin. For the activities two groups of six children were mixed, usually a group of boys and a group of girls of the same age group.

Some volunteers came from the organisation "Volunteering Geelong". Greg gave up a week of his holidays to volunteer and Mary gave up a week of caring for children and grandchildren. She said it was extremely enjoyable but challenging and tiring as "parents" were on call for twenty four hours, every day.

Thank you for volunteering. The camp may be a life changing experience for the children.

Apply Now for GP Shire Community Grants

Applications for Council's Community Grants Program 2016/17 open to community groups are open for the month of February. Grants of up to \$5,000 are provided on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the community group's contribution provided in-kind or by cash.

To be eligible to apply, organisations must be:

- Not-for-profit or equivalent
- Incorporated or managed as a Council or Crown Committee (otherwise auspice must be provided)
- Have no outstanding projects or evaluations from community grants pre 2015/16

Mayor, Cr Des Phelan, says "The Community Grants program allows community groups to further meet the needs of the wider community in a partnership with Council. Council encourages any group with a great idea to apply – Council loves to hear about community groups' innovative and constructive ideas."

Applications close Monday 29 February 2016 and can be submitted online www.goldenplainsdigital.com.au or a hard copy form can be provided on request. For more information, contact Paul Owen on 5220 7111 or communitygrants@gplains.vic.gov.au.

DECEMBER rain

■ LTA ■ 2015

53.3

22.6

Summer Rain So Far

JANUARY rain

■ LTA ■ 2015

42.4

39.3



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Art from the Neighbourhoods

Marg Cooper

"This exhibition is a partnership between 10 Neighbourhood Houses in the Barwon Region who support and encourage creative expression within their communities. Artmaking is an integral component of community development work, sustaining and promoting community identity, and the nearly 200 works on display are evidence of the enormous talent and goodwill that exists in our communities."

The exhibition "Art from the Neighbourhoods" was at Shearers Arms Gallery in Aberdeen Street, Geelong until January 23. It opened on Friday, December 11, 2015. It is the first joint exhibition by local Neighbourhood House artists. The Meredith Art Group had 28 artworks on display, Anakie Community House 58, Vines Road Community Centre 7, South Barwon Community Centre 9, Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre 11, Lara Community Centre 24, Forrest Neighbourhood House 13, Geelong West Neighbourhood House 2 and Cloverdale Community Centre had 46. The exhibition was curated by artist Emma Hollard.

The flyer said the exhibition is "Celebrating and supporting community engaged artists" during "Community and Philanthropy Week". The Meredith artists are proud to have their works displayed and for sale at a venue in Geelong.

Bannockburn Skate Park Lights Up

The Bannockburn skate park will again be up in lights this year during the third annual Barwon South West Twilight Skate Park Competition on Friday 18 March.

This year, people aged 14-19 have the chance to participate in Tracks; a program where they learn from industry professionals about how to organise skate park events and competitions.

They will also be able to get involved in making decisions and playing a lead role in the delivery of the Barwon South West Skate Park Competition.

Industry professionals will mentor the young people around photography, sponsorship, judging, emceeing, risk and event management.

Mayor, Cr Des Phelan, says the program is a great opportunity for Golden Plains youth.

"Tracks is a fantastic program for any young people who want to see more things happening at their local skate park. If you love skating and want to learn more about skate events and the industry in general, get involved! You'll have fun and get some great experience at the same time."

Starting on the 4th February, Tracks will be held at the Bannockburn Cultural Centre each Thursday from 4.30pm-6.30pm. For more information, please contact the Golden Plains Youth Development Team on 5220 7111, email youth@gplains.vic.gov.au or visit goldenplainsdigital.com.au/youth-blog.

An Unholy Caterwauling on New Years Morning

Marg Cooper


Jim and Linda Hynds entertained some neighbours on New Years Eve in their outside room and after midnight when the last guests had departed they went to bed. They were awakened about 2.30 am by an unholy caterwauling or cat screaming in the outside room that "would have woken the dead"! Jim scrambled out of bed, opened his back door and saw an unbelievable sight.

Two foxes, a mother and a young one had Thomas their black cat baled up on the barbeque. His black hair was standing on end, his tail was straight up in the air, his eyes were as big as saucers and he looked like a huge black fur ball. Jim raced around yelling and the foxes raced around upsetting the Christmas tree and scattering Christmas decorations, before escaping.

Also in the room was an echidna in a ball beside the Christmas tree, that disappeared under a mat while Jim chased the foxes. Jim couldn't get him out so left him to free himself when the kerfuffle calmed down.

Jim doesn't know if the foxes followed the echidna into the outside room and the cat got a fright or if the echidna was a quiet observer of the foxes chasing the cat. Eitherway, a Happy New Year was had





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Welcome Back to Kinder for 2016, we hope you have enjoyed the holidays as much as we have and are keen to start Term One in our new centre. We begin our Orientation Days on Monday 1st February for the Kindergarten group with their first full session on the Tuesday 2nd. Wednesday 3rd is for the 3 year old group. Our new 3 year old Pre Kinder teacher is Kylie Vanderkley and our relief Assistant is Leanne Davies.

Kylie and Leanne and I are looking forward to welcoming all our families and children to our Kinder, we have been busy setting up the room with lots of new areas to play and explore. We will meet and greet you with big smiles, ready for a fabulous and fun year ahead.

Jodie

MISSING SOMETHING?

Regular Columns: **ENERGY WATCH**, **KINDRED MATTERS** and **HEALTHY, EASY & DELISH** are all back next month.



MEREDITH and DISTRICT BROADBAND COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION

Meredith residents are set to experience the potential benefits of the **nbn** with the scheduled rollout of the **nbn**TM Fixed Wireless service.

We're holding a Community Information Session to let you know the facts and potential benefits of the Fixed Wireless network.

Monday 8th February 2016

Drop-in anytime between **4.30pm – 6.30pm**
Meredith Community Centre, 4 Russell St,
Meredith VIC 3333

- No need to make an appointment.
- Drop in at any time between 4.30pm and 6.30pm to speak with representatives of nbn and its' project partner Ericsson.
- For further information call Matt Evans, Ericsson Community Relations Manager on 0425-702-007.

Broadband is Coming

Jim Elvey

The highly politicised government program to improve internet broadband service throughout Australia, has mostly been a source of frustration and bemusement to rural residents. While many city and even regional residents gained access to NBN services, we, because of our small numbers and relative isolation, have been left languishing with "ADSL 1" or a satellite service that was not as good as what the "townies" were upgrading from. The mid-week service slump when children and adults get home is something we have just had to live with.

Our attempts to extract from successive federal governments a firm commitment to when this inequity will be addressed, have been met by vague policy pronouncements.

Well, at last there is something in the horizon. (Well, not literally just yet.) Representatives of NBN and communications company Ericsson will be in Meredith this month to talk to residents about plans to install towers to provide a "Fixed Wireless Service" option for district residents.

A media release states the National Broadband Network (NBN) fixed wireless service will "...provide access to fast, affordable and reliable internet services to Australians living in rural and regional areas." It goes on to explain:

NBN plans to upgrade the current telecommunications network in the most cost-efficient way using best-fit technology and taking into consideration existing infrastructure. As part of the Fixed Wireless component of the network, NBN is proposing to establish a series of radio network base stations designed to provide access to high quality wireless broadband services to people in towns and in rural / urban fringe areas, including Meredith and its surrounds.

The Fixed Wireless network uses cellular technology to transmit signals to and from a small antenna fixed on the outside of a home or business, which is pointed directly towards the fixed wireless facility. The fixed number and set location of users within the Fixed Wireless footprint is designed to help make data speeds and access to the broadband predictable and reliable.

Details of a *Community Information Session* are in this issue.

Go on...smile!



"Crime in multi-storey car parks. That is wrong on so many different levels"

Tim Vines



Dry garden workshop

Visit Ian's wonderful garden at Teesdale and learn the secrets of creating and maintaining a garden which requires minimal watering.

Saturday 19th March 9.30 am

Cost: \$20.00

Bee Keeping with Colin

Tuesday 23rd February 7.30 to 9.30

@ Meredith Community Centre

Mixed media madness

Create a gorgeous mixed media canvas using found objects and other art materials.

Sunday March 13th 10.00am to 3.00pm

The story of my family

Turn your family stories into a unique publication. Gather ideas, compile & edit them and present your book or simple website.

Monday February 15th to March 7th

Shadow boxes quilt

A simple quilt with interlocking boxes.

Wednesday March 16th 10.00am to 3.00pm

Occasional Care

We have experienced and qualified childcare educators committed to providing a quality service in a warm friendly environment. Our program is designed to meet the individual needs of your child and the needs of the group. We welcome you to come and visit the Centre and talk to our staff.

We are increasing our program times in 2016

New program times

3 Hour sessions

Mon, Tue and Thurs 9.15 to 12.15

5 Hour sessions

Wed and Fri 9.15 to 2.15

Kinder pick up session

Mon, Tue and Thurs 2.00 to 3.15.

Children will be either taken over to the Primary school by our teacher to join the after school program at 3.15 or you can collect your kinder and school aged child at the same time.

The service is registered with DET so that you can access the Childcare Benefit and Childcare Rebate, which assists in making care in our Centre affordable.

We currently have vacancies so give us a call
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facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre

For more details on any of these classes call us or visit our website. Bookings essential for all classes.

Hours: MONDAY-THURSDAY 9AM-5PM CLOSED FRIDAY

The Dressmaker

Have you seen the movie The Dressmaker

Join us for a trip to Banwon Park to see the costume exhibition and also hear from Anthony Hamilton Smith about his work with the production.

Friday 4th March. Leaving Meredith at 12.30pm Cost \$28.00 or \$25.00 concession. Includes transport, entry and afternoon tea. Bookings required by 19th February. Payment required on booking.



Computers for the Terrified

If the world of computers baffles you, if you are finding you need to learn skills to move into the digital world. This course will give you the practical skills you need.

Day: Wednesdays, 9.30 to 12.00pm (7weeks)

Dates: February 10th March to March 23rd

Cost: \$65.00

Tutor: Wendy Abraham

IPad Basics

Every time we run this class participants are amazed at all of the things they had not realised their iPad can do. In this class you will explore your iPad in more depth and what changes the latest update has made.

Day: Wednesdays, 1.00 to 3.00pm (7weeks)

Dates: February 10th March to March 23rd

Cost: \$65.00

Tutor: Wendy Abraham

Create a Wordpress website

Wordpress is an amazing, flexible and easy to use platform that you can use to create and maintain a website for your business, hobby or personal interest.

Day: Thursdays, 6.00 to 8.00pm (7weeks)

Dates: February 11th March to March 24th

Cost: \$85.00

Health and Wellbeing classes

TAI CHI

Tai Chi is a moving form of meditation. This low impact exercise helps to maintain a healthy body and mind.

MEREDITH

@ the Meredith Community Centre

Introduction to Tai Chi - Sandra

Tuesdays Feb 2nd - March 22nd

9.30-10.30am 8 weeks \$92.00 \$13 casual

TAI CHI

@ the Meredith Memorial Hall

Tuesdays Feb 2nd - March 22nd

9.30-10.30am 8 weeks \$92.00 \$13 casual

BANNOCKBURN - Daema

@ Bannockburn Family Services Centre

Tuesday Feb 2nd to March 22nd

5-6pm OR 6.30 to 7.30

8 weeks @ \$92.00 \$13.00 casual

TEESDALE TAI CHI-Daema

@ the Teesdale Hall

Thursday Feb 4th to March 24th

9.30am-10.30am

8 weeks @ \$92.00.00 \$13 casual

FUN & FITNESS FOR EVERYONE

@ Community Centre.

Dates: Fri Feb 5th to March 18th

Time: 2.00-3.00pm

7 weeks @ \$63.00 \$10 casual

YOGA/MEDITATION- Welcome back KIM

Evening 7.30 - 8.30pm Thurs Feb 4th to Mar 17th

Cost: \$ 60.00 7 weeks. Full term fee paid in advance.

Volunteering = Great Possibilities for Youth

Volunteering offers a variety of ways Golden Plains young people can get valuable experience and learn new skills – and they're definitely not boring!

People aged 14-24 have access to a whole host of local voluntary programs to get involved in. The Golden Plains Youth Development Team have developed a range of programs available for young people wishing to get involved in their local community.

Tracks: learn about what it takes to become an event manager and judge at your local skate park from industry professionals.

National Youth Week Planning Committee: get involved in organising activities for the largest week long celebration of young people in Australia.

Street Art Team: be mentored by professional graffiti artists to design and paint four skate parks, including Haddon, Dereel, Lethbridge and Enfield.

FReeZA Youth Leadership Program: be mentored by music industry professionals to lead and stage music events and festivals in the local area.

Activity Leader: gain experience designing and running activities and workshops for children and other young people during the Golden Plains School Holiday Program.

Mayor, Cr Des Phelan encourages Golden Plains young people to get involved. "Volunteering is a fun and easy way to get involved in the community – and it could even help you get a job one day. It's a great way to learn new skills, make new friends, and explore education, training and employment pathways – a fantastic way to spend your time."



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19 Feb African Drumming

Friday
26 Feb

All Day Fritz



Friday Nicky Bomba
4 March

Friday
11 March

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5220 7189



Mollie's COLUMN



Hello again!

It feels like just a couple of weeks since I last packed up and moved house, but here I am packing up again! This time I'm piling everything in the back of Dad's ute, because after lots of studying, a couple of freezing Ballarat sharehouses, and two busy years of living and working in Melbourne as a frazzled, slightly overworked addictions researcher, it's finally time to return to Meredith.

As odd as it feels to be moving back in to my childhood room at 27, now a grown woman who manages to do dull adult things like pay bills and wear sensible shoes, it's exciting and a little scary too. I'm about to begin medical school, an ambition that floated around in the back of my mind for a long time before I finally felt brave enough to talk about it, let alone chase it. It's a graduate program, which means I'll walk in on Monday morning with a brain full of...well, not too much, and walk out in just four years as a junior doctor.

I can't wait to catch up with you all around town, and look forward to sharing snippets of life out on Bamganie Road again. Now I better crack on with packing!

Mollie

HOW to POSE with a STATUE



District Skate Parks Get a Paint Job

Golden Plains Shire Council is excited to work with local young people and Ballarat artist Stuart Walsh to develop four murals within skate parks in Dereel, Enfield, Haddon and Lethbridge.

The initiative is part of the Skate Park Graffiti Prevention Project and funded by the Victorian Government's Community Crime Prevention Program.

The project will involve local community members, especially young people, working with local Ballarat artist Stuart Walsh to beautify their local skate park.

The workshops will also teach the participants about other street art design; the historical context of street art and murals drawing on historic examples like the Derry Bogside Artists, Banksy, Obey the Giant and HA HA.



Golden Plains Festival Traffic Management

A summary of the traffic management plans for Golden Plains Music Festival scheduled to occur on Saturday 12 March – Monday 14 March, 2016 is outlined here.

- We will implement one-way traffic on Mount Mercer Road from Bamganie Road to Cameron's Road from approximately 4am on Saturday 12 March to approximately 7pm. Traffic within the one-way zone travelling to Meredith will be diverted down Cameron's Road.
- We will implement a speed reduction on Mount Mercer Road and Cameron's Road from Friday 11 March - Saturday 12 March.
- We have assigned traffic controllers to the corner of Staughton Street and Midland Highway on Monday 14 March to assist vehicles turning left or right onto Midland Highway.
- We will install a no-parking zone along Mount Mercer Road and some surrounding roads.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact us on 0430 091 120.

Thank you for your support from the Festival Planning Team



Pictures: Aaron Walker

Workshops @ the heart

cnr High & Milton Streets, Bannockburn

Sat 20 Feb

2.15-3.15pm

3.45-5.15pm

Sat 27 Feb

2.15-3.15pm

3.45-5.15pm

Sat 19

March

11-12.30pm

● Open to age 6yo + ● Max 30 participants each session ● Bookings essential

more
info:



theheartbannockburn

5220 7189



A Musical Life Story

Marg Cooper

Mike Colvin told his friends and family at his 80th birthday party on Saturday, January 2, at Queenscliff, that he is no good at making speeches, so he told his life story, musically, with the help of Lorraine on key board and his daughters as the choir.

The first music he heard when he was two days old, as a baby being hidden in the laundry of a hospital for aged people, that was owned by a nursing friend of his mother, was the "Geelong Football Club Song". He laughed and insisted that that song became immediately ingrained as part of him. He moved to "Penrose", the property at Grenville that his parents had bought, at three weeks of age and has lived on the property ever since. He grew up in a magic, big, rambling old house and not far from the back door was the Leigh River (or Yarrowee) where Mike and his siblings gained an immunity to all diseases as at that time he maintains it was 80% Yarra and 20% wee.

His first music book was "The Little Grey Mouse". His mother would sit him on her knee at the piano, play the music and sing to him. Mike had the original book and played the tune and his daughters sang. He went to school at Grenville and Mt Mercer on alternate days but recalls that he learnt nothing except how to catch a rabbit with his bare hands. After lunch the teacher put his feet on his desk and went to sleep so the children went rabbiting. They would circle around an area and one child was designated to dive on the rabbit in the centre.

It was quite a shock when he went to Geelong College, aged 13 years. He discovered learning, sport (Row, Row Your Boat) and eventually got to learn music and became the owner of an old saxophone, which he took to pieces and got to work. After school he came home to the farm at Grenville, did wool classing (Click go the Shears) and accountancy courses, became engaged to Jenny, a young lass from Tasmania and proceeded to build a house for her and started playing the saxophone with the "Revellers" at dances and balls. Mike, Lorraine and various drummers played for balls, dances and the Railway Dance on Saturday nights for over fifty years. Mike played some old dance tunes (Moonlight and Roses) and then Jenny and the other four kindergarten teachers at the party sang "I'm a Little Teapot" with actions.

Mike explained how he had a piano in the hall when their four daughters were growing up so they would tinkle as they passed by. They all have sung in choirs, play musical instruments, sing and act and this talent has followed on to many of Mike's grandchildren.

Several other tunes were played to celebrate 55 years and two days of the marriage of Jenny and Mike (For They are Jolly Good Fellows), all their family being present for the party at the house at Queenscliff they purchased about a year ago and the New Year of 2016 (Auld Lang Syne). Mike played "Happy Birthday" and family and friends sang heartily. Jenny Griffiths had made a cake in the shape of a sheep. Of course this reflected his life as a merino sheep farmer, his wool classing prowess and, maybe, that shearing began the following Friday.

**WITHOUT MUSIC
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A MISTAKE** Friedrich Nietzsche

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Meredith Primary School News

Come and see our sunflowers!

Last year, Mrs Daglas' grade 2/3 students planted our scarecrow bed with tiny sunflower seedlings. The stakes we put beside them looked enormous but now, two months later, the sunflowers have swamped them. The bright, yellow heads started to bloom just in time for the start of school and are very happy-looking. Sunflowers are native to South and Central America and the world record is for a sunflower nearly eight metres tall. Sunflowers need regular watering and the families on our school holiday watering roster have tended them carefully through some very hot days. Many thanks to Helena Lindorff for sowing the seeds and planting the seedlings with the students.

Our two scarecrows, on the other hand, are not so happy. After two and a half years of continual wear, their clothes were quite dishevelled and had to go. Master Scarecrow currently has palm fronds to protect him from the weather and Ms Scarecrow is hiding behind the Tuscan kale. We think they would like to step out in something finer and are looking for shirts, trousers, overalls...can anybody help?

Lastly, in our wicking beds, we have some beautiful, organically grown, ruby red rhubarb. This is delicious cooked with apples and topped with a crumble mix or you might like to try some rhubarb muffins. Call in to school have a wander around our gardens, chat to the student and staff and pick some rhubarb.

IMAGE OMITTED
FROM ONLINE
EDITION

Charlie and Jatzu with the "giant stakes" when the sunflower seeds were planted; below, Thomas and Emma give them a coat of paint and bottom, Olivia, Bethany, James and Isabelle among the sunflowers.

IMAGE OMITTED FROM
ONLINE EDITION

IMAGE OMITTED FROM ONLINE EDITION



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This summer, it's up to you to check Fire Danger Ratings daily. You could be at risk of uncontrollable fires on Severe, Extreme and Code Red days.

STAY INFORMED.

To check Fire Danger Ratings
visit emergency.vic.gov.au
call 1800 248 887
download the FireReady app

FireReady

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Vale Rita Beggs 12/7/1937 - 9/11/2015

Marg Cooper

Rita Christina Beggs was the only child of Thomas (Lofty) and Irene Lewis (Mooney) who lived on a farm on Morrisons Road at Elaine. When she was five years old she came to Meredith to live in the Royal Hotel with her grandmother, Ma Mooney, so she could attend St Joseph's Catholic School at Meredith. There were about fifteen children at the school and one teacher who taught all the grades in the one room. They wrote on slates. Rita liked to play cards, listen to the battery powered radio and occasionally play the piano in the bar of the hotel. She remembered that the first picture she saw was "Lassie Come Home" in the Meredith Hall. To celebrate the end of WWII the school children travelled to Geelong in the back of a truck for a picnic lunch and went to the pictures. Other important events in her life she remembered as the Coronation of the Queen, the murder of J.F. Kennedy and when the first man walked on the Moon. After finishing primary school she became a boarder at Sacred Heart in Geelong for five years. She would go home at weekends by train. She then boarded in Ballarat, attended the School of Mines where she learnt to sew and went on to work at Lucas's, cutting and sewing underwear and dresses.



As a teenager she loved Elvis, drive-in theatres, the song "A White Sports Coat" and she loved to dance. She met a very handsome George Beggs from Balliang at a local dance. They were engaged for two years before they married at Meredith Catholic Church on Easter Monday, 1959. They honeymooned in Adelaide and returned to live in a new house on the Beggs farm at Balliang. Rita loved children and she had six: Jane, Mark, Fiona, Sally, Donna and Andrea. Her cousin Doreen Vanstan recalls Rita prayed that her children wouldn't have red hair but by Number six, she forgot to pray and guess what: a beautiful but red haired daughter. She got her driving licence when Jane started school and got quite depressed when Andrea went to school as she missed having her children at home with her. She didn't join clubs but was very interested in politics and would listen or watch parliament. The family knew not to ring her on the night of an election. The family caravanned at Torquay every Christmas and Easter holidays and in 1980 she travelled to America with a friend. She liked crosswords and keeping track of her eleven grandchildren.

Rita moved to Belmont after her husband George died and her two youngest daughters lived with her. Doreen tells that she and Rita have always been best friends. This Christmas was the first Christmas not spent with Rita.

At the Funeral Mass for Rita on Tuesday, November 17 a film was shown that told of Rita's life. The film had been created by her granddaughter Grace for a school project. Grace narrated Rita's life story as photos appeared on the screen. A wonderful tribute to Rita.

New Wildlife Shelter

Jim Elvey

We have a new district refuge for sick and injured wildlife, the Golden Plains Wildlife Shelter. It is run by Maria Farrugia of Meredith, who has nearly seven years' experience in the field, working with a wide variety of native animals. As an independent not-for-profit shelter, it is designed to shelter and rehabilitate injured or orphaned native wildlife – anything, from kangaroos to blue tongue lizards. Here, they will be cared for until they are old and/or strong enough to be released back out into the wild.

If you find any native wildlife in need of care, give Maria a call on 0459 379915. You will also find the Shelter listed among our Emergency numbers at the front of every issue



Maria, with one of her charges, an orphaned Brushie.





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From Ghana to Bamganie for Christmas

Marg Cooper

Nick Ritchie is the second son of Roy and Diane Ritchie of Bamganie. Many Meredith people know him as "Fridge" and will remember him as an outstanding local cricketer who played in Meredith's halcyon days.

Obuasi is the town in Ghana where Nick Ritchie works. It is 400 kms from the capital Accra and is a town owned and operated by "Anglo Gold", a company that mines for gold in about 19 locations in nine different countries. The mine near Obuasi is an underground mine and is one of the 10 largest gold mines on Earth, and used to employ thousands of workers who lived in the town. It has been operating for more than 112 years and one incline into the mine is 6 km long, which is only half way down. It is one of the best bodies of ore in the world and they expect to soon reach the "Honey Pot", the richest deposit of all.

Nick had 15 years in the mining industry in Western Australia before he applied for a job as an Occupational Health & Safety Manager and Trainer with a firm called Byrnecut, an Australian Company who supply workers to mostly gold mines in many countries. Workers like Nick are employed to set up training systems with a view to handing over to local people.

Except for two days off, Nick works 14 hour days, every day for 6 weeks and then has three weeks off. The company flies him "home", which for Nick is Perth, for that three weeks or anywhere equivalent in cost of airfares. If Nick chooses to holiday somewhere else he pays the difference. There are several ex pats and about 50 Ghanaians in Health and Maintenance.

The mine has been losing money. Traditionally the mine has employed all the workers in the town and all facilities in the town, such as schools and hospitals, were built and run by the mine. Recently many workers have been laid off and more big machinery is being used, mine related businesses, such as the workshops, have been shifted to within the mine site and the mine has been fenced off (at a cost of 21 million dollars) to make it safer and to try and keep illegal miners out. So the mine is facing challenges, like returning it to profitability, social and environmental issues, improving community engagement and illegal mining. (There are 1000 to 2000 illegal miners working in the mine, mostly controlled by Chinese bosses.)

Nick is enjoying the experience however, as the lifestyle suits him as a single person who likes to travel. He admits though his breaks can be costly and he doesn't get home to Bamganie very often. When he was home, because of the prolonged dry here, he missed the green countryside of Ghana. He says it is a beautiful country and that it is so fertile that a pile of rocks will be covered with greenery after a short time.

He arrived home after a 30 hour flight via Dubai. He travelled on a bus then three planes arriving in Melbourne at 6.30am on Christmas morning and was at Bamganie by 9 am. A lovely gift for Christmas for Roy and Diane.

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IN OUR NATURE

wendy cook

The small grey marsupial pushed her pointed snout under a loose piece of bark, halfway up an ancient gum tree. She could smell food – a large huntsman spider, which she hastily caught and crunched between her sharp teeth. She was a brush-tailed phascogale or tuan, the dark stripe down her face barely visible in the night. Her sharp claws were poised to lift another strip of bark, her pink ears listening for danger, when air movement on this still night alerted her at the last moment. She stamped her front feet on the tree trunk. The long black hairs on the brush-like portion of her tail stood up. The owl's talons reached for her conspicuous tail as she ran. It caught only a few hairs as she ducked behind the trunk. She fled for the safety of a nearby hollow.

The hollow entrance was about 3-4 cm wide, just big enough for the phascogale to enter, while securely keeping out predators, such as owls and cats. In the spacious interior was a woven nest of bark, feathers and fur. She would move from this hollow soon to another in her forty hectare territory. She would use up to thirty hollows if she could find them, but there were insufficient trees in her territory old enough to have hollows and competition with possums, birds and honey bees for these precious spaces was intense. This one may be occupied when she next returned.

The female was about seven months old and had recently left her mother's nest and found her own territory not far away. Her body and tail were each about 18cm long. She was nocturnal, emerging from her hollow at dusk to hunt, usually in trees, but occasionally on the ground. Mostly she ate spiders, centipedes, cockroaches and other insects, but sometimes she drank nectar or caught a napping bird or small mammal. She was capable of killing a chicken, which brush-tailed phascogales will occasionally do, if they can find a small hole to enter a chicken coop.

In May or June, it will be breeding season, a very intense few weeks, especially for the males, who use a lot of energy in competition and mating, then die from stress-induced illnesses. After the breeding season, there will be no males. One month later the female will give birth to her litter. She has eight teats, and her babies will attach to them so she carries them everywhere. When they are about seven weeks old, she will leave them in a carefully woven nest, under a layer of fur and feathers. Initially she will only hunt for a short time, returning for long visits to suckle and warm her babies. As they become older, she will visit less. At around three months old, she will start to bring solid food for them. The young will leave the nest in early summer to find their own territory. Rearing young takes a lot of effort, and the female may be one of the small number who survive to breed a second time.

Brush-tailed phascogales are a threatened species in Victoria, which means there is a threat of them becoming extinct. Much of the dry eucalypt forest they prefer has been cleared for agriculture, or changed through grazing, mining, forestry and firewood collection. Patches of suitable habitat may be separated from each other, limiting the area in which young phascogales can disperse, their ability to move to a new area and to find mates. They are also preyed on by foxes and cats as well as their natural predators.

Another threat is the loss of hollows for shelter and nesting. The Friends of Brisbane Ranges (FoBR) recently received a grant from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) which will allow them to install fifty nest boxes in the Brisbane Ranges National Park. They will be designed to suit phascogales, with small entrance holes and spacious interiors. Students from Newcomb Secondary College and Wyndham Central College, who use the National Park for environmental studies, will be involved in making and installing the boxes. FoBR also conducted a successful crowdfunding campaign, which will allow the project to continue for longer, and create a network of groups involved in similar projects elsewhere. Hopefully, the nest boxes will provide additional homes for brush-tailed phascogales, and may also free up some of the limited number of natural hollows for other species.

Wendy



Photo by Trevor Prescott

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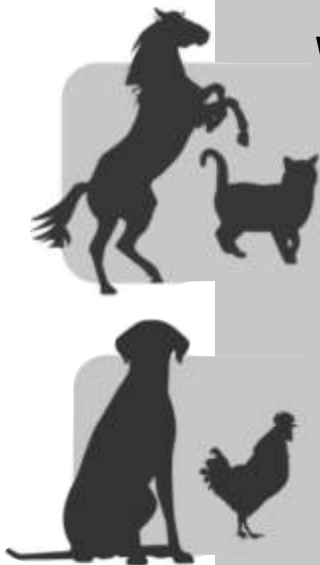
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Mouse Hunt

It began like déjà vu. I was sitting at the kitchen table, eating my two Weet-Bix and milk when I heard a squeak. I was instantly transported to the time that I connect to being my first ever sighting of a mouse. I remembered its small, agile brown body bounding along the kitchen floor, scuttling out of view before screeches of terror escaped my five-year-old mouth.

Fast forward to twenty years later and here I was, eating my breakfast, frantically looking around for the source of the squeaking. Mouth full of soggy biscuits and no longer filled with childhood fear I turned my ears this way and that, trying to trace the source. Moving stealthily around the kitchen I thought I'd found the vermin's hiding place – behind the fridge.

Deducing that it wasn't going to move anytime soon, I resumed my breakfast eating, announced my findings to the family and went about my day in the usual way. Eventually we decided that the thing must be trapped, it had been making its noises at irregular intervals throughout the day, interrupting the mini study group that was my sister and I, steadily sending us over the edge in connection to our impending assignments due dates. Enough was enough. It had to go and being the caring people that my family are we decided to simply relocate the mouse rather than trap and kill it. 'Simply' probably shouldn't have been the word I used. There was nothing simple about getting a live mouse out of the house without touching it. And even if any of us were willing to become a mouse dundee our reflexes weren't quick enough to catch this Speedy Gonzales.

Half an hour later our kitchen and living room looked like a tornado had spun through. Our fridge had been pulled out from its enclave, our recliners had been turned on their sides and pushed across the room. Our couch had been undone into three parts, each in varying stages of toppling over, exposing their bottoms so that we could see if the little critter had got up and into one of them. My sister was holding a broom to man the hallway, my dad had a dustpan and I had an empty Magnum box (no questions, please). My mum? She was keeping watch from a vantage point on a chair, well out of harm's way. In her defence, she got off to clap her thongs together, thinking the sound would draw it out. It had made its way from the fridge to the fire place and then scuttled from chair to chair, shaking like a leaf. Eventually we found it hiding it one of the couch parts.

So what happened? The mouse made it out of the house alright...but he took our chair with him.

Gemma

He came for Six Months!

Marg Cooper

Harold William Powles (Jack) came to Meredith in the late 1950s when he was 33 years old. He intended to stay for six months.

Because Jack had grown up with horses near Shepparton, driving a six-horse team at 16 years of age and an eight-horse team when he was 18 years old, he joined the Mounted Branch of the police force. His proudest moments were when he escorted the Queen up the straight 6 at Flemington before the running of the first Queen Elizabeth Stakes and when he escorted the Queen during her visits to Melbourne, Bendigo and Geelong in 1954. Jack was rear guard escort for the first Moomba Parade and performed at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds with the Police Mounted Branch in the Musical Ride. A horse affectionately known as "Scotty", lent by the Henderson family of Burrumbeet, was trained and ridden by Jack in the Royal Escort. The horse was officially named "Royal Escort" by its new owners, after Hendersons sold him and he won many prizes at shows. The mounted Branch also escorted umpires at football matches and Dr Mannix on St Patrick's Day. They wore white trousers, belt and sash, long boots and a white helmet.

After a few years Jack decided to return to the uniform branch and to apply for a one man station. He applied for Meredith because the position required a Mounted Policeman and although Jack had gone back to uniform branch, he had the necessary qualifications. Meredith had a Police Paddock where police horses were spelled so it was a requirement for the local policeman to be able to handle horses coming and going by train and later by float.

So, Jack, Carmen and three young children came to Meredith in April 1958. Carmen helped and supported Jack in his police work as well as looking after their seven children. In a book by John Silvester and Andrew Rule in the "Underbelly" Series they describe Jack as a country cop who didn't care for his arrest rate, was most interested in training his trotters but who knew everything that was going on in his district. He was a country policeman when each man had to look after a district, virtually on his own. Jack did this in his unique style, but very successfully. Jack recalls that the authors wanted to make a movie about him but , whilst he told them that they could, it was to be after he died.

Jack retired in 1979 and the family moved to Possum Point where Jack runs livestock and trains horses. Jack recently went to the Mounted Police Reunion at the Barracks in St Kilda Road. The facility is being moved to Broadmeadows. Three men who rode escort for the Queen attended the reunion. He never expected to be one of the oldest men in Meredith. He was delighted to have all his family at his home to celebrate his 90th birthday on Sunday, December 20. He said they are a close family but not often all together at one time. So, as well as his birthday, they also celebrated 62 years of his marriage to Carmen.

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Christmas Sheep

Marg cooper

Many people displayed Christmas Sheep to say "Happy Christmas". They were seen at Morrison, towards Elaine, on the Mt Mercer Road and adorning fences in Meredith town. Some people cut out some extras of their own and some even cut them out of rusty corrugated iron. Well Done!

Did you see the Christmas sheep sporting an Australian Flag, the very apt soldier related sheep at the Memorial Hall, the twelve days of Christmas sheep on the State School fence, including the twelve pairs of koalas, the red sheep at the Information Centre and the four unique sheep on the fence at Wallace Street.

And about a dozen sheep with Christmas hats attended the Nativity Scene on the fence where Parkinson's garage used to be. Next year we may aim for some Kings, Shepherds and more animals for this scene.

A big Thank you to all who helped and if you would like to be more involved in any way next Christmas please, tell us your ideas.

Christmas Light Competition

The judge was delighted with the number of buildings in Meredith that displayed some Christmas decorations.

The Equal Winners were the Ross family in Nuttall Street & the Wheeler family in Wilson Street.

Highly Commended were the Primmer family in Staughton Street & St Joseph's Catholic Church in Lawler Street.



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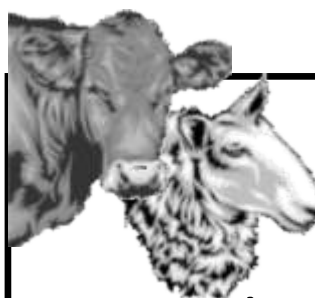


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- Have a non-electric pump available that can be operated from an alternative water supply such as a swimming pool, concrete or metal tank, or dam.

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Walking at any age is a great form of exercise that has many benefits, including:

- Reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers
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on 5321 1500, mobile 0458 384 080 or email

jwalsh@gplains.vic.gov.au

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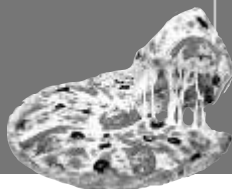
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Marg's BOOK REVIEW

"The Little Coffee Shop of Kabul"

by Deborah Rodriguez

"In a little coffee shop in Kabul, one of the most dangerous places on earth, five different women come together." The quote from Eleanor Roosevelt that opens the novel sums up the five characters perfectly: "Women are like teabags; you never know how strong they are until they're put in hot water." The five women are: "Sunny", an American woman who has finally found a place to call home and who has established the coffee shop where she brings hospitality and a bit of normality to expatriates, misfits, missionaries and mercenaries who stroll through its door. It just happens to be in the middle of a war zone: "Yasmina", a young pregnant woman stolen from her remote village who Sunny rescues: "Isabel", a determined British journalist on the trail of a risky story: "Candace", a wealthy American who has left her American Ambassador husband for her Afghan lover and "Halajan", the sixty year old owner of the building whose love affair she must hide from her ultra-traditional son. They discover that there's more to one another than meets the eye and they all have a dream of making life better for the women of Kabul.

The book deals with a variety of different topics such as inequality, the treatment of women and minorities, terrorism and forbidden love. The author lived in Afghanistan from 2001 after the fall of the Taliban. She was involved in the set-up of a beauty school training program to give women a chance at financial independence. She later opened a coffee shop in Kabul. In 2002 she married an Afghan and in 2007 she had to flee the country. She paints a vivid picture of Afghan culture and has a remarkable gift for depicting the nuances of life in Kabul and for depicting vibrant characters.

On many occasions in the book the author expresses thoughts about the country. For example, "the tiny village of Balkh was a microcosm of Afghanistan, rich in history, devastated by plunder, the people dominated by a frequent changing of the guard and then exploited by government in cahoots with one set of foreigners or another" and "bribing a warden was one thing but dealing with hundreds of years or repressive attitudes was another".

A review told that the title, cover and description screamed "chick-lit" but that the book is so much more. It is the best kind of fiction: full of heart yet smart and thought provoking. I recommend that you read this book because it shows a good understanding of the history of Afghanistan, the politics, corruption and the opium trade and tells so much about Kabul and Afghanistan of today. It may be a culture shock. It gives hope that women can make a difference. There is also a little bit of relationships and romance.



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Saturday: Emergency Session from 10.00 am (no appt required) and a regular session from 10.00am-12.00pm with appts taken in advance.

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Dr Andrew Bell: Monday, Thursday, Friday

Dr John Henderson: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

Dr Margaret Somerville: Wednesday

Dr Dheeraj Pawar: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

Dr Benjamin Fry: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Dr Amir Rahimi: Alternate Sat (bookings taken in advance)

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it's History

Meredith History Interest Group

Annual Meeting

You are invited to the Meredith Golf Club for the Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 6 at 1.30pm. After the meeting we will explore the history of this "parcel of land" that was gazetted as "a site for racing and general recreation" on February 26, 1866. You may meet a trustee, the wife of a murderer, an early racegoer, Miss Meredith, a pony clubber, a motor cyclist and some golfers. If you have any information or memorabilia about the "use of this land", please bring it along. Have you got some antique golf sticks? Have you got newspaper reports of races, gymkhanas or golf? Have you got a Meredith Race Club booklet?


Catalogue Day

We catalogue and talk history on the last Thursday of each month at the Anglican Church Hall from 9 am. MHIG needs people who would like to catalogue on cards or computer!



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Tenders Ballarat road; Tenders received until 11 o'clock on Tuesday 27th March for erection of Toll House and Gate near Burnt Bridge.

To Let Tenders; to Carters and others, between Meredith and Burnt Bridge, 5,000 cubic yards of rubble stone and about 50,000 cubic yards of broken metal, apply to Mr Colliner."

Geelong Advertiser, Saturday, March 17, 1855.

SHOCKING ACCIDENT. LOADED WAGGON RUNS OVER BOY

On Saturday last the district was cast in gloom when it became known that William George Cunnington, eight years of age, (the eldest son of Mr and Mrs, W. Cunnington, of She Oaks, had been killed. The deceased, with a younger brother, was riding on the shafts of a waggon load of wood, which was being taken to Lethbridge by the father on Saturday morning last. The father had asked the boy a few minutes before the accident if he would not like to walk but he declined. The father and second son were walking behind the load when suddenly they saw the boy under the front wheel, which passed over his shoulder and head, death being instantaneous, the boy's face being smashed out of recognition. The distracted parent picked up his dead child and conveyed him to the nearest farm, and at the inquiry held before Mr. Dan Richards, J.P., on Monday afternoon, a verdict of accidental death was recorded. This is the second shocking bereavement that has befallen the family during the past few months, their only daughter, Jessie, having been accidentally burnt to death while the father was burning off scrub. The remains of the boy were interred in the Lethbridge Cemetery yesterday afternoon, the Rev. Mr Stone officiating. The bereaved parents have the deep and sincere sympathy of a large circle of friends in their double tragedy.

The Ballarat Star Wednesday 25 September 1918

Jan McDonald, Meredith History Interest Group



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Bannockburn Pharmacy Newsletter

Proprietors: Scott Wilkes & Damian Bennett

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Phone: 5281 1519

We want your feedback

We are about to head up to the Sydney Gift Fair on Saturday 20th February and we would love your feedback as to what gifts you like so we can do our best to continue to for everyone's needs in 2016. We have got some exciting ideas on the direction we would like to take this year but we would love your feedback.

Are you a member of our FREE Loyalty Club?

Have you joined our FREE Loyalty Club yet? There are lots of benefits for joining. Here are 6 reasons why you should join, if you haven't already:

1. It's FREE to join
2. 5 cents for every \$1 you spend in-store goes back to your loyalty profile (excludes prescriptions for legal reasons). For example, spend \$20 & receive \$1 on your loyalty club.
3. Receive a 16% discount off all gifts all year and 21% discount in December
4. There is no card so don't need to carry a card around in your wallet. Everything is stored at the Pharmacy on our computer system.
5. You can accumulate the money you earn for as long as you want and you can spend as much as you would like. It's your choice.
6. You can have multiple family members linked to your Loyalty club profile.

It only takes 1 minute to join in-store and you are right to go.

Keep up to date what's happening at the Pharmacy

If you would to be kept up to date with what's happening at the Pharmacy then the best way to do this is to like our Facebook page. We regularly post updates whether it showing pictures some of our new gifts as they are being unpacked, specials, health information tips, etc. Simply type Bannockburn Pharmacy into your search bar in Facebook and you will easily find us and then simply click on "Like" to follow what is happening within the Pharmacy.

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Did you know that we are open weeknights until 6:30pm?

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Friday:	8:30am - 6:30pm
Saturday:	8:30am - 1:00pm
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