

Meredith & district News



OUR **FREE** COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

To all our readers, we wish you a Very Happy (near) New Year and a great 2023. Happy Reading!



inside

- Locals at the Open
 - 30 Years at the Music Festival
 - District LandCare Groups Join Up
- ...and the usual **MUCH MORE!**



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GET IN TOUCH TODAY

MOORABOOL Wind Farm

COMMUNITY UPDATE - February 2023

Community Fund Round Four - 2022

Applicants from Round Four of the Moorabool Wind Farm Community Fund were notified if they were successful or not in December. We will announce the successful projects in the February/March once the necessary paperwork is completed.

Thank you to all community members who submitted an application and to the Community Fund Assessment Panel for your time and interest.

Landscape and Visual Screening Program

Owners of residential dwellings within 4km of the Moorabool Wind Farm are invited to participate in a landscape and visual screening program, designed to reduce the potential visual impacts of the project for our closest neighbours.

All agreed works are undertaken by Moorabool Wind Farm at no cost to dwelling owners. Get in touch using the details below to learn more.

Community Fund and Scholarships Round Five - 2023

The next opportunity to apply for grant and scholarship funding will be later in 2023. Keep an eye out for details.



Meredith & district NEWS



The Meredith and District News is published by a volunteer sub-committee of the Meredith Community Centre comprising: Jim Elvey, (general editor and chair), Stefania Parkinson, Ian Penna, Mike Palmer, Sue Higgs, Alex Hyatt, and Nerida Anderson. Production is undertaken Peter Boer, Don Atherton and Jim Elvey.

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 Post Office or Meredith Hub

DATES AND DEADLINES

The Newsletter is distributed on the **first Thursday** of the month (except January). All ads and submissions must be lodged by 9.00 am on 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, excluding GST, are as follows:

	B&W/Colour
Business Card	\$20.00
Quarter page	\$30.00
Half page	\$50/\$110
Full page	\$100/\$200

A \$20 loading applies for preferred position. Please submit in jpeg format, if available.

Classifieds are **FREE** for small, personal notices from residents. Otherwise \$7.50 on invoice or \$5.00 if paid on lodgement. Community Groups can have a 1/4 page ad for free or a \$30.00 discount on larger ads. (conditions apply)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you are outside our delivery area you can subscribe for \$35.00 p.a. plus GST (11 issues) and get the Meredith and District News posted to you anywhere in Australia.

CONTACT US

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advertising@meredithnews.com.au

Accounts: Mike 0419 307044

accounts@meredithnews.com.au

Editorial: Jim: 0409 163169

news@meredithnews.com.au

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

Issue Production: Peter Boer Editor: Jim Elvey

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Meredith
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Junior
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0448 291074
Meredith
5286 1434

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5286 1252

emergency

Police, Ambulance, Fire (from mobile phone)	000
Meredith Police Station	000 or 112
Police non emergency	5286 1222
Power Failure	131 444
Nurse-On-Call	132 412
Mental Health Advice	1300 606 024
Poisons Information	1300 280 737
Barwon Water	13 11 26
SES Emergency - flood & storm	1300 656 007
24 Hour Helpline	132 500
24 Hour Drug & Alcohol Counselling	1800 629 572
Kids Help Line	1800 888 236
24hr 5-18yo	1800 551 800
Golden Plains Shire a/h emergency	1300 363 036
Ranger	0408 508 635
	52207111
	or 0409 830 223
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Golden Plains Animal	0407 811 222
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	0421 617 238

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Mr Paul Ryan Elaine 0409 861 296

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..or start something.

If you have a special interest you would like to share with like minded people, let us know



"Many years ago I resolved never to bother with New Year's resolutions, and I've stuck with it ever since." - Dave Beard



COMMUNITY

Meredith Senior Citizens

Jim Hynds, President.

We gathered on Monday, December 5th for our Christmas Party. The Memorial Hall was beautifully decorated by members Heather and Robin.

After everyone arrived, we soon settled down to our two course Christmas dinner supplied by Kylie and friends. Linda organized Christmas carols to be played throughout the day.

After a superb meal, we commenced to draw the raffles and they were worth winning! To be won were \$100 petrol vouchers and \$100 lunch vouchers and Christmas Hampers donated by Catherine King, Federal MP for Ballarat and Anthony Hynds of AMWU Union. Believe me, there were many happy winners and thanks to Carol for running the raffles, thanks to all the generous donors and everyone who helped to make our Christmas Party such a wonderful day.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 30th, 2023 for lunch at the Fyansford Hotel.

[Linda and I won a \$100 voucher for the Royal Hotel which we spent on Thursday, January 19th. We enjoyed a really delicious meal and a bottle of champagne!]

We Need a New
Treasurer!



If you're good with numbers and not frightened by computers, you could look after our invoicing and accounts. We have an established system that is easy to use. This could be a job share arrangement. Call or text 0419307044

...and another
Editor!



We run two production teams which work on alternate issues, so the workload is confined to about 10 hours every two months. (Plus some short meetings in between.) If you think this might be you, or would like some more information, call or text 0409163169.



Meredith **Community Centre**
working for our community

What's On



TERM 1 - 2023 - FREE EVENTS

21st February – Paint Pouring - 9:30 - 10:30

28th February – Tea Blending - 2:00 – 3:00

7th March – Mind, Body, Soul Kit - 9:30 – 10:30

14th March – Paint Pouring - 2:00 – 3:00

For Bookings - Phone us at the Centre!

Mums & Bubs

Movement, Mindfulness & Meditation with Jade

Mondays - 10am - \$10 per class

Adult Classes Coming Soon!

For Kids!

Movement, Mindfulness & Meditation with Jade

Prep - Grade 4 - Mondays - 3.30pm - \$10 per class

Grade 5 - Year 10 - Mondays - 5pm - \$10 per class

BCYF - Wellbeing Counselling

Tuesdays at the Community Centre

1300 022 293

IPaLs Program - Starting Term 1 @ Meredith

The I-PaLS program will provide training, mentoring and peer support activities that connect people to community. Training sessions will include tenancy rights, financial literacy, job readiness, maintaining physical and mental health, interpersonal skills, supported decision making, consumer rights and accessing transport.

For More Info on the Program visit -

<https://grampiansadvocacy.org.au/about-us/independent-pathways-and-living-skills-i-pals/>

2023 - More Details to Follow

Botanical Watercolour Class - FEBRUARY 25

Singing Classes - Starting Soon

Tai Chi - \$15 per session

Tuesdays @ Meredith with Sandra - 9.15 - 10.15

Wednesdays @ Bannockburn with Desma - 9:30 - 10.30

Thursdays @ Teesdale with Desma - 9.30-10.30

Steady Feet @ Meredith - \$10 per session

Wednesdays - 10:00 - 11:00 am

To Book:

learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au

www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre

Ph. 5286 0700 / 0491 184 999



Join us on



Facebook & Instagram

@meredithcommunitycentre

Have you got a Talent to
Share?

Let us Know!

Church News



Meredith Uniting Church

Services have recommenced. 11.00 am 2nd Sunday each month.

Enquiries:

Rev. Paul Sanders 0407 833 515 5341 2440

Serbian Orthodox - 5341 5536

Daily services: Matins 08.00 am, Vespers 6.00 pm. Divine Liturgies on Saturdays & Sundays 10.00 am.

Worship on Sundays in the Anglican Parish of Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith:

9.00 am Holy Communion St Paul's, Inverleigh

11.00 am Family Communion. St John's, Bannockburn

5.00 pm Prayer and Praise Epiphany, Meredith

Find us at: www.goldenplainsanglican.org or

office.ibm@goldenplainsanglican.org

The Revd Dr Timothy Smith

PiC Anglican Parish of

Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith

St Josephs Parish of Meredith

St. John the Baptist, Winchelsea - Feb. 4,11,18,25 at 6pm - Feb 22 Ash Wed at 8am

St. Mary MacKillop, Bannockburn - Feb. 5,12,19,26 at 11am Feb 22 Ash Wed at 9.30am

St. Brigids, Anakie - Feb. 5,19 at 9am

St. Josephs, Meredith - Feb. 12,26 at 9am, Feb 22 Ash Wed at 11.30am

Sacred Heart, Inverleigh - Feb 19 at 4pm

If we are missing a church offering services in our district, please contact us at news@meredithnews.com.au

Our district is generally regarded as sheep country. But there is no better image of summers around here, than a well-clipped paddock, bristling with hay bales. This picture was taken by Jim Elvey



Share your favourite pics with us. You could make front page news!

Editorial



A Safer Meredith

Sadly, it often takes a tragic event to focus on an obvious need for change. Last month's road fatality at the northern entrance to town is such a case. It has prompted us to write to the Minister for Road Safety in the following terms.

Dear Minister,

The Meredith and District News is a community publication distributed throughout several communities in this district. Prompted by yesterday's tragic road fatality at the northern entrance to the town, we wish to draw your attention to what we believe are the generally unsafe circumstances that exist in Meredith, because of the high volumes of traffic using the Midland Hwy passing through the town.

The fatality underlines the need for a right turn lane for southbound traffic on the Midland Hwy where it intersects with McLeod Street. Many locals make this turn regularly, as do motorists on their way to the west of Meredith. The absence of a dedicated lane exposes stationary vehicles waiting to make the turn to following traffic. The installation of a turning lane is a priority, but there is also a need for a broader traffic safety review given that over 3000 vehicles pass through our town every day. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that most residents live on the west side of the highway while our primary school and post office are on the east side.

The Minister's office responded to say:

"Our thoughts are with all those impacted by the fatality in Meredith – every death on our roads is one too many.

The Department of Transport and Planning is working with Victoria Police to investigate and understand the circumstances surrounding this tragic incident, therefore it would be inappropriate to comment at this time.

The safety of all road users is our priority and we will continue to monitor road conditions to determine if any improvements are required."

By way of background, the office added "...since 2018, there have been two reported crashes on this section of Sutherland Street (Midland Highway), and none at the intersection of McLeod Street and Sutherland Street (Midland Highway)."

In fact, there are several intersections, and especially the busy Hotel/General store intersection, that warrant turning lanes. As one resident has said, we have a highway running down an urban street.

If you have any thoughts on this important topic, leave a message on our Facebook page.

Meredith Tennis Club News

Bridget Dyer

The Meredith Tennis club has been very busy over December and January. December saw us have our Christmas break up with a visit from Santa on the Meredith fire truck. Thank you to all the families that came to the break up and helped out on the night.

Our coach, Courtney Murray, was invited to bring along a group of children and parents to the Hotshots day, on the 19th of Jan, at the Australian Open by Tennis Australia. There were about 30 children and adults that were able to attend. The day started with everyone arriving at the courts at 5.40 am to catch a bus to Buninyong Courts. Big thanks to Scott Thompson for organising and driving that bus. At Buninyong, we boarded another bus and headed to the MCG where we got our special hotshots t-shirts and walked to the AO Ballpark. The kids had the opportunity to have a play on the various attractions and activities before heading over to get some pictures and a hat and then were free to watch the tennis. Most of the group watched in prime seats at the John Cain Arena. There were quite a few familiar faces spotted on the channel Nine news that night. We were very grateful for being able to take advantage of such an amazing opportunity and the kids had a great time.

Competition Tennis and the Orange ball competition resumes on the 4th of February. Thursday practice will begin again on the 2nd of February. Please contact Meredith Tennis club to book your child in.

The fortnightly Sunday paid coaching sessions are commencing the 29th of January. These sessions are for an hour with a professional coach from Tennis Ballarat. They are \$10 per session for regular attendees and \$15 for casual sessions. Please contact the club to book your child's spot.

Social night will also resume again. Details will be on the Meredith Tennis Club Facebook page.



Big smiles from Lachlan Dyer and Leo Fox and (below) Bailey Dinning, Madi Sanderson, Erin Hayes, Olivia Murfit, Harley Murfit and Max Murfit playing "Guess Where We Are?"



I'M HERE TO HELP.



PLEASE CONTACT ME FOR ANY ASSISTANCE

Michaela Settle MP
STATE LABOR MEMBER FOR **BUNINYONG**

📍 15 Main Road, Bakery Hill VIC 3350 ☎ 5331 7722
✉ michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au 📱 MichaelaSettleMP

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The Blueys

Like most rural property's around here I host a Blue Tongue lizard or two. I have one who lives under a rock in my garden not far from my front door, who has grown quite accustomed to having me around since I retired. He doesn't snarl at me anymore, just keeps a wary eye on me for a while then goes off on his search for sustenance. I was sitting in my fern garden one evening when Bluey came wandering along, paused for a while, then proceeded to scratch around in the ground litter, dug out a huge spherical fungus and consumed it with great gusto, not more than 1 metre away from me. Eventually I persuaded him that it was safe to eat from my hand, and he was particularly fond of bacon rind. Perhaps he thought they were juicy worms because he would shake them violently before swallowing them whole and demonstrating his pleasure by licking his lips with his blue tongue.

Just recently I was doing some renovation work and as a temporary measure I had screwed a large old plastic blind over the space where I was going to fit a floor to ceiling window. While I was working on another job, I could hear a persistent scratching sound coming from the area around the aforesaid window space and went off to investigate. There was my garden Bluey, squeezing his way edgewise through a very narrow gap between the plastic blind and the window frame, intent on getting inside the building!

I have a series of tracks through the bush and around my property and while hosting a group of visitors one weekend, we came across a Bluey who was happy enough to be picked up and examined by my guests. My six year old visitor was very happy to hold him and examine him from head to foot, but not so her big brawny dad who grew up in the wilds of the Scottish Highlands and could not bring himself to get within six metres of this dangerous Australian reptile!

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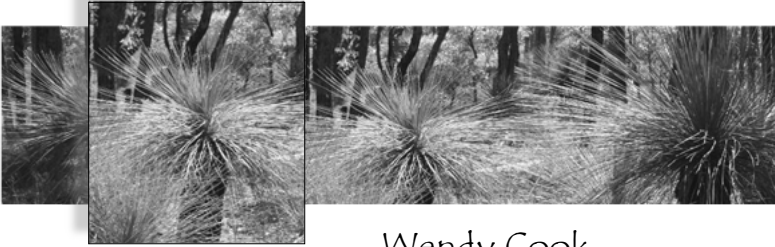
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*Our 12 Steps
to Success*





Wendy Cook

I walked along the road slowly, looking up into the trees. I scanned the trunks for claw marks, then gazed higher, hoping to see a large grey rump positioned comfortably in a fork, or a furry koala face with dark eyes looking down at me. I glanced at the road from time to time, seeking a different sign of their presence, cylindrical olive or brown droppings, but there was nothing. I continued my search for koalas, through an area of manna gums and stringybarks. Fifteen years ago, I would have seen at least two koalas if I had made a survey here, but today, there were none.

My survey was part of the National Koala Monitoring Program (NKMP) for which the Australian Government has allocated ten million dollars. The program is coordinated by CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, and organised locally by the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group. It is a collaboration between CSIRO, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Landcare and anyone who wishes to be involved. CSIRO wants to know where koalas are found and where they aren't found, and they want ideas from communities about the best way to gather this information. To learn more, CSIRO scientists visited Ballan last July for a workshop with local people, which my husband and I attended. Most people had seen koalas locally. These sightings provided important data about where koalas are living now, but it is just as vital to know where there are no koalas. Many participants told stories of koalas becoming less common, so the scientists also wanted to know of places where koalas aren't seen. We marked all these locations on maps for the scientists to use. We watched a demonstration of a drone flying over trees, looking for the heat of warm koala bodies in treetops, where they are difficult to see from the ground. We also participated in a survey looking for koalas, a method which the scientists have found works well. Local people looking for koalas in familiar places is a successful way of gathering information. For many of us, walking a survey route regularly is quite easy, and CSIRO would like all Australians to be able to participate.

There is another way in which people can contribute to this research. A year ago, in nearby bush, I was delighted to see a female koala walking along a stringybark branch. She paused to look down at me, and I was able to take photos of her. I uploaded the best photos onto iNaturalist, a website for sharing nature observations. Anybody can view the photos, so CSIRO scientists can use it to keep track of

where koalas are seen.

CSIRO is running the National Koala Monitoring Program in all states and territories where wild koalas are found - Queensland, New South Wales, ACT, Victoria and South Australia. In February 2022, koalas in Queensland, New South Wales and ACT were listed by the federal government as endangered. In South Australia, they are considered rare. In Victoria, there is no listing. They are not even considered threatened, although in many areas their populations are diminishing, and they face the same threats as koalas elsewhere. Their habitat is destroyed by bushfires, and to make way for developments which benefit people. They are killed by cars and trucks while crossing roads. In semi-urban areas, they are attacked by dogs. They also struggle with the changing climate. If things continue like this, we will lose our koalas forever. It may still be possible to see them in zoos, but not to have a personal encounter with a wild koala.

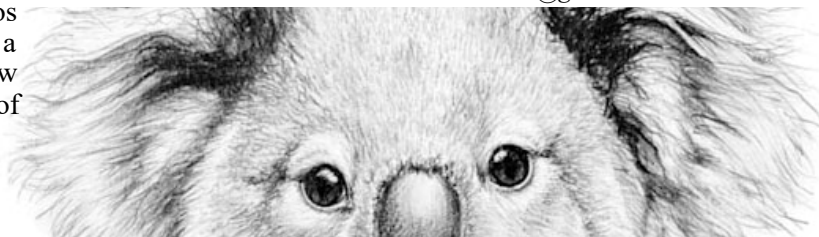
This is the reason that CSIRO wants to learn where koalas are found and where they aren't found. It is the first step to protecting them, and saving them from extinction. I sent my survey results to Jackson Cass, Landcare Co-ordinator of Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group, who forwarded it to CSIRO. To highlight the importance of this information, people like me, who see no koalas when they survey, are known as "zero heroes". Surveys which find no koalas help CSIRO to tell the story of koalas missing in areas where they were once common. These areas may become a focus for recovery programs to help koalas to return to their former homes. One method that can help is planting trees on public or private land, choosing species that provide food and habitat for koalas. If many people work together to learn more about koalas and to protect them, one day, seeing them may become a frequent pleasure again.

I'd like to finish with a happier story. One night, last winter, my son opened the back door, which looks towards a small porch, enclosed on three sides. Wooden steps lead from outside onto the porch, where numerous pot plants shelter. Among them, he saw a large male koala. By the time he had alerted everyone, the koala had climbed the nearest vertical thing he could find, a veranda post. He watched us and we watched him. When he was ready, he descended the post and strolled through a flowerbed and across the garden. Sometimes, I hear the grunts of a male koala at night. It is likely to be our visitor. Koalas are still out there, living near us, but we need to look after them. If you would like to assist by surveying for koalas, information can be found on the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group's website at

<https://mooraboolcatchment.au/submit-koala-data/>
or contact Jackson Cass moorabool.landcare@gmail.com



Picture by Owen Cook



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GOLDEN PLAINS FESTIVAL TICKET ALLOCATION FOR LOCALS

An allocation of tickets for Golden Plains XV is available on a first-come first-served basis for locals living between Elaine and Lethbridge. Tickets can be purchased from the **Meredith Corner Store (15 Wallace Street)** from 10am on Tuesday 14 February until sold out. 3 per person limit.

Please bring proof of residential address (Meredith, Elaine, She Oaks or Lethbridge address). CASH sales only. For more information please contact Aunty Meredith via auntym@mmf.com.au.

Thank You

EaSy and DeLiSh

with Stefania



Chickpea & Vegetable Korma

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown or basmati rice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, finely sliced
- 145g korma paste
- 300g chicken or lamb diced into 2cm pieces
- 2 x 400g tins coconut milk
- 1 x 400g chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 4 cups chopped mixed raw vegetables such as, eggplant, zucchini, mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, snow peas.

To Serve

- Greek-style yoghurt
- Toasted, flaked or slivered almonds
- Corriander leaves

Method

1. Cook rice according to packet instructions.
2. Place a large saucepan over medium heat and add olive oil, onion, korma paste and meat. Saute for 4-5 minutes, or until onion is soft and translucent.
3. Add coconut milk and stir well. Then add the chickpeas and the vegetables and stir through. The liquid should only just cover the vegetable mix. Bring to the boil then reduce heat to a simmer and partially cover with a lid, stirring occasionally.
4. Cook for around 15-20 minutes or to your liking.
5. Divide rice among bowls, then top with the curry, a dollop of yoghurt, a sprinkle of toasted almonds and coriander.

Recipe from:

The 18:16 Intermittent Fasting Lifestyle Plan



Overjoyed on the Overland

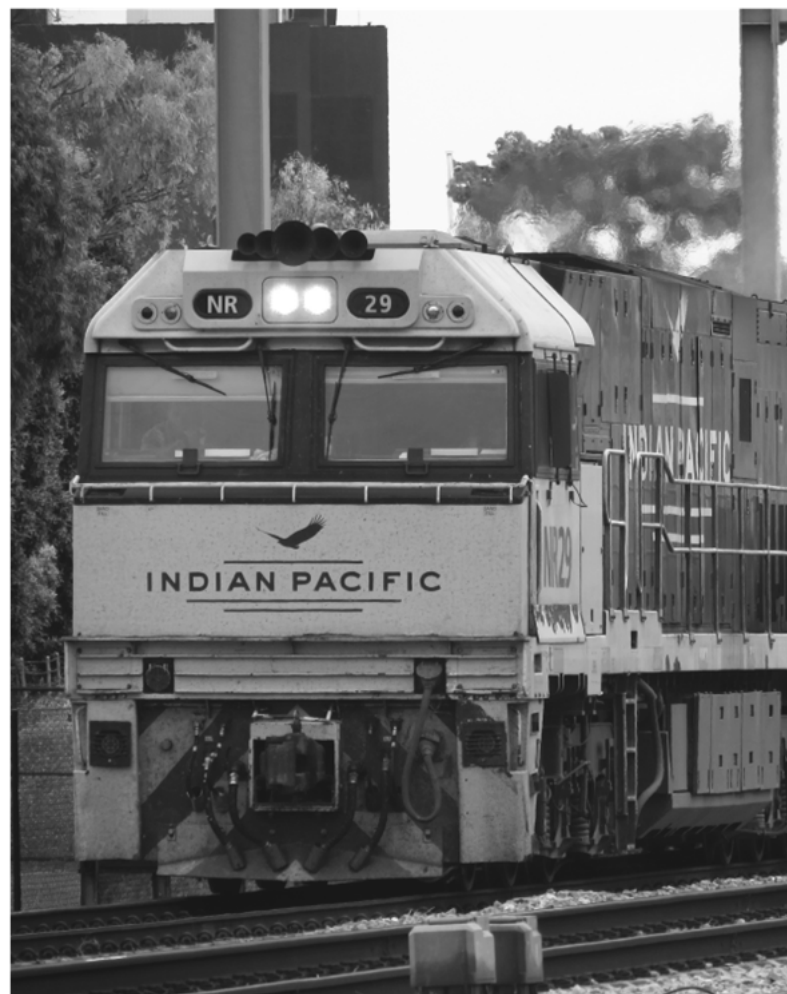
Marg Cooper

Train enthusiast Harley Murfitt took his grandmother Anne on the *Overland Train*. They left at 9 am on Monday, December 12, from North Shore in Geelong and 11 hours later they arrived in Adelaide. Climbing the Adelaide Hills was the slowest part and Harley estimates that the train was then, only travelling at 40 km per hour.

There were six carriages, the locomotive was NR95, the chairs reclined and swung around so you could talk to other passengers, there was a dining/café carriage and the train was pretty packed. The train undertakes two return trips a week and is now managed by a private company called *Journey Beyond*. The train first ran in 1887 as the *Adelaide Express*, known to South Australians as the *Melbourne Express*. It was given its current name in 1926.

They meant to do this trip over two years ago before Covid but the extra time gave Harley time to save more money for hiring a car and accommodation in Adelaide. When asked if they did some sight-seeing Harley replied *Trains*. They travelled to various smaller towns and within Adelaide and Harley photographed it all. While on the Overland they crossed a few trains including the Great Southern and Indian Pacific, they crossed bridges and saw the flooded Murray River and Harley was intrigued by the carriages with a double stack of containers on them.

Harley and Anne boarded in Adelaide at 6.55 am on Thursday, December 15 to return home for Christmas. Of course, some of the gifts he received, were train related.





Bannockburn Pharmacy Newsletter

Proprietors: Scott Wilkes & Damian Bennett

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MMF Celebrates 30

Mary Nolan

It was so good to welcome everyone to 30th MMF 2022 – to this place we love! It feels like a different world for Chris and I since 29th MMF in 2019. Pandemic changed so much for us all - not least for Chris and I and many friends from various networks. Isolation for Nolans is hell – the Nolans are very social and people used to say they met ‘funny’ people at our place, so many stories. We have always had wide and diverse friendship groups who often met each other at Nolan get togethers. And we miss the live gigs,

1st MMF in 1991 seems another world away – 3 friends involved in organising, the stage was the back of a truck, portable generators for power, punters were friends and friends of friends who shared a love of the then independent music scene. Chris and Nolan great loves - the land, music and people. A party for friends and friends of friends. Hay bales and logs for seats and no curfews - so different from the city music scene! Sleeping under the stars in tents or vehicles. And they had fun!

For Chris it was bringing the loves of his life together – people, the land and music. And the ‘voice’ of young people coming through the music, and it worked! Chris’s school mate was ‘gate man’ in a ute (later a tent) at the gate taking the money! – think it was \$20 BYO everything and camp overnight. City, Ballarat and Geelong music scenes all represented.

It started with about 250 people and was a great success – the punters loved it and after each festival, Chris and his 3 friends - the organisers - posed key Q’s What went well? Not so well? and how can we do better? And listened! Numbers went up as word got around.

John, (Jack) and I were involved from the start – and we loved it. Jack the farmer and practical fixit man -Where’s Jack? Was a common question. I am more the conversationalist and in early times sometimes the moderator – before we had security! Chris is 6th generation Nolan on the land. Jack’s grandfather, John, retired to Ballarat. When he returned to the farm, he would bring some trees to plant and he’d say, these trees will be here for the birds to roost in when I am gone. Jack mused he would have loved to see festival punters enjoying the shade.

Feedback has always been appreciated and important –So punters voices were listened to and shaped the festival. Numbers increased each year and the MMF grew in numbers. And moved to a new site. The ‘no dickhead’ policy came about when a younger brother was being stupid and his older friends said, ‘Don’t be a dickhead!’ - it says it in a nutshell! It’s about having a good time and treating each other well!

In 1996 after a trip to West Indies for the Test cricket, Chris went to Hanoi to work as a lawyer. He was learning Vietnamese and enjoyed that ‘connection’ with people of another culture. He went out one night, came home and never woke up. He suffered a multi organ collapse and hypoxic brain injury, critically ill – airlifted to Singapore then St Vincent’s with an Ecoli bug not seen before in Australia. After 6 months in hospital he ‘woke up’ laughing at a joke his cousin told in his room. Intellectually intact, Chris now hears and understands but is unable to speak or move or see much. He communicates nonverbally. It is said that 80% of communication is non verbal and Chris teaches us. With good support, he loves life and people and getting out and about. Like us all he has his ‘down’ times but overall, Chris is inspiring in his courage and will to

live life fully as he is.

John (Jack), Chris’s dad, passed away in May 2019 - he is much missed. He loved the festival and punters and was always on for a yarn. His funeral was here on the farm and as the cortege left the wedge tail eagle was soaring over the river valley. Hospitality, community, love of people, land, and music, giving people a fair go have come through the generations. We miss Jack.

Fast forward to 2022 and 30th MMF – missed 2 years - Pandemic affected world. - a different world in so many ways. Our relationships and resilience tested as seldom before. Renewed appreciation of what we took for granted – connecting with each other- and it’s free!

A recent week at the house for me with no mobile, landline, or TV reception.- and cold and wet. A time of rest and attuning to the land and creatures – bird song at dawn, birds tend to wake and call, warble early and settle again late afternoon, evening. I loved it! Wood heater, walked the hills, made fire toast – back to childhood when we lived simply and cooked toast on a long-handled fork made of strong fencing wire on hot coals – after wood had burnt down.

Isolation for Chris is tough, and he can’t initiate so he needs us to notice - his carers very attuned to his non verbals.

Chris in pandemic - his carers – varied cultures and life experiences which he loves, and isolated. Necessity is the



mother of invention and we’ve used whatever means we could to connect – at one stage I was visiting through the wire garden fence – Chris in garden and me outside! Regular weekly ZOOM and the speaker phone is good. And he enjoys his music therapy. He loves to get out – local cafes, walks and venues and back to the farm – much less frequent in pandemic. Really miss live music.

What keeps him going? People and stories of life as it is, loves life, music, the festival and farm, enjoys footy and tipping, spring racing carnival, cricket, stories! Great sense of humour and ‘doing his bit’. For Movember he grows a moustache and he has raised over \$14,000 for men’s health since 2012.

Nature is amazing - our lambs are born in cold weather; mothers lick them clean and know when time for the birth. They often seek an area of shelter - trees or rocks or under the hills away from weather. I love the baas toward the end of a day when it’s time for them to mother up for the night. They can sound the same, but they find each other. The delight of the lamb as it nuzzles and drinks with tail wagging in delight!

With the Golden Plains Festival coming up next month, we congratulate the Nolans and their colleagues, producing two such loved and enduring events. - Ed.

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We add to "The Write Stuff" this month, expanding our fiction content with the first instalment of Melissa Arch's serialised story. Melissa is a Sheoaks resident who works as a drug and alcohol counsellor and has a love of creating writing. When she offered to write a story for us, we of course said yes please! If you miss an episode, or need a refresher, we will collect them on our website. Enjoy the read, and welcome Melissa. - Ed.

Once upon a Benson...

An original short story by Melissa Arch

Margie yawns, as she switches the kettle on. Sammy the cat is curled up on her feet. The jug gurgles to life, a morning familiarity. Coffee was always first priority in the Benson household!

"Merv, you want a cuppa?" Margie called out to her husband, who was freshening up in the bathroom.

Merv had already been out milking since 4am.

"Yes please luv". Margie knows Merv loves toast and would be ravenous by now.

Smiling, she pops a couple of slices of bread in the toaster. Butter, check. Vegemite, check.

Still shaken up about her dream last night, Margie grimaced at the memory-Scott had been refused parole.

Their son, Scott had served 7.5 years in prison and was coming up for parole any day now. It was playing on Margie's mind. Margie wondered what her husband's thoughts were, leading up to the time?

The toaster pops, jolting Margie's attention back to the present moment. As she spreads the butter and Vegemite evenly across the slice, she says a silent prayer for their son.

Where would Scott live? He was welcome home, if he could toe the line. He would have to look for work though, that would be a must.

Merv appears in the doorway, his eyes bloodshot, as he scuffs across the lino in his worn moccasins.

"Morning luv". Merv plants a kiss on Margie's lips. Just like he had every day for the past 40 years they had been together. Margie put the coffee and toast down in front of Merv, on the table he had crafted himself, all those years ago. Three generations had sat at that table, shared their daily goings on, triumphs and tears alike.

Margie felt a desperation to talk with Merv, about their son and his pending release. Something was holding her back.

Merv had never been much of a talker. Typical bloke. This needed to be discussed, Margie thought adamantly.

Scott sat pensively on the bed's edge, awaiting the guard to collect him. He was visibly nervous, palms and lip line sweating, 7.5 years in this place, all due to an avoidable accident. Scott would never use a mobile phone whilst driving again. People don't ever think it could happen to them. People are stupid thought Scott, as he wondered again what the time was?

Scott had done much reflecting on that regular,

unsuspecting afternoon, yet the images would haunt him for the rest of his time. He may have a chance to walk free today. Scott would never take freedom for granted again.

"Benson, you're up" the guard bellowed. Scott rose to his feet promptly, nodded at the guard and walked forth hesitantly, as if prolonging an answer he may not want to hear....

"Merv, do you reckon Scott will get out?" Margie asked, wary of Merv's reaction.

"I really couldn't tell you luv. It's up to the magistrate isn't it? If he's kept his nose clean, he should be right".

Merv had not been to visit Scott for a good while. Margie, on the other hand, visited Scott weekly. She was his mum and needed to help keep his spirits up. Margie knew that Merv still dwelled on the accident, that it needn't have happened. The locals had all chipped in their two bobs worth, which stirred Merv up. If either Merv or Margie ever saw Scott with a mobile phone in his car again.....

"Mr Benson. All reports state that your behaviour and participation over the course of your sentence has been admirable", remarked the magistrate, his gaze firmly fixed on Scott.

"Yes, your honor", replied Scott meekly.

"So today, I am granting you parole, on account of your consistently good record. A most regrettable and preventable tragedy happened, but I am sure that you have had much time to reflect on the consequences to all parties."

Scott lowered his gaze in shame. He still felt it. What if he ran into Lauren's parents down the street? Perhaps to move away, start afresh, would be best? Nobody would then know what he had done.

The truth is that Scott took away someone's life, an innocent person. Her loved ones would never see her again. The pain he had caused, simply by being distracted.

to be continued...



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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

The Revd Dr Timothy Smith

Making New Year's resolutions is not my thing. I find I am making resolutions throughout the year in response to different situations that arise. The other reason I don't make New Year's resolutions is because so often I fail in keeping them. There are reasons why our resolutions may fail and here is a response to those reasons especially where they relate to your significant relationships.

Halt the comparison game.

We know we shouldn't do it, but it can be just so easy to fall into the trap of comparing aspects of our life to others. Maybe it's feeling like your house or car isn't as nice as your friends'. Perhaps you feel "behind" all your peers when it comes to major life milestones. Or maybe it seems other couples have it all figured out. Here's the thing: everyone has their own unique struggles and successes, so try not to invest energy in resolutions about whether or not we measure up to others.

Be specific.

If you do make resolutions on New Year's, being specific is going to help you be successful. Instead of simply resolving to achieve something big, create some specific goals of how to do that. You might plan a date night once a week with your partner, or train for another job that is more interesting, or eat less chocolate. Specific resolutions help toward the big goal rather than failing.

Be mindful of

then it is good to examine our own expectations of life and relationships. Being aware of what we expect from life, and questioning those expectations, helps us to put in place resolutions that are realistic and inspiring to fulfil.

Focus on yourself.

When we take time to focus on our self we become more aware of insecurities, needs, and desires. Understanding of who we are, our skills, and our resources equips us better to make resolutions that we are actually able to complete. Without knowing ourselves, failure to achieve the resolutions cause us to become a greater sense of failure. Focus on our self also helps us implement resolutions that provide self-care that recharges us.

Whether you make resolutions for the New Year or not, hopefully these tips will also foster a positive influence in your significant relationships throughout the year.

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Dig Deep *(media release)*

A new EPA program is uncovering the gritty mysteries in your garden. GardenSafe is a soil screening service that analyses your dirt and tells you what might be in amongst your vegetation.

By sending EPA a soil sample from your home garden you can have the data you need at the tip of your green thumb. It's part of a global initiative that helps you investigate soil health and potential contaminants in your garden so you can work out the best use for your patch of paradise.

EPA's Chief Environmental Scientist, Professor Mark Patrick Taylor, says "If you are growing fruit and vegetables at home, you should use GardenSafe to check what is under the surface of your seedlings. The only cost to you is the postage,"

"Our scientists assess each sample they get for trace elements and general soil quality indicators, including soil texture, composition, nutrients and organic carbon," he said.

"The findings from GardenSafe help us to build an understanding of potential contamination levels in residential gardens across Victoria. This information will help gardeners better understand what's in their soil. It will also help to reduce potential risk and exposure if soil contamination is present."

GardenSafe data will not be used for EPA compliance or enforcement activities.

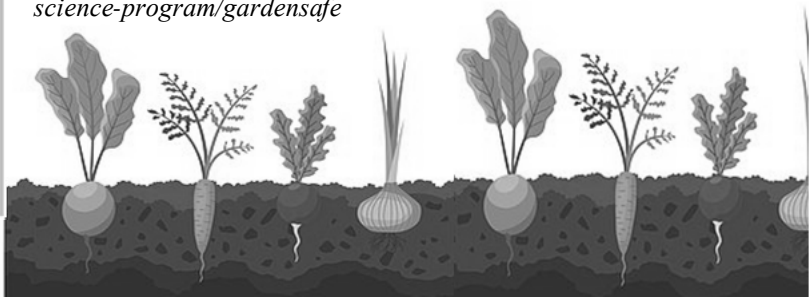
"As a partnership between EPA Victoria and members of the community, GardenSafe is a great example of how we can work together, after all, the environment is everyone's business," he said.

Victorians can send the GardenSafe team three soil samples from their gardens. They must be from a residential property.

EPA scientists will analyse the samples and provide a short report detailing the results and how to interpret them. Participants can also access information on growing fruit and vegetables safely in their gardens.

Find out more about GardenSafe on the EPA website:

<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/get-involved/citizen-science-program/gardensafe>



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Gynaecologist: Dr Saj Rathnyake

New patients welcome

We've always said that volunteering brings its own rewards. But now and then those rewards are a little more tangible, like this letter from new subscriber, Michael Risely, from Mount Duneed. The gift of hundreds of stamps was warmly received (perhaps not so much by Kerry Thomson, our subscriptions officer, and "volunteer tongue") but Michael's charming letter is too good not to share.



The November Meredith News arrived today. Many thanks. I noted that the envelope had \$3.20 postage on it, which must be the going rate these days for a big envelope.

I am a long time, fairly serious stamp collector. I cannot remember the last time I had to buy a stamp at the post office.

Over the journey we stamp collectors tend to gather (horde!) lots of stuff. We often buy bulk parcels of stamps and sometimes old collections which explains why I have a room full of stamps.

This means I have a lot of surplus stuff. In one of my albums I store those mint, unused Australian stamps that I have come across I don't actually want or need. Out of this I provide postage stamps to my family and friends.

And so enclosed with this letter is a gift of some postage stamps for the Meredith News. Hopefully it will save the News a dollar or two in its endeavours to spread the news.

But the downside is that they're not as easy to use as the \$1.10 peel and sticks. You will have to do some licking to fix him to the envelopes!!

So, a block of 4 x \$0.60 = \$2.40 + 1 x 90 cents = \$3.30

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and for more licking a block of 10 x 33 cents equals \$3.30

As I explained, they haven't really cost me anything so no fuss, no posters. I hope that they help with the budget for the News.


Keep up the good work.

Cheers, Michael

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Marg's BOOK REVIEW

The Man Who Died Twice by Richard Osman

The Man Who Died Twice is a mystery novel by British Television presenter Richard Osman, published in 2021. It is a sequel to his first novel *The Thursday Murder Club*, which he published in 2020.

The formula for the books is described as 'fiendishly clever': four senior citizens friends living in Kent in a Retirement Community form *The Thursday Murder Club* and solve murders rather than do jigsaws, attend sing-alongs or watch television. It helps that Elizabeth is ex-secret service but the others, Joyce, Ron and Ibrahim also have valuable talents. They start by researching old murders but in the latest book the murders are in the present time, Elizabeth's ex husband is involved and the world of espionage and international crime are involved.

The story is told through dual narratives. Chapters alternate between the first person diary entries of Joyce and a third person narration covering multiple view points. The chapters move rapidly from one scene and perspective to the next, all the time building suspense. Although the tone is witty the text addresses serious themes such as ageing, mortality, friendship and revenge. At first the title seems to refer to a faked death of one or more of the characters but in reality it refers to the effects of dementia, another of the novel's themes. In fact, Elizabeth's current husband Stephen has dementia.

The mystery begins when Elizabeth receives a letter from a former colleague and ex-husband who she thought was dead. He has recently run foul of a dangerous English mobster and an international crime cartel after stealing a bag of valuable diamonds and securing them in a secret hiding place.

Osman uses multiple characters to tell several other stories throughout the book with protagonists also involved in several personal battles, as well as trying to bring down a local thug and a local crime lord. The author spent a great deal of time in his first novel introducing the main characters and making sure readers would like them. But this second book in the series can be read as a stand alone novel.

I have heard that the next book in the series is even better than this one. I look forward to reading it. I like the way that Osman champions the ageing process and shows how capable and interesting older members of the community can be.



Kerry Thomson

The sketchers are back! We'll meet at 10 am on Tuesday, 14 Feb at the Community Centre in Meredith from whence we'll decide our destination for the morning. Bring your drawing/painting equipment, chair, weather-appropriate clothing and a cuppa/bikkie to have afterwards. No experience necessary, all welcome.

Rugged up against the cold and slight drizzle our December outing was to Kerry's home in She Oaks. We had Alex, Peter, Ray, Mandy, Louise, Ingrid, Yan and Kerry (and Whoopie) test their artistic talents with the challenging architecture of the house, moving sheep, garden vistas and an ancient bicycle leaning against the wall.





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Every year, just before Christmas, lots of sheep turn up in Meredith. One of the more interesting visits was this family flock out the front of Cliffy and Brenda Niblett's property on the Steiglitz Road. Not only Mum, but five lambs (named after Cliffy and Brenda's great grandchildren) and their own personal minder.





it's History

Meredith History Interest Group

Calendars:

The 2023 calendars are still available from local shops and the History Centre for \$15.00. Each year a topic is chosen that both records and brings people's attention to that topic. The 2023 calendar features underground tanks of Meredith & District. Most of these tanks are now obsolete but are still attractive and interesting structures. Most of the houses and businesses in Staughton Street had an underground tank before iron, cement or plastic tanks were produced. Many country houses also had underground tanks.

The tender of J. Stowe of £73/7/6 was accepted by the Meredith Shire Council in January 1879 for excavating and building the tank at the Shire Hall.

In November 1893 the contract for doming the Shire Hall tank was completed. Kenneally was paid £27/- for doming the tank. The engineer recommended that the interior of the tank be cemented after it was found to be badly cracked in places. The contractor was willing to do this work for £3/-.

In 1906 the Council resolved to limit the amount of water to 10 gallons per day for persons coming to the Shire Hall for water. It was also resolved to repair the spouting on the Shire Hall.

Profits from the sale of the calendar are donated to MHIG.

Steiglitz Miners:

A Table has come into our possession that lists the numbers of European Alluvial Miners and Quartz Miners and Chinese Alluvial Miners and Quartz Miners from 1860 until 1896 at Steiglitz. It shows that in 1863 there were 1200 European and 200 Chinese (the most of both European and Chinese in any year) and that in 1894 there were 678 European Quartz Miners and only 8 Chinese Miners in 1878 and 1891.

The table also lists the reefs at Steiglitz and in which year they were opened.

A Whipping Machine:

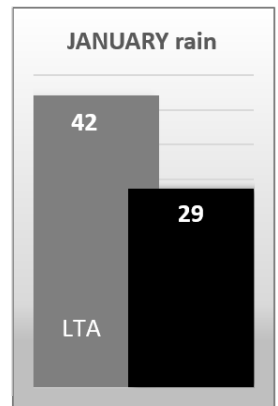
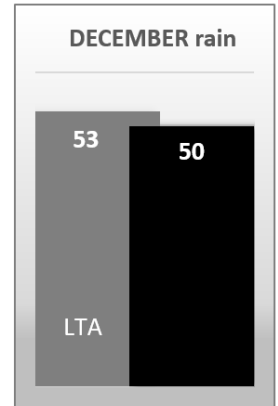
Automatic flogging machines were in use among the military forces of several European countries in 1910. As soon as the culprit is secured in position a spring is tightened or loosened to gauge the exact force of the blow. A pointer is moved over a dial to the required number of strokes and the mechanism is started. With perfect regularity the victim's back is scourged by the thongs.

Annual Meeting:

All members and prospective members please note that the Annual General Meeting will be held at 1.30 pm on Sunday, March 26, 2023 and that subscriptions are due on that day. At the AGM Tony Scott will give a presentation

on the first ocean liner, the SS Great Britain which brought more than 15,000 immigrants to Australia between 1852 and 1856. Complete passenger lists will be available to search for your ancestors. (MHIG has purchased a large portable screen which will be used on the day for Tony's presentation.)

the rain report



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Art On the Farm 2023

4th & 5th March

Over a weekend in March, seven artists from around Australia will come together to exhibit their work at the beautiful Glenairlie Homestead in Meredith: 370 Taylor Rd.

Covering a wide range of media, including painting, photography, sculpture and jewellery, the works are as varied and interesting as their creators, who will be there to talk about their work.

The first "Art on the Farm" event in 2022 was a great success with over 300 attendees enjoying the scenery while talking directly to artists.

This year, the show returns on 4 & 5 March. Artists include:

Painter - Mandy Moyle,
Painter - Michael Clark,
Textile artist - Ro Cook,
Photographer - Mark Smith,
Painter - Julie Fleming,
Jeweller - Pauline Wilkinson and
Sculptor, Darren Gilbert.

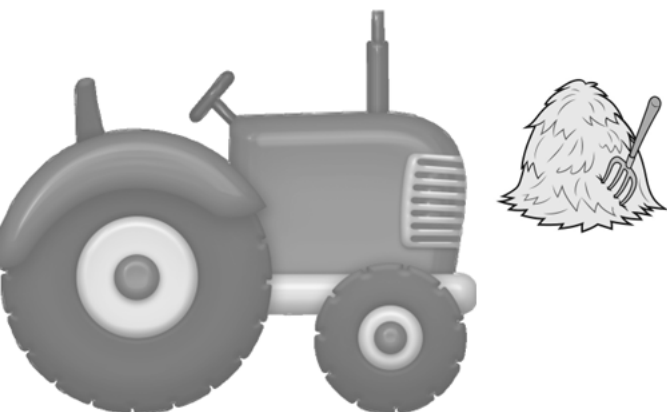
Many of the works on display reflect a love of the natural environment, as well as the use of eco-friendly media and repurposed materials. All exhibits will be up for sale.

This year, with performances by local musicians *The Rattlers* and Australian entertainment legend, Mic Conway, there will be more than just art on display at Glenairlie.

Bring a blanket, a picnic and a friend. Enjoy a glass of wine from the licenced bar and afternoon tea on the deck served by Advance Meredith Association members and Anglesea Community Garden members.

Art on The Farm 2023 runs over the weekend of March 4th -5th, 11am – 5pm with a donation on entry.

P.S: Next year we hope local artists will contribute to a Guest Artist Gallery!

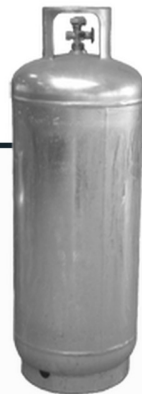


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Vale to Keith Francis Strong

24/1/1929 – 19/11/2022

Keith's wife Joyce researched and collected information and photos about him and his family and created a document, from which this tribute has been taken.

*Out of the countless memories
Invention selects a few
That become the story of my life.*

Keith was the son of George [Joe] and Joyce Strong. He had siblings Stanley, Bruce, John, Joyce, Isabelle Mary and Hazel. The family came to live at She Oaks on a farm known as Grandview that comprised 400 acres before they bought more land.

The seven children all went to She Oaks State School except the youngest John. The school closed in 1951 because of low numbers attending. The Strong children milked 2 cows each, every morning before school and devoured a high tin loaf of bread fresh from the oven, after school before they began their evening chores.

Reared within a strong Christian household the family went to church on Sunday mornings and Sunday night was devoted to hymn singing. Keith's father had a pleasant singing voice and mother and daughters were accomplished pianists, so musical evenings were popular. The boy's favourite pastimes were fishing and ferreting.



Keith said that he was not a very good scholar. He left school aged 14 and joked that he earned his Merit Certificate by taking up an axe and an onion hoe. The brothers cut wood, worked on the thresher machine, grew vegetables such as peas and onions and ran stock including sheep, horses and cows. Joyce said that it was a toss up what brought the biggest smile to Keith's face, the smell of newly mown hay or the fact that he always felt like a man when he wore a hat.

Keith married Joyce Schefferle on September 10, 1955 at Church of Christ in Ballarat. (Keith's sister Joyce married John Schefferle, Joyce's brother). They built a new house on *Glenoaks*, a property Keith bought from his mother in 1963. Keith and his father worked both farms together. Their daughter Leeann Julie was born in 1957. Sadly, Joyce passed away in 1987 but daughter Leeann and her husband helped Keith on the farm as did the Boardman family, often helping one another with cropping etc.

On a trip to New Zealand in 1989 Keith met another Joyce and after a whirlwind courtship, they married. Keith sold the farm in 1996 to the Stray family. He and Joyce then lived in a unit in Bannockburn.

Keith was a quiet country man, neither rich nor famous, a man who says Good Morning even if it isn't, a man ever ready with a word of good cheer, a man who is what he is because of all the steps he's made along the way.



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50th Birthday

By Marg Cooper

On November 21 Paul Ryan was to celebrate his 50th birthday but, instead, unfortunately, had to call the ambulance.

Paul is the son of Kevin and Shirley Ryan of Elaine. He attended kindergarten at Meredith and school at Elaine and St Paul's Technical School. In 1988, just a few weeks before his 16th birthday, Paul started work at Max Stevens Aluminium in Ballarat. He went back to school to sit the Year 10 exams. If he hadn't been put off in June 1991 when *the recession that we had to have* hit the building trade, he may not have become the local carrier.

He bought a blue J6 Bedford in 1990 and carted small hay bales from paddocks to sheds. At one stage he had three trucks and about 15 young blokes working for him. He even carted hay on a semi-trailer and pulled it with a tractor.

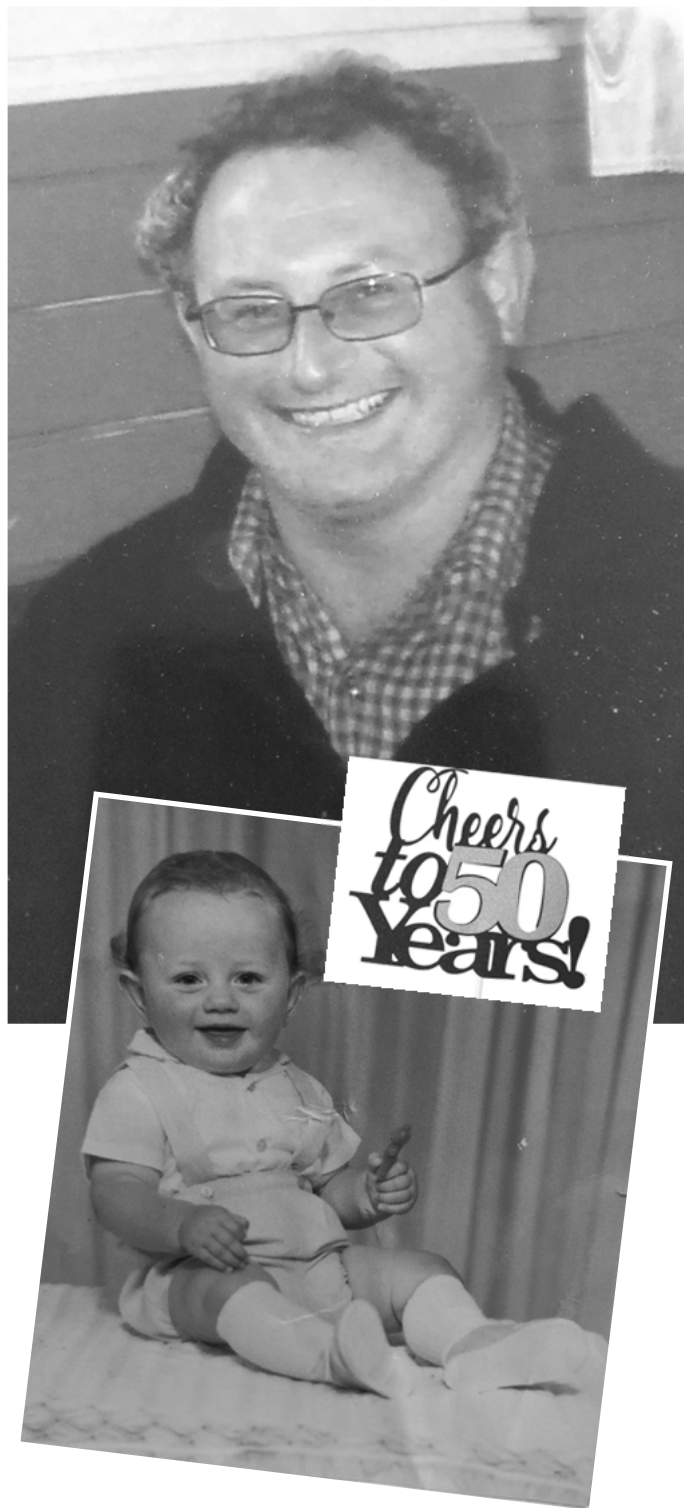
In 1996 Paul bought a red 1970 C 1800 International Truck from Neville Tucker at Anakie and carted scrap metal to Geelong. He saved enough money to buy a new stock crate. It took him three months to get his first job. Since then Paul has bought and sold trucks and trailers and now has two main prime movers and several trailers and can cart anything that people want shifted.

Paul is deeply committed to his home town of Elaine. In 2005 when the Elaine shop was in danger of closing, he took over the lease to keep the business in town. He intended to get it up and running as best he could in two years and then have someone take over. But time slipped away. He had the shop for one week shy of eleven years!

Paul has been a Justice of the Peace since 2007 and is currently Captain of the Fire Brigade. He is an avid collector of local history. He has an amazing memory, enjoys telling stories about people, places and events and is great to listen to.

Since his birthday Paul has suffered various aches and pains and at the time of writing he is stranded in a recliner chair at home, unable to walk. Fortunately, he can still talk!

His mother recalls that Paul was in quite a large group of local children at Kindergarten who would all have celebrated their 50th birthdays in the last half of 2022 or in early 2023. Happy 50th Birthday to all of them!





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Kelpie Kapers! © #37

By Emma Clarke



In the School Garden

Mrs. Garden

The weather has certainly been playing with us lately and we are trying to keep up. With cold weather right into December, it was then followed by rainy days and very hot days. Fortunately our wicking beds keep up a constant and even supply of water to the plants so we don't need to worry about daily watering.

A group of school families has very kindly volunteered to look after our gardens and assorted CHOOKS over the holidays. The vegetable beds only require a weekly top up of water to ensure their reservoir is filled. The chooks, however, need a daily check on their water and feed, and to collect their eggs. They produce a wonderful variety of eggs: speckled, large, small, brown, blue and white. A little treat for them has been the lettuces that bolted to seed as soon as the warmer weather hit; no need to waste them as they were devoured within minutes. The silverbeet has also had a chance to regrow so they will enjoy that when school returns and they are out and about for their daily stroll and pecking time.

Something else has been out and about in our garden, too. The SUNFLOWER seedlings put in by the Prep/Ones before the holidays have mostly disappeared. There are three surviving ones alongside some familiar looking scratchings. Could it be the Lunar New Year Rabbit?

The plantings in the raised beds are protected from a similar attack. The STRAWBERRIES are flowering and fruiting well and the children enjoy searching amongst the leaves for some juicy, red treats. The TOMATOES are doing the same although the fruits are still green and we patiently wait for them to ripen.

RHUBARB is always a reliable crop and we have a whole bed devoted to it. The POTATOES are also looking strong and healthy and are starting to flower. We keep heaping up the straw around the plants to make sure the new potatoes are not exposed to any sunlight turning them green and poisonous.

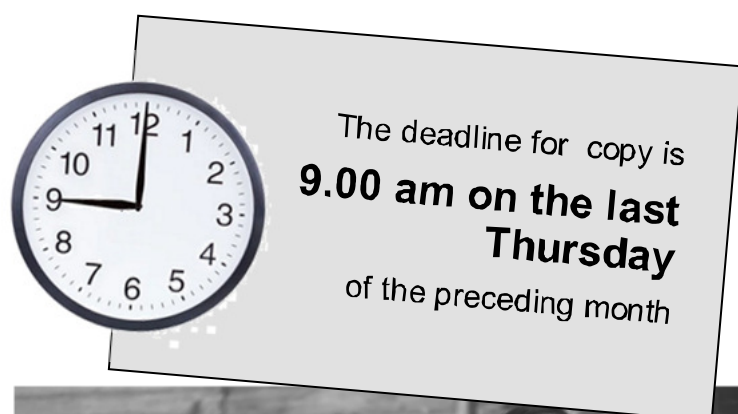
The ROSES around the flagpole are blooming furiously. They have thrived with all the rain, and the growth since we gave them quite a hard prune in winter has been outstanding. Being perfumed as well is a wonderful bonus.

This month you might like to try sowing some BUSH BEANS, BEETROOT, CARROT, PARSNIP, LETTUCE, RADISH, SPINACH or TURNIP SEEDS. Be careful on hot days to give them some protection when they sprout and also plenty of water.

Finally, how are your GIANT PUMPKINS going? Keep the water up to them and a fortnightly feed will

help. We look forward to gathering in a few months to weigh and compare our produce. If you haven't had success this year, you could find a pumpkin, any type or size, and adorn it with natural materials to go in the Best Decorated section.

In the meantime, happy gardening in your plot.



Veterans

Roy Hay

I wonder if 2023 will turn out to be the year of the veterans? It has started promisingly with some excellent sporting performances. The seemingly ageless Andy Murray has just outlasted a brilliant young Australian in the Australian Open tennis tournament, though he lost in the next round. An even older American is contemplating another year as quarterback in the National Football League. At the time when I wrote this column, Steve Brady is 45 going on 46—a vintage when most sports stars in less demanding competitions are a decade into their post-sports careers. Geelong football club had a team with a hard core of veterans when it won the Grand Final last year and most of them are planning to go round again. One of Australia's finest ever basketballers, Lauren Jackson, returned to the courts last year at 40 and drove the Opals to a Bronze Medal in the Women's World Cup in Sydney.

At the recent Association football World Cup, the two outright stars of the tournament—Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe—were at opposite ends of the age spectrum and it was the veteran Messi's team, Argentina, that came out on top thanks in large part to a stellar performance by him. In the upcoming women's soccer world cup to be held jointly by Australia and New Zealand later this year, the Matildas will almost certainly have a nucleus of players with considerable experience for whom the tournament may well be the capstone to their careers. Sam Kerr, Claire Polkinghorne and Alanna Kennedy among others are in this category.

Sports medicine and coaching have been transformed in recent years so there is much greater understanding of how to increase the length of careers, reduce injuries, prevent recurrence of common ones and improve recovery times. I'm not clear about the extent to which coaches have internalised all these developments, but the best of them are realising the value of sustained rather than peak output to individual and team performance.

Meredith's Crocs have been giving local veteran footballers an outlet for exercising their skills and having a great social life associated with the game. For amateur players it is often the camaraderie and the off-field activities, including the odd social drink, that keeps them going, not just the game itself and any fitness benefits that flow from that.

Cricket has always been a sport that seems to accommodate veteran players in one role or another. Unlike the winter football codes, cricket regularly finds umpiring positions for retired players right up to international level where Paul Reiffel, an absolute star with the ball for Australia, is now one of the most respected umpires. The football codes are becoming so fast and athletic these days that it is harder for senior referees to keep up and the AFL has over the years increased the number of central on-field umpires.

In my preferred winter code, Association football (soccer), I took up refereeing for a while. In my case it was when I was involved with a Geelong representative team which gave some of the most promising juniors a chance to play at a higher level, eventually reaching the National Youth League. Along the way we regularly came up against Melbourne teams who would tell us the appointed referee had not turned up and one of their club members would

officiate. This often resulted in some very biased performances, so I persuaded our coach to join me in taking the referees' course and becoming accredited officials. When we encountered the absence of an official referee away from home, I would tell the host club we had two qualified officials and they could choose the slow one or the blind one! The absence of an officially-appointed referee did not happen again! Mind you, when we were officiating we were often criticised by our team for being too strict with them!

Veterans may have had their day in the sun earlier in their careers but, like me, they may be very reluctant to call time on themselves. Now I have to wonder about columnists. I've enjoyed these recent chances to write about subjects of my own choice for the *Meredith News* and I thank the editors and you the readers for the opportunity, but I am happy to sign off now. It has been a pleasure and I hope you enjoyed them. I am 82 and it is time to say farewell and thanks.

We have enjoyed, and will surely miss Roy's columns about his travels, reflections, opinions and historical observations. To the point we have imposed on him to not deny any future inspirations. So hopefully, it is not goodbye, but au revoir. - Ed.



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G'Day from the penners for 2023. We hope you are all well. This year we will concentrate more on the writings of our members and less on my chatting, so we can publish longer stories for your enjoyment. If you like any of our stories or poetry, please drop us an email via goldenpens4@gmail.com we appreciate any feedback you would care to give.

This month's story is from Wendy Spall, who has been a member since 2015. We hope you enjoy this story.

The Storm

She was so angry, she could feel the rage cursing through her veins, her heart beating like a big bass drum, bang, bang, bang. The storm of emotion gathering inside her very being, rising like lava from a volcano, ready to spill out and consume everything in its path. She was unable to move, her feet were rooted to the spot, her fists clenched tight beside her, she couldn't even speak; such was the anguish she felt. How could he have done such a thing, to her? She, who had only ever shown him kindness and love, who had adored him from their first meeting and now this. She had felt this feeling before, many times and undoubtedly, she would feel it many times to come, but still, it didn't make it any easier. The dark stormy tempest forming within her head made it feel as though it would explode any minute, she couldn't take it anymore, the relief valve had to give, but all the while he just looked at her, looked at her with those eyes. Those eyes that she fell for, those eyes that looked at her with such love.

She felt betrayed, injured, hurt. It was going to be such a special treat; she had poured all her love into it, carefully choosing the forms, the colours, everything had to be just right, and now it was ruined. All because of him!

She wondered where she got her temper from, her father, with his Italian background was always quick to temper, his arms would start flailing and his voice would rise and quicken, sometimes even reverting back to his mother tongue when his frustration couldn't be satiated. But as quick as it rose it would also fall, and before long he would be his happy self again, singing and dancing her around, spinning and laughing. But how would he take this, she knew how much her father loved her but how could she explain this disaster to him, how would he react? Would he want to punish him, or even her? for being so thoughtless, for putting herself in this position in the first place. All these thoughts made the storm in her head more violent. It was too much.

But then her mother, the calmest, kindest woman she had ever met bent down to speak to her, and in her softest voice, whilst looking her directly in the eyes said. "Wendy, he didn't mean it you know. Your brother Michael is only a baby and he doesn't know things yet. I'm sure you can do another picture, even better than the last one." At those words she felt the tears start to well up in her eyes and she ran into her mother's arms. She

cocooned her with her love and she felt safe again and the flood of emotion began to pour out. Slowly the storm inside her abated and she began to feel normal again. It can be so hard when you're only 5 years old and your baby brother grabs the special drawing you were doing for your dad and he rips it in half and starts chewing it. But I guess things will get better, when he starts to learn things, like me she thought.

Steiglitz Rest Cottage

Marg Cooper

They were looking for a house to buy, in the country, on acres, not too far from Geelong and Melbourne and preferably not a flat terrain, in the bush!

They had looked everywhere and had nearly given up when they spotted the perfect place for them between Steiglitz and Anakie.

They told that Brian Kelly, a draughtsman built the house between 1987 and 1993 out of mud bricks manufactured in Emerald, bluestone blocks and recycled materials including oregon beams from Geelong Wool Shed, doors from a house in Nantes Street, Newtown and old stain glass windows. A sign he left in the house tells that they spent 2000 hours restoring the many windows.

Dan and Greg occupied the house about one year ago. They have filled the many spacious rooms with furniture, art and fittings that all have a story. For example, the large desk in the study was the desk on which the decision was made for England to discontinue importing jeeps and start making land rovers and the light fittings were from the Dutch East India Company. An eclectic collection of art is displayed on the study wall including paintings by Dan's mother.

While he built the house Brian and his family lived in a small cottage about 80 metres from the main house. Dan and Greg thought that they would clean up and paint the cottage for family and friends. They also did some alterations including install a large window where there had been a very small one and install a wood heater. It looked so good they put it on Airbnb and have been surprised how popular it has been.

The cottage is situated on a 26 acres hilly site in the bush and is setback from the main house with a private outlook. Their four alpacas are a hit with guests as are the chooks, possums, kangaroos and echidnas. There is a 2½km walk around the property and a very steep track down to a big dam if guests need a workout.

Dan also advises guests of the many attractions in the area to explore and where to eat. They hope that guests to their Cottage will spend money at local businesses and benefit the lovely district in which they have come to live.



Vale - Reginald Anthony Lewis

26/5/1945 to 11/12/22

Reg was born 26/5/1945, the 5th of 6 children born to Archibald and Marjorie Lewis of Mount Doran. He attended Elaine State School, riding his push bike 5 miles from Mount Doran to Elaine. He said it would often happen that he would have a head wind riding into when going to school, then during the day the wind would change and he'd have another head wind to ride home again.

After state school, he attended a couple of years at Tech school in Ballarat and then left school when he turned 14 years of age. He thought he would become a shearer like his two elder brothers, but his father said no, he had to go and get a fulltime job with a regular income.

So he found a fulltime job as an apprentice with a small engineering business in Ballarat. This meant that he had to board in Ballarat all week and be at home on weekends, which he did for the next 4 years until he turned 18 and bought his first car, then drove from Mount Doran to Ballarat to work every day. His first job only lasted 2 years, for there was a slump in the economy and the owner could not afford to keep him on. He soon found another apprenticeship with a new business making caravans called Franklins. This business thrived and at one stage employed over 700 men. They were so busy all employees were made to work 10 hours a day starting at 7 am till 5.30pm. Reg worked at Franklin Caravans for over 20 years until the factory finally closed. Reg was the last employee to be stood down.

When Reg turned 20 years old the marble with his birth date on was drawn out of the barrel and he was conscripted into the Army, and he did 2 years of National Service from 1967 to 1969.

Reg and Marie met at a 60/40 dance at the Ballarat Civic hall just three months before he joined the army. The first 3 months of his training was at Puckapunyal Army base in Victoria and then he was put with the engineers division and spent 3 months training in Sydney's Army Base. His next posting was with a division that was based at Laverick Barracks in Townsville, Northern Queensland. He spent the last 18 months of his national service here, only coming home on leave once a year at Christmas time. Reg said Army life was tough, but he made a lot of good mates and they had fun when on leave together.

In 1972 Reg and Marie were married at St Alipius Church in Ballarat. They were both working jobs and Reg was helping his mum on the farm in Elaine on weekends. In 1975 they moved out to the house in Elaine, Joseph was born in 1975 and Samuel followed in 1977.

After Franklins closed Reg got a job with a new business called Modkon Constructions, building portable school units, again they were very busy and for the first 12 months he had to work 12 hours a day – 6 days a week. He worked there for 11 years until it finally closed also. He was then employed with Laminex at their Wendouree factory, this involved shift work, working one week day shift, one week afternoon shift and one week night shift. Reg worked there for the next 6 years till 1999 when it shifted most of the factory to NSW.

After that Reg said "Bugger this", and bought a courier run in North Geelong and became his own boss, leaving Elaine at 5.30am and not getting home till 7pm each night. With his wife's help, he built the courier business up and was making 5 times as much as when he started.

In 2000 Reg and his two sons decided to buy two small farms adjoining each other along Doyles Rd. They found a bank that gave them a 15 year loan, but those 15 years were tough. Cattle prices and wool prices were down and 12 of the 15 years were drought. Dust was blowing in the paddocks in the winter time and by 2006 all of the dams were dry. So no longer could all the farm work be done on the weekends only. To look after 70 head of cattle and 1000 sheep, someone has to stay home and cart water and feed all the stock every day to keep them alive so Reg sold his business.

In 2005 Reg became a grand father for the first time. In total there were 5 grandchildren who all adored him.

In his trusty Bedford truck with a 1200 Gallon water tank on back he would cart sometimes 3 loads of water a day from the Cargerie Bore to keep the cattle troughs full of water. The water carting would take all morning and in the afternoon he feed out the hay to keep the cattle and sheep alive.

The 15 years went by quickly and finally the bank loan was paid off, and the drought broke. Reg had planned to semi retire and he and Marie were going to have a few day trips around Victoria. But as sometimes happens when a man retires, illness settles in. Reg developed lung disease He tried his best to fight it, living 5 years longer than doctors expected. Reg hates hospitals, so his wife promised him she would nurse him at home and he got his wish. He passed away at home with Marie and Sam at his side,

Reg and Marie were only 19 days short of their 50th Wedding Anniversary,

Reg dearly loved and was so proud of Joe and Sam, and was devoted to his 5 grandchildren Zachary, Jorja, Erica, Zoe and Maggie, he loved them all and they gave him great joy.

Reg was a member of the Elaine CFA for over 60 years, in his later years helping with juniors and ensuring the radio scheds were completed on weekends. He played footy for Elaine Football Club, then when they folded he played for Meredith.

Reg was a friendly country boy, loved living and working on the farm, loved his family and the Collingwood Football club

May his dear soul rest in peace.



**When should you
go at red and
stop at green?**

**When eating a
watermelon!**

Landcare News



If you would like more information about the group, please see the Maude and District Landcare Group Facebook page or contact us at maudeanddistrictlandcare@gmail.com

Bamganie-Meredith

Nerida Anderson

Amalgamation of the Bamganie Meredith and the Maude And Districts Landcare Groups

It is with great excitement that we announce the amalgamation of the Bamganie Meredith and District Landcare Group with the Maude and District Landcare Group to form the **Maude Meredith and Districts Landcare Group Inc.** The purpose of the group is to encourage and promote of conservation of land, waterways and the environment in general, whether on private or public land particularly in the Meredith, Bamganie, Maude and the surrounding districts.

With changing methods of funding and changes in ownership of private property throughout the district it was clear that interest in Landcare had also changed from the time when the Bamganie Meredith Landcare Group was first formed. This meant that after many years of successful operation it was time to look at new ways of doing things to ensure the continuity of Landcare in the local area.

Amalgamation will bring new opportunities and an expanded membership base with a wider range of interests and will continue to work towards preserving and improving our local natural environment.

The Bamganie Meredith and District Landcare Group has been responsible for far reaching and environmentally positive changes in the local landscape over many years. The treed environment which we enjoy today has been enhanced and improved by the efforts of the Group which also extended into erosion and weed control and raised awareness of how to care for the natural environment. A great debt is owed to all former members and office bearers for the work they have done, and in particular Rob McColl and all the McColl family. The contribution of the McColl family over many years has been outstanding – thank you!

Meetings of the new amalgamated group will be held every second month, commencing in February.

Keep Up to Date With Landcare News

Landcare Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation established 30 years ago to support the community to protect, enhance and restore the natural environment, build resilience in Australia's food and farming systems, and create stronger communities. For more information about the activities of Landcare Australia including information about programs and grant opportunities go to <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/what-is-landcare/>.

Next Meeting

The first meeting of the amalgamated **Maude Meredith and Districts Landcare Group** will be at 7:00pm on Thursday 16 February at the Maude Tennis Pavilion.

All welcome, come and join us, we are delighted to see both old and new faces!

50[&]
Fabulous

A Time She Will Remember

Marg Cooper

Kim Medlyn hired the facilities at *Moranghurk* on the weekend of her 50th birthday for her celebrations.

The old bluestone shearers quarters of the *Moranghurk* property have been fully restored but retain the rustic, rural feel. Included are rooms for sleeping 30 people, a large country kitchen, a lounge, showers and toilets and a wonderful outside area which contains a fire pit and is protected on three sides by the buildings.

Family and friends joined her on the Friday night, the night of her birthday (November 25th) for pizza, freshly cooked and delivered to the site.

Kim's Mum, Jo Primmer, cooked a breakfast of bacon and eggs on Saturday morning for all who had stayed the night and when they left about 2 pm preparations began for the Saturday night party.

A large crowd of her friends including friends from her work enjoyed food including pulled pork and beef rolls, music and games. A great night was had by all! On Sunday morning some of her mates helped with the clean-up. But the celebrations didn't stop there! On Monday Kim, son Kenneth and Mum Jo drove to Apollo Bay for lunch and to enjoy the magnificent fine weather. That trip finished her birthday weekend. Kim had a fabulous time that she will always remember.

Happy 50th Birthday Kim.

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