

Our FREE Community Newsletter



Meredith & district News

We're
B-a-a-a-ck



FEBRUARY 2024

inside



- New Managers at Police Paddocks
- Russel's 50 years a Wool Classer
- Sam Galli's 80th

...and so much MORE!



e: news@meredithnews.com.au w: meredithnews.com.au



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, Sue Higgs, Alex Hyatt, Nerida Anderson and Ian Leighton. Production is undertaken by Peter Boer, Don Atherton, Marlene Johnson and Jim Elvey.

NEWS & VIEWS

Appropriate 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. RATES: excluding GST, are as follows:

	B&W / Colour
Business Card	\$20
Quarter page	\$30
Half page	\$50 / \$110
Full page	\$100 / \$200

Community Groups can have a 1/4 page ad for free or a \$30.00 discount on larger ads. (conditions apply).

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

Classified ads cost \$7.50 on invoice or \$5.00 if paid on lodgement.

Classifieds are **FREE** for small, personal notices from residents.

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: Ian 0409 016815

advertising@meredithnews.com.au

Accounts: Ian Leighton 0428132880

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We do not publish children's photos online.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

FEEDBACK

Yes please! Send it to news@meredithnews.com.au

Issue Production: Peter Boer and Jim Elvey

connect

ADVANCE MEREDITH 0409 027 359	FOOTBALL Seniors 0408 545246 Juniors 0430 587 674
ANGLING CLUB 0419 248 660	GOLF CLUB 0407 795 342
B'BURN ART GROUP 0410 808 483	HISTORY GROUP 5286 8201
BLUE LIGHT DISCO 5286 1222	LANDCARE 0409 862 326
BOOK CLUB 5286 8201	MEMORIAL HALL 0409 662106
CFA 000 for fire calls Elaine 0409 861 296 Meredith 0433 714 017 Morrisons 0417 770 765	MEREDITH SEWING GROUP 0491 184 999
CHILDCARE 5286 0700	MOTORCYCLE CLUB 0437 009 250
COMMUNITY CENTRE 5286 0700	PLAYGROUP 5286 0700
CRICKET Elaine 0448 291074 Junior (U16,U14,13) 0448 291074 Meredith 5286 1434	POLICE PADDOCKS 0409 163169
CUBS & SCOUTS Lethbridge 0435 042077	RSL - 5286 1452
ELAINE HALL elainetownhall@gmail.com	SENIOR CITIZENS 5286 8232
	TENNIS Elaine 0448 291 074 Lethbridge 52 817 321 Meredith 0424 754 179
	SEW 'N' SEWS 5286 0700
	FRIENDS OF THE BRISBANE RANGES 5286 1252

emergency

Police, Ambulance, Fire (from mobile phone)	000 000 or 112
Meredith Police Station	5286 1222
Police non emergency	131 444
Power Failure	132 412
Nurse-On-Call	1300 606 024
Mental Health Advice	1300 280 737
Poisons Information	13 11 26
Barwon Water	1300 656 007
SES Emergency - flood & storm	132 500
24 Hour Helpline	1800 629 572
24 Hour Drug & Alcohol Counselling	1800 888 236
Kids Help Line	
24hr 5-18yo	1800 551 800
Golden Plains Shire a/h emergency Ranger	1300 363 036 0408 508 635 5220 7111 or 0409 830 223
Bannockburn Vet	5281 1221
Golden Plains Animal	5281 2226
Pets and Horses 24/7	0421 617 238

Justices of the Peace

Mr Don Atherton. 0409 869 960

Mr Paul Ryan Elaine 0409 861 296

services

CEMETERY TRUST 5286 1550	MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH 5220 7230
HALL HIRE Meredith Memorial 5286 1545 Elaine Mechanics elainetownhall@gmail.com Elaine Rec Res 5341 5703	PRE-SCHOOL 5286 0722 PRIMARY SCHOOL 5286 1313 RECREATION RESERVE 0429 315 575
LIBRARY VAN 5272 6010	

..or start something.

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



A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawnmower is broken.

- James Dent

← **ARLO'S**

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FRIDAY 22 MARCH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP

10 am to 3pm,
Bannockburn and Smythesdale



We are trialling something new, come along and share your thoughts to make a difference!

In-person attendance is required and lunch provided. **RSVP by Wednesday 13 March 2024**

Please register using the QR Code and include any additional/dietary needs. Limited transport options available.

If you have any queries, please call the Community Inclusion Team on 5220 7111 or email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au



2040 COMMUNITY VISION

Have Your Say SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Council invites you to help shape the future of Golden Plains Shire

Visit the 'Community Vision 2040 Refresh Have Your Say' webpage to complete the online survey and learn more about engagement opportunities.



At the Paddocks

New Managers at the Police Paddocks

Members of the local volunteer group met onsite recently with three of the directors of the newly formed Western Region Environmental Network (WREN). Pleasingly, soon after the meeting, WREN sought delegation of management authority for the site from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). This was granted just before Xmas.

The directors indicated a willingness to work collaboratively with the community and will be represented at a meeting of the Meredith Police Paddocks Support Group to be held at **2.00pm on Sunday 11th February** at the Community Hub. All members of the community are invited to attend.

The Support Group is excited by this development and is hopeful it will soon lead to some action to reduce the presence of invasive weeds at the Police Paddocks. It will also bring a measure of expertise to the short and long term management of the site. Given this is such a valuable community asset, as well as being a rare remnant of undeveloped grassland, it is pleasing WREN has stepped up to oversee its future care.

Join us...

...at the meeting of locals and the new managers at the Community Hub at 2.00pm on Sunday 11th February.

And/or...

...as a volunteer. You can play a part in the development of this beautiful site as a recreational, historical and environmental asset for the region. Contact Jim on 0409 163169 for more information.

OUR COVER

Thank you Cathie Boer for the cheery summer cover photo of the sunflowers at the Elaine Farmgate shop, a bright spot on the drive north.



Taken any photos you are pretty pleased with? We would love to see them.

Recreation



Meredith Tennis Club News

Australian Open

The hotshots program that the club runs (free training sessions) was again chosen to go to the Australia Open to attend the Hot Shots Day on Thursday January 18th. Two buses picked up the 54 attendees at the Meredith Tennis Courts at 5.30 am and took us to Melbourne Park. From there, everyone walked to the AO Ballpark, where we were given two hours of playtime before the AO opened to the general public. During that time, we had access to a range of activities including the high ropes course, Hot Shots lessons and the water park (including water slide and obstacle course) among other activities. Once the AO was open, we were given priority access to the John Cain Arena, where we could watch Lukas Klein and Alexander Zverev play a very evenly matched game. Some children found themselves in the right place at the right time and were even able to obtain signatures and photos with some of the tennis stars! We then boarded another bus at 4 pm and were driven back to Meredith.

It was another amazing opportunity for the children to attend the Australian Open and see some amazing tennis played and we were very lucky to have received this opportunity two years running. All the children had a wonderful time and are grateful for opportunity to attend.

Coaching

Our community Hot Shots program, which usually runs on a Thursday, will start on Wednesday February 7th, and will follow the same times for ages as last year – please refer to our website for times. From March 14th, the sessions will revert back to Thursdays. The reason for the change is due to when our volunteers are available to run these sessions. We will now be able to incorporate the brand new BallSlingers that we received through a generous grant from Bannockburn & District Grants (Bendigo Bank) into our training sessions. These will also be available for hire. Please contact Maddy McColl or the Meredith Tennis Club via Facebook if you would like to arrange to hire one of these machines.

At this stage paid coaching with a professional coach has not yet been arranged, however we expect that it will be organised shortly. Details will be on the website and on our Facebook page.

Summer Competition

Our next summer competition will start on February 8th and we expect to have three levels of competition as we did with the spring competition. These are a great and safe way to either learn the sport or get back into it. It is also a lot of fun and dinner is available afterwards for \$10 per person which is all you can eat. We welcome spectators along for dinner as well. Cricketers are also invited to join us for dinner.

Saturday Competitions

December had a number of wash outs across both Geelong and Buninyong competitions. Despite this, we are still seeing some great tennis being played with a number of the junior teams currently sitting on top of the ladder for their section. We currently have six weeks left

of competition before the finals start, and will keep you posted on the teams that go to finals.

Community Impact Award

Well done to our President, Madeline McColl, (below) on her community impact award for her work in getting the Tennis club up and going again, and all the work and time she has put into the club since. This award was given to her by the Golden Plains Shire and is well deserved.

Container Deposit Scheme

The club is now registered for the container deposit scheme and any funds generated from returning the cans can now be donated to the Meredith Tennis Club – New Tennis Nets.

As always, please follow our Facebook page and check our website for more information on what the club is up to and any other events.



What do you call a girl standing in the middle of a tennis court?



Annette



Recreation



Meredith Cricket Club

With 7 rounds of the home and away season remaining our 1st XI are well and truly in finals contention, sitting just outside the top 4 on percentage. Having started the season well, with 2 wins against sides contending for the flag, a combination of washed-out games, close losses and player unavailability, means we need to finish the home and away season strongly to contend this season.

Our 2nd XI have struggled for consistency to this point of the season, having had over 30 different players take the field in the 14 completed rounds.

A strong showing last round resulted in a good win against Teesdale which should give the boys confidence to finish the season off and push for a finals spot.

On the social scene we have our **Reverse Raffle** on Saturday night the 3rd of Feb, tickets are \$50.00 each for the chance to win \$2,500.00 and are available via our Facebook page or Google Search on-line at Eventbrite/Meredith Cricket Club.

Our **Annual Past Players Day** will again be held on Saturday the 9th of March. This is a great opportunity to catch up with past players from all eras and reminisce about the great club we are all a part of.

7th
January

<i>1XI @ Home</i>	<i>2XI @ North Shore</i>
Meredith: 4/286 Aaron Hart 120 Tyler Dittloff 78*	North Shore: 126 Scott Nieuwenhuis 3/29 Terry Hart 2/15
North Shore: 73 Steve Butler 4/23 Will Young 2/6	Meredith: 92 Terry Hart 19 Luke Young 18

14th
January

<i>1XI @ Home</i>	<i>2XI @ Newcomb</i>
Newcomb: 9/196 Sam Altmeler 3/21 Aaron Hart 3/31	Meredith: 128 Will Young 49 Anthony Harding 31
Meredith: 164 Troy Bott 69 Aaron Hart 42	Newcomb: 7/137 Cam Boer 3/27 Sam Vaartjes 2/15

21st
January

<i>1XI @ Teesdale</i>	<i>2XI @ Home</i>
Meredith: 184 Troy Bott 89 Tyler Dittloff 47	Teesdale: 96 Zane Whykes 4/13 Sam Vaartjes 3/25
Teesdale: 178 Beau Moreland 3/34 Joel Hart 2/24	Meredith: 7/101 Alex Hart 44 Craig Young 24*

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 8.00 am, Vespers 6.00 pm.

Divine Liturgies on Saturdays & Sundays 10.00 am.

Worship on Sundays in the Anglican Parish of

Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith:

8.00 am Holy Communion St Paul's, Inverleigh

10.00 am Family Communion. St John's, Bannockburn

5.00 pm Prayer and Praise Epiphany, Meredith

Find us at: www.goldenplainsanglican.org or

office.revdrtim@hotmail.com

The Revd Dr Timothy Smith

PiC Anglican Parish of

Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith

St Josephs Parish of Meredith

Winchelsea - St. John the Baptist @ 6pm Sat. FEB. 3, 10, 17, 24

Anakie - St. Brigid @ 9am Sun. FEB. 4, 18

Meredith - St. Joseph @ 9am Sun. FEB 11, 25

Bannockburn - St. Mary MacKillop @ 11am Sun. FEB 4, 11, 18, 25

Inverleigh - Sacred Heart @ 4pm Sun. FEB 18

CHRISTMAS DAY: Winchelsea @ 9am & Bannockburn @ 11am



Brisbane Ranges sketchers

Kerry Thomson

Although we hadn't planned a January outing the group is so enthusiastic we couldn't resist the offer by Peter to come to his farm in Bangamie to sketch, chat and have a cuppa. Mark even brought Monty along but his skills as a trained sheep dog still need a little refining! Lovely sunny weather was perfect as we set ourselves up on the verandah or in the paddocks. Views around the house and garden and across the plains, incorporating swaying grasses, ancient eucalyptus trees and placid cattle and sheep made for plenty of interesting subjects to challenge our artistic talents.

We welcomed Sue for the first time and Richard back after a break. Bae (Peter's daughter) kept us entertained trying to round up alpacas and sheep and with stories about "Limpy" the sheep. Sam, Louise, Mandy, Alex, Peter, Mark, Richard, Ray, Marion and I all tackled broad landscapes whilst Robert focused on an individual tree, Pete dramatically depicted some old posts, Mari a pair of work boots and Sue chose a close study of leaves from an apple tree. Whatever the subject or medium we all had fun!

*Next outing: 13 February (2nd Tuesday) : 10.00 am - 12.30pm
Location: Bannockburn Railway Station - meet in the carpark on the hotel side of the tracks BYO: art equipment, chair, drink, weather appropriate clothing, hat & sunscreen etc*

New people welcome.

I'm here to help.

Please contact my office if you feel I can be of any assistance to you.

Michaela Settle MP
Member for Eureka

 michaelasettle.com.au
 (03) 5331 7722
 michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au
 MichaelaSettleMP



Meredith Community Centre
working for our community

What's On This Month



Mindfulness with Jade

Monday - 3.30 - Kindergarten - Grade 3
 Monday - 4.30 - Grade 4 - Grade 6
 Wednesdays - 9.30 - Mums & Kids
 \$15 per session, payable by Term

Toddler Dance with Jacque

Mondays - 10:15 - 10:45
 Ages 1-4
 \$10 per child, pay on the day with cash or card
 Jacque - 0448 046 551

We are here to help you with your phone, tablet or laptop and provide assistance with all MyGov related queries including your Pension, Medicare, and Centrelink enquiries.

We are also a registered Volunteer Organisation.

If you need some help, please give us a call and make an appointment to come in for help!



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9-3 MONDAY-THURSDAY

Tai Chi - \$15 per session

Tuesdays @ Meredith with Sandra - 9.15 - 10.15
 Wednesdays @ Bannockburn with Desma - 9:30 - 10.30
 Taking Expressions of Interest for Inverleigh!

Steady Feet @ Meredith - \$11 per session

Wednesdays - 10:00 - 11:00 am

To Book:

learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au
www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre
 Ph. 5286 0700 / 0491 184 999



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 Facebook & Instagram
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PLAYGROUP

THURSDAYS
 9.00am - 11.30am

\$2 per family



POLICE report

Senior Constable Anthony BOX

Meredith Police Station| Western Region Division 3
Phone: 5286 1222| Fax: 9244 2156
14 Wilson Street Meredith Vic 3333

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone for the warm welcome I have received since arriving here in December 2022. Policing in Meredith has been very enjoyable and rewarding for me, mostly due to the great people living in Meredith and the surrounds, so thank you!

Some recent highlights:

On the 20th of October 2023 at Maude, Meredith Police detected and intercepted a driver travelling at 164KM/H on Steiglitz Road. The driver has been charged, vehicle impounded, and licence suspended.

An offender was detected by Police committing a theft at the Meredith Railway Station, the offender was chased to Elaine where he was arrested by Meredith Police and charged.

Police detected an offender riding a motorcycle on a footpath in Bacchus Marsh, the offender attempted to evade however was ejected from the bike during a vehicle collision and was subsequently arrested by Meredith Police and located in possession of a large machete.

Throughout the year Meredith Police has maintained a focus on road policing, especially around the school crossing.

Dozens of penalty notices issued for speeds up to 71KM/H in the 40 KM/H school zone, with the most common excuse being "I didn't see the sign". (There are 6 signs, one of which is illuminated).

Dozens of penalty notices issued for 125KM/H or more including up to 156KM/H on the Midland Hwy and other roads around Meredith.

Speeds up to 93KM/H in the 60KM/H zone through Meredith.

So as you can see, the message is not really getting through, however I will continue to enforce this as much as possible, and we have received good support from State and local Highway Patrols.

During 2023 Meredith Township saw a spate of Theft from, and Theft of, Motor Vehicle incidents. This was out of the ordinary for Meredith and involved offenders from outside of the area. Any town can be susceptible to these crime sprees, and during the year Meredith Police hosted a meeting to highlight some crime prevention strategies.

Some key messages from this that need to be brought back to residents' attention for the new year:

Vehicles:

- Please continue to lock your vehicles.
- Attractive items such as handbags, electronics and sunglasses should be kept out of view.
- Garage door remotes should not be left in the vehicle as they provide easy access into the garage / home.

Houses/ buildings:

- Please continue to lock your doors whether you are home or not.
- Please do not leave your keys in your front door.
- Consider fitting security lights, CCTV and metal screen doors.

Stock Theft:

Please keep an eye out for unusual stock movement, in particular vehicles not seen before, unusual days / hours of movement.

Preserving crime scenes:

Do not move or touch anything that has been disturbed as this will likely destroy any evidence such as fingerprints and DNA.

Please takes steps to review and save any CCTV footage as it often deletes after a short time period.

Reporting crime:

If an incident is occurring at the time and police are needed, **call 000**. This cannot be emphasised enough.

There are still frequent instances of people calling around every police station or mobile phone number they can think of rather than just dialling 000. This is the fastest way to get a response and any belief otherwise is **not correct!**

To report crimes that have occurred previously, please do so as soon as possible to allow a complete investigation.

Please remember that reporting crimes also allow us to keep track of trends that are going on around the area, there's is a bigger picture.

Thank you again for your continued support and I look forward to seeing everyone around Meredith this year.

We're interested in finding a new...

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBER*

If you have the skills and experience to join the dedicated team behind this important community project, please register your interest by email to :
news@meredithnews.com.au

**An important, but not a big job. The Committee meets just four times a year.*





Golden Plains Festival 2024 Information and Contacts

We are writing with information about the Golden Plains Music Festival, scheduled to occur at the Meredith Supernatural Amphitheatre from Saturday 9 - Monday 11 March 2024.

If you have any comments or ideas about any matter related to Golden Plains, including any concern or question about Traffic or Noise management, please get in contact by phone/text 0430 091 120 (available 24 hours over the festival weekend) or by emailing auntym@mmf.com.au (available anytime).

The festival website is goldenplains.com.au

Additional information for locals is available at aunty.goldenplains.com.au/locals

As part of our traffic management plan, the festival will:

1. Implement a speed reduction on Meredith-Mt Mercer Road and Cameron Road from two days prior to the festival through to the day prior to the festival.
2. Implement one-way traffic on Meredith-Mt Mercer Road from Bamganie Road to Cameron Road from approximately 4am the day prior to the festival to approximately 7pm on the first day of the festival.
3. Divert traffic traveling to Meredith within the one-way zone down Cameron Road.
4. Station traffic controllers to the corner of Midland Highway and Staughton Street on the final day of the festival to assist vehicles turning left or right onto Midland Highway.
5. Install no-parking zones along Meredith-Mt Mercer Road and some surrounding roads.

Vehicle passes are distributed to properties along Meredith-Mt Mercer (town side) and Coopers Roads a week before the festival. If you live or work along Bamganie Road or Cameron Road and you would like a vehicle pass, please email Aunty Meredith to confirm if you need one.

Thank you for your support.

Festival Planning Team

An 80th birthday

Marg Cooper

On Saturday, December 16, 2023 a party was held in a garage at Bamganie to celebrate the 80th birthday of Sam Gulle.

Sam bought his property in 1978. He recalls there were three properties for sale at the time on Shelford Road. He didn't buy it at the auction but negotiated, sold his house in Melbourne and took possession on April 3. The garage was full of leather mens shoes as the previous owner had a shoe factory.

Friends of Sam had a small farm on Shelford Road. They encouraged him to come to the Meredith area. His brother had a farm at Sunbury and milked cows. Sam liked cattle and first bought 12 Hereford Stud cows/in calf with calves at foot. They didn't eat all the grass on the 600 acres, so Henry Saffin baled 12,000 small bales of hay which Sam turned four times to dry, before they could be stored in the hay-shed.

Sam sold 30-40 bulls a year from his Bamganie Hereford Stud and his cattle did very well, although when he first came he was told by some locals that it was sheep country only! Later he was encouraged to buy some sheep and was taught how to look after them. Now he runs them, mainly on his farm at Rokewood and, apparently, he is fastidious with the preparation of his wool for sale.

The farm has been good for Sam and his family. For a boy from the city he had a lot to learn but says many people helped him and he is grateful for that help.

Immediately before Sam bought the farm he sold AMP Insurance but for 24 years prior he had been self-employed selling fruit and vegetables. He started working for his brother in his shop in Niddrie from the age of 11 years and later took over his lease. Later he was offered a corner in a supermarket at Sunbury where he became an expert at arranging fruit and vegetables in towers, wore a smart leather apron which he polished with shoe cleaner and made a fortune. He blew out two motors in his Volkswagen carting goods to his shop from the wholesale market. Sam then moved to Puckle Street in Moonee Ponds to *The Cabbage Patch* which was next door to *The Meating Place*. It was here that he met his future wife Vicki as she worked in a florist shop just down the street.

But, after getting up really early to buy at the market and working 6 or 7 days in the shop each week for 24 years, Sam's Doctor told him that if wanted to live he'd have to slow down a bit. He retired but then took up a job with AMP when it was offered to him.

Sam's father and older siblings came to Australia from Sicily in 1951. They worked for a year to provide passage for his mother and the rest of the family (including Sam) to come to Australia. It was a slow trip on a cargo ship. After living in North Melbourne they settled in Moonee Ponds. They were close because all the family members helped each other.

Sam has been at Bamganie for over 45 years. He would have been a great salesman - either selling bulls, insurance or fruit and vegetables. He has plenty of personality and likes a chat. Happy Birthday Sam.





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The Philatelist

Michael Riseley



OOPS!

Sometimes things can go wrong. In 1918 USA issued a 24 cent airmail stamp depicting a Curtiss Bi-Plane in a blue circle inside a red border. The plane was commonly known as a Jenny. In those days printing in 2 colours was done in 2 steps. The first was to print the outside red border. And then the other pattern plate was used to print the blue plane. No problems. Well almost. In one of the follow up printings the second plate was inserted the wrong way and the plane was printed upside down. Only one sheet of 100 stamps was printed before the error was noticed and corrected.

But this sheet was actually released and sold to the public instead of being destroyed. These stamps are known as an Upside down Jenny. Only one stamp is unaccounted for but the other 99 have been verified and are in various collections. A normal Jenny stamp is worth about \$50. An Upside down Jenny is worth about \$3million.

In 1938 Fiji issued a set of 19 stamps in various denominations showing Fiji life and scenes. This set included a portrait of King George VI in the corner and was used for over a decade with regular reprinting when stocks became low. One showed a man sailing a canoe. Well it did until a 1940 reprinting showed the canoe but no man in it. Maybe he went for a swim! Many of both were printed so no great value here – stamp with the man worth \$6, one without \$1.

In the same set was a stamp showing a map of the Fiji Islands with lines of latitude and longitude marked but not numbered. However a reprint (again in 1940) added the number 180 to one of the lines. Again many of both were printed. The no number stamp worth \$10, the numbered one \$2.

This set did not originally include a 1 shilling & 6 pence stamp. Presumably postal rates had changed and one was added in 1950. This showed the Fiji coat of arms and the portrait of KGVI. No problems so far but stocks must have run low and another printing was done of the same stamp in 1955. This was 3 years after the death of KGVI and 1 year after Fiji issued a set of stamps showing Fiji life and scenes with a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II.

There are many errors in philately but these rank high on the list.

We all
make
mistakes!

BINGO!



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30 Year Anniversary

Marg Cooper

30 years ago Pat Banks was invited by Graham Smith, the owner of Meredith Wool Company, to come to Meredith to work for him. Pat had studied wool classing at the Gordon Institute for four years, had studied Business Management at Glenormiston Agricultural College for four years, had classed many clips around the Shelford area where he farmed and sent a lot of his clients to Meredith to sell their wool to Graham.

Pat recalls that on his first day the shed at Meredith was 'chockers' full of wool bales lined up, and Peter Hutchinson was there buying wool from Graham, who bought wool privately from farmers. Every Thursday a truck went to Lake Bolac and as far as Kaniva to visit farms and buy wool. Graham also had depots in the Riverina and a large clientele around Meredith. The wool was classed in the shed at Meredith and sold or sent to a scourer and then sold. The only pet food was a pallet of chook feed and drench would be ordered in, if requested.

Graham retired from the shed 25 years ago and Pat rented the shed from him and the truck for two years until he and Helen bought the business and the freehold and called it Meredith Wool, later to become Woolabrai. Pat says buying wool was totally different to classing wool, and that meeting and talking to people whom he didn't know was a challenge at first, but after about 18 months people trusted him.

Meredith has been a traditionally merino wool growing area. About 20 years ago that changed when a lot of hobby farmers with small clips introduced more cropping and cattle or dorpers. And so, the business changed from wool buying to a Rural and Pet Supplies with the ability to class, press and sell wool for clients. Their recent name change to Meredith Rural & Pet Supplies made a big difference to sales. Representatives and prospective clients must have thought that the business still dealt only with wool.

The shed has also grown. Another big shed was built 15 years ago and the yard was totally fenced in so larger items like posts could be stored, outside. As well as selling rural supplies the business now does contract cropping, baling and fencing.

There have been many loyal staff members over the years but until Christmas, Pat was supported by his wife Helen who not only worked in the shed, but was the resident babysitter for their grandchildren. But, she informed Pat that she was retiring at the end of 2023. We'll see! Son Mark has worked with the business for about 15 years mainly doing farm contracting and son-in-law, Daniel has worked for about 11 years with the business, mainly fencing.

Pat is going to stay. He has had 30 years of talking to people. What would he do if he retired?



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IN the SCHOOL Garden



Well done Mother Nature for surprising us all with plenty of rain to nourish our gardens through December and January with a few warm days here and there. The school garden is quiet over the summer holidays with no children to buzz about planting, picking and weeding. As always we have our families who generously come in to top up our wicking beds with water and look after our chooks. They need a continuous supply of food and particularly water to ensure their good health and uninterrupted egg laying. Remember if you would like some eggs and you would like to support the students who look after them, the eggs are sold for \$5 per dozen. Call into the school office or phone 5286 1313 during school hours.

The plants have been peacefully growing in the quiet, with the tomatoes planted by the Prep/One children in mid November putting on some enormous growth. Flowers are appearing that will hopefully be followed by an abundant crop of tomatoes.

Just before school finished in late December, a group of elves was spotted in the gardens sowing a variety of seeds. There was a recent sighting of sunflowers popping up in the bed next door to the front office steps so they must have put them in the right way up. This area also has magnificent red kangaroo paws and smaller plants with blue blooms - our school colours.

The bee pots were resown with seeds early last December by the Grade 5/6 students who will be happy to return to school this month, and find sunflowers and nasturtiums sunning themselves and doing their best to attract the bees to the veggie gardens.

This season our strawberry bed has again produced many plump fruits due to the rain and we have managed to keep them thanks to the frames and protective netting put up by Ralph. We share the ones nearer the ground with our chooks but the higher up ones are for human consumption.

In the first week of school we are going to try for a late sowing of beans hoping for a crop. We'll let you know how successful we are with this. Fingers crossed for a late run of warmth.

While enjoying the summer bounty, now is the time to turn our thoughts to next season's plantings. Sweet peas are a fragrant and attractive addition to gardens - traditionally seed is sown on March 17th, St Patrick's Day but you can start at the end of this month if you can't wait. Choose as sunny a spot as possible and put them in about 15 centimetres apart. Remove spent flowers to promote more abundant blooming.

By the middle of this month you can start seeds of autumn and winter brassicas such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower. At this time of year there is still some warmth in the soil and plenty of daylight to give them a good start. It is also the time for sowing of carrots, beetroot, leek and celery. For a continuing supply of these, try succession

sowing every three to four weeks instead of putting them in all at once.

Welcome to a new year of gardening with successes and some mistakes while adapting to the different and less certain weather patterns we are experiencing. There is certainly nothing like wandering into the garden and picking some fresh produce ready to cook or eat. Happy gardening everyone!

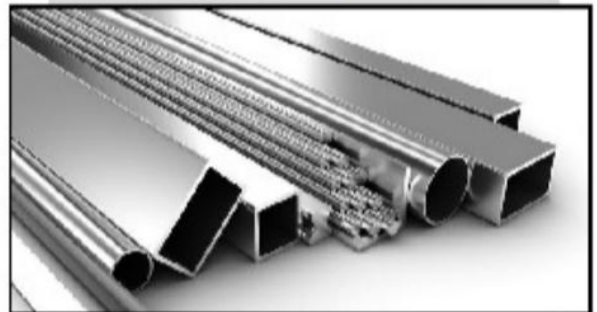


Reuben and Darcy putting sunflower seeds in the garden

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A Golden Stencil

Marg Cooper

Russell Ford has just received a gold stencil from AWEX or Australian Wool Exchange, in recognition of his registration as a wool classer for 50 years. By registering with AWEX a wool classer agrees to abide by the rules and bales bearing his stencil are prepared to the standard declared by the Wool classer's Code of Practice.

It is quite uncommon for anyone to class continuously for 50 years. Even owner classers usually don't last that long. On Friday, January 20, 2024 Russell classed the wool of Kevin Ryan for the 50th year in succession. Most classing is done while shearing is going on but Kevin has always had the wool classed cold, ie the fleeces are stacked in the shed after the shearer shears it from the sheep and then at a time convenient to the owner and the classer, the fleeces are classed and baled.

When Russell was young most farmer's sons worked in shearing sheds to earn money either as shearers, rousies or as wool classers. Russell attended the School of Mines in Ballarat for four years of night school to attain his qualifications. His father was a classer and all his father's brothers were involved in the wool industry. For a number of years Russell went interstate with contractor Colin Doran for six months runs, classing. Others from the district also went with him as shearers and rousies.

Russell always preferred to class than farm. He struggled physically to drag sheep, cart hay bales, lift bags of superphosphate and manoeuvre posts while fencing. His back coped better with shed work. Usually in a shed Russell skirts the fleeces on one side of the wool table, classes the fleece and then takes the fleece to the wool press or to a wool bin, depending on his classification. He estimates that a classer walks about 20 km in a day.

Shearing sheds have changed a lot over 50 years. There are fewer sheep in the district and less fine wool merinos (which Russell mainly classed) than there once was. Shearing machines and gear are much improved and there is less variety in shearing abilities and styles resulting in fewer second cuts, skin and fribs (a short, heavy, inferior piece of wool). Wool presses are much quicker and easier to use and women are now welcome in sheds as both visitors and workers.

Russell is proud that he has never applied for a job in his life. He has always been recommended and he has classed for three or four months each year. He enjoys the company and the characters. He has seen the Best of Times when wool prices were sky high in the 1980's to the Worst of Times in the 1990's when the Wool Corporation had a stockpile of wool that no one wanted. He has also seen good seasons and bad seasons and a lot of seasons where farmers probably only broke even. And, there are not many sheds he has not been in!



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it'S HISTORY

Meredith History Interest Group

Annual Meeting:

The 16th Annual Meeting of MHIG will be held at the Memorial Hall on Sunday, February 25 at 1.30 pm. Reports will be presented followed by the election of Office Bearers for 2024. Then, the book, *Ladies Please Start Your Engine*, compiled by Darren Guthrie, will be launched. Darren, Vice President of MHIG lives at Steiglitz, has a keen interest in gold mining in the district with a particular interest in the engines involved. He is also interested in the ceremonies conducted to start those engines, which were similar to the ceremonies conducted to launch ships with a bottle of champagne and a pretty girl. Darren, in documenting ceremonies, has compiled a book which tells much more about the gold mining times, including how they travelled, what engines were used, who built and installed the machinery, how much gold was mined and even the weather conditions. Most mines had a ceremony and Darren has included mines found in a large district south of Ballarat.

Letterbox:

A chance meeting of like minds at a coffee shop in Buninyong has resulted in a remarkable new letterbox at the History Centre. The meeting was between myself, always looking to promote MHIG, my friend Bev who knew about some new letterboxes in Buninyong, Jeff Douglas who is a member of Buninyong Men's Shed and Jenny Colvin who is the former teacher at Meredith Kindergarten. The result is a Letterbox that looks like a small version of the old Shire Hall, ordered by myself, constructed by Jeff and paid for by Jenny. Thank you also to Russell and Ross from the Buninyong Mens' Shed for installing it, on a pole on Tuesday, January 17th. For various reasons it has been installed by the path, inside the gate so the Postie won't use it, but if you have anything to leave please open the gate, walk in a few steps and post or just have a look at this work of art.

Wanted:

There are always jobs that one can do to help MHIG. One of these jobs involves finding and printing house sales, past and present to add to our *Who Lived in my House Project*. We have a folder for each street in Meredith and in these folders we place any information that we obtain about each block of land or building. The information collected is always being referred to and was most recently used with talk of renovations to the Pink House or Meredith Roadhouse.

Street Nursery:

This stall has proved very popular and raises funds so MHIG can keep the grass mowed. We have also used some of the money to establish a new cottage garden in the front yard which looks colourful at the moment with many flowers including Nana's Cannas and Gladiolas and just before Christmas the Christmas Lilies were superb! Thanks to Harley for mowing and Bev for planting and maintaining the garden.



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Fishy Tails

John Merlo

The town's reputation as a wellspring for 'Indi' (independent) music is now well and truly an international one, with top international singers, musos and artists coming to Australia for each of the festivals held at the Supernatural Ampitheatre on the outskirts of the town.

The goats' cheese industry is also contributing to Meredith's growing fame - along with some prominent and talented individuals who just happen to have made the decision to live amongst us.

But right here in the centre of town is an organisation that flies right under the radar - our anglers' club.

The thousands of commuters who drive past to the east and to the west every day of the week, probably don't even notice the unassuming little red brick building that sits between the Servo and the Royal (hotel) on the busy Midland Highway.

Many of the passing parade are on their way to work in Geelong or Ballarat, and Meredith just happens to be the mid-point on their daily grind, getting to work.

At the times they pass they won't see any activity at the club - meetings are held there on the third Monday of every month just on dark - about when the fish begin to bite in the local waterways.

The Meredith Anglers' Club was formed around 1933 and currently has a fluctuating membership of around 40-50, as well as around 25 juniors.

Among its distinguished former members the club can boast one of Victoria's most memorable State Premiers - Sir Henry Bolte - a keen fisherman and sometime keen patron of the Royal Hotel.

Angling club meetings were often held at the Royal prior to the club leasing its own premises in the current location, and it's very likely that Sir Henry occupied his favourite corner of the bar during many of those meetings.

Being the man he was, Sir Henry would have had plenty to say at those meetings - perhaps more and more as the evening wore on.

In fact the hotel was for a short time during the stewardship of licensee Ronnie Tubb renamed 'Henry's Corner' before reverting to its original name.

Sir Henry fell foul of the law toward the end of his political career, being charged with driving while over the limit on his way back to Bamganie - but it's not known if the incident occurred after an angling club meeting.

Probably not, but anyway - our own Knight of the Realm beat the rap - his blood sample having been inadvertently misplaced by the authorities before Sir Henry was scheduled to face The Beak.

Just a bit of good luck, obviously.

But back to the Anglers' Club.

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They're a great bunch at the club, and anyone who likes dangling a line in the various waterways around the area could do a lot worse than think about joining this lively local group.

The club's activities in recent years have been guided by a group of fishing stalwarts, with longtime secretary Bert Eldridge prominent among them.

There's recently been something of a changing of the guard at the club, with Bert handing over the position of secretary to Geoff Ryan, and Neil Lee taking on the position of treasurer.

The club has a range of activities including regular fishing competitions for members and their families.

Annual membership is \$40 per family, or \$25 single adult membership (\$15 pensioner).

The club is very focused on its juniors, with junior membership negotiable (but probably free).

Contact Geoff Ryan on 0439 733 474 or just come along to the Anglers' Club (adjacent to the Servo) at 7.30pm on the third Monday of the month and see for yourself. It's an undiscovered gem.

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Marg's BOOK REVIEW

The Incredible Life of Hubert Wilkins

by Peter Fitzsimons

The author claims that Hubert Wilkins is the most forgotten famous man that Australia has produced. His accomplishments were at least the equal of such contemporaries as Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, Sir Douglas Mawson and Sir John Monash who remain iconic figures decades after their deaths.

George Hubert Wilkins was a thirteenth child and grew up in outback South Australia. In early 1906 when George was just 17 years old, a travelling troupe of players came to town, he helped to repair the portable engine for their movie show, he was offered a job and instantly accepted. He was intrigued by photography and wanted to travel.

For the young lad launching himself into the nascent world of cinema provided the model on which he would base the rest of his life: *take whatever interesting chance presents itself, ride your luck, show your pluck, withstand its buck and back the whole thing with your skills through your ever widening experiences, use finesse when you can and get a bigger hammer when you can't and if all else fails, throw for double sixes as you have nothing to lose!*

In June 1925 the Truth Newspaper described him as the strangest man in Australia today and the most travelled. *He has not been longer than six weeks in any one place during the last 16 years and never longer than 14 days and any one house during the last seven years and had explored every country in the world including the North and South Poles and was only 36 years of age.*

Wilkins was involved in both World Wars. In WW1 he was a photographer and it was his aim to photograph every type of activity including raids, Germans surrendering...bodies

being hurled through the air by shell explosion... men struggling from beneath the debris and the wrecking of all type of equipment by shell fire. He was twice awarded the Military Cross for bravery under fire although he carried no arms. He was often in the front line to capture images and even witnessed the Red Baron being shot down. In WW11 he was employed as a consultant in the Military Planning Division which saw him vanish from his Pennsylvania home for weeks and months at a time, always returning with precisely no news. His war record was unique!

Wilkins was a visionary who was so far ahead of his time that his time was forgotten when the world caught up to him. Among his earliest beliefs was that if the weather, especially at polar regions could be monitored, it might change the world and save the lives of millions of animals and people.

Wilkins was a Spy, Photographer, Writer, Daredevil, Cameraman, Polar Explorer, Australian Explorer, War Hero, Air Ace, Mystic and Futurist.

He was not the last of his breed, he was a breed apart!

Peter Fitzsimons has written another extraordinary book. He tries to bring the story part of the history alive by putting it in the present tense and adds entertaining sayings, poems and quips to add interest. An extraordinary read!

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G'day from the Golden Pens for another great year of stories. We hope that you will join us for a chuckle or two, perhaps some thought provoking or happy memories will be invoked. Whatever you like to read, we hope that you enjoy our pieces. 2024 is looking promising with a couple of new members trialling our group, we hope they stay, the more the merrier and the more diverse we become.

This month's story is from Gail Griffin and it might stir up some memories of childhood, especially those with older siblings. We hope you enjoy it.

We can always be contacted via our email address goldenpens4@gmail.com

Regards Wendy.

Outsmarted

Marshmallows. Yum. They're my favourites. I don't get to have them much because Mummy doesn't like us eating lots of sugar. She says it's bad for us. Mummy and Daddy are really into healthy eating.

'Pink or white?' Katherine asked, holding a marshmallow in each hand.

My choice. I was never offered a choice, usually. I loved both colours and my sister, Katherine, knew it. Her favourite though was pink and I knew it, so I said: 'Pink!'

She handed one pink marshmallow over to me. Just as I was about to eat that pink marshmallow, that sister of mine blurted out, 'I licked it already!' and put the white one in her mouth and chewed it up.

I pushed the pink one back into her hand, saying, 'Don't want your germs.' And, she gobbled it up too. Me, I scored no marshmallows; she scored two.

Impossible! She'd done it again. Outsmarted me. I hated her for it and I told her so, but she just laughed and ran off. I turned away and went into the kitchen where Nanna was cooking what she called her 'bumper batch' of scones for afternoon tea.

Nanna doesn't live with us all the time. She lives on a farm, up in the country. I love it when Nanna visits. We get to do all sorts of things with her while Mummy and Daddy are at work. Shopping. Tenpin bowling. Train rides along The Waterfront. My favourite ride though is on the ferris wheel. I love being up high but Katherine doesn't. I called her a scaredy cat last time. Nanna said that was unkind so I didn't say it again because my Nanna knows everything and she said she knew I didn't mean to call Katherine that because I am a really kind girl.

But today I'm cranky with Katherine so I threw myself down on a kitchen stool and let out a loud noise, to let Nanna know just how aggro I was with that sister of mine.

'What's up, Violet?'

'I give up, Nanna. It's her. It's always her. Katherine. She tricked me again. She got 2 marshmallows and I got none!'

Nanna stopped what she was doing and came around the island bench to sit on the stool alongside me. She reached over and held my hand and patted it. 'Mmm. We need to talk about this gift your sister's giving you.'

'Gift? I didn't get anything. Not even one marshmallow. She got both. I don't understand how you can say she's giving me a gift.'

Nanna took my hands in hers, saying: 'Without knowing it, Katherine's giving you one of life's gifts. She's giving you the chance to tackle challenges.'

'Tackle? Like soccer?'

'Yes, a lot like that. You see, when she plays tricks on you, she's giving you chances to solve problems. What do you do when you're tackled during a game?'

'I don't give up. I do tricky footwork. Turn my back. Change direction. Run away faster!'

'Exactly! And that's what you can do next time Katherine plays a trick on you. Think about it, then try it.'

'But she's bigger and faster than me. You don't understand.'

'Size doesn't matter. Speed doesn't matter. Clever thinking matters my darling. Don't give up so easily, Violet. Soccer players don't give up. What does Coach tell you to do?'

'Practise alone, then with my team. Train hard. Play harder. Beat the other teams.'

'And, if you don't win, do you get cranky and give up?'

'No. We go out and play even smarter and harder the next week.'

'You go girl! Now you've got it. Good stuff! We all learn from our mistakes. But, we keep our eyes on the prize.'



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Lines That Linger...



"My friends all thought I should take over my grandmother's alterations shop because I knew how to sew and they didn't. Their mothers didn't. When I turned a hem or took in a waistband, they looked at me like I was Prometheus coming down from Olympus with fire."

(from "Tom Lake" by Ann Patchett)

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in our NATURE

Wendy Cook

Outside my back door, a terracotta-coloured plant pot hangs from a chain. It is the home of a dainty creeper with small purple pea flowers. It twists its way up the chain towards the veranda roof, dropping seeds into the pot, and sprouting more creepers. A few years ago, ferns began to appear in the pot. Ferns are spread by tiny windblown spores. Some came from a potted fern in the nearby porch, but the origin of the other ferns remains a mystery. The pea continued to twine its way upwards, while the pot below became filled with fronds, some green and vigorous, some old and brown. The veranda roof also shelters a small garden bed with a few bushes, including a lemon verbena with woody branches intruding into the neighbouring rose bed and reaching towards the pot. The area is a favourite foraging ground for small birds such as fairy-wrens, scrubwrens and thornbills. They can be easily watched from the back door or through two windows.

In early October 2022, we regularly saw two larger birds there, grey shrike-thrushes. They are plain looking grey birds, with a dull brown cape across their upper back, a black bill, black eyes, and a beautiful melodic song. Hidden among the fern fronds in the hanging pot, my daughter discovered that they had built a bowl-shaped nest of intertwined strips of bark, lined with tough plant stalks. In it were four creamy-white eggs with scattered brown and grey blotches and spots. We were very surprised, as the nest was under two metres from the most used door in the house. The birds had been so secretive that they had built a nest and laid eggs without anyone noticing. This location had an advantage. With people going in and out regularly, it was unlikely that larger predatory birds, such as ravens and currawongs, would raid the nest, stealing eggs or chicks.

After this discovery, we kept a careful watch on the nest. We felt that in an area with so much activity it would be safe to peek into the nest occasionally, so long as we didn't disturb the parents. Some nest raiders are intelligent enough to notice people returning to the same place regularly, especially if the parents make a fuss, and may return later in search of a feed. We could also watch the birds from indoors. As both parents look the same, we could not tell which was sitting on the nest. Research revealed that they share incubation of the eggs during the day, but that it is always the female on the nest at night.

The incubation period was longer than we expected. On the twentieth day after we found the nest, my son noticed that the first egg had hatched. Later, a second chick emerged, and by the end of the day, there were four chicks in the nest. They were pink, wrinkly and mostly bald, with patches of drying grey fluff on their heads and backs. Their long necks seemed unable to hold up their heads, which sagged heavily into the nest. Their wings were pink stubs. Their parents kept them fed and warm, and the nest clean. Two days after hatching, I saw a chick's head resting on one of its siblings. A large grey sphere was an unopened eye. Its beak was the same colour as its skin with two tiny spikes on the end of its upper mandible,

which had helped it to peck its way out of its egg. The lining of its mouth was bright yellow. For much of the time, the chicks were asleep. At five days old, the spikes on their beaks had fallen off and tiny feather quills were growing on their wings. Three days later, their eyes were open and little grey spikes, the beginning of feathers, had appeared on their heads. Each day the spikes grew a little longer and covered more of their body.

As well as watching the chicks' development, I paid attention to the parents' behaviour. They would often arrive with food for the chicks at the same time. Each would perch in a tree within view of the nest, but not too close. One parent would quietly fly into the lemon

verbena, while the other behaved as a lookout, calling a single loud clear note 'choo'. It may have been drawing attention from its partner or calling that all was safe. The parent approaching the nest would quietly hop through the branches of the lemon verbena and arrive on the rim of the hanging pot. Hungry chicks stretched their necks upwards, beaks wide open, each showing the brilliant yellow-orange inside of their mouth, with red veins visible. After dropping food into one of these large bright targets, the parent made a discrete withdrawal through the lemon verbena and returned to its perch. It then called the 'all safe' signal, and the second parent flew towards the nest. When both had made their delivery, they left in search of more food for their hungry youngsters.



Like most newborns, they start out looking like giblets.



The first organ to develop is the lung.



"Of course we're anxious...flight day's approaching."

We should point out that Wendy had nothing to do with the captions, so they may lack her scientific rigour. - Ed.





in our NATURE

Continued from previous page

At this age, chicks need providing with plenty of energy. Not only are they growing in body size, but they are rapidly developing feathers. At eleven days old, the spikes that would become feathers were dark grey with paler tips. The following day, the pale tips began to split down their length to reveal the ends of feathers. A day later, the chicks were half covered in feathers, and after another day, they had a complete covering and looked like proper little birds. The feathers on their backs were grey with brown edges, while their flight feathers were plain grey. As the feathers grew, brown eyebrows became obvious, a feature which the adult birds don't possess. The chicks practised raising and lowering their wings, and preening and caring for their new feathers. The nest was now crowded. The chicks' big day was approaching fast.

When they were seventeen days old, we found only three chicks in the nest. We hoped that nothing had gone wrong for the missing one, and that it had safely left the nest with its parents. The following morning, only two chicks remained. A few minutes later, watching through a window, I saw them leave the nest. One chick flew into the porch, which is enclosed on three sides. A parent followed, then made its way through an open louvre window at the far end of the porch. The chick couldn't follow it. I gently chased it out. It flew to the lemon verbenas where it perched. I could see its white front with grey streaks running down it. The chick waited, occasionally singing two notes to its parents. One arrived in a tree nearby. I withdrew out of sight, and ten minutes later, both were gone.

Baby Boy by Linda Brumby

I've gladly tended every need
Since, in his fluffy shawl
They laid him in my waiting arms
So pink, and white, and small.
I've watched his very breath by night;
Protected him by day,
I've softly sung him off to sleep,
And joined him in his play.
I've satisfied his hunger, thirst,
Washed tiny fingers clean,
And tried to close my eyes, to marks,
Where tiny feet have been -
I've read through endless story books,
(.....a respite from the noise),
And cautiously have picked my way
Through a battle ground of toys!
Now, suddenly the house is quiet:
The toys are laid away:
I've lost my little baby boy -
He went to school today.



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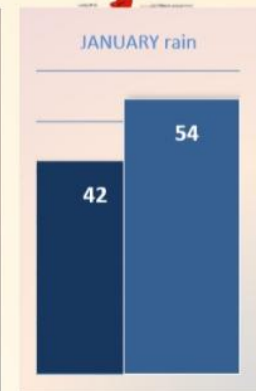
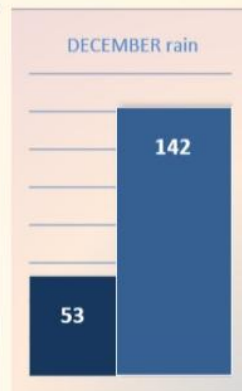
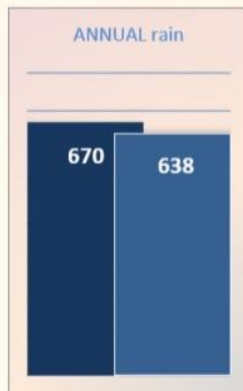
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