

Meredith & district News

JULY 2024

OUR **FREE** COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

inside



- EPA issuing fines for burning toxic material.
- June Cameron celebrates her 90th birthday
- Meredith students go to school...in the 19th century!

....and lots more!

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



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Dam construction & repair

General earthworks

Gorse slashing with bobcat

Tractor slashing

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Driveway construction &

Rural driveway construction

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Site cut/prep

Soil and crushed rock supplies

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With jackhammer/ rock breaker**

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2 x truck and trailer combos / bulk haulage

9 metre float hire

Tilt tray hire



**For all enquires call or message
Brett - 0418 647 446
Daniel - 0417 392 985**

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), Ian Penna, Sue Higgs, Nerida Anderson and Ian Leighton. Production is undertaken 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. 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

You can subscribe to get the Meredith and District News posted to you anywhere in Australia for what it costs us to send it - \$59.50p.a. (11 issues)

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news@meredithnews.com.au

WEB

You can read back copies and additional stories 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: Don Atherton Editor: Jim Elvey

connect

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ANGLING CLUB
0419 248 660

B'BURN ART
GROUP
0410 808 483

BLUE LIGHT
DISCO
5286 1222

BOOK CLUB
5286 8201

CFA
000 for fire calls
Elaine
0419 767 982
Meredith
5286 1502
Morrisons
0417 770 765

CHILDCARE
5286 0700

COMMUNITY
CENTRE
5286 0700

CRICKET
Elaine
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Junior
(U16,U14,13)
0448 291074
Meredith
5286 1434

CUBS &
SCOUTS
Lethbridge
0435 042077

ELAINE HALL
elainetownhall@gmail.com

FOOTBALL
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246
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MEREDITH
SEWING GROUP
0491184999

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CLUB
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PLAYGROUP
5286 0700

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PADDOCKS
5286 1273

RSL - 5286 1452

SENIOR
CITIZENS
5286 8232

TENNIS
Elaine
0448 291 074
Lethbridge
52 817 321
Meredith
0424754179

SEW 'N' SEWS
5286 0700

FRIENDS OF THE
BRISBANE
RANGES
5286 1252

emergency

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Police, Ambulance, Fire | 000 |
| (from mobile phone) | 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 | 1300 363 036 |
| a/h emergency | 0408 508 635 |
| Ranger | 52207111 |
| | 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

HALL HIRE

Meredith Memorial

5286 1545

Elaine Mechanics

elainetownhall@gmail.com

Elaine Rec Res

5341 5703

LIBRARY VAN

5272 6010

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

5220 7230

PRE-SCHOOL

5286 0722

PRIMARY

SCHOOL

5286 1313

RECREATION

RESERVE

0429 315 575

..start something.

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



*"Don't tell people your plans.
Show them your results."*

Recreation



The Croc Report

The Crocs played their first home game of the season on Sunday the 5th of May vs the newly formed Yarrawonga AFL Masters (Over 35).

The game started and the Yarrawonga boys kick 2 early goals and left the Crocs thinking this is going to be a long day. To the credit of the ageing Crocs, they never gave up and managed to keep plugging away at the scoreboard, and not let the Yarrawonga boys get too far ahead. The closer the game got the more the intensity picked up. A hard-fought contest over the whole ground but eventually Yarrawonga were the victors by 3 points. Both clubs agreed it was a great hit out.

The Crocs would like to welcome our 2 newest players Glen Upston and Travis Purcell

Best for Crocs: Matt Rocco, Johnny Cranston, Glen Upston, Mick Battye, Kev Murray, Shaun Faulkner, Chris Parker

The Crocs would like to thank Yarrawonga for making the long trip. We would also like to thank everyone who helped out for the day: Ange and Kev behind the bar, Wendy, Jas, Meg, Elsa and Kylie in the kitchen, Harley Murfitt and Jack for goal umpiring and Chris for umpiring.

Also thanks to our raffle prizes donated by The Royal Hotel Meredith, Meredith Dairy and Devlin's Ridge Naturals.

Thanks also to our award sponsors, Farmgate shop and Meredith Rural and Pet Supplies.

The Crocs took on the newly formed Southcoast Sharks Sunday the 19th at Meredith.

In a really tough hard game, the Crocs tried our best and fought really hard right to the end but were out matched by a really strong side in the sharks. A great effort by the ageing Crocs. Crocs 3 6 24 Sharks 8 7 55

Best players for the day were: Chris Parker, Shaun Faulkner, Chris Friars, Matt Rocco, Mitch Troy, Marcus, and the one and only Kev Murray.

Congrats to Doopa for winning the great local raffle prize.

We also welcome Chris Friars and Marcus for their first game for the club and hopefully many more.

Another great day of Crocs football and thanks to everyone

who came to watch. Also thanks to Wendy, Meg, Elsa, Jas, Ange and Kev Bats for looking after the kitchen and Bar.

Thanks to Jack and Charlie for goal umpiring and Anthony for running the scoreboard.

The crocs were on the road to Maryborough to take on the Pumas. The sun managed to shine through and warm us up a bit for the start of the game.

The Crocs put in a great team effort all over the ground, but the back line really stood out led by Shaunny Faulkner, Johnny Peterson, Chris Friars and Matt Rocco. The Crocs came away with a win despite the Pumas finishing strong in the final quarter. Another great enjoyable game.

Best for the day: Mitch Troy, Mick Devlin, John Peterson, Chris Friars, Matt Rocco, Shaun Faulkner and Daryl Sid Jones.

Also great games from veteran Mick Rooney and second gamer Glenn Upston and Kevvie Murray for receiving the Maryborough dunny award for missing a goal.

Thanks to Sid for driving the bus and thanks to the Maryborough AFL Masters for their hospitality.

On Sunday the Crocs took on the brave lads from Gippsland Tigers AFL Masters. The Tigers were a bit undermanned but with some help from a couple of Crocs, the game was underway with 18 on 18.

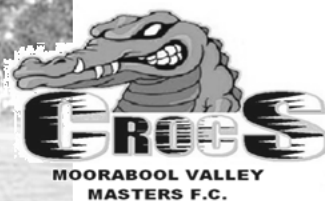
The Tigers, although undermanned were fantastic in the first half and kept with the Crocs. The second half was a different story with the Crocs, (who were fielding their strongest side this year) kicked away and ran out winners. The game, although a bit one sided was played in great spirit and was enjoyed by all. We also celebrated two legends of the club playing 50 games each, Mick Battye and Kevin Murray. These are two of the core people at the club and part of the reason that the club is doing very well.

Congratulations Bats and Kev, now let's get to 100 games. We also had 2 first gamers in Carree and Morlo, welcome to Crocs footy.

Best for the day: Craig Badger Taylor, Chris Moreland, Scotty Thompson, Chris Parker and the men of the moment Kev Murray and Mick Bats.

Also great games from the 4 blokes who help out Gippsland, Trav Purcell, Glenn Upston, Gary Polglaze and Col Mullane

Next game is the mini carnival at Kialla on the 29th June.



**Go
Crocs**

Meredith Tennis Club news

Bridget Dyer

Winter Night Competition

The club has been continuing to gear up for our next competition that starts in 25th July 2024. We already have 13 teams registered! Welcome back to all our regulars, and of course our new players. We also have some new faces coming out of their tennis retirement, which is wonderful to see. There are three sections so far which will allow us to cater for all ages and abilities. As with previous competitions, our amazing chefs are back to cook delicious dinners for \$10 a meal. You don't have to be a player to come and enjoy these meals, spectators are more than welcome. We do announce the meals a week in advance on our facebook page and ask that people indicate if they will be coming so that we have enough each week.

We have also been working hard to gather support for upgrading our courts and lights. Our competitions have been so popular, that we need additional lights so that everyone can play at a reasonable time. Many of our members have been writing to the council and local members of parliament to let them know of this need in the community. We thank everyone who has written or emailed their support. If you would like details on how to help us, please email meredithtennis2020@gmail.com for more information.

Annual General Meeting

Our next Annual General Meeting will be held at the Meredith Recreation Reserve at 7 pm Wednesday 14th August. All nominations and Agenda items should be emailed to meredithtennis2020@gmail.com. If you would like to be part of a strong club with a community focus, please come and join us.

Grading Day

The Club will be holding grading day in preparation for the next summer season as teams playing in the Geelong competition will need to be in by late August. The grading day will be held 17th August and will be grouped according to age/ability at set times. Below are the ages and times, however tennis is more based on abilities and your child may be in a slightly different group based on their abilities.

9 am - Orange Ball: 6- 8 years old

10 am - Green Ball: 8-10 years old

11 am - Yellow Ball: 10+

As always, please follow us on Facebook for more information on our events.



EVENT Meredith Tennis Club presents **JUL 25**

ALL AGES

\$30 per team

WINTER Night COMP

8 WEEKS

\$10 dinner | cash prize | doubles | kids & adults

Registration closes 15 July 2024 contact us via Facebook or meredithtennis2020@gmail.com or <https://play.tennis.com.au/meredithtennisclub/Competitions/WinterNight>

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Hours:-

Mon - Fri 8.30am- 5.30pm

Sat 8.30am-1pm

Please note - closed Sundays until further notice

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

CATHOLIC PARISH OF MEREDITH MASS TIMES – JULY 2024

Winchelsea - St. John the Baptist @ 5pm Sat. July 6, 13, 20, 27

Anakie – St. Brigid @ 9am Sun. July 7, 21

Meredith – St. Joseph @ 9am Sun. July 14, 28

Bannockburn – St. Mary MacKillop @ 11am Sun. July 7, 14, 21, 28

Inverleigh – Sacred Heart @ 4pm Sun. July 21



Launch of Meredith Community Plan

Where: Meredith Community Centre, 4 Russell Street

When: Thursday 15 August, 9.30am to 11am

To RSVP or find out more:
meredithcommunityplanning@gmail.com



POLICE report

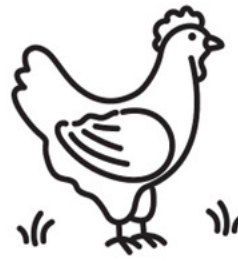
Senior Constable Anthony BOX

The Bannockburn, Inverleigh & Meredith Police cluster have recently lost our much valued Police Chaplain.

Reverend Liz Bufton passed away on the 19th of June 2024, she was a deeply cherished member of our local team. Her funeral service on the 28th of June, was attended by all serving members in the area, and we were privileged to perform a guard of honour for her.

Liz provided support for police members and our families, welcomed us to the area and lead services for us such as on Police Remembrance Day.

She was enthusiastic and committed in her support of us in our personal and work lives and will be missed by all police members and their families.



Backyard poultry?

We are responding to an outbreak of avian influenza in south-west Victoria. Backyard poultry flocks are not immune.

We are contacting poultry owners in the Golden Plains and Corangamite Shires to check if their birds are healthy.



If you have backyard poultry call us on the VicEmergency Hotline on **1800 226 226**.

Do your bit to help protect Victoria's poultry industry.

More information:

agriculture.vic.gov.au/avianinfluenza

Health information: betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Follow us for regular updates on:  



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



THE MEREDITH CEMETERY TRUST

Trust member positions

Are you interested in making a meaningful contribution to your community, learning new skills and preserving local history for future generations?

The Meredith Cemetery Trust is seeking new volunteer trust members. In this role you will gain hands-on experience in managing a public cemetery and valuable governance skills as a member of a public board. Free governance training is provided.

Who should apply?

Applications are welcome from people with a range of skills and experiences including administration, committees, and groundskeeping. Women and people from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Current trust members whose terms of appointment are due to expire are welcome to apply for reappointment.

What it means to be a Victorian cemetery trust member

Cemetery trust members are appointed by the Governor in Council for a term of up to five years on the recommendation of the Minister for Health. Cemetery trusts are responsible for the management of public cemeteries, including planning for future cemetery services for their communities. More information about the role is available at <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/class-b-cemetery-trust-appointments>.

How to register your interest

Simply contact the Meredith Cemetery Trust within two weeks of this advertisement date:

The Meredith Cemetery Trust contact details: 0427 300 742

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that government boards and committees reflect the rich diversity of the Victorian community. We encourage applications from people of all ages, Aboriginal people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and from lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse, intersex and queer people. The trust will provide adjustments to the recruitment process upon request.

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



What's On This Month



Meredith Mart..

The Meredith Mart has been in operation for 10 months and we have assisted many people in getting food on their table as well as making connections with families in need.

We want to keep this service operating, so we are asking the community to please be respectful of the Mart and not help themselves to full boxes, nor open our storage boxes.

The Food we provide has been purchased and is there to ensure everyone has access to food for their families.

By taking more than you need, others will miss out.

We know times are tough for everyone. Even Foodbank is struggling to keep up with the demand, with producers now cutting back on their own donations.

This in turn affects our ability to purchase food.

So next time you pop in, ensure you only take what you need and if at all possible, donate something back.

Every little bit helps in fighting food security in our community.

Mindfulness with Jade

Monday - 3.30 - Prep - Grade 4

Monday - 4.30 - Grade 5 - Year 9

Wednesdays - 9.30 - Goddess Mums

\$15 per session, payable by Term

To Book:

learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au

www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre

Ph. 5286 0700 / 0491 184 999

THE MEREDITH MART PROVIDING FOOD SECURITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY

*Give What You Can....
Take What You Need*



9-3 MONDAY-THURSDAY
DONATIONS ACCEPTED IN THE OFFICE!

Tai Chi - \$15 per session

Tuesdays @ Meredith with Sandra - 9.15 - 10.15

Wednesdays @ Bannockburn with Desma - 9:30 - 10.30

Steady Feet @ Meredith - \$11 per session

Wednesdays - 10:00 - 11:00 am



Join us on

Facebook & Instagram

@meredithcommunitycentre



PLAYGROUP

THURSDAYS

9.00am - 11.30am

\$2 per family



Community

What's Been Happening At Meredith PS?

Fairlie Pritchard

Our last month at has been full of wonderful learning experiences for the students at Meredith Primary School. Here is a snapshot of what we've been up to!

100 Days of School:

Our F/1 students celebrated their 100th day of school in style. They participated in a range of activities focusing on the number 100 while dressed up as 100 year olds.

School Grounds:

Ralph and his group of workers have been busy spreading mulch around the front garden beds which is looking amazing. Ralph and Mr Day have also started building our Gaga Pit which is a project our Junior School Council have been working on over the past few months. What is a Gaga Pit I hear you ask? Gaga is a fast paced, high energy sport played in an octagonal pit. The more players the better! It's a kinder, gentler version of dodge ball which is played with a soft foam ball. It combines the skills of dodging, striking, running, and jumping, while trying to hit opponents with a ball below the knees. We can't wait to start using it!

Matildas Day:

We had been so excited to follow the Matildas journey throughout the FIFA Women's World Cup this year. On the day of their Semi-Final with England, we held a Matildas Day to show our support. You can see the video we made on our school Facebook page.

F/1 Daffodils:

Exciting times in F/1 as the daffodil bulbs we planted with Mrs Gargan have flowered! Each student got to take their beautiful daffodil pot home with them.

Book Week:

Book Week is one of the most exciting weeks of the year at school. We kicked off the week by holding our dress up day and parade, which saw many inventive and creative costumes. Throughout the week we had a visit from local MP, Michaela Settle who read a book to our junior students and enjoyed reading the nominated and winning books during class time. We also ran our Book Week book sponsorship program that allows families to choose a book to sponsor and have a name plate dedication placed inside the cover. This has proved to be a popular initiative for families in the past!

Concert:

Rehearsals are in full swing for our annual school concert which is being held on September 6th. This year students are performing numbers from musicals and Mrs Thorley has been working hard to teach them the songs and the dance moves. Students have made props for the concert during their art sessions.

Meredith PS turns 150 in 2024:

Next year, Meredith PS will be celebrating it's 150th birthday. Planning is still in the very, very early stages, but stay tuned for more information when it becomes available!

Flying The Flags:

If you've been past the school lately, you might have seen our three new flagpoles. Flying proudly atop these flagpoles are the Aboriginal, the Torres Strait Island and the Australian flags. This is the first time these three flags have flown together in Meredith.

During the opening ceremony, our Indigenous students were given the responsibility of raising the flags while Wadawurrung woman, Nikki McKenzie performed the Welcome to Country and Kurnai/Wotjobaluk man, Norm Stanley played the didgeridoo.

The funding for the new flag poles was provided through a grant from the Moorabool Wind Farm.

We are proud to be flying these flags at the front of our school where the whole community can see them. We are also proud to acknowledge the land that we live and learn on is Wadawurrung land.

Have Your Say...

From media releases

Golden Plains Shire Council is seeking feedback from the community on:

The Draft Footpath Strategy. This aims to identify and recommend future upgrades and new footpath construction priorities and proactively plan for ongoing maintenance. Contact Council's Asset Services Team on 5220 7111.

The Draft Disability Action Plan. The objective is to enable clearly identifiable actions in the Council Plan that aim to improve the overall quality of life for people living, working and visiting the Shire. Council is committed to eliminating barriers which directly or indirectly discriminate against people with disabilities. Contact Council's Access and Inclusion Officer on 5220 7111.

The community is now invited to provide feedback. For more information visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/consultations

Winter Activities for Young

From media Release

GP Shire is hosting a series of free activities for young people aged 12 to 25 years throughout the upcoming winter school holidays, with activities running from Monday 1 July to Thursday 11 July 2024.

To register or find out more information about the Winter Holiday Activity program, contact Council's Youth Development Team on 5220 7111 or visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/holiday-activity-program.


OUR COVER

Meredith PS students had a couple of days in the 1850's recently, when they attended the Sovereign Hill PS. You can read Harry's lively report of the experience in this issue. Thanks to Fairlie Pritchard for the great photo.



Send us your fabulous photos - you could be front page news!





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June Cameron Celebrates

Marg Cooper

June Cameron was born in June and was named after the month of her birth. She has just celebrated her 90th birthday with several parties: on Sunday 16th with her family, on Monday 17th, on her actual birthday with women friends of the district, on Wednesday 19th with her ex-work colleagues and on Thursday 20th with her nieces in Melbourne.

Music has always played an important part in June's life. Her father loved opera, had lots of records and took June to performances in Melbourne where she grew up. Plus, there were terrific music staff at Lauriston Girls School where June attended. One teacher ran music broadcasts on 3LO and a junior choir from the school often sang on these programs. June especially liked singing madrigals which she describes as a small group of singers, singing in parts. Ave Verum was her favourite.

June also remembers concerts in the School Assembly Hall on Saturday mornings and members of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra coming to the school to teach students. June started to learn piano from a lady up the road and would have liked to learn the violin, but did learn the oboe for a year. She admits that it took her a term to get a noise out of the oboe and she was always breaking the double reed.

Her singing lapsed somewhat after she left school and started an Honours Arts Degree at Janet Clarke Hall, then transferred to study Physiotherapy, mainly at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals. She was most interested in this work as her older brother, David, had cerebral palsy. After qualifying June then worked in Melbourne before marrying and moving to the country. A family of



five children, a lot of community involvement and returning to work at Shannon Park Spastic Centre, now Scope, absorbed her time, but gradually music became important again.

June and Mary Nolan started to sing together. They went quite well in a Talent Quest in Meredith and sang at various events including

weddings and a funeral. June became a member of an ecumenical choir formed in Meredith and later was an original member of The Minstrels, another Meredith choir. After June retired from work, she joined the Ballarat U3A choir and also The Choristers who sang more serious music. This involved a day of practice per week in Ballarat and performances, often. June loved it all. She describes her voice as low soprano and loved to sing descant.

June has now retired from singing because her voice is all cracked now! She does miss the singing and the friendships but was delighted that at one of their last performances they sang her favourite, Ave Verum.

Congratulations June. You have matured to perfection.



**Australia's
Biggest
Morning
Tea**

**Join Advance Meredith Association
& St Joseph Church for
Food, Fun, Games &
a Silent Auction
to raise funds for cancer research**



Pretty in Pink High Tea

**SATURDAY 27 JULY 2024
10 AM - 2 PM**

MEREDITH MEMORIAL HALL

Book Your Table
Mary 0424 037 542
\$25.00 per person
please note cash preferred
QR Code Payment available



Sovereign Hill

By Harry Dickers

"Bang!" goes the gunshot of the Red Coats as we walk silently into the changing rooms to get dressed for the day. I put on my knickerbockers and miners shirt which made us look like we were in the 1850s for the two day excursion.

"Backs straight. Lips locked and standing tall and proud! Children should be seen, not heard." The serious face of Ma'am startled me. Then Ma'am talked about what we were doing for the day. We walked into the 1850s classroom as I rang the bell for the start of the day 'Ding! Ding! Ding!' Mmm, the smell of the confectioner wafted up the hill, making the most appetising delights. We were in character and so was Ma'am, so we had to act the part for the two day excursion.

For the first lesson of the day we did reading. I had the role of the bell ringer. After we were finished with that we had our 'morning air'. "Line up! Boys on the side of danger, backs straight and lips locked." Ma'am said. Ma'am walked quietly to the cottages. We got to see what it would have looked like in the 1850s houses. The wallpaper was arsenic which was poisonous and you could have got sick for a few days. At lunch we did bowling which was awesome. Maddy was the only person who got a strike. Finally we did gold panning which I was the most excited for so I could find little flakes of gold. After the end of the first day we went down to the changing rooms and got our school clothes back on.

We walked down to the school to do our lessons for the start of the day. "Children, for the start of the day we will be doing arithmetic and writing". Ma'am said. We had to use ink pens which I wasn't used to at all. At 'morning air' I did my role which was ringing the bell. After 'morning air' we went down to see the gold pour.

I was fascinated because I had never seen anything like it before. Other schools came in to see the gold pour as well. We went back to school to make ropes with partners and my partner was Jacob. Then we walked down to the massive playground where we saw the future kids. After that we went down to get our school clothes back on. We went on a shopping spree at the lolly shop to buy the

raspberry drops that I had been dying to eat in the past two days!

Out of all the things that we did I think that the gold pour was outstanding!!!

Thanks to Fairlie Pritchard

Young Musicians

Media Release

Golden Plains Shire Council is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) for young musicians across the Shire to participate in the Golden Plains Youth Battle of the Bands competition which will be held on Saturday 24 August from 6.30 to 9.30pm at the Inverleigh Public Hall, 71 High Street, Inverleigh.

Open to all young people aged 12 to 25, Battle of the Bands is a showcase of young up and coming artists, inclusive of all genres, with bands, soloists, duo performances and digital artists all welcome to express their interest in performing.

Presented by the FReeZA Youth Events Crew, with support from Council's Youth Development Team, the competition is designed to support emerging musicians by providing a safe and inclusive opportunity to perform in front of a live audience.

"I encourage young people aged 12 to 25 to express their interest in taking centre stage at the event and showcasing their musical talents in front of a live audience," he said.

The Battle of the Bands competition is funded by FReeZA, a Victorian Government initiative that supports young Victorians to get involved in their community by planning and running drug, smoke, vaping and alcohol-free music and cultural events for other young people. This is an all ages, fully supervised event with strictly no pass outs.

Expressions of Interest are open from Monday 17 June until 9am, Monday 15 July 2024. To submit an EOI, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/consultations

For more information, contact Council's Youth Development team at youth@gplains.vic.gov.au or call 5220 7111

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New Financial Year, New Tax Cuts, New Blank Slate.

Are you excited! It is July, my favourite time of the year! Not only are the fireplaces crackling in the evenings and the sun shining during the day, but its almost like New Years when you can set new goals and habits that the future you will thank you for.

Firstly, how do you keep receipts. Do you prefer a shoe box under the bed or an app on your telephone. My Deductions is an ATO based app but there are plenty of others, where you scan your receipt and at the end of the year you email the receipts to yourself or your accountant.

If you prefer the original receipt kept under the bed, make sure that it is copied as the wax paper can be hard to read after a while. Remember you must keep your written evidence for 5 years from the date you lodge your tax return.

Next, check your investments. We all invest via superannuation so check that your employer is paying into your superannuation account by checking your super fund. The compulsory super guarantee rate is now 11.5% as at 1.7.2024 and was 11% for the 2023FY. If your employer hasn't been or isn't paying your superannuation then you can contact your employer or if you are not comfortable speaking with them then the ATO.

Another item to review is your next pay slip. You should see that if the gross pay (before tax) is the same, the tax amount is reduced, this should give you more net pay (what you physically receive). This is because the tax cuts are now taking effect. If you want to read more about the tax cuts go to www.taxcuts.gov.au

Finally let's talk insurance. Did you know that Income Protection Insurance can be tax deductible if you purchase this insurance outside of your super fund.

Also, Private Health Insurance (PHI) may have many benefits outside of tax. Looking at tax only, if you have income above \$97,001 as a single or \$194,001 as a family, without PHI you will be charged a Medicare Surcharge Levy of 1 - 1.5% of your taxable income if you don't have suitable PHI. Note, the family thresholds increase with children. So, if you have been thinking about this or know that your income may reach these levels this FY, then now would be a perfect time to seek further advice.

Household savings hack of the month:

Do you love buying plants but worried you don't have a green thumb! Firstly, did you know that Bunnings guarantee their plants for 12 months. Keep the receipt and if the plant doesn't work out, take it into the nursery to get

some help. Secondly, can the plant be easily propagated. If so, take cuttings from it straight away. Place the cutting in water, soil or my new favourite, plastic container with lid and peat moss, and once the plant is bigger sell one and give one away. Melbourne Plant Buy Swap and Sell on Facebook is just one example where you could sell your plant once mature.

I was gifted a 170mm Fruit Salad Plant – Monstera deliciosa over 6 years ago. I have since propagated the plant number of times. It has been used several times as a housewarming gift saving me cash and I have even donated the plants to the stand in front of the local Meredith Historical Society (MHS), hoping that someone will love the plant as much as I do while placing \$3 in the MHS kitty.

A Reminder

(A poem by Linda Brumby)

Please don't postpone that 'phone call
You should have made it to-day,
Please don't delay that little note
That should be on it's way!

And don't forget that cheery card
The bunch of flowers, or as such
To someone who is very ill,
They mean so very much.

Just leave those things you had to do
They'll be there another day;
They would seem so unimportant
If you heard she'd passed away.

No use to rush and send a wreath
When the tired spirit has fled;
So senseless, heaping lovely flowers
On one already dead!

How better to have sent them,
When life she still was blessed,
When she could have smelt their
fragrance
And their petals soft, caressed!

So send them now! don't risk delay!
For time is oh so fleet:
Life slips away from some of us,
On silent stealthy feet.

You have so much to do - I know -
So much your hours to fill,
But send a message - do it now!
To that someone who is ill.

(Submitted by Janene Schiller)





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in YOUR Community

Since Covid, Karen and Tom Hinkley have been facilitating ongoing community engagement across the district through the provision of a very popular community sharing table in Mount Doran. Here, Karen Hinkley relates the story to Marlene Johnson.

My name is Karen and I live here in Mount Doran with my husband Tom. We moved here roughly 10 years ago - we absolutely love having a bit of land, just enough to run the dogs, have chooks running around and working in our garden trying to become self-sufficient. Right at the beginning of the Covid time, we had numerous plants coming up from seedlings - far too many for ourselves and we didn't want them to go waste. So we set up this table: Free to take away.

People passing by did stop - seedlings disappeared and we did hear back from community members how they grew beautiful tomatoes and other plants. For us it's for community members, we don't want any kind of money exchange. It's all about - if you've got too much in your cupboard, or whoops, you're running low - have a look on the community table. It might be something that you can use, or swap vegetables, share beautiful flowers. A lot of the community are joining in because it often seems quite full with preserves, citrus, greens and other fruits. Instead of putting it in the compost, more and more people seem to be thinking, let's share with community.


I go through the social media pages of the Elaine community, Mount Clear, Scotsburn, Clarendon and Morrisons to let people know there's something on the table and it's there for whoever wants to come and get it. We've got people making preserves and bringing them

back to the table to share with the community. I don't always know who they are, I don't see people - quite often they'll take a photo and put it on the Elaine community page. I've noticed comments on a couple of the photos over the last few months asking, 'Where is this community table?'

Word of mouth, neighbours sharing information, community clubs such as the horse club sharing information has spread the word. People are very generous with what they leave and those who take, take just what they need. I've noticed that the table nearly always empties over a couple of days, it looks as though it really popular. A recent popular time was Mother's Day weekend - produce started arriving at 9:30 on the Saturday morning, the table was well and truly full by midday. The last of the flowers went by 8 o'clock on Sunday morning.

I've met so many people including travellers who can't believe it's free.





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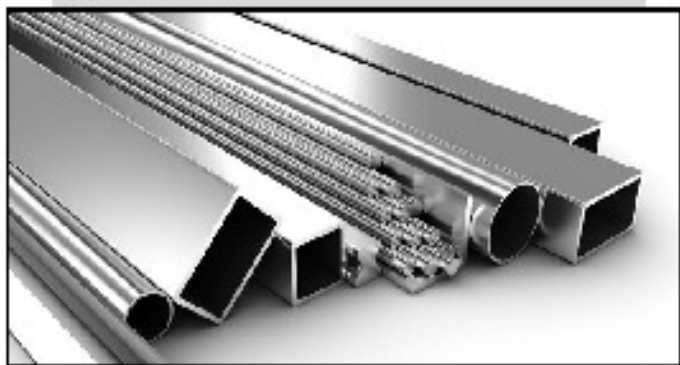
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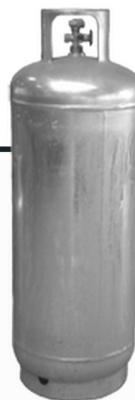
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The Philatelist

Michael Riseley



SUNDAY MAIL

Between 1893 and 1912 all stamps issued in Belgium included a small detachable label which said "Do not deliver on a Sunday". In those days the Belgian Post Office delivered mail 7 days a week. The purpose of the label was to cater for those people whose religious beliefs were that Sunday should be a day of rest. They would leave the label on the stamp and the post office would not deliver that envelope on a Sunday.

For other people without such religious convictions, the system was that you would detach and discard the label before putting the stamp on the envelope and it would be delivered in the normal routine which could include Sunday. Most Belgian stamps from this period exist today without the label. Interestingly there was no such system for people of the Jewish faith for whom the holy day is Saturday.

Between 1925 and 1950 Bulgaria issued some stamps which were to be used for mail to be delivered on Sundays and holidays. They were an extra surcharge payment and were to be put on the envelope along with a stamp for the normal postal rate. The extra funds raised were used to provide recreation homes for employees of the postal services. It seems a strange system to me because unless your letter was urgent, you could just wait a few days and post it on a weekday without paying any extra tax.

In the late 19th and early 20th century many national postal services operated 7 days a week 365 days a year. The mail was viewed as an essential service. Delivery of mail on a Sunday continued in England up until 1960.

There are many philatelists who collect postmarks. For them a stamp or envelope with a clear postmark date of 25December or 29February is highly sought after. But perhaps the most excitement would be for a postmark clearly showing the date 1 January 1900.

Another Little Gem

Jim Elvey

Readers will remember "Little Gems", Gemma Hanan's delightful "now that I am an adult" column from a couple of years back. Well Gemma finished her studies, started a career, met and married Luke and no longer found time to write her monthly column. And that's not likely to change any time soon. Gemma and Luke welcomed baby Fynn into the world on the 29th May. On behalf of all of our readers, we heartily congratulate them both and send our best wishes for a wonderful family life.



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Assistance Dogs

All about Assistance Dogs and how you can help their handler– as told to Marlene Johnson by Sophie

I am a health professional and I have an assistance dog. I want to raise awareness around assistance dogs and what to do when you see one in public. People may have assistance dogs for many reasons, but they are all to elevate a disability. Some people have them for seizures, anxiety, mental health and trauma, balance, reminders to take medications, memory issues and a lot more. It's really important as a member of public not to ask a handler why they have a therapy dog – it is personal. Companion dogs

are not assistance dogs - companion dogs are really pet dogs that support their owners. My current assistance dog, Marli, is a Labrador, but my older assistance dog was a Koolie. Assistance dogs help their handlers to get about their day.

There is an important difference between 'assistance dogs' and 'therapy' and 'companion dogs'. The title assistance dog is important as it gives handlers and their dogs public access rights. Assistance dogs have rights under the disability and discrimination act and are allowed in ALL public spaces except operating theatres, commercial kitchens and biohazard parts of the zoo.

Therapy dogs 'have access to agreed public spaces. Therapy dogs are allowed into one place in one area that's agreed upon but aren't allowed in shops etc'. Companion dogs are really like pet dogs that support their owners and don't have access rights to any public spaces. Assistance dogs come in most breeds depending on what would be suitable for the job they're needed to do. This is why you see many different breeds working. I went through an organisation with my assistance dog, and they do a PAT (public access test) each year to make sure the dog is continuing to work to a high standard.

I had my previous dog for 10 years; she retired a year ago. I've had Marli for 2 years. He's given me my independence back and helps reduce my symptoms. However, the disadvantages of having an assistance dog are being stopped over 20 times a day whenever we go out in public and having attention drawn to us.

If you see a person out with a working dog please ignore them. That includes not talking to the handler or dog, not making noises at the dog, not touching the dog or making eye contact with the dog. It's important for people to understand that the dog is a medical dog and when you touch and distract him, he may miss something vital. For example, if I was going to have a seizure and you touch my dog, he will miss it and not alert me which could be life threatening. It may look like the dog's not working, but he is working at all times. Please pretend the dog's not there. You can also help by telling those with you and having discussions with your kids, family and friends about the need to ignore assistance dogs.



Golden Spaces



A Chance to Exhibit

Media Release

Golden Spaces is a free community-based program offering group art exhibitions across three locations: The Bannockburn Cultural Centre, The Well at Smythesdale and the Golden Plains Civic Centre. This initiative aims to celebrate and promote local artists, providing the community with greater access to the arts in a local setting, and offering professional development opportunities for both emerging and established artists within our Shire.

Golden Spaces was officially launched at an event on 1 June at the Bannockburn Cultural Centre, featuring the first Winter Exhibit.

There will be two opportunities to apply to exhibit at Golden Spaces throughout the calendar year, with EOIs for the first Summer Exhibit open now for local artists and creative practitioners.

Golden Plains Shire Mayor Cr Brett Cunningham encourages all local artist to submit their EOI to exhibit at Golden Spaces.

"Golden Spaces is a vibrant hub where the creativity of our artistic community can shine and their stories come to life," Cr Cunningham said.

"I urge local artists and creative practitioners to seize this opportunity to be part of a professional exhibit that engages both locals and visitors."

EOI's are open from Monday 3 June to 5pm, Friday 30 August 2024. To submit an EOI, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/golden-spaces

At the conclusion of the EOI period, successful artists will be notified in October 2024, and the Summer Exhibit will be launched at the Bannockburn Cultural Centre on Thursday 19 December 2024. The exhibition will be on display for 12 months rotating between the Bannockburn Cultural Centre, The Well at Smythesdale and the Golden Plains Civic Centre.

The Golden Spaces Winter Exhibit is currently on display at the Bannockburn Cultural Centre, featuring artworks of 24 local artists. Keep an eye on Council's website and social media channels to find out when the Exhibit will move to its next location.

For further information, contact Council's Arts, Culture & Heritage and Facilities teams at golden.spaces@gplains.vic.gov.au or call 5220 7111.



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Jim Elvey

The Meredith Police Paddocks Support Group held its second meeting for the year last month and discussed a number of activities either underway or in planning. They include

On-site Storage Container - Western Region Ecological Network (WREN) donated a freshly painted shipping container which was installed on-site last month. This will make it much easier and convenient for volunteers working on the site. Thank you WREN!

Weed Control - The meeting heard WREN's contractors have already spent 6 man-days on site spraying gorse and blackberry. More will be done in a few months time.

Master Plan - WREN is developing a Master Plan for the site to identify priority works and overall objectives. Our Group has submitted the following points on behalf of the community.

- protecting and enhancing the natural environment; and
- preserving the history of the site; and,
- enhancing opportunities for enjoyment of, and passive recreation at the site
- providing information and education to visitors to the site
- ongoing flora and fauna observations, made accessible for research and education,
- engaging with the community to foster appreciation and appropriate use of the site.
- Linking importance of the site and its maintenance/improvement to the GP Shire's town strategy.

If you would like to contribute to this exercise, send your suggestions to meredith.police.paddocks@gmail.com

Fundraising - We are seeking funds for several projects to enhance visitor experience. These include:

- Pedestrian bridges along the valley walk.
- Instructive Art work mounted on the container. (This is part of a larger plan to create a walk through garden featuring plants important to First Australians.)
- A ride on mower and spray tank to assist in maintaining walking tracks.

We'll have more to report later in the year. In the meantime, if you would like to get involved in the many things we have planned, or help our team maintain this wonderful community reserve, please drop a line to the address mentioned above.

Winner of this month's "least interesting photo", a recently dead blackberry bush at the Paddocks.



Vale to John (Jack) Rupert Mitchell 7/12/1928 – 23/4/2024

Jack Mitchell grew up in Melbourne. His association with Meredith started when he met Joyce Irvine. At the age of four years following the breakup of her parent's marriage she was taken to Melbourne from Meredith by her father and placed in the care of the Rogers family. When Joyce was seven years old the Rogers family and Joyce moved four doors from where Jack's family lived in Newport.

When young they were all part of the Farm Street gang. Later, when Jack bought a motor bike, he invited Joyce to go for a ride with him and so their love affair began. They became engaged on Joyce's 19th birthday, started building their dream home in Kingsville and married in February 1952. They had two children, Gary and Lynette.

Jack and Joyce moved to Williamstown after their children married and moved out and Jack took a few months break from work to just relax with Joyce and share time together. They decided to look for work that allowed them to travel and be together and over the years they worked on a large range of projects and even played at sheep farming before settling down as partners in a floor and road coating business.

They travelled extensively during this period working together in all Australian states as well as overseas. Jack said they were never bored and were completely happy just to be together. They also loved to visit Meredith where they often spent their weekends.

In 1973 Jack had the option to buy the house and blocks of land where Joyce's family had lived in Meredith which included the old creamery and butter factory block in Grant Street, for \$900. He was glad to help the family who still lived in Meredith. After Joyce's stepfather moved away and brother Theo died, they sold all the blocks except the creamery and butter factory block. They used the money to fund a 3-month world trip.

They created a house using the foot thick concrete walls of the creamery basement or cool chamber that measured 40 feet by 20 feet with walls 8 feet 3 inches high. Jack did most of the building. Because Joyce and Jack had been used to big houses Jack later added another lounge, office and sunroom.

In 1989 Jack and Joyce moved to live at Meredith. Jack said Joyce could have chosen anywhere to retire to, including to their home in Queensland but chose her home town.

Jack was described as forever restless and at times having wild schemes. He was a thorough gentleman, a worldly man who loved nothing better than a beer or two with Meredith locals.





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Preparing for Life's Transitions Makes Sense

Rev Dr Tim Smith

Occasionally in the past I have included at the end of my contribution: **Prepare/Enrich**, a low-cost programme we offer to help explore our relationship in times of life's transitions. Whether the transition is preparing for a wedding, an addition to the family, change in career, moving house, approaching retirement, transitions can stress relationships. With help to discern the strength and growth areas in our significant relationship can assist in navigating change smoothly. Here are some thoughts on checking-up on your relationship in preparation of times of transition that make sense.

Don't be distracted from your relationship by change.

Thinking about the financial planning and the busyness of change can distract us from our relationship and, let's be honest, the stress can bring out the worst in us. Many relationships fall into conflict preparing for a wedding. All life transitions have the potential to cause us to focus on the conflicts and not find resolution. But they can also be a time when we focus on the relationship and grow in knowledge of one another's strengths and growth areas.

Preparation strengthens relationship skills.

It doesn't matter how long we have known someone, or even cohabited with them, we can learn stuff about our significant other when the pressure is on. It's never too late to nip in the bud bad habits and prevent new ones from setting in. We can reap the long-term benefits after the transition if we work on foundational relationship skills.

Prepare for life that comes after the change.

We may have agreed to the plan we are going to make and are excited about it. It is going to be perfect. However, there is potential for the pie-in-the-sky idealism wear off. We might be surprised by an unresolved conflict to come up or we experience disappointment of unmet dreams and expectations. But focussing on each other's strengths and growth areas we are in a better position to traverse the disappointments that may come.

We need all the encouragement we can get.

Life's transitions often mean a lot of adjustment for both partners, and that dose of reality served up with those unmet expectations we mentioned earlier can leave us feeling pretty discouraged. Are we doing something wrong? Is our marriage going to last or did we make a mistake? Focussing on our relationship can provide the encouragement we need to help make sure we are assisting each other through the transition.

Checking-up on our relationship sets a precedent for growth.

Having a relationship that is able to withstand those ups and downs requires ongoing effort and intention – continuing to work on our self with our partner can contribute to making changes the best they can be. With

preparation life's transitions have the potential to assist us with growth in our relationship skills and the relationship itself.

Prepare/Enrich has been around for nearly 40 years and is low-cost way to prepare for any life transition whether at the beginning of a relationship, or later in life together. In the same way we might give the car an inspection and tune up before a big road trip, we can take stock of the different areas of your relationship to avoid any major breakdowns on the way of life's transitions.

Based on <https://www.prepare-enrich.com/blog/6-reasons-newlywed-counseling-makes-sense/>

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"Commentators who suggested that the computer's victory would make the game extinct were wrong. After his fifth defeat, the elderly go master, helped by an assistant, stood slowly, bowed towards the laptop and congratulated it in a trembling voice. He said, 'The mounted horse did not kill athletics. We run for joy.'"

(from "Machines Like Me" by Ian McEwan)

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it's History

Meredith History Interest Group

Elderberry Cottage:

It seems that no-one knows where Elderberry Cottage, where the Wilkinson family lived, was in Meredith. William Wilkinson was a boot-maker who ran a business in Meredith from 1860 until about 1901. Over the years several others also plied their trade in Meredith. James McIntosh was a boot-maker in Meredith from 1877 to 1882, Joseph McDonald was listed as a boot-maker from 1883 to 1887 and Walter McDonald from 1890 until 1896. For many years there were two boot-makers situated two doors from each other in Staughton Street. At No 36 John Joseph Holt started business just before 1900 and continued until about 1931. He died in 1933, aged 92 years. Sydney Robinson (Bobby) Bell started business about 1906 at 32 Staughton Street and continued until 1938. He died in 1945, aged 70 years.

F Taylor had a short stint at boot-making in Meredith in 1906. George Mayo was a boot repairer in later years in the building where JJ Holt had carried out his trade and Gerald King was a boot-maker at 32 Staughton Street where Bobby Bell had worked for many years.

Books, Books and more Books:

Darren Guthrie's book about the ceremonies that were performed to start engines at gold mines is an absorbing read. He has documented more than 100 ceremonies, covering a large district around Ballarat and although the focus is on the ceremonies there is a great deal of other information - for example, the size of the machinery involved!

Murders, Suicides and Deaths are the themes of a book being compiled by Kerrie and Bev and I am compiling a book of the photos of Morrisons that we exhibited in October 2023. Darren's book, Ladies Please Start your Engines is available at MHIG and the other two books will be available later in the year.

Museum Room:

Football is the major attraction in the room at the moment but also included are items and objects from other exhibitions MHIG has held. Come in for a LOOK!

Community Bank, Buninyong:

A recent newspaper article said that the bank is providing the public with a chance to have innovative ideas funded. They are trying to encourage groups to think of projects that are different, that are not stock standard, that are creative and innovative.

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Marg's Book Review



Brisbane Ranges sketchers

Kerry Thomson

Our group was very thankful for Mandy and Alex's shed which enabled us to escape the inclement June weather. It was another interesting day as we tackled portraiture for the first time. I was the lucky model who sat in a soft lounge seat closest to the heater! Louise and Mandy were comfortable with this style of art practice but Mark, Sam, Melinda, Alex, Peter H., Mari and Ray were a little more challenged. Nevertheless, it was impressive to see the resulting likenesses of me - especially those that made me look that little bit younger! After an hour and a half Mark took over the modelling and provided a different challenge with his beard and cap. A fun time was had as we all rose to the new challenge, exchanged tips and techniques and stayed warm and dry.

Next outing - 9 July (second Tuesday)

Time: meet at 10 am at the Meredith Community House

Venue: Lake Lethbridge

BYO: own art equipment, chair, weather appropriate clothing, cuppa for after

New people are always welcome so come along and unleash your inner artist or just come and try something new in a friendly, supportive environment.

No, Thank You

Elaine resident, Shane Dunne let us know that Moorabool Shire Council will, at its July meeting, consider a proposal to rename the Elaine Recreation Reserve the "Ron Read Recreation Reserve". The officer's report to Council states it has received 312 submissions comprising 56 supporters and 255 objectors, with one of those objections being a petition containing 113 signatures. The report notes "...the proposal is not supported by the community and no longer complies with the Place Naming Policy and Geographic Names Place Naming Rules."

Council's decision will be known after its meeting on 3rd July.

The Garden of Hopes and Dreams by Barbara Hannay.

This is a delightful and uplifting story about the importance of community and the healing power of connection. It is also a story set in modern times with very well-developed characters. Love, friendship and the natural world all play parts in the author's new novel. Can love and friendship blossom on a rooftop?

The book follows the lives of the residents of a city-based apartment block in Brisbane, who have no reason to connect with each other until a couple of gardening enthusiasts from one of the apartments suggest that they create a communal garden on the rooftop.

Before this venture they have no idea of the loneliness, the lost hopes and dreams and the troubles being experienced behind their neighbours' closed doors. Over their budding plants and produce, their lives become interconnected in ways they could never have imagined. It was an inviting, embracing and creative initiative.

There is a broad mix of wonderful characters in the book with very different back stories. From Vera, now widowed, who is trying to create a new life for herself in Brisbane, after her son and his family took over running her farm in outback Queensland. To Maddie who is unlucky in love, and to Vera's grandson, Henry, who lifts her spirits when he comes to stay. Then there is also Jock, the caretaker/maintenance man, to Ned the academic and Joe and Dennis who cultivate indoor plants, through to the grumpy woman Nancy who seems to oppose everything. So, in the five storey block of apartments there are a range of people of different ages, life stages and interests.

The themes of this book are wholesome. They are of friendship, helping people out and second chances. It was a calm, low conflict book, a feel-good read. I'd be surprised if anyone who read this book didn't want to immediately start a roof top community garden or surround themselves with plants and friends. The way the garden brought the residents together to create deep friendships and care for each other was heartwarming.

The book is easy to read and genuinely engaging.

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G'Day from the penners for July. This month's story is from Gordon Vanbeck, he is a talented writer and he always brings good things to our group. Gordon likes to regale us with crime stories that finish on cliff hangers, which has left many of us frustrated to say the least. But this month he has written a story from his childhood. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do. We can be contacted via our email goldenpens4@gmail.co and we meet every Thursday fortnight at the Bannockburn library.

Cheers Wendy.

The Rag and Bone Man

(A memory from a Scottish Childhood)

Danny, the Rag and Bone man always came to Spa Street on a Saturday afternoon, usually about 2 o'clock. He was a stickler for routine and his customers knew when to expect him. They would listen for the clear musical peal of the hand bell he continually tolled as he made his way down the street.

"Any Old Rags! Any Old Rags!" he would bellow from the high wooden driving seat on his cart, right arm rising and falling vigorously as the brass bell flashed in the afternoon light. Peal after peal of sound echoing down the street, its clamour reverberating down the narrow closes and even penetrating the thick glass windows and granite walls of the tenements.

In one of the flats in Spa Street, a young woman ceased what she was doing to check again the items she had placed in two shopping bags. What Danny was prepared to pay for the contents would decide what the family could afford for supper that night. There were other flats in the street that day, where bags lay by the front door waiting for Danny's inspection and his decision.

Danny's progress was slow, attracting the attention of any number of young children, lured, not only by the cart and the sight of his mammoth horse Chieftain, but also by the bright multi-coloured balloons that festooned the cart.

The Rag and Bone Man and the Clydesdale horse had been inseparable companions for years. Chieftain was a former brewery Dray horse saved by the Rag and Bone Man from the Knackers yard, after being declared too old to continue pulling brewery carts. The Clydesdale was still a handsome and imposing animal. Coal black, apart from snow white socks of hair on each leg, he stood at over 6 feet tall from hoof to mane.

He was a truly gentle giant, who loved nothing more than the attention of the children and adults he met on the round. Today was no exception. The children clustered thickly around the sides of the slowly moving dray, pleading for the Rag and Bone man to stop.

Danny's small blue eyes would twinkle merrily as he made an audible clicking sound with his teeth and tongue. This was Chieftain's signal to come to a halt. Chieftain snorting loudly as he graciously lowered his massive head to graciously accept the deluge of pats from a myriad of small hands. Danny would watch with amusement; calling out greetings to the children he recognised and keeping an ever-watchful eye

out to ensure that the children's small feet did not stray too close to Chieftain's enormous hooves.

A brave few began mounting the side of the cart. Danny well knew what they wanted but raised his eyebrows in feigned ignorance and held out his hands in a gesture of puzzlement.

This caused a tumult of beseeching cries to assault his ears. Finally, his eyes widening as if in sudden comprehension, he would turn in his seat to reach down and pull out a small cloth bag. The children surging around him, seeking with their hands. Laughing out loud The Rag and Bone Man would stand and with a flourish, empty the contents of the sack over the side of the cart.

The rain of carrot and apple pieces cascading to the ground would be immediately pounced on by the kids: whereupon under direction from Danny, they would form an orderly queue and patiently waited their turn to offer Chieftain a tasty treat.

The giant Clydesdale, with amazing delicacy and infinite care would grasp the segments of apple and carrot between his great yellow teeth and munch with obvious enjoyment, snorting and whinnying his pleasure. After some fifteen minutes of this, Danny would warn the children that he needed to go and after ensuring they were safely back on the pavement, signal Chieftain into motion, promising them he would be back the following week.

I was one of those kids, gathered with my mates round that cart way back in 1950's Scotland. And sometimes, in bed, between waking and sleeping, I could almost swear that I can still hear the faint peal of that bell and the rumble of cart wheels along a cobbled road.



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Illegal Burning Off

From media Release

EPA Victoria issued a fine of \$1,185 to a Darley individual for illegal burning when a community member reported seeing plumes of smoke issuing from their Darley property.

EPA responded to the report and witnessed an individual feeding plastic cement bags into a fire.

Burning anything other than green waste is an offence, and EPA is cracking down on businesses, farmers, or residents who are illegally burning waste.

"We have given several warnings already. We have shared the message far and wide about what you can and cannot burn. We are now fining individuals and companies that failed to listen to our advice. If you are caught in the act, expect penalties. You cannot dispose of waste by burning materials like cement bags, silage wrap, mattresses, waste tyres, treated pine and other general waste," EPA South West Regional Manager Carolyn Francis said.

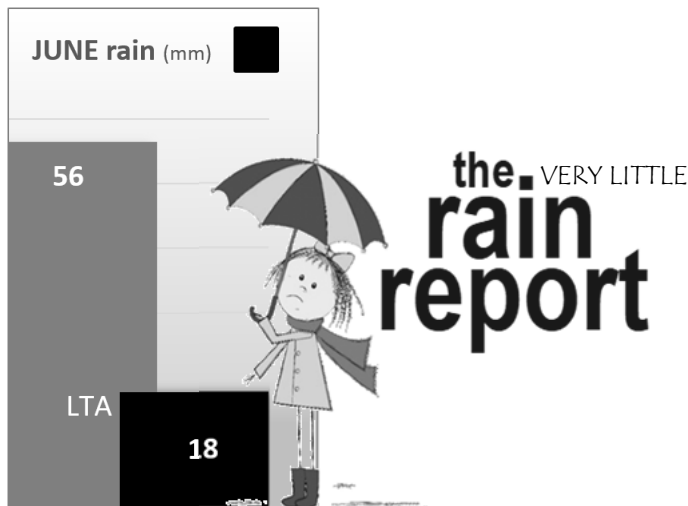
"Smoke from waste burn-offs can lead to harmful effects on human health, particularly for people with asthma or other lung conditions, older people, pregnant women, babies and young children."

"They also impact our immediate environment. Hazardous ash and burnt waste contaminates our soils and local waterways".

Ms Francis said reports of burn offs would be investigated if industrial waste materials were suspected of being involved. While winter usually slowed the practice, stockpiling of material with the intention of burning off as the weather improved toward spring, might still be in some people's plans.

"Take waste to a facility licensed to accept it. If you're trying to save a few dollars with a backyard burn, EPA will take action."

If you suspect illegal burn off activity contact EPA on 1300 372 842 or contact@epa.vic.gov.au

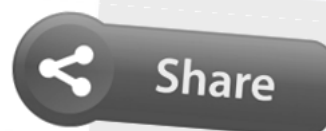


...but there's good news!

By the end of this month, we will be getting around 24 minutes more daylight than at the start. There, hasn't that cheered you up?



DISCLAIMER: We make no assertion the sun will be out during any of that extra 24 minutes. - Ed.



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in our NATURE

Wendy Cook

When I think of old plants, I remember an ancient yellow gum above the Moorabool River; or a river red gum with a broken trunk near Echuca; or mountain ash trees east of Melbourne, towering above me; or a broad-trunked kauri tree at least one thousand years old on the North Island of New Zealand. Perhaps your mind wanders to a gnarled rosebush in your grandmother's garden; or the giant redwoods of California; or your own favourite Australian tree. Most of these have massive trunks. Your neck aches when you look to their uppermost branches which spread into a wide canopy far above you. The branches may be twisted or broken, but all these trees carry a sense of magnificence, and many are far from your home. Few of them live in our local forests, but there we have plants, not so tall or gnarled, which live for hundreds of years, add interest and attractiveness to our landscapes and form a vital part of life in the bush.

These plants are the grass trees, the biggest of which are far older than most of the trees above them and the smaller plants around them (although we don't know how long some of those live). The shaggy head of long narrow leaves may be held up by a blackened trunk, partly covered in a coat of dead brown leaves, or it could reach to the ground, leaving patterns in sandy soil as the pointed leaf tips sway in the wind. Their trunks are made up of the bases of old leaves, tightly packed around the plant's stem and stuck together with resin. Older grass trees grow a tall straight trunk up to three metres high, or fork into two or three branches, each with its own leafy top. Our local grass trees are estimated to grow at a rate of one centimetre a year, so the tallest of them could be three hundred years old or more.

The dense crown of grass tree leaves forms important habitat for many animals. On a cold, windy night of heavy rain, an agile antechinus (a small carnivorous marsupial) pushes its way through the stiff umbrella of long green leaves, reaching to the ground. It enters a space which is dry, out of wind and rain and much warmer than the world outside. It is also a sanctuary on the hottest of days, when it is cool under this sheltering shield. The antechinus is now out of view of its predators and has the opportunity to do some hunting of its own, as spiders and other invertebrates take advantage of this refuge. It may even build a nest to raise its young under the skirt of a grass tree.

The dead brown leaves on the trunks of tall grass trees also form a shelter for small animals. However, they are highly flammable and easily ignited by a bushfire. After the fire passes, the densely packed leaf bases give the grass tree its characteristic black trunk, but also protect the stem underneath. The heat of the fire turns the green leaves to brown, but within a few weeks starch stored in the stem provides energy for new leaves to grow vigorously upwards, forming a spiky green centre to the shaggy brown head. When winter comes, a brown flower spike begins to

grow straight up from the top of every burnt mature grass tree. By spring, it can be several metres tall and covered in small creamy flowers arranged in crowded spirals, opening first on the north side of the spike. Each bloom is rich in nectar, attracting butterflies, beetles and other insects, honeyeaters and parrots, and small mammals such as the antechinus and sugar gliders. Native bees build nests in the flower spikes. Beetle larvae burrow into them, attracting cockatoos which use their strong beaks to dig them out.

Grass trees are a crucial part of our local bushland, but they are threatened by a pathogen in the soil called *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. This infects the roots of some plant species, and grass trees are particularly susceptible. When the weather is dry, infected plants are unable to take up sufficient water and nutrients from the soil to survive. One of the saddest sights in the bush is to see a dead three-hundred-year-old grass tree whose shaggy top has turned brown and fallen to the ground as its trunk disintegrates. We can help prevent the spread of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* by scrubbing dirt off our boots before going into the bush, and when leaving it. If the ground is wet, after scrubbing, spray the bottom of your boots with a solution of 70% methylated spirits and 30% water, to kill any spores of the pathogen. When the grass trees die, they are replaced by other plants which do not provide such good habitat for the creatures of the bush. Although this is a gloomy outlook, it is not the end for the grass trees. Whenever I see an area of dead grass trees, there are always one or two healthy survivors, totally unaffected by the disease. In a few places where many mature grass trees have died, I have found patches of young grass trees growing healthily, the descendants of the plants that sent up those tall flower spikes. It gives me hope that our forests will always include stands of magnificent old grass trees providing food and shelter for our indigenous wildlife.





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