

DECEMBER 2025

# Meredith & district News

Our FREE Community Newsletter since 1976



**We wish all our readers a  
Great Festive Season and a  
Safe Summer**



## inside...



**So many reasons to smile!**







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, Nerida Anderson, Amy Medley, and Ian Leighton. Production is undertaken by Peter Boer, Don Atherton 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](mailto: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	\$20.00
Quarter page	\$30.00/\$50
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)

### CONTACT US

Post Office, Meredith, 3333

**Advertising:** Ian 0409 016815

[advertising@meredithnews.com.au](mailto:advertising@meredithnews.com.au)

Accounts: Ian Leighton 0428132880

[accounts@meredithnews.com.au](mailto:accounts@meredithnews.com.au)

**Editorial:** Jim: 0409 163169

[news@meredithnews.com.au](mailto:news@meredithnews.com.au)

### WEB

You can check back copies and lodge comments at [meredithnews.com.au](http://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We do not publish children's photos online.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](mailto:news@meredithnews.com.au)*

Issue Production: *Peter Boer* Editor: *Jim Elvey*

# connect

ADVANCE  
MEREDITH  
0409 027 359

ANGLING CLUB  
0419 248 660

B'BURN ART  
GROUP  
0410 808 483

B'BURN MENS  
SHED  
0407 835 731

B'BURN SOFT  
TENNIS  
0409 236 420

BLUELIGHT  
DISCO  
5286 1222

BOOK CLUB  
5286 8201

CFA  
000 for fire calls  
Elaine  
0419 767982  
Meredith  
5286 1502  
Morrisons  
0417 770 765

CHILDCARE  
5286 0700

COMMUNITY  
CENTRE  
5286 0700

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

CUBS &  
SCOUTS  
Lethbridge  
0435 042077

ELAINE HALL  
53415575  
0409861296

FOOTBALL  
Seniors 0408 545246  
Juniors 0430 587 674

GOLF CLUB  
0407 795 342

HISTORY GROUP  
5286 8201

LANDCARE  
0409 862 326

MEMORIAL HALL  
0409 662106

MEREDITH SEWING  
GROUP  
0491 184 999

MOTORCYCLE  
CLUB  
0437 009 250

PLAYGROUP  
5286 0700

POLICE  
PADDOCKS  
0409 163169

RSL - 5286 1452

SENIOR CITIZENS  
0407 683 892

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	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 -	132 500
flood & storm	
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	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

## HALL HIRE

Meredith Memorial

5286 1545

Elaine Mechanics

53415575

0409861296

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

## ..or start something.

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

Dear Santa, before I explain, how much do you know already?







## AUCTION

Saturday 13th Dec @ 11am

### 63 Grant Street, Meredith

Nestled at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac and bordering a picturesque creek line, this rare Meredith opportunity offers space, privacy and potential in an unbeatable township location. Properties like this simply do not come along often.

Set on approximately 2 acres, the home features 5 bedrooms, including a master with ensuite, and 2 large living areas ideal for families needing room to spread out. The outside grounds provide the perfect

backdrop for future enhancements or your own creative vision.

The property continues to impress with a carport, double garage, large shed, garden shed, and water tanks—plenty of infrastructure for hobbyists, tradies or those seeking extra storage. Several established fruit trees add to the rural charm, while the creek frontage offers a tranquil natural setting right on your boundary.

5 2 2

#### Price

ESP \$549,000 - \$599,000

**Owen Sharkey**  
0417 365 607

**Rene Pompe**  
0419 764 940



### Lot 1/12a Grant Street, Meredith

Peaceful Country Living on 1 Hectare (Approx. 2.5 Acres)

Escape the hustle and bustle and enjoy the quiet charm of country living with this generous 1-hectare (approx. 2.5 acres) parcel in the heart of Meredith.

Perfectly positioned in a friendly rural community, this property offers the ideal setting to build your dream home or weekend retreat (STCA).

With plenty of space for a shed, veggie garden, or even a few animals, this is your opportunity to enjoy a relaxed lifestyle surrounded by nature while still being within easy reach of local conveniences, including the Meredith Corner

Store, Primary School & Pharmacy.

Only a short drive to Bannockburn and within comfortable commuting distance to Geelong or Ballarat — this is the perfect mix of space, serenity, and accessibility.

NB: The Eastern title boundary is 14.5m inside the existing fence line meaning lot 1 enjoys approx additional 2,400sqm of land (unmade Government Road)

#### Price

\$359,000 - \$389,000

**Owen Sharkey**  
0417 365 607

**Rene Pompe**  
0419 764 940






SEASON'S GREETINGS

## CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

This time of year is all about community, kindness and connection — the things that make our region so special.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy start to the new year.

**Michaela Settle MP**  
**Member for Eureka**

 [michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au)  5331 7722  /MichaelaSettleMP



Community Bank · Buninyong

## Meet Randall Your local Branch Manager

Introduce yourself

If you need help with your banking,  
call Randall on 5341 8066 or  
search Bendigo Bank Buninyong

 **Bendigo Bank**





# Where every move matters

From Bannockburn to beyond,  
we've got you covered

At Bannockburn Removals and Storage, we're proud to be a family-owned business with over 40 years of experience, dedicated to making moving and storage stress-free. Whether you're moving locally within Bannockburn, across the Golden Plains, through Geelong or the Surf Coast, or heading into the city, our experienced team is here to deliver professional, reliable support every step of the way.

## Stress-free moving and storage

Whether you're relocating across town or downsizing for a fresh start, we make it easy.

## Our services

- Home and office removals
- Antique and piano transport
- Packing and unpacking
- Secure short- and long-term storage
- Packing supplies available

“

“Exceptional service...  
on time, polite and  
worked quickly.”

**Margaret**

“

“Super professional,  
friendly and efficient. They  
handled everything with  
care and made our move  
stress-free.”

**Millie**

## Why locals choose us

- Over 40 years of experience
- Family-owned and operated
- Friendly, professional team
- Available 7 days a week
- Flexible, tailored solutions

## GET A QUOTE TODAY

📞 0461 529 860

✉ [info@bannockburnremovals.com.au](mailto:info@bannockburnremovals.com.au)

🌐 [www.bannockburnremovals.com.au](http://www.bannockburnremovals.com.au)





## Chocolate and Almond Pasticcini (gluten free)

By Julia Busuttill Nishimura @JULLAOSTRO

### Ingredients

200g almonds blanched or whole  
100g caster sugar  
80g chocolate (70% cocoa) roughly chopped  
extra chocolate for decorating  
1 teaspoon instant coffee  
pinch salt  
2 small egg whites or 1 large  
zest of half a lemon  
icing sugar for coating

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 170° fan forced (190° conventional) and line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. In the bowl of a food processor, place the almonds, sugar, chocolate, coffee and salt. Blitz to a fine texture that's slightly coarser than almond meal. Set aside.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk the egg whites until foamy. There is no need to whisk to soft peaks. Add the nut mixture along with the lemon zest directly to the egg whites

and mix with a wooden spoon till damp and a dough has formed.

4. Dust your hands with icing sugar and roll tablespoons of dough into balls (about 25g each) before coating them in icing sugar. Transfer to the baking tray.
5. Press a small piece of chocolate into the top of each ball, slightly flattening them as you do. Place the tray in the oven and bake for 12-13 minutes.
6. Remove tray and allow biscuits to cool. Then store in an airtight container, where they will keep for up to one week. Makes 18.

*These would be a perfect Christmas treat or gift. They are soft and chewy, and as a bonus are gluten free.*

Marty mixing the dry ingredients

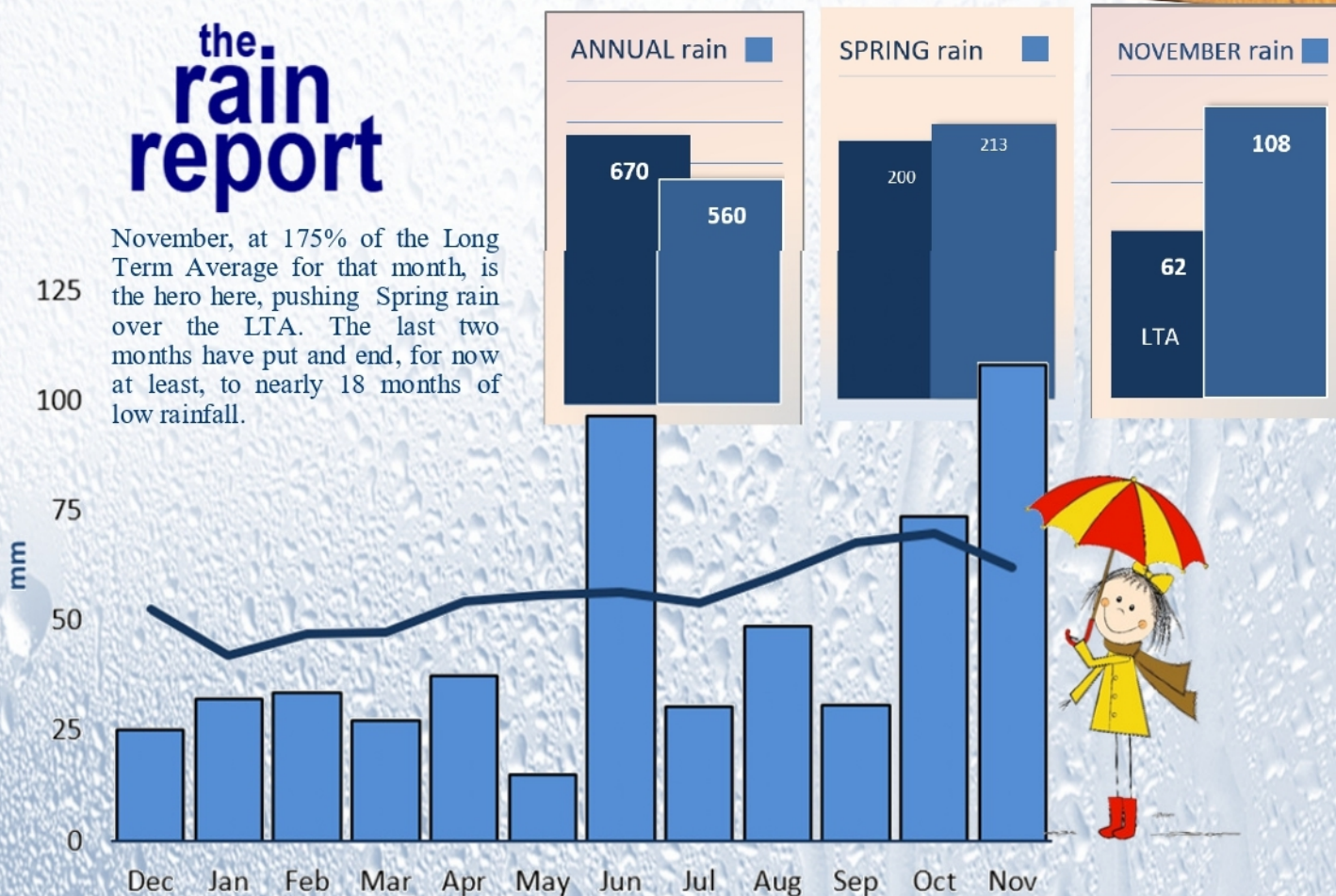


Lulu rolling the mixture into balls



## the rain report

November, at 175% of the Long Term Average for that month, is the hero here, pushing Spring rain over the LTA. The last two months have put and end, for now at least, to nearly 18 months of low rainfall.





## 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](http://www.goldenplainsanglican.org) or

[office.revdrtim@hotmail.com](mailto:office.revdrtim@hotmail.com)

The Revd Dr Timothy Smith

PiC Anglican Parish of Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith

### St Josephs Catholic Parish of Meredith

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

Meredith - St. Joseph @ 9am DEC. 14, 28

Bannockburn - St. Mary MacKillop @ 11am Sun. DEC. 7, 14, 21, 28

Inverleigh - Sacred Heart - @ 4pm Sun. DEC. 21

**CHRISTMAS RECONCILIATION & MASSES**

RECONCILIATION - Bannockburn - Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December 9.00am

Meredith - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am

Winchelsea - Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December 5.00pm

CHRISTMAS EVE - Bannockburn - 6.00pm children invited to dress up

Meredith - 9.00pm

CHRISTMAS DAY - Winchelsea - 9.00am  
Bannockburn - 11.00am

### CATHOLIC PARISH OF MEREDITH MASS TIMES - JANUARY 2026

Winchelsea - St. John the Baptist @ 6pm Sat. JAN. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Meredith - St. Joseph @ 9am JAN. 11, 25

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

Inverleigh - Sacred Heart - @ 4pm Sun. JAN. 18



Meredith Community Centre  
*working for our community*



## What's On This Month



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR COMMUNITY CENTRE. WE THANK ALL OF OUR FABULOUS VOLUNTEERS AND OUR COMMITTEE FOR THEIR INCREDIBLE WORK IN 2025.**

**WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR.**

**WE ARE OFF TO REST AND RECHARGE, AND WILL CLOSE DECEMBER 17.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU FROM JANUARY 27, 2026.**



To Book:

[learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au](mailto:learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au)  
[www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre](https://www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre)  
Ph. 5286 0700 / 0491 184 999



### THE MEREDITH MART

LET'S MAKE SURE NO TABLE IS EMPTY!

CANNED GOODS - SOUP, VEGETABLES, FRUIT, BEANS

DRY GOODS - PASTA, RICE, CEREAL, FLOUR, SUGAR

CHRISTMAS FOODS - TINNED VEGETABLES

TOILETRY ITEMS - SOAPS, TOOTHPASTE/BRUSHES

**BRING YOUR DONATIONS INTO THE OFFICE BEFORE DECEMBER 31!**

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS SOME HELP?

NOMINATE THEM NOW FOR A CHRISTMAS HAMPER!



**The Power Saving Bonus - \$100 for Concession Card Holders!**  
Concession card households can cut their energy bills with a new round of the \$100 Power Saving Bonus.  
Come into the Centre with your Power Bill and Your Id and Bank Account Details and we will get you \$100 back into your account.

### TAI CHI - \$15 PER SESSION

TUESDAYS @ MEREDITH WITH SANDRA - 9.15 - 10.15

WEDNESDAYS @ BANNOCKBURN WITH DESMA - 9.30 - 10.30

**GENTLE EXERCISE @ THE COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR OVER 65'S**

THURSDAYS @ 9.15 - 10.15 - FREE



Join us on

Facebook & Instagram  
[@meredithcommunitycentre](https://www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre)



### PLAYGROUP

THURSDAYS

9.30am - 11.30am

\$2 per family







We had a busy but wonderful year at the Maude Meredith and Districts Landcare group! Over the past 12 months we have supported our community with conducting our annual rabbit baiting campaign, organised an event for Clean Up Australia Day at the former Meredith tip site, and completed a tree planting event in Maude. We had a wonderful afternoon tea and wandered the property of local member John Tantau, who shared his expert knowledge of growing native plants for flowers, and organised a members' trip to Mount Rothwell to see the fantastic work, that the volunteers do to protect and preserve native grasslands, for native endangered species. In April we held a special gathering to unveil a plaque at Spillers Bridge, Maude, in remembrance of past president Robert Lynch. Recently we were saddened at the passing of Rob McColl, founding member of the Meredith Landcare group, tireless volunteer and Life Member of our current group. He will be missed. In December we are pleased to be presenting awards to local students at Meredith and Lethbridge Primary schools, for their commitment to furthering environmental work at their school. This award is to honour the extensive work of our late treasurer and Life Member, John Stray and former secretary and Life Member, Lex Stray.

This year we have had some fantastic guest speakers at our bi-monthly meetings including Sophie Small (rabbit management), Craig Castree (soil health), John Gdak (GenU plant nursery), George Johnstone (managing stock on small properties), and Dan Frost (native seed collection). It has been terrific to connect with locals, through their attendance on guest speaker nights, and also at community days, such as the Bunjil's Lookout Community Gathering and Maude CFA day. We even managed to purchase a shiny new sandwich board sign, to advertise our meeting spot. Keep an eye out on Steiglitz Road, Maude!

We will be conducting our rabbit baiting campaign again in 2026. If you have evidence of rabbits obvious on your property, go out with a spotlight, or even a strong torch, and have a look around at night. Our program is conducted using Pindone-poisoned carrot. Pindone is an anticoagulant, which works by blocking the blood-clotting mechanism. It is regarded as one of the most humane ways to control rabbits. There is an effective antidote for this poison which reduces the risk to non-target animals. The baited

carrot is to be put out for three nights, over the week coinciding with the collection dates. The dates for our 2026 program are: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March. More information about 2026 pricing will be available soon.

Our final meeting for 2025 will be held on Thursday 11th December at the Maude Tennis Pavillion from 7:15pm. We welcome new members and would love to see you there for a chat and discussion of our events for 2026.

Contact Laura via email  
at [maudemeredithlandcare@gmail.com](mailto:maudemeredithlandcare@gmail.com) or check out our  
social media pages on facebook and instagram:  
<https://www.facebook.com/maudelandcare/>  
<https://www.instagram.com/maudemeredithlandcare/>

## THE TRAVELLER

As I rode in to Burrumbeet,  
I met a man with funny feet;  
And, when I paused to ask him why  
His feet were strange, he rolled his eye  
And said the rain would spoil the wheat;  
So I rode on to Burrumbeet.

As I rode in to Beetaloo,  
I met a man whose nose was blue;  
And when I asked him how he got  
A nose like that, he answered, What  
Do bullocks mean when they say 'Moo'?  
So I rode on to Beetaloo.

As I rode in to Ballarat,  
I met a man who wore no hat;  
And, when I said he might take cold,  
He cried, "The hills are quite as old  
As yonder plains, but not so flat."  
So I rode on to Ballarat.

As I rode in to Gundagai,  
I met a man and passed him by  
Without a nod, without a word.  
He turned, and said he'd never heard  
Or seen a man so wise as I.  
But I rode on to Gundagai.

As I rode homeward full of doubt,  
I met a stranger riding out:  
A foolish man he seemed to me;  
But, "Nay, I am yourself", said he,  
"Just as you were when you rode out"  
So I rode homeward, free of doubt.

Source: *Selected Verse of C J Dennis* published by Angus and Robertson Ltd 1961 (sixth reprint) Submitted by Janene Schiller



## COFFEE

Small	Medium	Large
\$4.50	\$5.00	\$5.50

Cappuccino

Latte

Flat White

Mocha

Long Black

Chai Latte

Hot Chocolate

**Instant Coffee, Tea, Chai Tea** \$3.50

Milkshakes \$9.50

Thickshakes \$12.50

Chocolate | Vanilla | Caramel | Strawberry  
Blue Heaven | Banana | Lime

Iced Coffee

**Small** \$6.50

**Large** \$8.50

**Decaf** \$0.50

**Extra shot** \$0.50

**Alternative milks** \$1.00

Soy | Almond | Oat | Lactose Free

## OPENING HOURS

**Monday** 6am to 7pm

**Tuesday** 6am to 7pm

**Wednesday** 6am to 7pm

**Thursday** 6am to 7pm

**Friday** 6am to 7:30pm

**Saturday** 7am to 7:30pm

**Sunday** 8am to 7pm

PHONE 03 5286 1556

Select option 4

26 Wallace St Meredith

Mortimer's  
Petroleum



## MEREDITH ROADHOUSE Take-Away Menu

*Fish  
and  
Chips*



Friday and Saturday  
Nights

## TOASTIES

Bacon and Egg \$6.50

Bacon and Egg Roll \$8.00

Bacon, Egg and Cheese Muffin \$7.50

Ham and Cheese \$4.80

Ham, Cheese, Tomato \$5.50

Bacon, Egg Breakfast \$9.00



## HAMBURGERS

**Cheese Burger** \$11.50  
Double Cheese, Sauce, Pickles

**Plain Burger** \$11.50  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato Sauce

**Hamburger with the Lot** \$13.50  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Bacon, Egg, Onion, Sauce

**Steak Sandwich** \$15.80  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Bacon, Egg, Onion, Sauce

**Chicken Schnitzel Burger** \$10.80  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Mayo

**Chicken Chili Wrap** \$13.50  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Sweet Chili Sauce

**Veggie Burger** \$7.50  
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Sauce

## FRESH SANDWICHES

Ham and Cheese \$4.50

Ham, Cheese, Tomato \$4.70

Ham, Cheese, Pickle \$4.50

Egg, Lettuce \$4.80

Ham, Salad \$7.50

Chicken Salad \$8.00

## FRESH ROLLS

Salad \$8.20

Ham, Salad \$8.50

Chicken Salad \$8.70



## FRIED FOOD

**Hot Chips- Bucket** \$3.00

Small Bag \$4.60

Large Bag \$7.20

Flake Battered \$9.00

Fish Battered \$4.00

Squid Rings \$0.90

Crab Stick \$1.20

Battered Sav \$4.00

Battered Burger \$4.60

Chicko Roll \$3.00

Spring Roll \$3.00

Mini Spring Roll \$1.60

Dim Sims- Steamed/Fried \$1.20

Chicken or Pork Dim Sims \$2.00

Potato Cakes \$1.40

Chicken Wing Dings \$2.20

Chicken Garlic Balls \$1.60

Chicken Strips \$2.20

Kransky \$3.50

Hot Jam Donuts \$1.20

**Chips and Gravy**

Small \$6.50

Large \$10.00

Cheese +\$1.50

**EXTRAS**

Beetroot, Pineapple \$1.00



# MONEY Matters



with Sandy Hoffmann

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR MANAGING YOUR MONEY

## A Christmas Gift from the government via tax.

The government at the last election, promoted the introduction of a once off 20% reduction in HECS debt. Well as promised the HECS cuts have started to land and student debts are about to feel lighter. People who have a HECS debt that wasn't paid off by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2025 will get a notice in their mygov account as soon as the 20% reduction takes place.

People who have done their tax return already for the 2025 Financial Year and have reduced their debt through their tax return will not be disadvantaged. The 20% is calculated on the debt that was on your account as at 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2025.

So, if you owed the average \$27,600, around \$5,500 will be wiped off. The best part you don't have to do anything to get the discount. It is automatically applied.

At this stage not all HECS debts have been reduced. The government is rolling the 20% reduction out in stages; they expect this to continue until early 2026.

If the 20% reduction ends up putting your account into a credit balance. They will refund the difference into your nominated bank account. Please go to mygov or speak to your accountant to ensure that your bank account details are up to date and correct if you think that your account balance will be in credit.

This is a brilliant gift especially for those who are applying for home loans. The HECS debt is calculated in your overall asset, liability serviceability ratio when applying for a bank loan.

## Household savings hack of the month:

Because Christmas is around the corner, I thought I would suggest two ideas.

First...is your birthday coming up? Sign up to your favourite stores as you may end up with a free gift or discount for your birthday. Just note that a lot require you to sign up at least the month before your special day. (If you don't like to be bombarded with advertisements, then simply unsubscribe after your birthday).

Second...if you are hosting Christmas, start food shopping as soon as possible and keep an eye on the specials. Make a list of the ingredients and note any that can be frozen ahead of time. Not only will it save you money but it will save your sanity ☐

From my family to yours we wish you all a very Merry Christmas. Thank you for allowing me to share my passion with you.

## Barwon Camino Group

*Marg Cooper*

On Saturday morning as I approached the Bottom Shop at Meredith, to pick up my newspaper a chap approaching from the opposite direction asked me if I was part of the Camino. He assumed that I was because I had calf length pants on and wore runners.

We spoke and he told me about that a group that he was part of were heading to Clipswood Park at Morrisons for a lengthy walk. The group was the Barwon Camino Group which consists of pilgrims who have walked the Camino in Spain, people who have done other long walks anywhere in the world, people who are planning such a walk and anyone else who just likes to walk.

The group which started about 6 years ago, gathers once a month for a walk of between 10 -14 kms somewhere in the Geelong, Bellarine Peninsula, Surf Coast region and also hold a bi monthly dinner with a guest speaker at a hotel in Geelong. Often the speaker talks about a walk that he or she has done.

The group has 284 members and 28 walked 11.7 kms at Clipswood Park on Saturday, November 15 with a stop for a barbeque lunch at Secret Valley. Denis told me that walking long walks like the Camino is addictive, that when you finish one walk you start planning the next adventure, that you meet kindred spirits and that there is lots of pleasure amidst a bit of pain.

Clipswood Park was a perfect place to walk. The front paddocks are clear but as one heads east there are more and more trees and bushes in small gullies around Eclipse Creek. Lance Wray bought 1400 acres in 1950 from Mrs Rhodes who also owned the property Moreep which was next door. Lance, a returned WW11 soldier did not want to be regulated by Soldier Settlement so bought his own farm that he told had been rejected by the Soldier Settlement Board as it was considered to be of no commercial value, inferior with no grass, grew only moss and had no buildings. The only asset on the property was a boundary fence. Lance with wife Marj and family of three girls transformed the property to make it a productive farm on which was produced super fine merino wool and many rams from the Clipswood Park stud including Lucky who won the finest ram in the world sire evaluation.

At lunchtime on the walk stories were told about Lance, the property and one of his workers. Cyril had escaped exploitation of his father in Gippsland and set up his tent on Clipswood Park. One time he cleared off to Steiglitz but Ralph Paulden and Lance thought he was a valuable man to have in the district so they went by truck to where he was camped, helped him load his tent and goods and brought him back. He worked for many years for people in the district and lived in a bush hut on Clipswood Park.

*Incredibly, we have TWO Carmino articles in this issue. Mary Foster's account of a REAL Camino Walk, is on page 28. - Ed.*







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Meredith Uniting Church, Christmas Eve Service

December 24<sup>th</sup>

5.30pm

All welcome.

## To Volunteers

When was the last time you had your faith restored in something or someone?

Every time I come back from a parliamentary sitting week and I have a meeting with a stakeholder – usually, a not-for-profit charity. Meeting people who are doing something good for others never fails to restore my confidence in humanity. They're good people, shameless idealists seeking neither glory nor recognition, just doing the hard work to help the world.

*Extract from a Benjamin Law interview with Larissa Waters MP, Melbourne Age 19/11/20*

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## OUR COVER

Our cover photo is an end of day view over the Stony Creek Reservoir, supplied by Owen Cook. Thanks Owen.



## PICKLEBALL AT ELAINE

If you are interested in playing pickleball come along for hit and giggle, to meet and greet, at Elaine Recreation Reserve Saturday 20th December at 2.00pm.

## NOTICE OF AGM

Meredith Racecourse and Recreation Reserve Committee

Meredith Golf Club, Midland Highway, Meredith

Dear Member,

This is to advise you of the upcoming Annual General Meeting of the members of The Meredith Racecourse and Recreation Committee. The details of this meeting are as follows:

Date: 15 December 2025

Time: 8pm

Place: Meredith Golf Club, Midland Hwy, Meredith 3331

Regards,  
Zena Downie

Secretary/Treasurer – 0472 727 483



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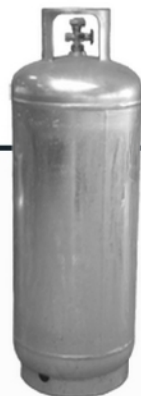
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### Outside Now

Warmer days are finally settling in, and the rain is still arriving in generous bursts. It's that classic late-spring mix — soft sunshine one moment and sudden showers the next — creating perfect growing conditions for just about everything. Gardens everywhere are surging with new life. Flowers are swelling, lawns are racing ahead, and the weeds... well, they are absolutely thriving.

### On Our Farm

The dahlias are almost all in now. Those that were planted a few weeks ago have started to push through their mounds of soil, sending up those fresh green shoots that always spark a little thrill. It's the earliest sign of the show to come — a promise of colour after months of planning, digging, and preparing.

We've planted more than enough to fill our new rows, so if you'd like to try growing a few in a sunny spot at home, feel free to reach out — we're always happy to share and spread the dahlia love.

Another exciting milestone this month: our revegetation corridors are complete. These new plantings help realise a long-held dream — a koala corridor linking our property's natural belts with those of our neighbours. It's a gentle but meaningful step towards restoring habitat, encouraging wildlife movement, and building a more resilient farm ecosystem.

The chrysanthemum cuttings are also potted up and settling in well. They're still small but growing sturdier each day. Once they gain a little more size, they'll be transplanted into the beds, where they'll become the backbone of our late-season arrangements.

### Weed Prevention with Safe Remedies

With the warmth and ongoing rainfall, everything is growing — including the plants determined to grow where you'd prefer they didn't. These "volunteers," as some gardeners politely call them (or "weeds," as we mutter), are thriving with the same enthusiasm as our intentional plantings.

Because we avoid harmful chemicals and pesticides on the farm, we've tried many different techniques to manage the ever-expanding sea of green. Some have been brilliant. Others... character-building. Here's what we've learned:

### Weed Mat

Each winter, after preparing the soil with compost and amendments, we lay a layer of mulch and then cover the rows with weed mat. This prevents weeds from stealing nutrients and dramatically reduces maintenance throughout the season. While there's ongoing debate about using plastics, we reuse the same mats for many years, and their effectiveness still outweighs the drawbacks for our system. In a home garden, weed mat works well too — though it's best hidden beneath

mulch for appearance's sake.

### Straw Mulch

We've had wonderful success using straw from a local wheat farmer — it forms a thick, breathable barrier that suppresses weeds beautifully. Unfortunately, this season there's been a shortage, with much of the available straw diverted to livestock feed. For a home garden, pea straw from the local hardware store is an excellent option and breaks down into lovely organic matter.

### Torching

A weed-wand blowtorch is a surprisingly satisfying tool for knocking off tiny soft-leaf seedlings before they take hold. It's quick, chemical-free, and effective on new growth. However, it's no match for onion grass (which regrows from bulbs) or creeping grasses that spread by runners.

### Cardboard and Mulch

In previous seasons, we laid recycled cardboard (with all tape and plastic removed) along our flower-bed paths and topped it with woodchip mulch from local arborists. It worked wonderfully... briefly. The cardboard broke down faster than expected, and soon enough the grasses returned. Still, it added valuable organic matter to the soil and fed the worms — a long-term win, even if short-term weed suppression was limited.

### Homemade Weed Spray

Many gardeners swear by a mix of white vinegar, salt, and dish soap. It can be effective, but salt can accumulate in soil and create long-term issues. Because our soil is something we're actively improving, we've opted not to use this method (at least for now).

### Or... Embrace Them

And finally, the unexpected approach: acceptance. There's a saying that a perfectly tidy house belongs to a boring person — perhaps a perfectly weed-free garden belongs to someone who isn't gardening at all, but simply concreting!

Weeds feed bees. "Unwanted" grasses add organic matter. Sorrel and other deep-rooted plants help break up stubborn clay.

So instead of waging war, look above the weeds to the blooms rising proudly above them. If you squint, it's all green anyway. And after all, the flowers are the whole point — and they're thriving.



I'm only a morning person  
on December 25th.



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Wendy Cook

It rested on my leg, a butterfly soaking up sunshine. I had never before had a chance to examine a living butterfly so closely. With wings spread to gather warmth, the most obvious feature was their colours. Much of its forewings (the wings closest to its head) were bright orange-brown with black markings. The portions furthest from the brown furry body were black with white blotches. The rear edges of these wings were patterned with black and white. On the hindwings, the dull brown of its body merged with orange-brown and black patterns. The edges were marked delicately with these two colours and white. In from this border was a row of black circles, surprisingly, filled with a pale but obvious blue. The butterfly remained still, the dark eyes on the sides of its head facing away from me, its white-tipped antennae stretching outwards. I studied it carefully until it flew, memorising its colours and patterns, hoping to identify it later. Indoors, aided by the internet, I learned that it was an Australian Painted Lady, one of the group of butterflies known as browns.

Australian Painted Ladies are among the first species of butterflies to be seen in spring. Over the following months, other butterflies emerge, including several more species of browns. In most of these, males and females look the same or have subtle differences in wing patterns. One of our common species of brown butterflies, the Common Brown, does things differently. The male's wings are orange-brown with black markings, darkest close to the wings' edges and fading to the same dull brown as its body where they join it. Towards the outer edge of each wing, is a black circle surrounded by an orange-brown circle. The centre is shaded blue, similar to the spots on the Australian Painted Lady's wings. These circles could be mistaken for an eye, and startle a predator for a moment, allowing the butterfly a chance of escape. It is a marking seen on the wings of many of the brown butterflies. The female Common Brown also has these circles, known as eyespots, but otherwise her appearance is quite different.

Female Common Browns are noticeably larger than the males. Their wings are orange-brown close to their body, with black only appearing further out. They have three creamy patches in the black portion of their forewings. In flight, they are easily seen and recognised, but if they rest on the ground with their wings folded upwards, only the undersides can be seen. Then, both the females and males seem to disappear. This side of their wings are subtly patterned in dull browns and greys, and blend with leaf litter or bark.

For much of the butterfly season, only the males or only the females are seen. In the middle of spring, both emerge from chrysalises on the ground, the males earlier than the females. While searching for a mate, the males are visible,

sometimes flying in large groups. After they have mated, the females find a cool place to rest for the summer, and survive on the fat stores in their bodies. The males feed from flowers, and sap oozing from tree branches. By the time the females begin actively feeding in autumn, the males have died. Now, the females lay their eggs, one at a time or in small groups, on or near grasses that are suitable food for their caterpillars. After hatching, the green caterpillars stay out of sight during the day, and feed at night. In early spring, they pupate and become butterflies, continuing the life cycle of their species.

Many of the brown butterflies have orange-brown and black patterns on the upper surfaces of their wings, but the undersides can be quite variable between species. One butterfly I always enjoy seeing is the Ringed Xenica. Its upper surface is brighter than many of the other brown butterflies. Underneath, rather than a camouflage pattern, it has three large eyespots surrounded by cream and brown markings, as if its aim is to scare predators rather than hide from them. It is often found in grassy areas in shady gullies, and flies slowly so it is easy to have a good look at it. Recognising it and giving it a name, means that I can learn more about it, its habits, where it likes to live and what its caterpillars eat. Since I identified that first Australian Painted Lady, I have become familiar with several species of brown butterflies. Some are challenging to recognise, but it adds interest to the hot days of summer to find different species emerging, and to realise that other species will not be seen again until next year.

*We have (humanely) pressed an Australian Painted Lady butterfly on to page 31, so you can see her in all her glory. - Ed.*



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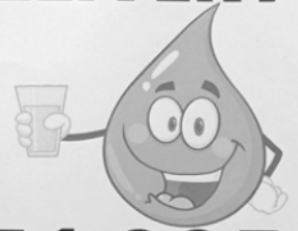
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## Jess and Asher's Monthly Puzzle



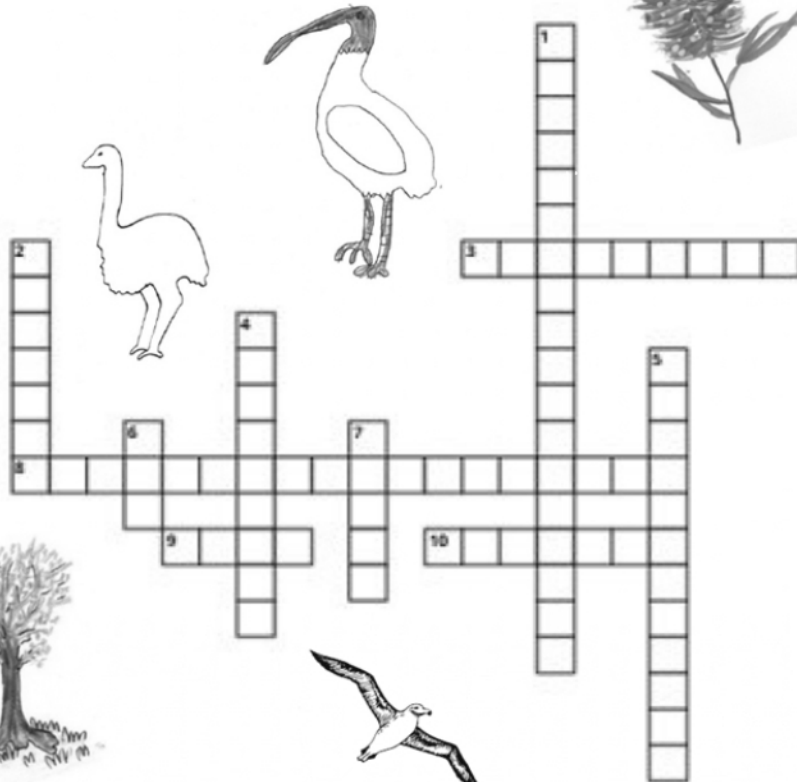
### Bird Crossword

#### Across

- [3] White bird with a long black bill  
[8] Victoria's bird emblem  
[9] Birds lay these  
[10] When some birds fly long distances over winter

#### Down

- [1] Largest flying bird  
[2] Largest Bird  
[4] Most well known bird in North American  
[5] Large red bird only found in South America  
[6] Largest Bird in Australia  
[7] When birds lose feathers



## the Philatelist

Michael Riseley



### ANTARCTICA

In 1898 Carsten Borchgrevink led a Norwegian/British expedition of 10 hardy explorers to Antarctica and constructed the first Antarctic building at Cape Adare. The hut must have been well built because it is still standing. Then in 1903 the British William Bruce expedition built a permanent stone building at Laurie Island. In 1906 it was gifted to Argentina on condition that the scientific mission was continued. Which it did and was used as a base by many scientist explorers.

All was quite peaceful and non-political until just before WW11 German aircraft dropped markers with swastikas over parts of Antarctica. It was an attempt to create a territorial claim which the Germans would call New Swabia. In 1943 the British launched Operation Taborin to establish a British presence. They were afraid of Argentinian sympathies towards Germany.

Bases were established at Deception Bay where the Argentine flag was taken down and the Union Jack hoisted and also at Port Lockroy and Hope Bay. The Argentines never forgot nor forgave and this partly fuelled the Falklands War several decades later.

After the war there was massive expansion in international interest and activity in Antarctica. This eventually led to the Antarctic Treaty first signed 1st December 1959 by the 12 main countries involved. They were Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, NZ, Norway, South Africa, Soviet Union, UK and USA. The agreement was for the continuation of peaceful scientific research which would be shared by the signatories. And that mining was forbidden and nuclear testing banned. The Treaty has expanded to now include 54 member countries many of whom have established permanent bases. 7 of those countries have territorial claims. They are Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, NZ, Norway and UK.

But where does philately come in. Well 4 of those 7 countries issue specific stamps for their territories – Australian Antarctic Territory from 1957, British Antarctic Territory from 1963, French Southern and Antarctic Territory from 1955 and Ross Dependency (NZ) from 1957. These stamps serve as official postage for mail originating from their research stations and territories and mark and reinforce their territorial claims.

Most of the member countries have issued stamps to commemorate the anniversaries of the Treaty, famous explorers, their part in Antarctic research or Antarctic scenery and wildlife. And sometimes together to reinforce the spirit of scientific cooperation. In 1990 Australia and Russia both issued the same set of 2 stamps.

For the thematic philatelist, Antarctic stamps make a very interesting and attractive collection with lots of history, seals, penguins and not surprisingly, ice.



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## Marg's Book Review

### On the Wool Track by C.E.W. Bean.

In early November, 2025 Jeff and I visited Dunlop Station near Louth in NSW for morning tea and a tour. We drove south from Bourke on the road on the west side of the Darling River and arrived just before 11am to be greeted by Kim Chandler who owns 2177 acres of the former station, which once consisted of 1 million acres. She and her family are working to preserve and restore the buildings and to keep the story of Dunlop Station alive.

Kim told us about the history of the Station while we enjoyed morning tea on the wide enclosed veranda of the house and then we looked through the house which was built with 16 bedrooms, were taken to the big stone store on the banks of the Darling River and then to the shearing shed that had stands for 45 blade shearers and was the first shed in Australia to undertake a full station shearing with the new [and initially controversial] Wolseley machines.

Sir Samuel McCaughey acquired the lease of Dunlop Station from his uncle Sir Samuel Wilson in 1880. [Wilson had the lease of Narmbool at Elaine from 1861 until early 1870's]. Sir Samuel McCaughey and his brothers also had other properties near Dunlop Station totaling over 3 million acres. Apparently, he built the shearing shed, then the store and lastly the house and had over 500 people working for him.

Kim mentioned that Charles Bean had included a lot of information about Dunlop Station in the book that he called *On the Wool Track* that he wrote in 1909. This book tells of an interesting part of Australia at an interesting stage.

The articles on which this book is based were written for the Sydney Morning Herald. Charles Bean, a youngish reporter was told that the newspaper wanted a series of articles about the wool industry because the great wool industry counted for more than other agricultural pursuits and was being unduly ignored. He decided to focus on the men, the qualities, worries and occupations of these outstanding national types. So, the writer followed the great industry of Australia down the long track from the farthest fenced areas out in the red country in NSW to the looms in the whirring factories on the coast.

The author tells of the homesteads which were really small townships, of the river boats that brought the stores and took the wool, of scouring works on the stations, of how sheep were brought to the shearing sheds and of the work that everyone did in the shed and outside etc. He also tells how tough conditions were in the outback: from 1889 for four years rainfall was of about 20 inches which resulted in floods, then for several years there was average rainfall of perhaps twelve inches and then seventeen months when less than two inches fell. In 1894 Dunlop Station shored 276,300 sheep but from 1900 they didn't shear many more than 100,000 sheep.

Interestingly, Michelle Grattan traced the footsteps of C.E.W. Bean and wrote a book in 2004 in which she paints a more modern picture of outback Australia. [I'll read that next!]



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- CFA Website: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)
- VicEmergency Hotline: 1800 226 226
- ABC Radio: Tune in for emergency updates
- VicEmergency App: Download on your smartphone for real-time alerts



*Compiled by Michael Riseley*

### Random

1. How many colours in the rainbow?
2. What animal is a bottlenose?
3. A type of hawk but it can also fly with strings attached.
4. A cheerful radio OK or a pirate flag.
5. Which African country was home for freed slaves?
6. Who was known as The Little Corporal?
7. What is the 2nd tallest land animal?
8. What 2 fruits are in 2 Fruits?

### You Want Answers?

1. 7, 2. Dolphin, 3. Kite, 4. Jolly Roger, 5. Liberia,
6. Napoleon, 7. Elephant, 8. Pear & peach



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## Our Australian Champion

*Virginia Cooper*

Lucinda Cooper, a 13 year old resident of She Oaks, through hard work and determination, earned the right to represent "Team Victoria" in the "Horsland Australian Interschools Championships"; that was held in Sydney at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC) for Dressage.

Lucinda was one of 144 school students that made the Victorian Team, and had to travel with their horses to SIEC.

The Competition ran for five days, while all the top ranked equestrian students from all over Australia fought it out. There were over 700 horses at the complex, so it was a logistical challenge.

The opening and closing ceremonies, and presentations were held in the same arena as the 2000 Sydney Olympics and a sight to see.

Lucinda had to compete in two dressage tests and we are please to let you all know that she came away with the title of "Australian Champion".

Lucinda was also a part of the most successful Dressage team in Australia taking home the title of Australian Reserve Team Champion.

Lucinda was one of only six Victorians that came home with the title "Australia Champion".

Her beautiful pony is "KRP Bonanza", born and raised in Lethbridge by Kathy Reynolds.

She is a nine year old Welsh Cross Riding Pony and stands 13.2 Hands. Lucinda has owned the pony for nearly three years.

We would like to thank the sponsors "Horseland" for running this massive event. And we would also like to thank our two coaches who are also local to the area: Jess Payne (Payne Equine) Staughton Vale /Anakie and Lucy Kolomanski (Arcadia\_Farm) Sutherlands Creek

*Team Victoria sponsors were JnK clothing, Capall Equestrian, Exclusive Floats and Coles. Lucinda's personal sponsors were HH Equestrian and Polished Ponies Australia.*

---

*This is a wonderful achievement and we extend our hearty congratulations to Lucinda - Ed.*



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# it's History

Meredith History Interest Group

## Calendars:

The 2026 calendars are for sale at the History Centre and make a wonderful inexpensive Christmas gift at \$15.00 each. The calendars this year feature old concrete or wooden Guide Posts and the one remaining mile post between Ballarat and Geelong.

They are available from Woolabrai in Meredith, the Farmgate Shop at Elaine, the Railway Station at Lethbridge and the History Centre in Meredith.

All proceeds will be used by MHIG to continue to collect and share history.

## Nolans of Cargerie:

When well-known Meredith identity John (or Jack to some) Nolan died in 2017, his wife Mary decided it would be a good idea to have a book written about the Nolans of Cargerie. She chose Meredith History Group member and author Peter Griffiths to write it.

John was the last direct link to the land selected by his great grandfather Peter in the 1860s. Peter Nolan was the fifth of 12 children of an Irish tenant farmer. All of the family came to Victoria eventually but Peter was the only one to remain at Cargerie.

The *Nolans of Cargerie* is a fascinating account of how an illiterate Irish land selector built up a successful farm still in the family name after 160 years. It is not just a dreary family history, but really the tale of a district with its openings and closings of schools, the changes in farming techniques and the coming of the motor car.

Peter's son John kept a diary for some 30 years which gives a fascinating insight into times in the district around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The diary was the source of many anecdotes regarding the ups and downs of farming and family life. There is also a direct link to the Eureka Stockade battle, stories of a few 'black sheep', and the later development of the Meredith Music Festival on Nolan land.

You can read all about this remarkable family in the new book which is available at the History Centre for \$25.00 each. There are some wonderful photos including the shearing team at *Mungadal* Station near Hay in NSW in 1923 which included Bill and Jim Nolan. You can see in the photo where Chris Nolan gets his good looks from.

## Annual Meeting:

The Annual Meeting of MHIG is to be held on Sunday, March 1 and we have asked David Rowe who is Director of a Heritage Consultancy Company, Authentic Heritage Services to be our guest speaker. He is consultant heritage advisor to the City of Greater Geelong, Golden Plains Shire, Surf Coast Shire and Borough of Queenscliffe.

## Sculpture Exhibition:

Once again we are asking everyone to make sculptures for an exhibition/competition at the History Centre in May 2026. We are giving you plenty of notice to start work and to make something amazing!

The theme will again be *History Reconstructed* because we can't come up with anything better!

## Matt Cooper:

Matt has just bought his first camera. He took several photos of Elaine NOW for our recent exhibition and over that weekend sold his photos and cards made with his photos to help fund his new camera. His support worker Lee Considine is teaching him how to use the camera and how to produce great photos.

MHIG has invited Matt, under Lee's supervision to record businesses in Meredith by photographing people at work. So if you are approached in the near future, please smile and help Matt to develop his skills and produce work for an exhibition at MHIG next year.

## New Flyer:

To further promote MHIG a flyer has been produced and printed which contains everything you need to know about MHIG including that our aim is to Research, Publish and Preserve the history of Meredith and District.

## Community Group Workshop:

The Ballarat East Neighbourhood House joined with Community Bank Buninyong to host a free, all-day workshop at Buninyong Community Centre on Friday, November 21 for anyone involved in community groups. The topics covered were *grant writing, budgets, volunteers and modern communications*.

Marg Cooper attended, learnt a lot from the speakers and also enjoyed meeting and hearing about the experiences of other community groups whose representatives also attended.

## Christmas:

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and lots of exciting history in the New Year!

# Three Brothers

Three brothers, the sons of Richard and Harriet Rebecca East of Willowbank, Elaine went to World War 1. Only one came home.

Joseph Thomas East died on Friday, October 12, 1917. His unit was the 12th Coy, Machine Gun Corps and was killed in action at Passchendaele, Ypres, Belgium. There is no known grave.

Ernest East, of 24th Bn. Australian Infantry, died on Tuesday, October 9, 1917. He was killed in action at Daisy Wood, France.

Edward East of the 60th Battalion, 2nd Reinforcement. Returned to Australia on August 24, 1918 and operated a garage in Elaine and in Meredith.

A photo of Richard and Harriet East displayed at the Elaine Photo Exhibition shows Harriet wearing a badge which we suspect that was worn with pride in memory of her two lost sons.

It was the *Female Relative Badge* and was issued during WW1 to the nearest female relative of soldiers, airmen and nurses who left Australia for active service abroad. The badge represented one person and each bar represented additional relatives involved in the war effort.





## The TINY Survey - Findings

*Nerida Anderson*

In the October edition of the Meredith News we asked our readers to take part in a TINY survey to tell us what they thought about the News. We asked just two questions: "How often do you read the Meredith News?" and "Which parts of the Meredith News are of particular interest to you?"

Thank you to all the readers who responded to the survey, and congratulations to the three lucky winners of the \$50 vouchers.

Overall, the responses received were very encouraging, with the majority of respondents (76%) reading the News thoroughly every month. The News was particularly valued for information relating to local news - events that have happened, including the school report and police report, and what's on including future events. Also very highly valued are the regular columns, local community information - what people are doing in the community, local community information - what people are doing in the community, local history, including stories about people in the past/obituaries, services available - advertising, local history, including stories about people or events in the past, and information about clubs and activities.

We also received many encouraging comments and suggestions, for which we are very appreciative. Next year the Meredith and District News celebrates its 50th year of publication. Although the format and content of the News has changed markedly over the past 50 years it is clear the News still plays an important role as a source of local information for the Meredith and district community.

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## The Science Behind Hay Fires

Spontaneous combustion in hay occurs when internal heat builds up to the point of ignition as a result of microbial activity and chemical reactions. Unlike fires caused by lightning or machinery, spontaneous combustion is insidious: it starts deep within a haystack and can smoulder unnoticed until it erupts into flames.

### How do spontaneous combustions happen?

Hay is an organic material rich in sugars, proteins, and moisture - ideal conditions for microbial growth. When hay is baled too wet or stored before it has fully cured, bacteria and fungi begin to break down the plant matter. This microbial activity then generates heat.

### What are the risk factors?

- High moisture content: hay baled with more than 20% moisture is at risk. Mould growth and fermentation cures when moisture levels are between 20-35%
- Dense packing: tightly packed bales trap heat and moisture, accelerating microbial activity
- Poor ventilation: lack of airflow prevents heat from dispersing
- Environmental conditions: warm, humid weather
- Storage practices: storing hay in enclosed barns or sheds without monitoring.

### What to look out for:

Early detection is crucial. Farmers should regularly inspect haystacks for signs of heating:

- Steam rising from the stack
- Musty, caramel, or tobacco-like odours
- Mould growth on or inside bales
- Condensation or corrosion under roofing
- Slumping or deformation of the stack.

Using a temperature probe or inserting a metal rod (like a crowbar) into the stack can be used to detect internal heat. If the rod feels hot to the touch after removal, the hay may be dangerously warm, and action should be taken.

### Prevention

- Allow hay to dry completely before baling and monitor moisture levels using a moisture meter. Ideal moisture content for small square bales is 18-20%, large square bales: 12-15% and round bales: 15-18%. When making sure hay is cured properly, also test plant nodes and leaf sheaths for hidden moisture.
- Use temperature probes or wireless sensors to track internal bale temperatures. If temperatures exceed 55°C, monitor closely. At 71°C, consider separating bales and increasing ventilation.
- Store hay in well-ventilated areas. Avoid stacking bales too tightly.
- Store damp or suspect bales separately. Monitor them more frequently and avoid placing them near dry hay.
- Smaller stacks reduce heat accumulation. Leave space between stacks and walls for air circulation.
- Ensure roofs, spouts, and drainage systems prevent water from reaching hay. Cover stacks with breathable tarps if stored outdoors.
- Modern sensor systems can provide real-time data on hay temperature and humidity, helping farmers make informed decisions and prevent fires before they start.

### What to do if you find heating hay:

- Pull apart the stack to release heat and moisture
- Move bales outdoors if possible
- Call 000 if smoke or fire is visible
- Keep fire suppression tools (hoses, extinguishers) nearby.

Never attempt to extinguish a hay fire alone. Fires can reignite and spread rapidly.

*Supplied by agriculture.vic.gov.au. Contact the Department for more information.*



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## Vale Robert McColl

*Bridget Dyer (nee McColl)*

Robert McColl was born on Melbourne Cup Day, 3 November 1959, at Baxter House in Geelong to Betty and Bill McColl. His father worked as a stock agent for Elders, and Rob grew up in the Elders house next to the merchandise store (now a pharmacy).

Rob spent his childhood in Meredith, roaming the countryside with his best mate Glen Miller, rabbiting, fishing, and getting into mischief. He shared a close bond with his uncle John “Jacko” McColl, who taught him to shoot and bought him his first gun. Rob also enjoyed duck shooting trips with friends Colin Beel and John Hunt. He attended Meredith Primary School and North Geelong Secondary College before starting a carpentry apprenticeship at 16 with local builder Neil Hart.

At 21, Rob bought his first home in Meredith and not long after moved to Dareton for fruit picking. This move changed his life—he met Elizabeth Harrison in March 1981. Rob quickly decided Liz was “the one,” and despite her initial thoughts of friendship, he convinced her otherwise. They married on 24 January 1982, less than a year after meeting. After a year in Dareton, they returned to Meredith, buying Jacko’s home on Wallace Street. Rob renovated extensively, adding a second story while living in a caravan.

Rob managed Keith McColl’s farm from 1994, as well as his own and helped his father. He was a fifth generation of McColl farmers in the area and took great pride in the fact that all of his four children (Bridget, Courtney, Angus and Madeline) live in the area with their children and are interested in the farm.

In 1992, a routine check revealed Rob needed a mechanical titanium aortic valve. Liz was six months pregnant with their youngest, Maddy, during his surgery. While recovering, Rob became president of the Meredith/Bamganie Landcare Group and poured his energy into improving the land he loved. Rob spearheaded programs for weed control (serrated tussock and gorse), rabbit baiting, erosion management, and replanting native species. He worked tirelessly to secure grants, organize whole-farm planning courses, and motivate landholders to adopt sustainable practices. Rob also partnered with Midway to establish blue gum plantations and nurtured junior Landcare projects with Meredith Primary School, involving water monitoring and tree planting.

His efforts earned him the **National Landcare Individual Award for Victoria (1996)**—a recognition of his personal commitment to restoring degraded land and inspiring others to do the same. Rob didn’t just improve his own farm; he created a ripple effect across the district. In 2002, he received the **ANZAC of the Year Award** for “exceptional service to the Australian community demonstrating compassion, endurance and dedication.” Landcare was Rob’s passion, and his legacy lives on through his daughters Bridget and Madeline, who served as secretaries and junior secretaries. Madeline and Angus also remain active in the Maude/Meredith Landcare Group. Rob was recently honoured with a lifetime membership for his decades of service.

Rob also served as president of the Meredith Tennis Club (1997–2003), volunteering tirelessly and helping secure funding to upgrade all six courts. When poor workmanship threatened the project, Rob and the secretary fought for 18 months to ensure proper completion—a result still enjoyed today. His volunteering extended to the Meredith Music Festival Tucker Tent, where for many years the whole family pitched in. Today, all three of his daughters continue his tennis legacy serving on the Meredith Tennis club committee. Rob also loved seeing his grandchildren on the courts, with all of the grandchildren who are old enough, playing tennis on a Saturday and some on Thursday nights as well.

Rob and Liz celebrated their 20th anniversary with a three-week trip to Hungary, Turkey, and Austria, attending a dawn service at Gallipoli. This was a meaningful moment given he had two family members serve, with only his grandfather returning.

Rob’s other notable holidays were the trip he and Liz took on The Ghan from Inverleigh to Darwin for their 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary and going to Tasmania, which he had always wanted to do. They got to Tasmania in 2024 and Rob took great pleasure in eating his way around the island.

Rob had a passion for fishing, great food, meeting new people, and engaging in conversation. He leaves behind a lasting legacy of community service, a loving family—including ten grandchildren, who will greatly miss him—and a spirit of generosity.



## PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

*Mary Foster*

On Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup>, Fr. Joseph and eighteen of his parishioners and friends set off on a pilgrimage through Greece and Turkey 'Following the Footsteps of Saint Paul'. Saul of Tarsus was a devout Roman Jew who initially persecuted the followers of The Way, the new Christian movement. Losing his sight after meeting the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus, he journeyed on, a changed man. After he regained his sight, he became known as Paul and spent time in the desert preparing to preach the Gospel.

We arrived in Athens where we stayed for two nights. Our first trip was to the ancient city of Corinth, where we explored the ruins and walked on roads built by Julius Caesar. Back in Athens, we climbed the marble streets of the Acropolis, examined the magnificence of the Parthenon then descended to the Aeropagus where Paul preached to the Greeks about their statue to the unknown God.

The following day we travelled to Kalambaka to the famous Meteora Monasteries perched hundreds of metres above ground atop massive sandstone rock pillars, where hermits sought isolation in the eleventh century. Six of the original eighteen monasteries are open today.

Our next stop was a bus tour of Thessaloniki where our guide explained to us that attending university in Greece is free, with accommodation and meals provided. Greeks pay 46% tax, half of this funds education. Travelling on to Phillipi, named after Phillip of Macedon the father of Alexander the Great, we walked along more ancient streets and saw a prison cell where Paul was held. Our final stop in Greece was Kavala, our hotel very close to a pebbly beach where at last we could set foot in the Aegean Sea. Mainland Greece is very mountainous and anywhere you go, there are wonderful vistas to enjoy.

The next day we travelled to the Ipsala Border Crossing into Turkey, saying goodbye to our wonderful Greek guide, Tina and our bus driver, Yannis. After lunch we went to Gallipoli, Anzac Cove and Lone Pine (smaller than I imagined), where Fr. Joseph offered Mass in the cemetery and we prayed for the thousands of souls lost in that conflict.

The following day began in Troy where we photographed the wooden horse used in the Brad Pitt movie, and learned that each time the ancient city was destroyed it was rebuilt on the same site. Excavations show that this has happened at least ten times over the centuries.

Onward to Askelepron, to Galen's Centre for Healing (an ancient hospital), then to Pergamum, another place where Paul was imprisoned for preaching the Gospel.

The next day we travelled from Kudhasi to Ephesus, a once magnificent city that was the third largest in the empire, and a centre for trade. We walked for miles on marble paving and were blown away by the size and splendour of the ruins.

A new day started with a long drive to Istanbul, a city of 18 million! Stopping on the way at a market to buy traditional hand made pottery and to discover the wonders of true Turkish Delight in all its flavours and colours.

We also visited a couple of mosques, head scarves and shoe removal required. The Green Mosque is where the Sultan and his family are buried, the children's sarcophagi lined up behind their father's. Our last day in Istanbul was very full, visiting the famous Sophia Hagia, The Basilica Cistern, Grand Bazaar and the magnificent Blue Mosque. Our final activity was a boat ride on the Bosphorus Sea, where we could view some of the amazing buildings in the city before climbing aboard our bus, and travelling to the airport.

Our days were very full, our hotels wonderful and the food delicious. We marvelled at the antiquity of all we saw and the skill of the ancient craftsmen. The Missionary Journeys of St. Paul were extensive and we were very blessed to travel to just some of the places he visited.

## Moving House

The diaries of Annie MacGillivray tell that it was a wet morning on Anzac Day 1918 when a service was held at Mt Doran State School No 1614, and the Roll of Honour was unveiled.

On that same day Jack's [MacGillivray] house, from Stalkers, arrived from Elaine, carried by the contractors A McGregor and Son.

The Roll of Honour was displayed at the Elaine Photo Exhibition together with a copy of Annie MacGillivray's diaries. Also in our collection is the account for shifting the house kindly donated by Fay Hedt who later owned and lived in the house. It cost 15 pounds to shift!



What type of photos do elves take?

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## YOUTH AND FAMILY COMMUNITY CINEMA

The Anglican Churches of Inverleigh, Bannockburn, and Meredith, known as Golden Plains Anglicans, with the assistance of a grant funded by the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, have established a Community Cinema in the Church of the Epiphany, Meredith for Children, Youth and their Families.

The Cinema will be free and located in the Church of the Epiphany, Wallace Street (Midland Highway) Meredith, open 6.00 pm, Tuesdays during school holidays. All films will be age-appropriate family movies (General or Parental Guidance). (CVLI # 61106)

Golden Plains Anglicans is a Safe Community Parish. All volunteers assisting in the operation of the cinema have undertaken our approved Safe Community Training, Working with Children Training, hold a current Working With Children Card, and a National Police Check. To maintain a safe environment for children and families we request that adults who are not accompanying children do not attend.

Free drink and popcorn will be available, however, if you would like to make a donation to the running of the cinema, donation boxes will be available.

Possible viewings this coming Summer Holidays are as shown.

We look forward to hosting you and your family at our Youth and Family Community Cinema sponsored by The Melbourne Anglican Foundation and Golden Plains Anglicans.



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30th December



6th January



13th January



20th January



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[news@meredithnews.com.au](mailto:news@meredithnews.com.au)

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*G'day from the penners for the last time in 2025. How the year has flown! All the members of our group would like to wish you all, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and we all look forward to 2026 and a bunch of new stories for you to enjoy.*

*Thanks to the Golden Plains Shire's, Community Strengthening grant, we will be producing a new Anthology in 2026, and we are very excited, but more on that next year!*

*This month's story is from me, written earlier this year as a homework prompt, we hope you like it. We will be having a break over the holiday period but we'll be back at it in January, so if you would like to contact us, to give feedback on any of our stories or to come and see what we are about, please contact us via our email [goldenpens4@gmail.com](mailto:goldenpens4@gmail.com)*

Regards

Wendy.

Vikki was walking down the street, just minding her own business, she was having a lovely day doing a bit of shopping, but mostly just looking in the windows at all the lovely things she wished she could have. But Vikki was just a young girl, trying to get by on the minimum wage, so she didn't have any excess cash for all that frivolous stuff, as much as she would like it. Maybe one day when her ship came in... she laughed to herself, remembering the old saying her mother used to say when she was little and she asked for something extravagant.

But Vikki didn't mind really, she was happy with her lot, and she was only young, things would improve for her eventually and until then she would live within her means.

She tried to avoid the areas where the homeless folk congregated, though she felt sorry for them, she also thought that many of them were just free loaders trying it on, looking for a sucker who would part with their cash at any sob story.

So, when a youngish girl stumbled into her whilst she was looking elsewhere it was a bit of a shock. This girl didn't seem much younger than her but she was in a mess, her hair was dishevelled, her clothes looked like she had slept in them for weeks and she just looked horrible. Vikki didn't mean to stare at her but she felt compelled to.

The girl stared right back at her and quickly asked Vikki if she had a dollar or two to spare, she was hungry and thirsty, she hadn't eaten since the day before and could she help?

Vikki first response was to say "No, sorry, I don't have any change", the girl looked down and she started to cry. This was unexpected, and Vikki didn't know how to respond. Was it just part of her ploy to evoke sympathy or

was she really in need.

"I'm sorry, so sorry, here let me look to see if I have anything"

Vikki started rummaging through her bag and she found a few coins right at the bottom.

"Look, this is all I have." she held out the coins, a total of \$5 in gold and some silver.

"I don't have any spare money as I'm broke myself, I live week to week and things are pretty tight, it's all I can do." She told the girl apologetically.

"That's OK, I understand all too well," the girl responded.

But Vikki wasn't sure how to take that comment. Was she just being sarcastic? Or did she really understand the situation Vikki was in.

"Here, let me buy you some food, there is a café just around the corner, and I have my credit card, I can put it on the never never."

Vikki didn't really think the girl would accept but she did and thankfully. So, the two of them went to the café, ordered a nice lunch and after several cups of hot tea Vikki had learned the girl's tragic story.

Her parents had kicked her out because she was going out with a boy they didn't approve of, and then she lost her job, her boyfriend gave her the flick because she didn't have money anymore, so she had nowhere to live and her parents refused to let her come home. But she was hopeful of a new job soon and then she might be able to get a room in a share house. She still had some positivity about herself and Vikki was impressed with that.

When they parted Vikki gave the girl, who's name was Sue, her phone number and promised her help whenever she could.

Vikki and Sue became fast friends and Vikki helped Sue find a job at her work and things began to improve for her.

After many, many years the women would often regale their friends and family, with the story of how they met, and how they had become the best of friends in a friendship that would last forever.



The deadline for copy is  
**9.00 am on the  
last Thursday**  
of the preceding month





Brace Yourself for the Bon Bon!

Why are Christmas trees bad at knitting? They always drop their needles.

What's an elf's favorite musical genre? Wrap music.

What do you call a snowman with a six-pack?  
An abdominal snowman.

What do gingerbread men use when they hurt their ankle? Candy canes.

## 49 ...and counting.

Well, this is our 49th year done. We hope you have enjoyed getting a close look at the rather complex process of producing and supporting our community newsletter. We have met and heard from some of our committee members, production staff, contributors, advertising, accounts and distribution volunteers as well as our all important advertisers.

Next year we launch into our 50th year and plan to make something of it. We will put aside some pages in every issue to showcase our beginnings and evolution over the decades, with notable snippets, covers and photos. We will also feature Marg Cooper's account of the newsletter's history, along with interviews with some of our past volunteers which will reach all the way back to our first issues.

So please join us as we roll out our fiftieth (and perhaps final) year of newsletters created by and for the residents of Meredith and District. - Ed.



On November 29th, around 100 guests gathered for the beautiful garden wedding of long time local Judy Emond and Brett Bridges. (Yes, the Prime Minister tried to steal the limelight, but as you can see, Judy and Brett only had eyes for each other.) We wish them both a long and happy life together.



Australian Painted Lady, Wikipedia, photo by Vanessa kershawi.  
See Wendy Cook's article on page 16.





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Authorised by Catherine King MP,  
5 Lydiard St Nth, VIC Ballarat 3550



Golden Plains Shire Council is proud to support the local business community this festive season by encouraging residents, visitors and individuals passing through our Shire to prioritise shopping with local business.

For more on Council's *Buy Local This Festive Season* campaign, visit [goldenplains.vic.gov.au](http://goldenplains.vic.gov.au)

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