

DONALD

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The Buloke Times

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For the Shire of Buloke, and the districts of Birchip, Charlton, Donald, St. Arnaud, Watchem and Wycheproof

Does Energy Transition Trample Farmers' Rights?

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has reacted with concern following recent comments from Victorian Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio, warning that the State Government's energy transition risks alienating the very communities it needs most.

While the VFF supports the shift to renewable energy, VFF President Brett Hosking said the transition is being derailed by poor planning, worrying rhetoric, and alarming legislative proposals including the VicGrid Bill Amendment, which would allow police-enforced access to farms and fines of up to \$12,100 for landholders who resist.

"Farmers are not opposed to renewable energy," he said.

"We know the world is changing and we're part of that change, but we won't cop being steamrolled in the process."

Deeply Troubling

"The VicGrid amendments are deeply troubling. Allowing police to enforce access and slapping hard working farmers with fines for simply wanting to protect their land is not how you build trust, it's indicative of how trust has been lost," Mr Hosking said.

Mr Hosking said the government's determination to press ahead with major transmission projects without genuine community consultation, including the Western Renewables Link (WRL) and VNI West, is undermining both public confidence and the project's viability.

"Failed Projects"

"The WRL and VNI West are both failed projects and they should be scrapped entirely. Both have been mismanaged from the start, and communities have made it clear they won't accept it being forced through their paddocks," he said.

"These projects are too important to get wrong and the Victorian Government is risking a smooth renewable energy transmission by attempting to ram these projects through. Acknowledging the mistakes and starting again is the only way to deliver a smooth transition."

"The VFF has directly expressed our concerns with Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan and written to all MPs, urging them to vote down the VicGrid Reform Bill," Mr Hosking said.

Alarm

The VFF is alarmed by the Minister's comments that "transmission lines will be built" regardless of community concerns. It's approaches such as this that foster opposition in our rural communities which only serves to delay meaningful emissions reduction.

"We've had enough of being treated like obstacles, instead of partners."

"Good policy isn't made in a Spring Street bubble or podcast studio, or by using threats of fines and jail or coercion,

rather it is done through genuine consultation with those that live and work on the land."

VFF's Call

The VFF is calling for the Victorian Government to:

- Withdraw or significantly amend the VicGrid Bill to remove coercive powers.
- Scrap the Western Renewables Link (WRL).
- Take VNI West back to the planning table and start fresh with genuine consultation.
- Commit to respectful, transparent consultation with landholders and local communities.
- Recognise and protect agriculture as a vital land use in energy planning.

"The transition to renewables can and should be a win



• Brett Hosking.

for everyone, but that means doing it right," said Mr Hosking.

"The government needs to drop the heavy hand and start partnering. Otherwise, they risk doing lasting damage to rural communities and undermining public confidence in the whole transition."



• Artist Kristie Dean unpacking the new art supplies for Addi Hamilton and Jude McLoughlan.



• Micheal Darby, Shaylee Fields and Steph Trickey show off their cute ceramic animals.

Birchip Art Club Thrives

Creative energy is flourishing in Birchip, thanks to the ongoing success of the Birchip Art Club, an inspiring initiative supported by the Buloke Shire Council through its VicHealth Strong People grant and the Birchip Neighbourhood House LDAT project.

This vibrant community program is helping young people explore their artistic talents, connect with others, and build confidence in a welcoming and inclusive space.

Held at the Birchip Neighbourhood House every Monday evening during school terms, the Art Club has become a fun weekly activity for local children and teens.

With a strong focus on participation and enjoyment, the sessions are facilitated by local artist Kristie Dean, whose experience and enthusiasm bring a professional edge to the creative process.

In recent weeks the children have enjoyed using clay, and their creations have been fired by Kristie in the kiln she uses in her own pottery business, Mudlark & Co. Ceramics. This process adds an exciting element of transformation where children see their fragile clay creations turned into solid, long-lasting artworks.

The Art Club, though, is more than a weekly craft session. Thanks to VicHealth's Strong People grant and Kristie's altruism, Birchip Art Club is turning ceramics, painting and craft, into tools of wellbeing and empowerment.

Young people living in rural communities don't have many opportunities to participate in creative activities and Art Club is providing them with an avenue for self-expression, stress relief, and connection, without pressure or cost barriers.

Transmission Meetings Disappoint Council

[From Buloke Shire Council]

Buloke Shire Council elected representatives and officers recently participated in an online meeting with Transmission Company Victoria (TCV).

The request to meet was initiated from TCV and was communicated to Council via email, indicating a public announcement was to be made, regarding the VNI West transmission project.

Council accepted the invitation in good faith, based on TCV's indication that an important update on the project would be shared. However, during the meeting, Council was advised that no announcement

would, in fact, be made. Instead, the meeting was reframed by TCV as an opportunity to strengthen its relationship with Council and improve consultation processes.

Council expressed its disappointment at the lack of transparency and the absence of any substantive information or a detailed agenda for the meeting, particularly given the expectations that had been set. The meeting was concluded shortly thereafter.

Protest

At the time of the meeting, a large crowd of community

members had gathered outside Council's Wycheproof office in protest against the VNI West project and proposed renewable energy developments.

Following the meeting, Mayor Alan Getley and Deputy Mayor Graeme Milne addressed the community, conveying their own frustration and disappointment at the

outcome, and reaffirming Council's commitment to advocating for the interests of the Buloke community.

Minister's Visit

Council appreciates the recent in-person visit by current Minister for Energy and Resources in Victoria, the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, who

• Continued on page 2.

Shaping The Future Of Birchip’s Sporting Heart

At its July meeting Buloke Shire Council endorsed the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan for public exhibition and invites the community to share their insights and ideas.

This draft plan builds on the legacy of the 2010-2019 Master Plan as a forward-thinking blueprint of shared community vision for enhancing a living, breathing space that will continue to unite generations through sport, celebration and connection.

Birchip boasts some of the highest participation rates in sport across regional Victoria including one of the State’s strongest junior AFL and netball communities.

Birchip’s Under-14 Girls AFL team was successfully launched in 2022, reflecting the town’s commitment to nurturing local talent and gender-inclusive sport.

Prepared in close collaboration with the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management, Council staff, local clubs, community members, State Government agencies and peak sporting bodies, the draft plan identifies both current

needs and future opportunities, from upgraded sporting infrastructure to inclusive spaces for broader community use.

The draft plan also aligns with the Council Plan 2026-2029, the Buloke Inclusiveness Plan and guidelines of leading State Sporting Associations such as AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria and Hockey Victoria.

“The Birchip Recreation Reserve is more than just a sporting venue – it’s the beating heart of Birchip,” said Mayor Cr Alan Getley.

“From AFL to netball, cricket to hockey and tennis, this Reserve serves as a vibrant space for all ages to connect, compete and thrive.”

Highlights of the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan include:

- Clear priorities for maintaining and upgrading sporting facilities.



• Birchip Leisure Centre.

- Environmental considerations including water and renewable energy solutions.

- Strategic pathways for investment and staged development.

- Opportunities for co-location and facility sharing.

- Expanded recreational offerings for the whole community.

Whether you’re invested in local sports, a passionate volunteer, or simply love being part of the activities, this is your chance to shape the next

chapter of Birchip’s shared community heart. Council is now seeking community feedback.

The Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan will be available to view from Wednesday, July 16, to Tuesday, August 5, 2025 on

Council’s website visit: www.buloke.vic.gov.au and at Council’s Wycheproof Customer Service.

Hard copies can also be posted upon request, with feedback to be submitted online or in writing during the exhibition period.

Transmission Meetings Disappoint Council

• Continued from page 1.

also serves as the Minister for Climate Action and the Minister for the State Electricity Commission.

The visit presented an hour-long opportunity for discussion and questions, which included members of the community. However, the timing of the visit on Wednesday, June 11, occurred just prior to the release of a proposed

amendment by the Minister to the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025 on Thursday, June 19.

Council has found the lack of information regarding this proposed amendment extremely disappointing, despite the significant impacts on our region being made clear to the Minister in person and her mutual agreement to a process that has thus far lacked effective communication, engagement and transparency.

The proposed amendment, adjourned for debate in parliament until July 3, 2025, seeks to consolidate energy infrastructure planning and streamline renewable energy development under a single statutory authority, VicGrid. The bill grants VicGrid new powers to manage grid access, plan Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) and deliver major transmission projects, shifting authority from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO).

Significant Shift

The legislation empowers VicGrid to implement the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan and marks a significant shift from the current requirement for voluntary land access agreements, which will have major implications for rural and farming communities like those within the Buloke Shire.

Council was not informed of this amendment during the Minister’s visit, despite its relevance and impact on affected landowners, some of which were present and engaged in the discussion held.

Council remains firm in its position that early, transparent, and respectful communication must be a priority from both project proponents and government agencies.

Council will continue to advocate strongly for the rights of its residents, particularly landowners and primary producers, as developments in the VNI West project and broader energy reforms progress.

Church Notices

**ANGLICAN
“Parish of
Charlton-Donald”**
Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
0435 593 395

Friday, August 1
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, August 3
St. Martin’s, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George’s, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W’burn, 3 p.m.



Renewable Energy from ACEN



ACEN Australia is in the early stages of investigating a large-scale wind energy project in Buloke Shire in Western Victoria, called **Corack East Wind**. The development is proposed to be located on privately owned land between Donald, Birchip and Wycheproof.

Drop-in information hub every Wednesday 1-6pm

Dates and venues		Venue information
9 July Charlton	6 August Charlton	Donald – Scout Hall, Racecourse Road, Donald
16 July Donald	13 August Charlton	
23 July Charlton	20 August Donald	Birchip – Birchip Community Leisure Centre, Morrison St, Birchip
30 July Birchip	27 August Birchip	Charlton Charlton Park Community Bank Complex, Calder Hwy, Charlton

Meet the project team, find out more and provide feedback.

 www.corackeastwind.com.au

 info@corackeastwind.com.au

 1800 498 550

 Corack East Wind



Police Beat



Gannawarra
Trailer Theft: Between 2 p.m. Saturday the 19th of July and 4 p.m. Wednesday the 23rd, it is reported that offenders attended a Market Street, Cohuna, address and stole a grey box trailer containing a yellow dingo hyson digger.

Reckless conduct: Police are investigating an incident at a child service in Leitchville. Between July 17 and 21, unknown person has thrown a substantial amount of broken glass on to a play area.

Buloke
Burglary: In the early hours of Saturday the 26th of July, it has been reported that an unknown person has gained access to a home in Woods Street, Donald, whilst the occupant was sleeping. A wallet and personal items appear stolen from the address.

Vehicle theft: Between 10 p.m. on Friday the 25th of July and 7 a.m. the following morning, a 2017 white Toyota Prado, has been stolen from outside a Campbell Street, Donald, address.

Burglary: Between July 18 and 21, offenders have forced entry to a sporting facility in Charles Street, Wycheproof. A large safe was stolen from this address. During the same period, another sporting facility was targeted. It appears nothing has been stolen from the second address.

Robinvale
Assault: At about 9.30 p.m. on Friday the 25th of July, there was an altercation at a property at Tol Tol. A

23-year-old male has sustained stab wounds. He attended the Robinvale Hospital and was later transported to Mildura for treatment. His injuries are not believed to be life threatening. A 39-year-old male co-worker self-presented at the Robinvale Police Station just after midnight. He was arrested and later interviewed by Mildura detectives. He was charged with recklessly causing injury and bailed to attend court at a later date.

Deception: The victim reported that in April he was approached on a social media platform by a punting group. Over the next few weeks the victim transferred almost \$20,000 into an account purporting to invest in Bitcoin.

Deception: On the 21st of July a victim was trying to log in to their “phantom wallet”. When trying to seek technical support, the victim clicked on a link in an email. This led to almost \$25,000 being taken from their bank account.

Vehicle theft: At about 8.20 a.m. on Tuesday the 22nd of July, offenders have attended a farm on the Murray Valley Highway, Bannerton, and stolen a white 2013 Mitsubishi Challenger.

Swan Hill
Lost Bracelet: On Wednesday the 23rd of July, the victim was shopping in the Swan Hill CBD. It is believed that during that time, her rose gold tennis bracelet has been misplaced.

HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST



- ☐ NEVER LEAVE COOKING UNATTENDED
- ☐ TURN OFF THE HEATER BEFORE BED
- ☐ NEVER OVERLOAD POWERBOARDS
- ☐ CHECK SMOKE ALARMS MONTHLY
- ☐ CLEAN CHIMNEYS AND FLUES YEARLY
- ☐ TURN OFF ELECTRIC BLANKET BEFORE BED
- ☐ CLEAN THE LINT FILTER OF YOUR CLOTHES DRYER AFTER EACH LOAD

AND MORE!

FIND OUT MORE AT
CFA.VIC.GOV.AU/HOMEFIRE



Jazz in July at the Rex

On Sunday, July 27, more than eighty jazz enthusiasts were treated to a toe-tapping afternoon at the Charlton Rex Theatre for Charlton Arts’ annual Jazz in July, featuring the ever-popular Hot B’Hines.

True to form, the band delivered an energetic and polished performance that had the audience smiling from start to finish.

With three decades of playing together, their chemistry and extensive repertoire shone through in two lively sets. The crowd was delighted with a mix of traditional jazz classics like “Smile”, “Minnie the Moocher”, “It Don’t Mean a Thing”, and “Tiger Rag”.

Band members Wally Joosen (drums), Ken Collins (trumpet), Barry Currie (saxophone, flute, clarinet), John

Huf (sousaphone and upright bass), David Hines (banjo), and Paul Ingle (trombone) – stepping in for Bill Beasley – were clearly enjoying themselves, with their signature friendly banter adding to the relaxed, feel-good vibe of the afternoon.

During the interval, guests were treated to a generous afternoon tea served at the Charlton Club – an ideal interlude to recharge before the second half of the show.

Next up for Charlton Arts is the Annual Art and Photography Exhibition in October.



• The Hot B’Hines. Left to right: Paul Ingle (trombone), Wally Joosen (drums), Ken Collins (trumpet), David Hines (banjo), Barry Currie (clarinet), John Huf (sousaphone).

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• The large crowd enjoying afternoon tea at the Charlton Club.



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Share Your Local Knowledge to Inform the Environment Effects Statement

Local knowledge is extremely valuable for a thorough environmental and social assessment of the VNI West project area — and we’re looking for your input into existing conditions.

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) covers a range of topics, including:



Amenity



Biodiversity and Environment



Community and Land Use



Land and Water



Heritage

VNI West Environment Effects Statement 2025 community session details

Kerang	Murrabit	Charlton	Stawell
Tue 19 August 3–6pm	Tue 26 August 3–6pm	Wed 27 August 9am–12pm 3–6pm	Thu 28 August 3–6pm
Kerang Memorial Hall	Murrabit Public Hall	Charlton Park Complex	Stawell Entertainment Centre

- Speak with the TCV team and technical experts
- Learn about the EES and what it means for VNI West
- Get involved: Share your insights on the local environment, land use, and community values in the VNI West project area

Scan the QR code or visit the project website to learn more and share your input into existing environmental and social conditions in the VNI West project area.



Contact us

Have a question? Reach out using the contact details below:

Email: enquiries@transmissionvictoria.com.au

Free call: 1800 824 221

Website: transmissionvictoria.com.au

Victorian Women’s Virtual Health Clinic Now Open

The Victorian Government’s women’s virtual health clinic is now open to all Victorian women and girls of any age – offering free, expert medical advice, treatment and care for a range of women’s health needs.

Led by specialist nurses, the clinic can provide medical advice remotely via telehealth, either online or on the phone – including endometriosis and pelvic pain care, menstrual health, cervical screening, menopause care, breast health care and abortion.

Women in regional and remote Victoria will benefit the most – with services like contraception and abortion traditionally harder to access due to distance from major towns.

Operated in partnership with community health organisation EACH, it will reduce the barriers and delays in accessing care, helping to avoid detrimental impacts on a woman’s health, their quality of life and the ability to participate in school and employment.

Assessment

The team of nurses will deliver an initial health assessment and some treatment, while patients can also be connected with a GP or get referred to a relevant health practitioner as close to home as possible.

In addition to treating immediate health needs, referrals can also be made to various mental health and wellbeing, alcohol and other drugs, and family violence community support services.

It comes as the Government’s mobile women’s health clinic continues to travel across the state delivering care to women in regional and remote communities.

Operated by BreastScreen Victoria, the van is making free healthcare more accessible for all women and girls, with a focus on improving access to care for Aboriginal women.

Range on Needs

It supports a range of women’s health needs, including sexual and reproductive health advice, clinical services and referrals for medical abortion, contraception, and referrals to other necessary specialists.

All services are delivered by an experienced nurse or nurse practitioner who works to build connections with women, their community and local health services.

Both the mobile and virtual clinics are part of the landmark \$153 million women’s health package transforming the way women’s healthcare is delivered in Victoria.

The virtual women’s clinic is available Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., by calling 1300 003 224 or via a simple, secure online form on the EACH website: each.com.au/services/virtual-womens-health-clinic.

It’s Free

“We’re making it easier for all women and girls to get the specific care and advice they need no matter where they live – and we have made it free,” said Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas.

“There is no denying the gender health gap is real and it disproportionately affects women living in regional or remote areas of Victoria – our new virtual women’s clinic is helping to breakdown this and other barriers to care.”

• Take care on the roads — no one is safe from careless drivers.

“The Buloke Times”, Friday, August 1, 2025 — PAGE 3

"Times" Classifieds

Deadlines:—

Tuesday's Issue:

Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Monday.
Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Friday prior.

Friday's Issue:

Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Thursday.
Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Wednesday prior.

DEATH

COATES (Clifford).— Peg
Loved sister of Joan and
sister-in-law of Keith Smith
(both dec.)
Auntie of Barry, Roger,
Craig and families.
Will be missed.

FUNERAL

COATES (Clifford).—
Margaret Alice "Peg"
of St Arnaud,
passed away peacefully
on July 29th 2025,
aged 94 yrs.

Loving wife of Bruce
(dec.). Loved mother and
mother-in-law of Colin &
Robyn; Neil & Jan; Helen
& Greg Polkinghorne; Di
& Eddy Ostarcevic. Treasured
Nan of Leonie, Brett, Ian;
Dale, Brad, Shaun; Claire,
Angus and Great Nan of
Georgie, James; Josh, Eloise,
Lachie; Alfie, Louis, Elma;
Chad, Vivian; Archie, Stella,
Ollie; and Billy.

*Rest peacefully Mum.
Re-united with Dad.*

FUNERAL COATES.—

A celebration for Peg
Coates, will be held at the
Uniting Church St Arnaud,
on Monday, August 4, 2025
at 1.30 p.m.
A private burial will be
held.

Condolences at
lifelived.com.au

KELL FUNERALS
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Printed and published for the proprietors by Robin Letts, at the office of "The Buloke Times", 6 McCulloch Street, Donald.

DONALD FIELD & GAME Shoot

75 ASF HCP
SUNDAY, AUG. 3
10 a.m. start

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DONALD HOCKEY CLUB 60th Celebration Saturday, August 2

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hockey, followed by the
annual casserole tea
and quiz night.

Donald Music Festival Monday August 4 7 p.m. Donald Memorial Hall

*Gold Coin Donation | Performances by
Donald High School, Donald Primary School,
St. Mary's Catholic School and St. Arnaud Band.*



Annual General Meeting

— Advance Notice to Members
TUESDAY, SEPT. 16
at 7 p.m.

DONALD RACECOURSE

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to:

- Elect Members of the Committee
- Receive and consider the Club's financial statements for 2024-25.
- Appoint the Auditor of the Club.

No less than three (3) voting members will be elected to the Committee of the Donald & District Racing Club at the Annual General Meeting. **Nominations to the Committee can be made in writing to the Club Manager, supported by two voting members with consent of the candidate and received by the Club by August 19, 2025.** Members are invited to submit items of business for consideration and/or questions of the Auditor at the Annual General Meeting by **August 19, 2025.**

For further information and to RSVP attendance, please contact
Club Manager Penny Penfold on 0418 124 289.

Retrospective Exhibition

Jenny Pollard

Official Opening
Sunday, Aug. 3
2 p.m.

OPENING TIMES
Sat/Sun 9th & 10th
Sat/Sun 16th & 17th
10am – 4pm

CHARLTON
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8 Camp St, Charlton
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An advert. in
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45TH ANNUAL

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6
& THURSDAY, AUGUST 7.

Public gates 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Official opening 12 noon,
Wednesday, by AFL great Tom Hawkins.

See article on pg. 6 for more info.

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WE are Hiring!

**Environmental Rehabilitation Superintendent
(Construction)**

\$180K - \$220K + 12% Super + STIP

**Health & Safety Superintendent
(Construction)**

\$150K - \$180K + 12% Super + STIP



Minyip, Victoria

Workforce Extensions is proud to support Astron Corporation Limited in recruiting an Environmental Rehabilitation Superintendent and Health & Safety Superintendent to join the construction team at the Donald Rare Earth and Mineral Sands Project.

These roles are full-time positions located in Minyip, Victoria for a maximum term of 2 years and are available for immediate start.



APPLY ABOVE:
Enviro Rehabilitation
Superintendent

FOR MORE INFO:



Contact Justin Thompson via
justin@workext.com.au



Visit workext.com.au/ballarat



APPLY ABOVE:
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Harberger Pty Ltd are seeking an experienced admin person to assist with the Spare Parts and Vehicle Servicing departments.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Front of house reception.
- Preparing customer sales and invoices.
- Ordering and receiving local stock for upcoming vehicle service work.
- Assisting with Machine Spare Parts when required.
- Cost capturing and price setting.
- Assisting with site OH&S responsibilities.

REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS:

- Proven working experience within an administration.
- Knowledge of accounting principles and procedures.
- Understanding of inventory management.
- Understanding of MYOB, Excel and MS Office.
- Excellent time management and organisational skills
- Ability to work independently and within a team environment

This position is Monday to Friday from 8am-5pm. **If you wish to apply, please send your resume to: stuart@harberger.com.au Or drop your resume into Harberger, 16-18 Racecourse Rd, Donald.**

“Times” Classifieds



Cultivating Healthy Communities

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Campus Negotiable

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Birchip

Endorsed Enrolled Nurse

Registered Nurse

Charlton

Resident Lifestyle Coordinator

St Arnaud

Resident Lifestyle Coordinator

Acting Campus Manager

Endorsed Enrolled Nurse

Registered Nurse

Further information available at
<https://ewhs.org.au/careers>

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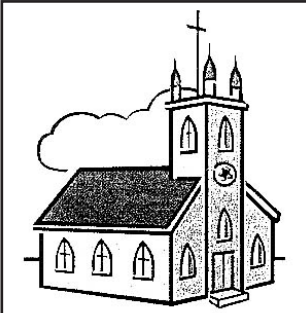
Ph. 5495 2595

Karen@klp.net.au



**AMBULANCE PHONE NO.
000**

CHURCHES



www.granitecommunitychurch.com

At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.

Speaker: Tonya Peters
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Baptist Union of Victoria

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GWMWater is an innovative and progressive employer committed to contributing to the sustainable growth of communities within the Grampians, Wimmera and Mallee regions.

Mallee Operations Manager (based in the Mallee area)

Position number VG/5311A

**Are you ready to take the lead in delivering water and
wastewater services across the Mallee region?**

We're looking for a confident and energetic leader to guide our dedicated operations teams in Birchip, Hopetoun, Ouyen and Swan Hill. In this pivotal role, you'll guide a group of passionate Team Leaders, champion safe and efficient work practices, and drive operational excellence across our assets. From optimising maintenance schedules to mentoring future leaders, your influence will help shape the way we serve our communities.

If you're a proactive leader with a passion for customer service, and the ability to inspire teams to deliver their best, we want to hear from you!

To apply online please visit: gwmwater.org.au/careers

Applications close: Friday 15 August 2025

GWMWater contact:

**Michael Schneider, Acting Executive Manager Service
Delivery on 1300 659 961 during business hours**

GWMWater is committed to achieving 'Zero Harm' across all operations. We prioritise a safe working environment, ensuring that everyone returns home safely every day.

As an Equal Employment Opportunity employer, we are dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. For confidential support throughout the application process, please contact our People, Culture and Legal division at 1300 659 961 to ensure a fair and inclusive experience.

Subscribe to receive GWMWater job alert emails by visiting gwmwater.org.au/careers

Mark Williams
Managing Director



11 McLachlan Street Horsham
gwmwater.org.au



E-Mailers! Contributors sending stories and photos to the "Times" via e-mail are reminded to include identifications of any people in photographs.

DonateLife Week July 27th – August 3rd

Check out your local
Neighbourhood House for events
and chances to register during
DonateLife Week!

**REGISTER AS AN ORGAN
AND TISSUE DONOR TODAY!**



**DonateLife
COMMUNITY PARTNER**



Birchip Neighbourhood House – 5492 2735
Charlton Neighbourhood House – 0473 759 456
Donald Learning Group – 5497 1707
Sea Lake Neighbourhood House – 0407 135 881
Wycheproof Resource Centre – 5493 7455

45th Mallee Machinery Field Days

Just weeks out from the Mallee’s largest agricultural event, Mallee Machinery Field Days secretary, Matt Brady, said the field days has experienced exceptional growth over the past three years, fuelled by the passion of the Speed Lions Club which organise the event, and the enthusiasm of exhibitors across the country, united in their support for the region’s farming communities.

“This year we’ve had a lot of interest from new exhibitors who are looking forward to showcasing the latest in agriculture across the two days,” Mr Brady said, adding the site was once again at full capacity.

New exhibitors include Signature Offroad Solutions who specialise in UTVs, Muddy River Agriculture with their Horsch 8000L 400hp self-propelled sprayer and MJM Equipment Australia who will showcase Balzer equipment.

This year the Speed Lions Club has also invested in long-term improvements at the site.

“In the past the remote location of our site has presented its share of logistical challenges, but we’ve been working hard with one of our

major sponsors, SpaceTec, to install fibre optic cables across the site, which will help to improve connectivity for both exhibitors and visitors,” Mr Brady said.

“We’ve also laid a permanent gypsum pad for the craft and special interest tent and upgraded the power network to meet the evolving needs of exhibitors.”

A highlight of the event will be SwarmFarm Robotics.

“This company pioneers advanced agricultural robotics designed for crop production and will deliver live demonstrations that offer a glimpse into the future of farming,” Mr Brady said.

This year’s event will also have a strong emphasis on famer health and wellbeing.

AFL football great and guest speaker Tom Hawkins

will officially open the event on Wednesday, sharing his experience of stepping away from the limelight of footy to take up an agricultural role with Nutrien Ag Solutions.

Mr Brady noted that current forecasts suggest a below-average season for agricultural producers throughout the Mallee region.

“We need the spring to be kind to us and bring some rain our way,” he said.

“Despite the dry conditions this year, it’s encouraging to see such strong support from our exhibitors, who continue to showcase cutting-edge technology for our farming community.”

This year’s Mallee Machinery Field Days will take place on Wednesday, August 6 and Thursday, August 7.



• Speed Lions Club.

Call for Rethink on Bank Withdrawal

As Bendigo Bank prepares to close the Wycheproof agency among 28 other locations across regional Australia, on October 21, 2025, Buloke Shire Council is urging the bank to reconsider the withdrawal and instead lead with innovation.

“This doesn’t need to be the end – it could be the start of something smarter,” said Mayor Cr Alan Getley.

“The Bendigo Bank may see the agency model as outdated, but the relationship certainly is not.”

The Mayor cited that the Bendigo Bank has a proud history of community reinvestment and grassroots connection, making it uniquely

placed to be the pioneers once again – one that uses technology to support human connection, not replace it.

While the bank cited reduced service use as a reason for closure, this does not eliminate the ongoing need for face-to-face assistance from trained navigators and provision of secure digital banking services.

The closure leaves Wycheproof with limited options: Bank@Post services at the Post Office during business hours, and a 24/7 Westpac-branded ATM for cash withdrawals.

“Let’s at least have a conversation to see how we can modernise the process such as multi-tiered partnering without erasing the connection,” the Mayor added.

Calling for New Friends and Neighbours

This coming Monday at 6 p.m. at the Donald Community Centre, Donald Friends and Neighbours will be holding its Annual General Meeting.

The Friends and Neighbours are a group of volunteers, who meet 4 times each year, with the intention of providing support to many Donald families, particularly young families with children.

This can be done in a variety of ways when families find themselves in need. Donald’s Friends and Neighbours are very welcome to accepting new people, who are prepared to be part of the

group and have positive impact on the Donald community. If you would like more information, please call Charmaine Delaney at the Donald Community Centre 54971707.



• Rosemary Larcombe and Graeme “Pickles” Harris.

Letter to the Editor

A Life Long Lived (The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.– It is with great pleasure that I write to congratulate all involved with the “Buloke Times”, and all who have preceded the current format over a period approaching double the length of my own life.

I am writing as secretary of the Donald Uniting Church Council, and also as an individual for whom the “Times” has been in integral part of my life for all my 80 years!

One hundred and fifty years of being the conscience

of the community, rolling with the highs and the lows that Donald (and also the much wider readership) has endured, is most highly commendable!

Celebrating or suffering with joy and sorrow, our much loved “local paper” has

been, throughout all those years, held in the highest esteem.

Long may that esteem continue into the future!

Yours faithfully,
Harold Flett.
Donald.

What’s Next for Information Hub?

Sea Lake’s Visitor Information Hub is now entering a period of transition, with future options being explored after Lake Tyrrell Salt Company Pty Ltd advised Buloke Shire Council on July 21, 2025, that it would end its lease of the Horace Street property early.

Since 2021, the Hub, operated by the company as part of its promotion efforts, has played a central role in growing Sea Lake’s prominence as a must-visit destination.

More than just a welcome point, it has served as a wayfinding hub, connecting visitors with local stories, art, culture, businesses and the awe-inspiring experience of Lake Tyrrell.

“Julie Pringle’s vision, Advanced Sea Lake Inc and the broader community’s belief in this place have helped turn Lake Tyrrell into a global tourism destination,” said Mayor Cr Alan Getley.

“There is a strong commitment to see it continue to evolve, and Sea Lake has proven what’s possible when passion, place and community come together.”

Since receiving the notice, Council has held meetings with members of Advance Sea Lake Inc. and local businesses and community to support a positive transition and ensure continuity for tourists and businesses.

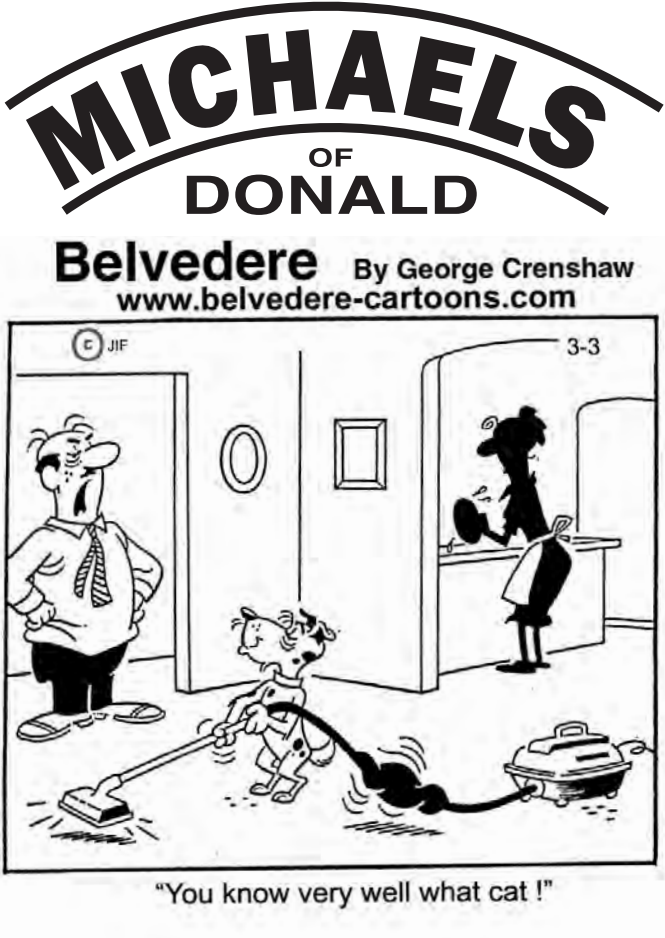
Council will continue to provide the hub as a meeting space for Advance Sea Lake Inc. within the site, as required,

until a future for the site is determined

Advance Sea Lake Inc. and local businesses have committed to sharing brochures and tourism information across multiple outlets in the interim.

Alternative uses for the DEECA-owned site are currently under review and will be presented to Councillors for consideration.

Council is also meeting with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism to explore additional regional support during the transition.



Rural Aid Marks Major Recovery Milestone: 200 Farms and Counting

Rural Aid has proudly reached a major milestone this month, with its 200th farm receiving vital support as part of the charity's Farm Recovery Event currently under way in Coraki, in the New South Wales Northern Rivers. The event, running through to August 2, marks a significant achievement in Rural Aid's ongoing commitment to Australia's farming communities.

Since its inception in 2018, the Farm Recovery Events program has provided hands-on assistance to farmers facing hardship, delivering practical help and hope to over 200 farms nationwide. Alongside individual farm support, Rural Aid has now completed 293 community and recovery projects, with the Coraki event marking the

latest chapter in this impactful national initiative. The work has spanned 45 towns and regions, from drought-affected Queensland properties to bushfire-ravaged areas in Victoria. Communities across Queensland (16), New South Wales (19), Victoria (9) and South Australia (2) have welcomed Rural Aid volunteers, who have con-

tributed more than 56,000 hours of skilled labour over the past seven years. This year alone, volunteers have collectively travelled more than 86,000 kilometres to take part in the charity's FREs.

Commitment

Rural Aid CEO John Warlters said the milestone is a reflection of the charity's commitment to long-term recovery and rural wellbeing. "Our Farm Recovery Events are about more than fixing fences or building cattle yards," Mr Warlters said. "They restore hope. Every kilometre travelled, every hour volunteered, is a reminder to our farmers that they are not alone. "Reaching our 200th farm is a significant achievement. It speaks to the strength of the rural spirit and the generosity of everyday Australians who put up their hands to help."

Benefits

The benefits of the program are both practical and personal. Volunteers help with essential property repairs, but the presence of helping hands and listening ears can have



• Rural Aid is Australia's leading rural charity, committed to supporting farmers and rural communities through good times and tough. Since 2015, Rural Aid has been a vital lifeline in times of hardship, delivering practical assistance such as mental health counselling, hay, drinking water, and community connection initiatives. Now celebrating 10 years of service, the organisation continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with rural Australians, helping them overcome hardship, build resilience, and create stronger, more sustainable futures.

lasting mental health benefits for farmers recovering from drought, floods or fire. "Time and again, farmers tell us that just having someone show up to help, even just to share a cuppa and talk, makes all the difference," Mr Warlters said. "It reduces isolation, lifts spirits and strengthens resilience." The wider community also benefits, with Rural Aid completing more than 100 projects in public spaces like halls, showgrounds, schools and sporting clubs. FREs also offer a unique and rewarding opportunity for

corporate partners to take part in meaningful team-building experiences while directly supporting rural communities. Many businesses have already joined forces with Rural Aid to get their teams involved in on-the-ground recovery, gaining insight into rural life and creating real social impact.

Meaningful

Long-time Rural Aid volunteer Raelee Keegan said the experience is just as meaningful for those giving their time. "We go in to help, but we get so much back," she said. "You feel the gratitude and the

connection straight away. I've volunteered in towns I'd never even heard of before, and now they feel like part of my extended family." Rural Aid's Farm Recovery Events rely on community donations, corporate support and a dedicated team of volunteers. "While we're proud of how far we've come, there's so much more to do," Mr Warlters said. "We'll keep showing up, because rural Australia matters." To support Rural Aid's recovery work or learn more, visit www.ruralaid.org.au.

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BALLARAT

Lifestyle Travel

The Greatest Show on Two Wheels: “Freestyle Kings Live” are Coming to Horsham

Freestyle Kings Live, the ultimate action-sports theatrical spectacular, is set to ignite Horsham’s City Oval on Saturday, February 14, 2026, as part of its explosive 6-country, 50-show World Tour.

This family-friendly event brings together the world’s elite riders in Freestyle Motocross (FMX) and BMX.

Headlining the tour is the modern-day Evel Knievel himself, Robbie Maddison, alongside his two sons — 14-year-old Kruz and 11-year-old Jagger — proving that while Robbie is the face of Freestyle Kings, his sons represent its exciting future.

“At 43 years old, it is no secret that I am closer to the end of my freestyle motocross career than I am to the start,” Robbie Maddison said. “My accomplishments on a dirt bike have been beyond my wildest dreams, but by far my greatest achievement is watching my three boys share the same passion I have for this sport... They are little showmen at heart, and whilst I might be a bit biased, I think it’s the favourite part of the show for the crowd.”

Family Bonds

Family bonds take centre stage when the boys join the stage.

“For us he is just Dad. We weren’t alive for his first big jumps, but he always shows us on YouTube and tells us how cool he used to be,” quipped Kruz.

“Mum comes to all our shows; she is our biggest cheerleader, although she is probably more nervous than us when it comes to our turn to jump in the show,” added Jagger.

The excitement doesn’t stop there: 20-time X Games Gold medallist and reigning FMX World Champion Rob Adelberg will lead a star-studded international FMX and BMX crew.

Adelberg, renowned for his dominance at the X Games, including nine gold medals in 2025 alone, said: “I’m from Regional Victoria and my dirt bike has taken me all over the world for the last 20 years. I can tell you, there is no better crowd to ride in front of than in places like Horsham... this is the best riders on the planet, who will be throwing down tricks that

need to be seen to be believed.”

Freestyle Kings Promoter Josh Hannah emphasised the tour’s regional commitment: “Regional Australia is at the very forefront of our thinking when it comes to live events... we source everything else locally in Horsham, from food and beverage, to ushers, security, machinery and everything else needed... we obviously get a lot out of these shows, but we like to think we give a lot back to a regional centre like Horsham.”

Impact

“A show of this magnitude will have a huge economic impact for the region,” said Mayor Ian Ross.

“Horsham is proud to host this incredible event, and we look forward to showcasing our town as a vibrant hub for exciting, large-scale entertainment. It’s going to be a spectacular experience that will leave lasting memories for everyone who attends.”

Tickets go on sale August 28th through Ticketek.



• Headlining the tour is the modern-day Evel Knievel himself, Robbie Maddison, alongside his two sons — 14-year-old Kruz and 11-year-old Jagger.

Boost To Mental Health Workforce

The Victorian Government is continuing to expand the state’s mental health workforce to meet growing demand and deliver on the Royal Commission’s vision of a system where every Victorian has access to the care they need.

On Monday, Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt visited the Whittlesea Mental Health and Wellbeing Local to announce the second round of roles through the Graduate and Early Career Program — supporting a strong pipeline of new workers to deliver the care Victorians need, close to home.

These workers will be placed in Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals across Victoria — helping more Victorians get free mental health support close to home without needing a GP referral or Medicare card.

Established by the Labor Government and acting as a “front door” to the mental health system, the local’s offer free support and treatment for Victorians experiencing mental illness or psychological distress, including co-occurring substance use or addiction.

Support

Support is delivered in-person, via telehealth and via outreach services with a care plan designed to reflect a person’s goals and preferences — family, carers and supporters can also be involved.

This new intake will establish 66 mental health roles across the community for graduates including:

- Positions in allied health, psychology, and postgraduate nursing.
- Lived and living experience positions.
- Wellbeing support roles.
- As well as clinical educators and supervisors to support and guide graduates.

It follows the first intake which commenced in February and saw 27 roles established at Locals in Greater Geelong and Queenscliff, Bendigo and Echuca, Whittlesea, Frankston and Latrobe.

Major Milestone

Together, the first two intakes of the program mark a major milestone — with every Mental Health and Wellbeing Local across Victoria now allocated early career roles, supported by dedicated supervisors and educators to strengthen care and support across the state.

The program is a key part of the Labor Government’s work to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System, which placed the workforce at the centre of system reform.

The Government has invested more than \$6 billion in the mental health system since the Royal Commission report was handed down and increased the mental health workforce by 25 per cent between 2021 and 2024.



• Freestyle Kings Live coming to Horsham as part of world tour.



• Tickets go on sale August 28, through Ticketek.

Support services

Adult	Youth	Other resources
Lifeline: 13 11 14 Text 0477 13 11 14 lifeline.org.au Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 suicidecallbackservice.org.au Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 beyondblue.org.au/forums MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978 mensline.org.au StandBy Support After Suicide 1300 727 247	Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 kidshelpline.com.au headspace: 1800 650 890 headspace.org.au ReachOut: ReachOut.com Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au	Head to Health: mental health portal headtohealth.gov.au Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal lifeinmindaustralia.com.au SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm) online forums: saneforums.org

Landline Sneak Peek

What an unforgettable week it has been at the “Buloke Times”, as the extraordinary milestone was reached – 150 years of publication!

It’s been a week filled with excitement, cake, confetti, and hearty congratulations from so many, all of whom have helped to celebrate this remarkable achievement. The support from our wonderful community, with visits, thoughtful gifts, and warm well-wishes extended, has truly touched us all.

But the celebrations are far from over! The excitement is stretching beyond these office walls and will continue this Sunday with the airing of a special feature on ABC’s Landline. Journalists Tim Lee and Andrew Alltree-Williams

visited the district from July 16 to 18, spending time gathering insights and capturing the essence of the remarkable 150-year journey. They are bringing this amazing story to the nation, and the community will certainly want to tune in to catch a glimpse of our shared history.

In the meantime, we’re able to show some of the still shots Tim Lee captured during their visit. These images give a sneak peek of what viewers might see on the segment, but the incredible story of the Letts family’s decades-long dedication to

the paper, will be best viewed on your television screen. Many thanks once again to Tim and Andrew for their genuine interest, dedication, and effort in bringing this story to a broader audience and promoting our proud region.

Mark your calendars! Landline’s “Buloke Times” feature will air this Sunday, August 3, on the ABC channel at 12.30 p.m., and again at 4 p.m.. If those times don’t work for you, you can also catch the segment on ABC iview or visit ABC News webpage to watch an online version at your convenience: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/>



• Brian Bayles tells the history of how the paper was printed prior to the use of computers.



• Out on the newspaper delivery run at Wycheproof: Clare and David Letts with Andrew Alltree-Williams. (Photos by Tim Lee – Landline.)



• Fake it till you make it. Candece Jay and Quill McQuilty hard at work on printing day.



• Andrew Alltree-Williams captures footage of the July 18 edition rolling from the folding machine.



• David Letts explains the process of making plates to cameraman Andrew Alltree-Williams.



• John McConville at the big Kookaburra.



• Quill McQuilty on camera at the Donald Archives.

Term Three Under Way

St. Joseph's warmly welcomes Mr Sean Lanyon, who has commenced as the Senior Room teacher this term.

Mr Lanyon will be at St Joseph's for the remainder of the school year. He is quickly settling in, finding his way and feeling the warm welcome of the extended community.

Special Visitors at St Joseph's School: On Friday, 25th July, St Joseph's School held its inaugural Grandparents and Special Friends Day.

Timed to coincide with the Feast Day of Saints Joachim and Anne (July 26th) — the parents of Mary and grandparents of Jesus — the day was a wonderful celebration of love and connection.

Grandparents and special friends travelled from near and far to be part of the occasion. The joy on the faces of both adults and students was unmistakable, as everyone enjoyed each other's company and the opportunity to feel special and appreciated.

Mass was celebrated by Fr Gerry Prunty in a nearly full

church. Students sang specially chosen songs to open and close the service, adding a heartfelt touch. The Prep/1/2 students opened with "Happy Grandparents Day," and all students concluded with "You Are a Part of Me." After Mass, students presented their visitors with a handmade card and proudly escorted them to their classrooms.

Teachers had prepared a variety of engaging activities, including colouring, board games, and interview-style questions, allowing students and their guests to connect through play and conversation.

The morning concluded with a shared morning tea in the multi-purpose room. A delicious spread of sandwiches and slices was enjoyed by all. Both staff and students were incredibly grateful for the presence of their special visitors and are already looking forward to doing it all again next year!

Celebrating 100 Days of School with Amazing Preps:

This week marked a very special milestone — 100 days of belonging, learning and growing together! The Prep students celebrated their 100th day of school with a day full of activity, lots of counting and community spirit.

From proudly wearing their "100 Days" crowns, to completing projects made with 100 items, our youngest learners showed just how far they've come since the first day of school. Collecting and ordering 100 numbered balls was no mean feat! The classroom buzzed with excitement as students engaged in fun 100-themed activities. Some students arrived in dress-ups imagining what they might look like at 100 years old (complete with canes, glasses,

• Continued on page 11.



• Prep Class. Left to right: Ethena Getley, Wyatt Steenhuis, William Donaldson and Sophia Sait (absent Tessa Wright),



• Mr Lanyon settling in to life at St Joe's.



• LSO Mason Heenan jumps for joy.



• Ivy Giles and her grandfather, Stuart, playing "Connect Four".



• Ethena Getley arrives at school.



• William Donaldson.



• Sophia Sait proudly wearing her "100 days" crown and holding her purse of 100 coins.

at St. Joseph's School

• Continued from page 10.

and grey hair), while others brought along 100 of something – coins, footy cards and even an envelope containing 100 notes lovingly written for Ms Brown!

The 100th day of school is more than just a number – it's a celebration of the hard work, friendships, and discoveries made along the way. We're so proud of all our Preps and their journey so far this year. Their curiosity, kindness and confidence continue to grow each day.

We look forward to the next 100 days of wonder, learning, and fun!

Athletics Practice: Term Three is the time for the Inter-school Athletic Sports! Through a Sporting Schools grant St. Joseph's has secured

an athletics coach from Bendigo Athletics to train the students in each of the events. Garnet Rodda visits St Joseph's each Thursday for four weeks, enthusiastically imparting his knowledge and experience, all while ensuring the students have fun and aim to give their personal best! In addition, we will join the students at Charlton College to compete in the House Athletics on Friday, August 1. This is a great opportunity for the staff and students to get together and prepare for the upcoming Calder Sports later this term, and we are appreciative of the kind invitation.

Coming up in term Three: Science Week, Book Week, Father's Day Breakfast, Kinder visits and "Come & Try" days for current four-year-old Kinder children. We look forward to a happy, productive and fulfilling Term 3!



• Vinny and Diane Roberts.



• Franklin and Lucinda Holmes-Brown.



• Brendan and Marie Byrne, Shepherd Mills and Nance Sait.



• Daniel, Paul and Yazmin Johnstone.

Top Tourism Town Awards: Halls Gap Shines

Halls Gap has won recognition as an outstanding tourist destination, taking out silver at the Top Tourism Town Awards in Shepparton last week.

The awards, presented by the Victorian Tourism Industry Council, VTIC, recognise excellence in tourism across the state, highlighting the vibrant and diverse destinations that make regional Victoria shine.

Northern Grampians Shire mayor, Karen Hyslop, said it was exciting to see the small-but-mighty town collect the silver accolade, which reflected the community's passion and the unique natural beauty of the Grampians region.

"The award is particularly uplifting following the summer's devastating bushfire season, which threatened Halls Gap, burnt a significant amount of Grampians National Park and devastated tourism operators," she said.

"The award is more than recognition; it is a moment of healing, pride and hope. This

achievement shines as a powerful reminder that resilience, beauty and renewal can flourish in even the hardest of times.

"We are beyond proud of our town and our people."

Other Finalists

Cr Hyslop thanked the VTIC and congratulated the other award finalists, including neighbours Dunkeld and Natimuk.

"The energy, innovation and passion in small towns across regional Victoria is truly inspiring," she said.

"To our community, tourism operators, volunteers, event organisers, artists, local businesses – thank you. You are the beating heart of Halls Gap."

Trentham took out the Top Tiny Tourism Town category, for towns with a population of 5000 or fewer. Warrnambool was named Victorian Top

Tourism Town, population 5000-plus, while Mount Beauty won the Top Small Tourism Town Award, population 1500 to 5000.

Acting VTIC chief executive Chris Porter said this year's awards showcased the strength and diversity of offerings in regional destinations across Victoria.

"A theme we have seen this year is that many of the winners are located further out of Melbourne, with destinations showcasing why visitors should travel to enjoy the delights that the winning Top Tourism Towns have to offer," he said.

"The winners are a reflection of the quality visitor experiences that can be found in all parts of the state, with visitors more likely to stay for at least one night, rather than just the day, due to their fantastic offering."



• From left, Northern Grampians Shire tourism and marketing lead Anna Gellert, councillor Justine Hide, team leader visitor services Julie Gibson and events officer Jana Turkalj celebrate Halls Gap's silver accolade at the Top Tourism Town Awards in Shepparton last week.

Halls Gap is a destination that brings together nature lovers, adventurers, families and foodies alike, whether for a weekend retreat or an active holiday immersed in the outdoors.

Cr Hyslop encouraged

people to visit, explore and reconnect with nature, culture and community.

"While Halls Gap is currently in the spotlight, our entire region is full of wonderful things to see and do. I urge people to make the most of it

and encourage their family and friends to do the same," she said.

People can follow "Discover Northern Grampians" on Facebook for more information about tourism and events in Northern Grampians Shire.

Junior Football at Birchip

Under-14s
The Under-14s was the most exciting game of football at George Cartwright Oval on Saturday, when only 1 behind separated Birchip-Watchem and Boort at the final siren.

In an even contest between the fifth and sixth placed teams, the youngest Bulls and Maggies entertained the early morning crowd, with competitive wet weather football. The addition of the Greenaways to the Bulls' outfit showed what difference a couple of extra older players can make to the structure of the team and the quality of the game.

The first quarter was a good even contest with the Greenaways hitting the scoreboard early for the Bulls, and Tyler Stringer converting accurately for Boort. At quarter-time there was only 2 points the difference with the Bulls leading 2.2 (14) to 2.0 (12).

Noah Howe's height around the ground was important for Boort in the second term, as it won the taps and gave its midfielders first use of the ball. This quarter proved to be critical to the result as Boort added 3 goals and four behinds while it kept

Birchip-Watchem scoreless. However, with the assistance of the wind the fortunes were reversed in the third term, with Jed Coffey giving his players plenty to work with. Willow Ryan, relishing the challenge after a week off, stepped up and the Bulls' accurate kicking and miserly defending kept them in the contest. At the last change the Bulls trailed 4.3 (27) to 5.4 (34), setting up a rousing last quarter.

With the ball and the players' legs getting heavier it was hard to score in the final quarter, but the Bulls gave it their all. Morgan Greenway and Willow Ryan were battling hard, to gain momentum and Liam Spezza added a goal for the Bulls to get them even closer.

Scoring remained difficult, but the Bulls kept charging and evened up the score with a behind. Boort responded with a point of its own to give it the narrowest of buffers. While Birchip-Watchem continued to work hard to rein in the Magpies, Boort did its best to keep the ball rolling forward, kicking it along the ground when it could to save picking it up as the Bulls' tackling was ferocious and

they usually caused a stop-page or a turn over. At the final siren Boort had managed to hold on winning 5.5 (35) to Birchip-Watchem 5.4 (34). Best players for Birchip-Watchem: Morgan Greenaway, Willow Ryan, Jed Coffey, George Greenaway. For Boort: Seth Muller, Noah Howe, Archer Lee, Matthew Soumelidis, Tyler Stringer.

Under-17s
The Birchip-Watchem Under-17s had a challenging outing on Saturday, contending with both a taller, stronger Boort side and the rugged winter weather. The first quarter saw Boort dominate early, using its size and strength to repeatedly drive the ball into attack. Jack McCaulliffe battled the whole quarter in the last line of defence as the ball was booted down time and time again, but Boort was stamping its authority on the game early, adding 6.4 (40). The second quarter was more evenly contested, with Boort rotating some players to the Bulls who also lifted their intensity. Oliver Cook began to make an impact with some strong centre clearances and increased tackling pressure. The Bulls did well to limit



• Under-17s: Ben Perry rucking against Cooper Gould.

Boort to 4.4 for the quarter, but they were still unable to trouble the scorers themselves and trailed by 67 at the half-time break. In the third term, the contest remained competitive. Ben Perry and Jack Knights brought energy through the midfield, while Marcus Atkinson started to show promise in just his second game, along with Taio Atkinson, who continues to play with determination. While the Bulls managed to stem the flow at times, Boort simply had too much

depth across the ground and a wealth of scoring options. Owen Byrne was dominant, and both he and Darby Perryman finished with three goals apiece, supported by five other goal scorers throughout the match. With a heavy, rain-soaked ball in the final quarter, both sides struggled with clean possession. Birchip-Watchem shuffled its line-up, with Ben Perry moving to full back and Koby Hamilton into the ruck and both players made their presence felt. Oliver Cook continued to lead by example,

with second, third and fourth efforts, and capping off his efforts with an impressive 30-metre chase-down tackle late in the game. Final scores: Birchip-Watchem: 0.2 (2) defeated by Boort: 17.16 (118) Best players Birchip-Watchem: Oliver Cook, Koby Hamilton, Ben Perry, Taio Atkinson. Best players Boort: Owen Byrne, Cooper Gould, Jake O'Flaherty, Brodie McPherson, Cooper Gooding, Darby F. Perryman.



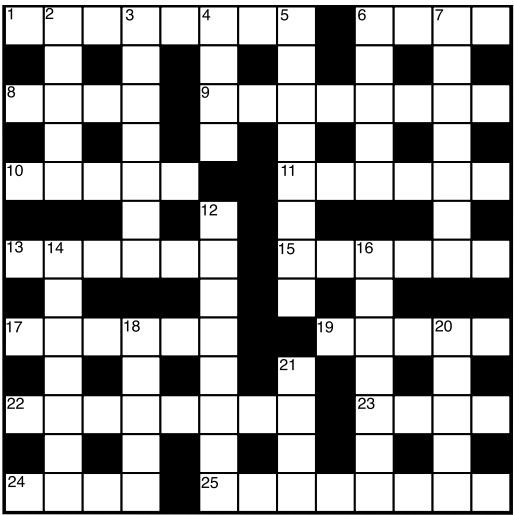
• Morgan Greenaway being pursued by Noah Howe.



• Willow Ryan being tackled by Cruz Nuttal and Seth Muller.

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8187



- ACROSS
1. Vegetable (8)
6. Stir (4)
8. Volume (4)
9. Disparage (8)
10. Fall (5)
11. Spring (6)
13. Vessel (6)
15. Metal (6)
17. Merciful (6)
19. Contest (5)
22. Capital city (8)
23. Article (4)
24. Heavenly body (4)
25. Coffee (8)

DOWN
2. Normal (5)
3. Dishevelled (7)
4. Infant (4)
5. Appropriate (8)
6. Engine (5)
7. Hamlet (7)
12. Turncoat (8)
14. Rich (7)
16. Poison (7)
18. Ire (5)
20. Board game (5)
21. Ooze (4)

• Solution next issue.

Wedderburn Hosts Wild, Wet Hockey

What a wild and wet game the Donald women's team faced against Wedderburn, which went out hard from the start and Donald was put on defence early in the game.

Both teams were able to secure short corners early on, but weren't able to convert them to goals. Wedderburn was able to finally get through Charlotte's defence and secure its first goal for the match. Carly was able to keep the ball on her stick and was constantly keeping the Wedderburn players on their game by stopping their hits from travelling further. Lauren was able to make some huge hits, with one unfortunately connecting with a Wedderburn player's head. Charlotte certainly didn't get it easy in the goals trying to stop the ball going in while also dealing with the mud and puddles surrounding her. Wedderburn secured three more goals before Donald secured some short corners where Kailie as able to push to Isobelle and Hannah, who scored a goal each. A stroke was called against Charlotte, which was made harder by all the mud and water and the home team was able to get a goal against her.

But Charlotte didn't let that bother her and had a good minute battle with two Wedderburn players trying to get a goal in, before finally getting it around Charlotte and in. Final scores: Wedderburn 6 d. Donald 2. Goals Wedderburn: Shelby (4), Tahlia and Dakota. Donald: Isobelle and Hannah. Wedderburn awards: Turnball award, Shelby; Coffee 2 Di 4, Tahlia; F45 Best team player, Chelsea G; Locksmith Store Choc, Chelsea H. Donald awards: Best on, Carly Pearse; Della Vedova, Louise Barber.

Under-12s
With lower numbers this week due to illness and the weather, no one could be blamed for sitting out this game of hockey. Donald was lucky to receive some extra legs from the Wedderburn team to make sure the match went ahead. It's nice to see players not caring who they're playing for, as long as they are out there playing. The Redbacks may

have a small team, but they have definitely have worked on their skills and co-ordination as a team. Donald players worked well with plenty of great stops, passes and defensive play, but on the day, Wedderburn just had what was needed. Final score: Wedderburn 9 d. Donald 0. Donald awards: Best on, Madeline Morton; Coaches Champion, Kyetta Rayner. Wedderburn goals: Sullivan 4, Heath, Nate, Zane, Sam, Cooper. Wedderburn awards: Wedderburn Garden & Produce, Annalise; Locksmith Store Choc, Nate, Angus, Heath, Elizabeth, Cooper.

Men's
The men took to the already boggy field in what was sure to be a skill based game due more to the conditions of the day rather than strategy. It took well to the end of the first quarter for teams to navigate their way around the field conditions.

Despite the conditions this was a great game to watch. Passes needed more strength than normal to meet their mark which made defensive plays and manoeuvres more difficult. However, amongst all the mud and hard work Donald managed 2 goals from short corners, passed cleanly out of the D and hit straight into the goal. All players had their work cut out for them, but they put on one hell of a show for the few spectators braving the conditions. Final score: Donald 2 d. Wedderburn 1. Donald goals: Glenn Pearse. Donald awards: Best on, Sam Pearse; Coaches Champion, Linc Westerland. Wedderburn goal: Jim Tate. Wedderburn awards: Reeves's, Patrick Ward; Canteen, Steve Giorlando; F45 Best Team Players, Oscar Van Veen; Locksmith Store Choc, Declan A.

Netballers Brave the Weather

[From Donald Netball Club.]

Under-14 “B”
The under-14 “B” girls bravely took the court in what was a deluge of rain at Wedderburn.

Instructions were to take it steady and do short passes which they executed well. Wedderburn rose to the occasion slowly and steadily creeping away from Donald. Some fantastic passages of play and intercepts down the court showed Donald’s determination but unfortunately it wasn’t its day.

Wedderburn 19 d. Donald 3.

Donald awards: Indi Goldsmith, Loveshack Giftware; Holly Goldsmith, The Clothes Bin.

Wedderburn awards: The Locksmith Store Chocolate, Maria T and Mia Co.; Wedderburn Plumbing, Mia Cl and Gabbie J.

Under-14 “A”
Rain rain and more rain – was the theme for the under-14 “A” girls’ game this week. Despite the wet and chilly conditions, the girls played some impressive netball, showing solid teamwork and great support for one another across the court.

Donald made a few positional changes to test out new combinations, and the encouragement shown for teammates stepping into new roles was a real credit to the strong friendships within this team – both on and off the court.

A big thank you to Wedderburn for hosting Donald. It was a cold one, but as always, you were welcoming and fair.

Scores: Donald 33 d. Wedderburn 3.

Donald awards: Lucy Robertson, Gilchrist; Patience Bevis, Harvest Cafe.

Wedderburn awards: The Locksmith Store Chocolate, Bella L; Wedderburn Plumbing, Destiny D Mia CL and Gabbie.

Under-17 “A”
The Donald and Wedderburn under-17s took to the court in tough conditions, battling through persistent rain and a slippery surface that made every pass and shot a challenge. Despite the weather, both teams showed incredible determination, persistence, and a genuine love for the game.

The heavy, rain-soaked ball and uncooperative goal rings made scoring difficult,

but the girls kept pushing. Donald’s defenders worked tirelessly to read the play, picking up key intercepts and forcing turnovers. However, Wedderburn proved strong across the court, consistently applying pressure and turning the ball over with its relentless full court defence.

In the face of testing conditions, the Donald girls never gave up. They dug deep, supported one another, and showed great resilience from the first whistle to the last. A gutsy performance from all involved – well done, girls!

Scores: Redbacks 42 d. Donald 16.

Donald awards: Donald Family Butcher, Jaya Sterling; Spuds Cafe, Halle Rice.

Wedderburn awards: The Locksmith Store Chocolate, Emily Phill Caruarna; Wdderburn Tyre Service, Alexis Loddon Test & Tag, Amelia.

“C” Grade
“C” grade came up against a strong Wedderburn side this week, currently sitting second on the ladder. The wet and cold conditions added to the challenge, but the Donald girls showed grit and determination. The shooting combinations continued to build on their set plays, with some promising results. Through the midcourt, players read the game well and created extra opportunities with timely intercepts. Down back, the defenders gave their all, forcing Wedderburn to earn every goal. Credit to Wedderburn for its pressure and ability to capitalise on turnovers. The final score was Donald 19 def. by Wedderburn 50.

Donald awards: Molly Harrison (Gilchrist & Co) and Megan Godkin-Briggs (Bev’s Baubles).

Wedderburn awards: F45 & FS8 Players Choice, Georgia Fry; Wedderburn Hotel, Georgia Fry, Coffee Di for, Carly Drinkwater; The Locksmith Store Chocolate, Jaymee Bailey.

“B” Grade
Good first quarter from both teams as they got used to the wet conditions. Wedderburn was playing at a fast pace, but Donald kept apply-



• “C” Grade: GS Tiarnah Hepworth shooting the ball defended by Wedderburn GK Carly Drinkwater and GD Georgia Fry stands out of play. GA Belicia Francis set herself for rebound with Julia Pearse looking on.

ing and the goalers worked well in the ring together.

Kim Griffiths was on fire with intercepting the ball mid court. Wedderburn was shooting well, but Donald wasn’t making it easy.

Belicia Francis killed it in GK in her first “B” grade game. Donald defenders continued to work hard along with the goalers, but Wedderburn had its foot on the pedal and was too good for Donald.

Score: Wedderburn 77 d. Donald 32.

Donald awards: Weir’s IGA, Courtney Doak; Donald Hotel, Kim Griffiths.

Wedderburn awards: F45 & FS8 Players Choice, Aliza Lockhart; Boundary Hotel,

Tess Jackson, Coffee to Di for, Alice Hubbard; The Locksmith Store Chocolate, Grace Lockhart.

“A” Grade
Wedderburn started the game strongly, with accurate shooting, Donald defence applied tight pressure. Donald players did not drop their heads, keeping their confidence with accurate shooting from Abby Griffiths and Milla Adams.

Great fight and determination brought Donald back into the game in the second term. Wedderburn continued on its path. Ally Doak intercepted the ball and read the play well. Emma Downes showed great determination and followed up the ball.

Wedderburn used the turnovers to their advantage and managed to get a good lead on Donald. Abby and Zara Staples worked well around the ring together in the final term with the assistance of Emma and Milla.

Some great netball from both teams with Wedderburn out shining the Royal Blues.

Score: Wedderburn 68 d. Donald 18.

Donald awards: Jasper & Co, Ally Doak; Mensland, Milla Adams.

Wedderburn awards: Driscoll Douglas East Players Choice award, Holly L; F45 & FS8, Holly Lockhart; Locksmith Store Chocolate, Olivia Lockhart; Mara’s Metal Art, Kelsey Pallpratt.



• Sister Ally (left) and Courtney (right) Doak just after playing their first “A” Grade game of netball together.



• Donald’s Olivia Wollermann attempts to intercept the pass into Wedderburn’s shooter, Jamie Bailey on Saturday in the “C” grade match. Umpire is Donald’s Lucy Robinson.



(By Course Language)

There may have been a few disappointed golfers last weekend, with golf being called off due to the course getting a great soaking of 45mm of rain for the week, but I’m sure that they’re in the minority.

The good it will do to the course is enormous, not to mention for the farmers in the district who have been desperately waiting for a “good dump” to give them a bit of confidence for the season ahead.

On Tuesday the Kara Kara Veterans played at Donald. There were 14 players and all were very complimentary of the course and the food provided. Thanks to Jenny and Ev. for looking after them.

One disappointing thing over the last couple of weeks has been the vandalism on the course. There are a lot of people who put in a lot of work to maintain the course and enjoy nothing more than to see people of all ages playing on it. Please respect our/your course, or you won’t be allowed on it at all.

Dad’s Army
Seven played Dad’s Army last week with Robert Burton’s 26 proving too many for the others to catch.

Junior Golf
As with senior golf, the juniors were cancelled last Friday. With a better forecast for today, the Juniors will hit off at 4 p.m. sharp so get there ASAP after school.

Coming Up
This weekend sees Charlton hold its tournament and the Kara Kara Men’s Shield Day is to be held at St.Arnaud on Sunday. There will be Stableford this weekend at Donald, sponsored by Megelec.

Next weekend the 8th, 9th and 10th is Donald’s annual Tournament. Friday is the men’s and ladies’ 4BBB, Saturday is the men’s 27-hole event with an 18 hole men’s

and ladies’ as well, if you don’t want to play the 27. Sunday is a 2 person ambrose, any combination. More information about the tournament is on the club’s Facebook page “Donald Golf Bowls Club Inc 3480”.

Dad Jokes
Some people will take offence with anything nowadays: I was at a bus stop yesterday and I met a person with no legs and all I asked was how are you getting on?

I failed my driving test the first time for stalling – the instructor said, “Will you just get into the car.”

The Webber barbecue thief has been caught – the police are grilling him now.

My grandfather returned from the war with one leg – he never said who it belonged to.

Hockey Weathers Wetness at Boort

The minkey games between Birchip-Watchem and Boort were abandoned due to the cold, wet and windy morning.

The remaining junior games were played on a soggy field that had several puddles and muddy goal circles, but the players, umpires and coaches withstood the inclement weather in good spirits.

Under-12

Birchip-Watchem started the match with intensity, but a few unfortunate errors allowed Boort to gain the upper hand early. Birchip-Watchem earned a short corner in the first five minutes, but was unable to convert it into a goal. Another short was awarded shortly after when Denley Tyler found a foot inside the D. However, Boort managed to clear the ball and

transitioned through the mid-field. Denley soon recovered possession with a strong tackle, maintaining control and skilfully carrying the ball before delivering a clean pass to Jakoby Saggars. Jakoby capitalized on the opportunity, firing a shot that found the back of the net, putting Birchip-Watchem on the scoreboard.

Des Coffey showed great determination, tackling a Boort player to win a free hit and wasting no time, Des carried the ball through Boort's defence and found River Ryan inside the D. River took a solid shot on goal, but the Boort goalkeeper made an impressive save, denying the opportunity. As the half-time whistle blew, Birchip-Watchem held a narrow 1-0 lead over Boort.

In the second half, Boort came out with renewed energy, moving the ball swiftly through the midfield. Just as Boort looked dangerous, Jett Hinds stepped up with a brilliant trap to intercept a pass and put the ball back in the Bulls' favour, but the shot at goal went off target.

Boort took the resulting hit-out, only to have Jude McLoughlan intercept and push the ball back to Denley, who forced another short corner for the Bulls. Despite a marvellous save by the Boort goalkeeper, the ball was cleared only briefly before Birchip-Watchem regained control. Denley Tyler then



• Birchip-Watchem's Frances McClelland leads the race to the ball, ahead of defenders Jonas Haw and Hayley Stringer with back up coming from Sadias Gardiner-Paikea.

found space and slotted in the Bulls' second.

With limited time left, Birchip-Watchem launched several more attempts on goal, with Denley and Des setting up some clever passes, though none was successful as the Boort goalie and full backs did well defending in the mud. The game ended with Birchip-Watchem securing a well-earned 2-0 victory. Awards went to Jude McLoughlan and Desmond Coffey for their outstanding performances.

Boort awards: Charlton Bendigo Bank, Tyla; Boort Vets Award, William.

Under-15

In very wet and cold conditions the underage players started strong with their first two tries at goals being defended. However, their momentum paid off as Lana Angel, Beau Haslam and Ben Horton pushed closer to goals, and the third try at a goal from Lana Angel was successful. Birchip-Watchem continued to work as a team, with Frances McClelland, Elise

Cox and Grace McAuliffe passing well to team-mates, but Boort tried hard to keep the ball out of its D with strong defending.

Boort regained its composure and started to adapt better to the conditions with Chaise Hird controlling play and putting a lot of pressure on Eligh Dean in goals. Boort's quick entries caught the Bulls' defenders off guard and left Eligh exposed, enabling Boort to gain a 4-1 lead at the half-time break.

In extremely slippery conditions, there was lots of skidding and players taking hits on their knees to keep the game flowing. The muddy goal face slowed down scoring for Boort in the second half and good defensive pressure from Shaylee and Max Field, Garth Kilroy, Alana Caldwell and Michael Darby saw the ball going from one end of the field back to the other end with lots of attempts on goals, but only two resulted and Boort took the win 6 to Birchip-Watchem 1.

Bulls' awards went to Max

Field (O'Connors Towel) and Alana Caldwell (Sharps Bakery Voucher).

Boort awards: Michell Wool, Jonas; Ange's Innerns, Chaise and Emily.

Church Notices

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES

"East Wimmera Parish"

Birchip	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream out to churches without Mass)</i>	
Boort	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	
Banyena	No Mass
Charlton	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	
Donald	8.30 a.m.
St. Arnaud (Sat.)	7.00 p.m.
Wycheproof	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779
Parish Co-ordinator
- Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976

Down the Middle?

Nine ladies played the Stableford on Wednesday, which was sponsored by Love Shack Giftware.

A close finish saw Kerry Raven first on 28, and close behind her runner-up Beris Jones with 27 on a count back from Jenny Leishman.

Nearest the pins went to Kerry Raven on Donald Auto Electrical's 3rd, Jenny Leishman on Weir's IGA 7th, Kerry Raven on Nu Farm's 14th and Beris Jones on Donald Community Bank's 16th.

Next Week

Wednesday, 9 holes and member to bring lunch.

Donald Tournament Friday 8th: Men's and Women's 4BBB. Saturday 9th: Ladies

18 holes. Sunday 10th: Ambrose.

Ladies, names to Kerry Raven.

Highlights and Lowlights

Welcome to the 3-putt club, Brenda, Leonie and Helen. Margie's dam claimed Carmen this week. Jo and Leonie skimmed the water to the other side. We are still searching for Brenda's ball?

If anyone is available to help out over the tournament in the kitchen, please let Jenny or Ev. know.

Winter's Day at Wedderburn



• On the bench: Pictured during the Donald v. Wedderburn under-14s game are Donald's Ryan Jones, Wiremu Anderson, Kelvin Hepworth, Jason Italia, Danielle Jones, Kellie Petrie, Cherie Reilly, Ben Clark and Mark Mortlock.



• Off the bench: "Don't tell my wife." At the tender age of 46, Brent Barber plays his first ever game for Donald, in the reserves - it's Brent's first game of football for 18 years!

Bull Reserves Fall Just Short

The Bulls fell agonisingly short in their bid to claim second spot on the North Central Reserves ladder, going down to Boort on a water-logged George Cartwright Oval.

Boort was first to hit the scoreboard in a spirited and hard-fought opening quarter when Jett Hird finally scored after a slow start, but this was quickly followed by a minor and a major score from Matthew Berry, who came on with fire in his belly and a point to prove, which put the Bulls ahead.

Alex Cockrell was moved to action getting busy in the middle for the visitors, but the goals eluded him. Jack Dowling eventually broke through with a major late in the quarter to give Boort a narrow lead 2.2 (14) to 1.1 (7) at the first change.

In the ruck, George Addis and Cameron Ross were locked in a gripping duel and in the second stanza teams were going goal for goal, with Cockrell finally splitting the middle for Boort and Archie Lewis answering for the Bulls.

Another pair of goals, one to each side, kept the crowd entertained as both teams spread the scoring load. Notably, Dowling and Berry were the only multiple goal scorers for the game.

In the third, still neither side managed to break the contest open, with classic wet weather football keeping the game tight and the ball frequently on the deck. Bulls' president Brad Ryan was kept busy, simultaneously umpiring and commentating as the game unfolded.

Celebrating his 100th game, Callum Goode had a run through the midfield, while Ty Colbert was shifted to full forward to inject some pace into the Bulls' attack. With Connor Boyle having an influence around the ball, the Bulls levelled the scores with Berry kicking the first goal of the third term.

Boort was looking to rebuild momentum, but Matt Rickard, outstanding all day at full back, continued to frustrate its efforts. He was well supported by brother Ed, James Lindenback, Patrick Lakin, and the attacking Alex Noonan, who shut down Cockrell's influence in the second half.

Despite Chris Hatcher almost hauling in a one-handed screamer and some slick footwork from Pat O'Rourke, the third quarter yielded just one goal apiece. Birchip-Watchem's two extra behinds in the quarter saw them within five points at the final break.

With second place up for grabs, the last quarter promised plenty. Brendon Hewlett opened the scoring for Boort, and this was followed by a second from Hatcher to extend its lead. Ty Colbert's speed and skill in the midfield, alongside the bullish work of Berry, created chances for the Bulls, and Stefan Pye made the most of one opportunity, slotting a goal to keep the game alive. However, a strong intercept mark from O'Rourke in defence snuffed out any late comeback.

In the end, the Bulls were left to rue a missed opportunity to seize the coveted second chance and the best opportunity to have all their players available in the final, falling short by two straight goals.

Final score: Boort 7.4 (46) defeated Birchip-Watchem 5.4 (34)

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Matthew Rickard, Stefan Pye, James Lindenback, Ty Colbert, Matthew Berry, Connor Boyle.

Best for Boort: Fraser Millar, Jack Baker, Cameron Ross, Beau Herrington, Jordan Sheahan, Jett Hird



• Reserves ruck, Matt Berry (Bulls) and Cameron Ross (Magpies).

Charlton Netballers at Sea Lake

14-&-Under "A"
Charlton 20 def. by Sea Lake-Nandaly 23.

Charlton awards: TeeJet Best, Lila Schofield; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Marlly Morkos; Nutrien Ag & Charlton Caravan Park "Have a Crack", Maddie Lanyon.

Sea Lake-Nandaly awards: Elise (Haeusler's beanie) and Phoebe (Canteen Voucher).

17-&-Under "A"
Charlton 39 d. Sea Lake-Nandaly 24.

Attackers were strong, moved the ball well and had great positioning. Lots of great talk and direction for each other. Charlton's defenders applied lots of pressure creating many turnovers for us. Overall the girls had an awesome game both individually and as a team. The transition across the whole court was strong and they're making great improvements!

Charlton awards: IGA Charlton Best, Taylah Giles; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Sarah Blair; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Erin Blair.

Sea Lake-Nandaly awards: Mia (Skymirror voucher) and Darcey (Hair on Best Voucher).

"C" Grade
Thankfully the rain held off for the "C" grade girls! This week Charlton's defenders showed exactly what they've got! Plenty of ball being picked up by Charlton defenders providing many opportunities for its attackers, but unfortunately Sea Lake's defenders were just as strong. Despite the score line Charlton girls worked hard all game; well done girls. Charlton

18 def. by Sea Lake Nandaly Tigers 63.

Charlton awards: Jack Thompson Construction Best, Mia Ayars; S&D Consulting Coaches, Brooke Prior; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Brooke Prior.

Sea Lake-Nandaly awards to Bronte Michael (Royal Hotel Voucher) and Abby MacDonald (Pickering Transport Club Glass).

"B" Grade
A slow start from Charlton meant Sea Lake hit its straps early. There were a number of positional changes to try to generate some opportunities. Loretta Thompson back at GS for Charlton provided some great direction to the team. Charlton did not stop trying with everyone coming out firing in the last quarter seeing some great plays and intercepts.

Charlton 23 def. by Sea Lake-Nandaly 52.

Charlton awards: Teys Charlton Feedlot Best, Sarah Blair; Teys Charlton Feedlot Coaches, Rebecca Sexton; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Tahli Roberts.

Sea Lake-Nandaly awards to Lorraine Wight (C & M Pearce Electrical Club towel) and Prue (Agri Lending Solutions Club Glass).

"A" Grade
Well the weather certainly gave it everything during the "A" grade game. Charlton players faced this along with plenty of positional changes and handled themselves well.. Claudia Lee back in the side this week stepped right into her groove working well with Maggie Riley in the ring, with Remi Jeffery and Lacey Smith giving great feeds in. Charlton defenders were once again working well with Megan Bruns also back into the side getting some great intercepts providing opportunities for our attackers.

The third quarter saw some changes with Claire Smith moving from GK to GS and Anika Holmes-Brown coming into GK. Claire provided great strength in Charlton's attacking ring with Anika working into the game nicely. A tough game with tough weather conditions, but Charlton's girls held strong to the final whistle.

Charlton 21 def. by Sea Lake-Nandaly 35.

Charlton awards: Walsh Motors Best, Megan Bruns; Walsh Motors Coaches, Claire Smith; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Remi Jeffery.

Sea Lake-Nandaly awards: to Gaby Munari (Jarrod Arantz Electrical Club towel) and Ebony McLean (Sea Lake Hardware Club Glass).



• A Grade: Charlton's Issy Soulsby on the receiving end.



• "C" Grade: Charlton's Ebony McCarthy (C) with Brooke Prior (GK).

Rain Helps Settle the Dust

• Continued from page 16.

Sea Lake-Nandaly has a bevy of its best footballers it needs to get game time into prior to the finals, including Lachie McClelland, Oscar Brownless and Josh Jenkins. Their inclusion tomorrow would further stretch Donald's already very thin resources.

Charlton will also be hard pressed to subdue the finals-bound surge of Calder United, the Lions' multi-pronged attack capable of blitzing the Navy Blues' steadfast defence.

And St. Arnaud's defenders will also be put under enormous pressure as Birchip-Watchem, as a collec-

tive, wills full-forward Ben Edwards towards his 100th. goal this season. He needs just 10 to achieve that significant individual milestone.

"Rookie" Award
In addition to North-Central's Feeny Medal for "best and fairest", the league will also be seeking nominations from clubs for the "Rookie of the Year" award for 2025, sponsored by the Tooleybuc Sporting Club, the winner also receiving the Maurie Morgan Memorial Medal.

The award recognised young footballers who successfully make the step up from underage football to senior ranks.



**ANGLICAN
"Parish of
Charlton-Donald"**
Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird
0435 593 395
Friday, August 1
St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.
Sunday, August 3
St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.

Enjoyment & Employment —
Have Both, Shop in Your
Own Town!



Rain Helps Settle the Dust

(By Shane O'Shea)

The smiles on the faces of local farmers and the residents of communities that rely on them at North-Central football games last Saturday could not have been broader following the very welcomed significant falls of rain that continued over the weekend.

And despite the wetter than usual conditions, the outcome of round 13 games has helped provide a clearer picture as to what the future holds in the lead-up to the finals, now just over 4 weeks away.

The only certainty is that Birchip-Watchem will finish on top of the ladder, most likely undefeated in its sixteen games.

Almost as certain is the probability that Donald, facing Sea Lake-Nandaly, Calder United and Birchip-Watchem in the run home, will finish at the opposite end of the table without a win to its name.

Charlton and St. Arnaud, which also play teams above them over the next three rounds, may not be able to add to the respective meagre win tallies.

Of greater interest are the trajectories of Calder United and Sea Lake-Nandaly, currently occupying second and third places respectively. They are tracking on a collision course, their clash in round 16 likely to be a veritable qualification final, with second place on the ladder and a "double chance" in the finals the reward for the victor.

Boort on the Skids?

After a very promising start to the season, Boort's position on the ladder has been in freefall over the past month, with three successive losses to the competition's leading teams resulting in a rapid drop to fourth place.

And although the Magpies' hold on a finals berth remains firm, a loss to fifth placed Wedderburn tomorrow would add significantly to the pressure currently being heaped on coach Dale Cameron and his charges.

With a more favourable run home compared to the Redbacks, however, with games to come against St. Arnaud and Charlton, compared to Wedderburn's draw of Sea Lake-Nandaly and St. Arnaud, Boort should be able to hang on and take part in the business end of the season.

The unavailability of Jhye Baddeley-Kelly last Saturday, due to the prior personal commitment, in addition to the absence of James Wilson, Jarrod Fitzpatrick, Ryan McGhie and Jacob Mulquiny, had the Magpies on the back foot against Birchip-Watchem.

By a stroke of good fortune, former player Jono Lanyon was back in town and took his place in the team, in

what was a one-off appearance in black and white.

The Bulls were also without a handful of their best, including Joe Reid, Riley Hogan, Jake Noonan and Meyrick Buchanan, but their greater depth was emphasised by their dominant performance against a fellow finals hopeful.

The return of Baddeley-Kelly should be enough to ensure the Magpies secure the win against a Wedderburn combination coming off a big win over Donald, in which Zach Pallpratt, Mitch Jensen, Jye Mortlock and Noah Furlong were prominent. They will again be important contributors tomorrow if the Redbacks are to secure a win.

Tough Day at the Office Awaits

Donald, Charlton and St. Arnaud can expect little respite when they take on finals-bound Sea Lake-Nandaly, Calder United and Birchip-Watchem respectively.

Commitment and determination from the Royal Blues, Navy Blues and Saints will not be a problem, but the lack of depth needed to match up on the opposition's best will be.

• Continued on page 15.



• Ben Edwards holds the mark in the 2-on-1 contest with Jake Male and Harley Durward during Birchip-Watchem and St. Arnaud's last clash in round 7.

Indoor Tennis Grand Final

Another indoor tennis season has come to an end with the grand final being played on Monday night between the top two teams, Yellow and Green.

This season was a bit shorter and later starting than previous years due to the timing of Easter. There were five teams of three players competing in this competition on a Monday and Tuesday night and also a few fill-ins throughout the time, with lots of laughs had along the way.

Team Yellow consisted of Stuart Potter, Meaghan King and Chris Rodger, whilst team Green was Justin Trollop, Sarah Macdonald and Claire Adams. Maree Egan was an original member of this team until hit by injury.

The night started with team Green taking the first set 6-2, and a turnaround in the second set with Yellow winning 6-3. One set apiece and one game the difference in



• Donald indoor tennis champions, left to right, Sarah Macdonald, Justin Trollop and Claire Adams.

favour of Yellow, it was up to the number 1 and 2 players to battle it out for the coveted mug/glass.

The honours finally went to Green, 6-2, in a very entertaining match. Congratulations to Justin, Sarah and Claire. (It was rumored that Sarah had lucky shoes and Claire had not-so-lucky leggings.)

The wooden spoon winners were team Blue, Carmen

Bath, Melissa Sellick and Rhonda Russell, along with team White, Jasmine Hollis, Josh Talty and Bec Cumming, and team Red, Paul Cumming, Nicole Nunn and Sarah Jardine, making this season enjoyable.

As always, this competition couldn't and wouldn't be what it is without all the work that Jenny Guild puts in. So from all involved they say a big "THANK YOU JENNY".

GOLDACRES NORTH CENTRAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

ROUND 14

SATURDAY AUGUST 2ND, 2025

DONALD ROYAL BLUES	VS	SEA LAKE NANDALY TIGERS
GOFF LETTS OVAL		
CHARLTON NAVIES	VS	CALDER UNITED LIONS
CHARLTON PARK Mount of Prevention 'Respect' Cup		
ST ARNAUD SAINTS	VS	BIRCHIP-WATCHEM BULLS
LORD NELSON PARK		
BOORT MAGPIES	VS	WEDDERBURN REDBACKS
BOORT PARK		

CHURCHES

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

Donald, 10 a.m.
Wycheproof, 10 a.m.
Birchip, 10 a.m.
Contact Number: 5497 1033