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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

“Garage Girls” is Set to Roar Into Birchip

Tonight (Friday, August 15), the Birchip Public Hall will come alive with the high octane, history making story of *Garage Girls*, a dynamic theatre production celebrating Alice Anderson and Australia’s first all girl garage.

Sponsored by Creative Victoria and Presented by Three Birds Theatre and The Shift Theatre, “Garage Girls” blends humour, heart and history in a vibrant retelling of how one determined woman defied social expectations in the 1920s to carve out her place and empower other women in the male dominated motoring world.

Glowing Reviews

With glowing reviews from critics, the show has

been described as “fun, feisty and fantastical” (Stage Whispers) and “highly engaging” (Theatre Travels).

The performance will take place at 7 p.m. at the Birchip Public Hall. Tickets are just \$20, with audiences encouraged to BYO supper and drinks and enjoy the show at tables of any size, making for a relaxed and social atmosphere.

Bookings

Bookings can be made through the Birchip Neigh-

bourhood House, or via mobile 0429 922 735. Tickets can also be purchased at the door.

With its mix of wit, empowerment and fascinating local history, “Garage Girls” promises to be an unmissable night of entertainment for Birchip and district residents.

• “Garage Girls” will be performed tonight, Friday August 15, at the Birchip Public Hall.



• Excel Farms Staff at Rankins Springs Community Tree. Carolyn Wheeler is second from left; Charles Wheeler second from right.

Excel Farms Supports Mental Health Project

(By Excell Farms HR Manager, Carolyn Wheeler, of Donald)

What an incredible journey I have had on our Excel Farms regional tour with the Blue Tree Project, focusing on mental health awareness and support!

I’m deeply passionate about mental health. Whether it’s supporting family, friends or colleagues, it truly matters in every part of life.

Over the course of the tour last week, we travelled more than 1,700km, painted 5 trees blue on farm and in the communities, and hosted two sold

out community quiz nights. The support has been overwhelming.

Kendall Whyte, CEO and Founder of Blue Tree Project,

said the tour is about hope and connectivity in the bush. “Our regional communities are resilient, but they can feel isolated when it comes to mental health,” Ms Whyte said. “By painting a tree blue and coming together at these events, we’re sparking conversations that can save lives.

It shows people – especially in remote areas – that it’s okay to speak up and seek help.”

Warren Davies, known as The Unbreakable Farmer, knows first-hand the challenges faced by farming families.

“For farmers and rural families, mental health struggles often stay hidden,” Mr Davies said. “I’ve seen how a simple conversation can change a life. This tour is about making those conversations happen in our small

• Continued on page 2.

Changeover Time for Wycheproof Lions

(From Elaine Ison, P.R.O Lion)

Over half the year’s gone and we’ve had our changeover dinner at the Royal Hotel. A beautiful meal was had by all.

Welcome to our new president, Steven Lang, and his new committee. Looking forward to another busy year. A lot of money has been donated back to the community and to Lions’ projects near and far.

The bench seat in the park in memory of Mrs Mac Milburn has been replaced. As most of us know, Mac Milburn was instrumental in our

beautiful park being built. Such a lovely tribute to Mac Milburn, and another great Lions project.

Firewood working bees have been very profitable and the raffles have helped heat someone’s home. On going projects include the collection of cans and bottles at the depot drop off at the Lions building, collecting glasses to be sent overseas after being

sorted and cleaned in Brisbane, barbecues at hospital for the residents have been enjoyed by all. We’re still collecting batteries large and small (trucks and cars) – ring a Lions member and we’ll pick up.

New Member

A new member, Will Walker, was inducted at our July dinner meeting at the clubrooms. Will’s mother and Lion Rob Darby and his wife Andrea from Lara Lions (Will’s friends) attended to wish him well.

It’s lovely to have a new, young member and we welcome Will, hoping his impact will bring more young members into our club. A lovely casserole dinner was served by our catering committee.

Current and Coming Events

Restoration on the Steam Train on Broadway is an ongoing project. It’s a very big job with a lot of legal regalia to be followed.

We have 10 debutantes this year for our Deb Ball in September at the Shire Hall.

King of the Mount is the next big project that takes a lot of man hours to organise. All hands make light work, so if you can help in anyway that would be great!

In Lions we serve.



• Will Walker and Lara Lion Rob Darby.



• Left to right: Lion Director Doug Morrison, Lion President Stephen Lang, Will Walker, Lion Harry Brindley.

Excel Farms Supports Mental Health Project

Continued from page 1.

towns – letting folks know they’re not alone and that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.”

Inspiring Leaders

I feel incredibly fortunate to have worked closely with Kendall, CEO and founder of the Blue Tree Project. She’s an inspiring leader doing amazing work to spread awareness about mental health. I was especially lucky to work side-by-side with her in organising the regional tour and connecting with the communities, we couldn’t have asked for a better response.

Cass from the Blue Tree team was equally fantastic, making sure everything ran smoothly and capturing every moment beautifully on her camera.

I also had the pleasure of spending time with Warren Davies, The Unbreakable Farmer, whose personal story of resilience is truly moving. He joined Kendall and Cass on the regional tour adding so much heart and inspiration to the journey.

As part of the tour, Blue Tree will also return to each of the communities visited to deliver Mental Health First Aid training. This follow-up support is a great, especially in small rural towns where access to mental health services can be limited. By equipping locals with the skills and knowledge to support one another, we’re building stronger, more resilient communities.

Partners

Excel Farms has proudly partnered with the Blue Tree Project for 3 years, contributing \$50k annually. This year with the help of our generous suppliers, donation tins, raffles and auction items at our quiz nights, we’re on track to raise over \$100k for this year. I’m genuinely blown away by the support this initiative has received.

Over the next few years we hope you will see many more Blue Trees in your local area.

For those who may not be familiar with the Blue Tree Project, I encourage you to find out more about the incredible work they’re doing here: bluetreeproject.com.au

Together, we are helping to break the stigma and spark important conversations around mental health.



• Kendall Whyte and Warren Davies, The Unbreakable Farmer.



• Excel Farms Team at Murrayville Farm Tree.

Letter to the Editor

“Times” Anniversary

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.– At our meeting yesterday, it was resolved that the Society

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

formally acknowledged the 150 years of service to the Donald community by the “Times”.

We deeply appreciate the coverage you have given to our activities over the last 59 years and we continue to use papers from the whole period as a reliable source of information about events in

Donald and surrounding districts.

Congratulations to you and your team on a job well done and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours sincerely,
Brian Brasier,
Secretary,
Donald History Society Inc.

Corack East Wind
Renewable Energy from ACEN

ACEN Australia

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

9 July Charlton
16 July Donald
23 July Charlton
30 July Birchip

6 August Charlton
13 August Charlton
20 August Donald
27 August Birchip

Venue information

Donald – Scout Hall, Racecourse Road, Donald

Birchip – Birchip Community Leisure Centre, Morrison St, 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

Milestone for Prep Students

Tuesday August 5 was no ordinary school day at Birchip P-12 School, it marked a very special milestone for our youngest learners: the 100th day of school for the 2025 Prep cohort.

The Prep/One classroom was abuzz with excitement as students arrived in casual clothes, ready for a day filled with fun, learning, and creativity – all centred around the number 100. From the moment the bell rang, activities celebrated both how far our Preps have come and the bright future ahead for these young learners.

Students looked at pictures and videos of 100-year-old people, made colourful flags and crowns, and even filmed themselves imagining what they might be doing when they turn 100. The responses were full of charm and humour. Thomas McLoughlan said, “When I am 100, I hope I am in a wheelchair,” while Phoebe Tyler envisioned, “When I am 100, I would love to sip cups of tea.”

Throughout the morning, the children wrote interesting facts about the number 100,

read the book “100 School Days”, and learned about what school might have been like a century ago. They agreed they were thankful for today’s fridges, air-conditioners, and the fact that teachers no longer use a cane!

They also enjoyed skip counting on blackboards, took part in a spelling test, and worked in pairs to create collections of 100 using materials such as buttons, straws, rocks, pegs, beads, and bottle tops. After recess, the celebration continued with party food, fruit, and musical games. A highlight was the dice game where students raced to be the first to reach 100.

Principal and staff at Birchip P-12 School were quick to acknowledge the significance of this milestone. “The first 100 days of school are a foundation for a lifetime



of learning,” a spokesperson said. “Early education sets the stage for literacy, numeracy, and social skills, but just as importantly, it builds confidence, curiosity, and a love of learning. We are incredibly proud of our Prep students and the wonderful work their educators are doing to nurture them.”

As the 2025 Prep class looks ahead to the rest of the year, the Birchip P-12 community can be proud knowing these first 100 days have been filled with quality teaching, joyful learning, and a spirit of celebration; a fitting start to many more milestones to come.

“Thank You, Noeline!”

Last Saturday Noeline Hogan blew her final whistle, in the “B” grade netball game between Birchip-Watchem and Charlton.

Following the game, Birchip-Watchem Netball Club and the North Central Netball Association paid tribute to Noeline for her extraordinary contribution to umpiring, which has spanned more than 40 years.

Noeline’s umpiring journey began as a junior with her home club Wycheproof-Nar-raport and continued with the Birchip-Watchem club from 1998.

Noeline has been a player and a dedicated member of the Birchip-Watchem Netball Club since she joined the club, which was acknowledged with life membership in 2021, but her passion was for umpiring.

Her affinity for the role was unwavering, driven by a commitment to achieving the best for both herself and those around her.

In 2006, Noeline stepped into the role of Umpires Co-ordinator for BWNC, succeeding Tara Sharp. Over the next 11 years, she not only or-

ganised Thursday night and Saturday umpires, but also regularly took to the court herself.

In 2014, she extended her leadership to the wider competition, serving as the NCNA Umpires Convener.

Her dedication to self-improvement saw her earn her “C” Grade Umpires Badge in 2009, followed by the prestigious “B” Grade in 2012. Willing to travel many kilometres, Noeline attended training days, tested herself at higher levels, and mentored aspiring umpires, both locally and across the Wimmera region.

A respected figure in netball circles, Noeline has umpired numerous finals in the North-Central and neighbouring leagues, along with five Interleague Open matches and three State League Titles in Melbourne, representing the Wimmera Mallee region.

Noeline has been instrumental in developing the club’s pool of young umpires, leaving a lasting legacy of which the BWNC is immensely proud.

Following the recent “B” grade match, BWNC Umpire Co-ordinator Cheyenne Parsons presented Noeline with a gift of appreciation, joined by players, umpires, and supporters to celebrate her service.

Although she has now “hung up the whistle”, Noeline’s passion for the game remains strong. She will continue to be seen courtside, mentoring and testing the next generation of umpires.

Birchip-Watchem, NCNA and the wider netball community thank Noeline for her professionalism, remarkable service, and dedication to the sport she has served with distinction for nearly half a century.



• On Saturday, at the Charlton courts, umpire steward and Birchip-Watchem Netball Club Life Member, Noeline Hogan, blew her whistle to end a game of netball for the very last time.



• Prep/One students gather around their special party food to celebrate the 100 Days milestone.



MOBILE OFFICE

Monday, August 18th

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at 12:30pm

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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 BAIRD.—

Christopher Alan
"Toph"

Passed away
at home watching his
beloved Hawks,
on August 7, 2025
aged 60 years.

Loving brother of Jeffery
(dec.), Graham "Bear" (dec.),
and Stephen "Beaver".
Loved son of Alan &
Marilyn (both dec.).
Uncle to Ashleigh and
Luana.

Go Hawks

DEATH MILNE.—

Darryn Stanley
07/06/1964 to 13/08/2025
Died peacefully at Donald
Hospital.

R.I.P.

DEATH PAYNTER.—

Mary Evelyn
Passed away peacefully
on August 7, 2025
in Donald,
aged 93 years.

Loving wife of Neil (dec.).
Loved mother of Jon,
Neville & Alan. Mother-
in-law and friend of Margot
& Charmaine. Grandma
of Claire & Jake, Al &
Jazz, and Great-grand-ma
of Lara, Alex, Austin, Tilly
& Luka.

*A good life lived,
reunited with Dad.
R.I.P.*

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FUNERAL BAIRD.—

Christopher Alan
"Toph"

The Funeral of Christopher
Alan "Toph" Baird will
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Uniting Church, Horsham
on Friday, August 22, 2025
commencing at 2 p.m.

Please wear your Hawthorn
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support of Toph.

The service may be
viewed online at
[horsham.unitingchurch.
org.au/watch](http://horsham.unitingchurch.org.au/watch)

Trevor Bysouth & Daughter
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Horsham - 5381 1444
AFDA MEMBER

FUNERAL MILNE.—

The funeral service for
Darryn Stanley Milne will
be held at the Graveside,
Donald Cemetery, Donald
on Wednesday, August 20,
2025 commencing at 11.30
a.m.

A tribute can be left on
our website: [kellyfunerals
birchip.com.au](http://kellyfuneralsbirchip.com.au)

Mark and Raelene O'Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP

Inc. 
5492 2547



AMBULANCE PHONE NO.
000

FUNERAL PAYNTER.—

A memorial gathering for
Mary Evelyn Paynter will
be held at the Donald Golf
Club on Thursday, August
14, 2025 at 12 p.m..

A Private Graveside
Service will be held prior.

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DONALD FIELD & GAME AGM

SATURDAY, SEPT. 6
6 p.m.

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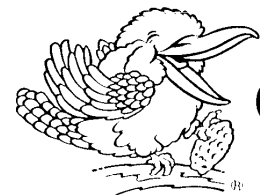
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Aria "Clowning Around" in
preparation for
The Wizard of OZ production.

The Textiles students were
planning to help with
the production wardrobe and
were just getting into
"character".

Aria Brennan

DONALD HIGH SCHOOL

“How Safe is My House?”

[From RACV]

A major study reveals metro residents are investing heavily in CCTV and alarms while rural communities maintain highest safety confidence as Victorians take action on safety concerns

The new study examining how safe Victorians feel in their homes has revealed an overall positive perception of home safety across the state, with residents rating their safety at an average of 7.66 out of 10 in 2024.

The Victorian Community Safety Perception report analysed 8,021 responses to Neighbourhood Watch Victoria’s “How Safe Is My House” quiz collected between 2021 and 2024 – the first Victorian-wide review focused not just on crime data, but on how safe people feel in their homes and what protective actions they take.

The report reveals significant regional variations in safety perceptions, with Western Regional areas consistently reporting the highest safety ratings, while Western Metropolitan areas recorded the lowest scores at 7.29. Despite

this variation, all regions maintained ratings above 7 out of 10, indicating a generally positive outlook on home safety across Victoria.

Key Findings

- Western Regional areas reported the highest safety ratings at 7.87, while Western Metropolitan areas recorded the lowest at 7.29.
- Active security adoption is rising – home security system use increased from 53 per cent to 63 per cent in Western Metropolitan areas between 2021-2024.
- The more protective behaviours someone takes, the safer they feel – participants with five or more preventative measures typically rated safety between 8 to 10.
- Knowing neighbours emerged as a key factor in feeling safe.
- Rural areas maintain higher safety confidence with

less reliance on technology than metropolitan regions and reported higher safety ratings than metropolitan regions, with some areas recording scores above 9 out of 10.

Neighbourhood Watch Chief Executive Officer Bambi Gordon said this research provides invaluable insights to how Victorians actually feel about their home safety, not just what the statistics tell us.

“The data shows that while crime statistics are important, people’s perceptions of safety are shaped by many factors including their environment, community connections, and personal experiences,” Ms Gordon said.

The study found that safety perceptions are influenced by more than just crime rates or security infrastructure. Cultural background, socioeconomic factors, and community engagement all play significant

roles in how safe people feel at home.

“Understanding how residents perceive their safety is crucial for developing effective community safety strategies,” Ms Gordon added.

“This partnership with RACV allows us to bridge the gap between objective safety data and the lived experiences of Victorians.”

Technology and Traditional Security

The research highlighted an interesting balance between modern security technology and traditional safety practices. While metropolitan areas showed increased adoption of CCTV, alarms, and sensor lights, rural communities maintained high safety ratings with less reliance on active security systems.

“We’re seeing urban residents increasingly turn to



• A major study by Neighbourhood Watch Victoria has revealed metro residents are investing heavily in CCTV and alarms while rural communities maintain the highest safety confidence. Image: RACV.

technology for peace of mind, while rural communities often rely more on community connections and traditional security practices,” Ms Gordon said. The study identified several areas for future research, including the relationship between population density and crime perceptions, and the impact of socioeconomic factors on safety behaviours.

Researchers acknowledged limitations in the data, particularly lower response rates in certain Local Government Areas and potential barriers to participation among culturally and linguistically diverse communities. “This is just the beginning, and we’re committed to expanding this research to ensure all Victorian communities are represented and their safety concerns are understood.”

The Victorian Community Safety Perception Report represents the first comprehensive analysis of its kind in Victoria, providing a baseline

for future community safety initiatives and policy development.

Collaboration

The collaboration between Neighbourhood Watch Victoria and RACV has been strengthening community safety across Victoria for over five years. The partnership combines RACV’s safety expertise with Neighbourhood Watch’s deep community connections to deliver practical safety solutions and education.

The “How Safe Is My House” quiz continues to be available to Victorian residents, contributing to ongoing research and providing personalised safety recommendations.

The full Victorian Community Safety Perception Report is available at www.nhw.com.au. The “How Safe Is My House” quiz continues to be available to Victorian residents at www.howsafeismyplace.com.au.

Monthly Historial Enquiries

[Received by the Donald History Group]

Barbara Kelly is a writer from Mildura and she is presenting a paper at “The International Irish Studies of New Zealand and Australia” Conference to be held at the university of Otago in Dunedin in November. The title of the paper is “The Watchem Hibernians” and she became inspired to present it due to an article that she found in “The Advocate” (A Catholic Newspaper) about the First Annual Communion breakfast held by the Watchem Hibernian Australasia Catholic Benefit Society (HACBS) on New Year’s Day after 9.30 Mass in 1919, and catered for by the Watchem Catholic Women’s Social Guild. The HACBS was a Friendly Society formed in 1868 by Irish Immigrants as a church based support network. In this case it was encouraging the Catholic men to attend an annual Mass and Communion. In those days the 3 hour fasting rule prevented many men from receiving Communion regularly and this was a way of encouraging them to fulfil the obligation of doing so once a year. The fasting law was later amended to one hour and then abolished altogether. Eighty men attended in Watchem that day. Barb asked for any information or photos of the society in Watchem, Donald and surrounding towns and we were able to oblige her with a 1918 photo of the Donald HACBS and c.1926 St. Arnaud HACBS. The list of activities of the Donald HACBS included the annual communion breakfasts, a ball and Euchre nights. It was probably a great support for the priests as well. Barbara is descended from the Watchem Connellans and also the Moores from Massey. She paid us a visit and was thrilled with the extra information she was able to obtain on the Hibernians. She has promised to

send us some of her historic family photos and she will return for a further visit. July the 8th was a miserably cold and wet day but the visitors poured in. First was Daniel Hall, with his two children on a holiday trip. Daniel was the younger son of Carol and Glen Hall, who both taught at the High School in the 1970 and 80s. Daniel attended DPS in the 1980s and was thrilled to find his named individual photo in an album we had recently put together for students of his era. The archivist on duty that day had taught Daniel and his brother, Tim, music at DPS and has also maintained regular contact with his parents for a number of years due to having mutual acquaintances at Cohuna.

Lee and Michael Flanagan were the next ones through the door. They had come on Monday the 7th to find the archives closed so stayed an extra night to ask if anyone remembered Michael’s family the Flanagans. Michael wasn’t too hopeful but he believed that his grandfather may have been the town doctor at one stage. He was quickly assured that we were well aware of Dr W.J. Flanagan and told that there was plenty of information and photographs of him, plus information on his surgery in Woods St. and its current whereabouts in Corack St. There were two doctors in Donald in those days, Flanagan and Calhoun. Dr. Flanagan would have delivered many of the current residents of Donald born in the era, 1922-1953. Michael is the only son of Dr. W.J. Flanagan’s son, John Flanagan, who also became a doctor and had a practice at Orbost. Michael, a retired builder, has three sisters. Michael and Lee were thrilled with their visit

and declared that they will return.

Debra and Trevor Emonson then came through the door, after phoning first, which is always a good idea. Debra’s father was the son of Charles Luehman, (pronounced Lehmann) who farmed at Carron. We didn’t have any information, as Charles was not an original selector, but a previous researcher had uncovered the Carron West School register which showed that Allan and Robert Luehman were enrolled there in 1934 and Joyce Luehman in 1937. All three were the children of Charles Luehman. Debra and Trevor set off to look for the Carron West School, having looked at our “Schools map” (produced during the Covid era by Norm and Beth Hollis). Debra phoned back to say that they had found the plaque on the Carron Watchem Road, on the LHS, just a few km past Andrew and Nadine Frank’s house. They also found another plaque for a second Carron West building. Trevor was also interested in finding any references to Emonsons at Jeffcott. There was plenty of information on Charles William Emonson from Carron, a great-great uncle of Trevor. Charles William’s son was Charles Henry and he retired to Donald, living in Woods St in 1925 and beyond. Charles Henry had a son, Charles William, b. 1916 and he seemed to have a connection with Jeffcott, perhaps working for a farmer there, before enlisting for World War Two. He played cricket for Jeffcott and was in the Jeffcott Tug of War team but he didn’t return there after the war. This Charlie died in Thailand in 1943 as a POW. Cora Wolswinkel, the Djaara Strategic Aboriginal Assessments Project officer, ordered

several of our publications for her Organization’s library. These included “Knocking About the East Wimmera and Lower Avoca 1874-1876”, “Townships: Extracts from Local Newspapers” and several of the Original Selectors series by Ron Falla. Ron was responsible for researching and putting together all of these books, which involved many hours of researching old newspapers, typing out, then literally cutting and pasting the information to make the booklets. Lilian Kirk has re-typed two of them and Mary Archbold binds them and replaces them regularly. They are a wonderful resource for many people.

Sophie Loy Wilson is researching the emotional lives of Chinese Market gardeners and purchased a copy of “Georgy Donald’s friend”. Rob and Debbie (nee Adams) Norton are researching the Adams, Flett and Tyson families of Laen. They intend to visit Ireland later in the year and Rob says, “I am doing some research on the family, both here in Australia and back in Ireland, which is where three Adams brothers migrated from Broughshane in Antrim from 1841 to 1852. They went to the diggings and then settled at Wangoom/Purnim before some of the family took up land in the Laen District in 1874 or so”.

Janece Cumming is researching Joseph Cumming (1831-1887) and Catherine Cumming (1837-1907). Joseph selected land at Laen in 1873 but died in 1887. Janece is descended from their son, Alexander William, who selected land in the County of Tatchera in 1890 and moved to Sea Lake in that County. We had some information in our “Donald Times” indexes on Alexander, but nothing on his parents.

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Celebrating National Landcare Week

The Buloke Northern Grampians Landcare Network have been celebrating their volunteers through Free Winter Workshops, with the series of skills based experiences, concluding during National Landcare Week, with a nature journaling session and terrarium building.

Dr Kathleen Bagot, of Nothing Like Nature, was welcomed to Lake Wooroonook on Sunday, August 3, to commence National Landcare Week with a workshop specialising in mindfulness and connection.

The Nature Journaling activity was well received as Landcare volunteers and members were taught to observe the natural environment with an art/science gaze. Participants were gifted their

own journals to keep, required tools, and the skills to capture the environment on the written, drawn or poetic page. The session was made all the more enjoyable by the spring weather and home-made biscuits and tea ceremony.

Plant Whisperer

On Sunday, August 10, The Plant Whisperer was welcomed to the Wycheproof Community Resource Centre where Landcare members and volunteers tried their hands at

terrarium building. The session supplied all materials for community members to build micro-environments in glass jars, with a selection of plants and decorative accessories for participants to choose for their own unique terrarium. The group learned about plant pairing for successful terrariums and best care practices for keeping each glass jar oasis thriving at home.

The workshop series also facilitated Hanging Baskets with Amy's Buds and Blooms in Wycheproof in July, to the delight of participants, who enjoyed learning nursery skills whilst making beautiful potted baskets take home.

National Landcare Week (Aug 4-10) celebrates Landcare throughout Australia, particularly each Landcare group across the nation, and their volunteers. Funded by Volunteering Victoria, the BNGLN Winter Workshops were held in thanks and recognition of the committed efforts of individuals that support local Landcare and community environmental projects. These community engagement activities were held to celebrate volunteers through social connectivity and enjoyment, whilst encouraging the community to be part of their local group – new members always welcome. The theme of Landcare Week in 2025 is L.I.F.E. – Landcare Is For Everyone!



• Dr Kathleen Bagot demonstrating a bark capture.



• Nature journaling, left to right: Andrew, Jordan, Emily, Charlie dog, Kirsten, Marney, Amy, Edie, Averyll, Juliya, John, Jill, Wendy, Michelle.



• Hanging baskets participants (left to right): Emma, Di, Gail, Bec, Wendy, Carol, Joy, Georgia, Andrea.



• Terrarium left to right: Gill, Pam, Joy and Andrea.

Blast from the Past

(From the "Donald Times", August, 1925)

A Narrow Escape. One day last week, Max Shearer, son of Mr. Sid Shearer, had a narrow escape in McCulloch Street. While riding his bicycle along the roadway it suddenly got out of control, and, as a result carried him headlong into Mr. Frank Cantwell's horse, which was harnessed to the lorry, and standing in front of the shop. The horse bounded off, dragging the lorry with it, the wheel passing over the bicycle. Fortunately the lad was thrown under the lorry, beneath the wheel tracks, and escaped unhurt. The bicycle, when they had finished with it, was reduced to a tangled and twisted mess.

The Missing Bell. It has been the generous practice of Messrs. Falla and Pitty to lend their bell to the local football authorities for the purpose of signalling "time" on the Donald ground. The bell was secured as usual on Wednesday week, when Litchfield-Carron and Cope Cope played their disputed match, but nothing has been seen of it by the association secretary or the aforementioned teams since the termination of the game. The showgrounds and dressing rooms have been thoroughly searched, but no trace of it has been found, and the owners are therefore anxious that it should be returned as soon as possible. At the present time its familiar tongue is stilled on auction days, and is likely to remain so until such time as the supporter who took temporary charge of it returns it to its proper quarters.

Fire in Woods Street. On Friday afternoon the spirited ringing of the fire bell announced the outbreak of fire in the town, and residents were soon hurrying southward along Woods Street, to the residence of Mr. J. J. McFall. The brigade was quickly on the scene, but happily, as was the case with Messrs. Hannah Bros fire a short time ago, their services were not urgently needed on account of the prompt action of the discoverer of the fire. The house is lined with papered hessian and it is surmised that a spark from the fire ignited some clothes which were drying nearby, the flames gradually

creeping up the wall. Mr. Reg. Dunstan, who first saw the fire rushed in and threw a dish of water on the flames, afterwards utilising the garden hose. He kept the fire in check until the brigade arrived. The firemen are to be complimented on their speedy arrival, and the manner in which they dealt with the outbreak without causing unnecessary damage.

Rabbits on Channel. At the last meeting of the Donald Shire Council, Cr. McPherson moved that the secretary be instructed to write to the Minister of Lands, complaining of the prevalence of rabbits on the banks of channels. To quote an instance, there was a spot on the Sheep Hills road, between Messrs. W. J. Bas-set's and Hepworth's, where the paddock had been eaten out over an area of about ten acres. Cr. Borden intimated that there seemed to be some misunderstanding between the rangers and the overseers, they having told him that it was not their duty to dig rabbits out unless they had taken up their abode in the bed of the channel. Cr. Adams added that they should find out the true position in this situation, and seconded the motion, which was carried.

Band Collection for Hospitals. The Secretary of the St. Arnaud District Hospital desires us to acknowledge, with very special thanks, receipt of the sum of £485/17/- from Mr. T. E. Conroy, being the nett result of the Hospital Sunday Movement conducted by the Donald Citizens' Band; also £544/7/9 from Mr. Jos. Lockwood, of Birchip Brass Band, for the year 1925. The thanks, not only of the Board of Management, but of the residents in the hospital district are due to the bandmen for their splendid efforts in the interests of our most deserving charity, and also all those who helped the bandmen in attaining the very fine result referred to above.

Commission on Soldier Settlement. Notification has been received by Mr. R. N. Jack, secretary of the local branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. to the effect that the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement will sit at the Shire Hall, Donald, on Wednesday next,

August 26, at 4 p.m.. Those returned men interested would therefore be well advised to get together and discuss the best means of placing before the Commission any grievances which may exist, together with suggestions for righting them. It is understood that members of the Commission will, if so desired, make a visit of inspection of soldiers' properties in the district on the following morning.

Soldier Settlement. Evidence before Commission at Donald. As previously notified, the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement sat in Donald on Wednesday, the representatives of the soldier settlers being introduced by Messrs. C.H.L. Davies and R.N. Jack, president and secretary of the Donald sub-branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A.. Four settlers gave evidence, the main grievance being in connection with the Act, which prevents one soldier settler selling out to another soldier settler, although he may sell to a settler who is not a soldier, or to a soldier who is not established under the Act. They also asked that, if the Act was amended to enable them to purchase another soldier settler's land, they should also be able to take on the vendor's liability to the Board. The whole position was, in a nutshell, as previously mentioned in the "Times", that the Act as presently constituted, prevented progressive men from progressing, and they requested authority to increase their holdings to 640 acres by buying their neighbours out as need be. In many cases the acreage was so small that the land could not be repeatedly put under crop, and sellers had to go as far as sixteen miles distant to obtain land to work on the share system. Another contention was that the initial grant was too small, being only £625. Naturally, after paying for a house, only about £200 remained. Arrangements would also have to be made to carry this initial advance on after the six years period expires. The Commission visited the settlements in the Donald district yesterday morning before proceeding to Rupanyup to take further evidence.

Share your local knowledge as environmental assessments continue

As technical studies for the VNI West Environment Effects Statement (EES) continue, we're encouraging landholders and community members to share what they know about local environmental and social values.

Local knowledge plays a key role in preparing a comprehensive and accurate EES. The people who live and work in the region understand it best. Your insights help make sure our assessments reflect real conditions on the ground.

Upcoming community sessions in August

We'll be holding community sessions across the project area next month. These are a chance to:

- Talk directly with Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) and technical experts
- Learn more about the EES process
- Share what you know about local land use, the environment, and what matters to your community

About the EES

The EES is Victoria's most rigorous and transparent environmental assessment process. It describes the project, explains why it's needed, and looks at the potential environmental and social impacts. The process is managed by TCV and administered by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on behalf of the Minister for Planning, who decided in April 2024 that an EES would be required for VNI West.

VNI West will connect Victoria and New South Wales with high-voltage transmission infrastructure to support renewable energy and maintain grid reliability. The project must complete the EES and obtain both Victorian and Commonwealth approvals before construction can begin.

What's happening now?

The VNI West EES is currently being prepared, with studies underway on topics including:

- Social factors
- Cultural Heritage
- Ecology (flora and fauna)
- Agriculture
- Traffic and transport
- Landscape and visual amenity

These studies help identify potential impacts — and how they can be avoided, reduced, or managed.

Community input is critical to this process to ensure a comprehensive and accurate EES for VNI West. It ensures the EES reflects what matters most to the people who live here.

Where we are in the process

There are two formal stages of community engagement in the EES process.

- The first took place in November 2024, when draft scoping requirements (the list of topics to be studied) were released for public comment.
- The second stage will be the public exhibition of the EES, expected in late 2026.

We're currently in the informal engagement phase while the EES is being developed, which is another opportunity for the community to provide important input.

Community feedback has already helped refine the project easement and identify areas for ongoing environmental investigation. We're now encouraging anyone with local knowledge — whether it's about native animals and plants, roads, heritage or other community values — to come along to an upcoming EES community session or get in touch in a way that suits them.

Come along to a session near you:

- **Kerang:** Tuesday 19 August, 3–6pm, Kerang Memorial Hall
- **Murrabit:** Tuesday 26 August, 3–6pm, Murrabit Public Hall
- **Charlton:** Wednesday 27 August, 9am–12pm and 3–6pm, Charlton Park Complex
- **Stawell:** Thursday 28 August, 3–6pm, Stawell Entertainment Centre

To share your local knowledge via our interactive map, or for more information on the EES, visit www.transmissionvictoria.com.au. You can also email enquiries@transmissionvictoria.com.au or call 1800 824 221 (free call).

Community Invited to Provide Feedback: Northern Grampians Approves In-Principle Council Plan

Northern Grampians Shire residents have a final opportunity to shape several strategic documents outlining the municipality's future, ahead of their formal adoption in October.

At a council meeting last week, councillors approved in-principle the 2025-29 Council Plan, which incorporates the 2025-29 Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, along with 2025-35 asset and financial plans.

The Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan sets out key goals in health, education, economic growth, sustainability and infrastructure, integrating community vision and wellbeing. The combined document provides a clear and strategic four-year guide to how council will support the Northern Grampians Community Vision 2041, "To love where we live".

Five Goals

The draft plan showcases five goals the council is seeking to achieve throughout the next four years: Live it up – health, wellbeing and community; Build it up – education, housing and skills; Business buzz – agriculture, economy and tourism; Clean it up – sustainability, climate and waste; and Do it well – infrastructure, finance and corporate services.

Strategies and Tasks

The plan details the 15 strategies the council will use to achieve each goal, along with the 40 actions it will pursue to achieve each strategy.

The plan includes a range of specific tasks, outlines how performance will be measured, and explains how supporting strategies and plans align with achieving the organisation's long-term goals.

The Asset Plan provides a framework for maintaining and upgrading infrastructure assets, ensuring service equity and community resilience, while the Financial Plan ensures long-term financial viability, aligning with strategic documents and emphasising community involvement.

Roadmap

Mayor Karen Hyslop said together, the plans created a cohesive roadmap for achieving the council's vision and addressing current and future challenges.

She said councillors had endorsed the documents for community feedback and encouraged anyone wanting to make a submission to any of the plans to do so by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 22.

"The draft plans have been informed by extensive consultation with the community, stakeholders and relevant experts, and have taken months of preparation," she said.

"I would like to thank the council staff for the time and effort they have put into

these plans, which are incredibly detailed.

"I'm really proud of the plans we have endorsed – I think they are some of the best plans we have had – and I encourage anyone wishing to have their say to do so as soon as possible."

Submissions

Submissions must be made in writing and can be made via the council's website, www.ngshire.vic.gov.au.

People can click a banner on the website to access a "Have your say" webpage dedicated to the council, financial and asset plans, which includes a link for feedback submission.

Submissions can also be made via direct mail and addressed to: Chief Executive Officer, Northern Grampians Shire Council, PO Box 580, Stawell, VIC, 3380.

Copies of all three plans are available on the webpage.

People can also view them in person at council's customer service offices in Stawell and St Arnaud.

Review

Council will review all submissions in September. Amendments to the draft plans might be made in response to feedback where appropriate, however not all submissions will result in changes, as council must balance a wide range of views, priorities and statutory responsibilities.

While council will not notify individuals on the outcomes of their submissions, people can call customer service on (03) 5358 8700 or email ngshire@ngshire.vic.gov.au if they have any questions.

All three plans are scheduled to be endorsed by councillors at a council meeting in St Arnaud on Monday, October 6, 2025.

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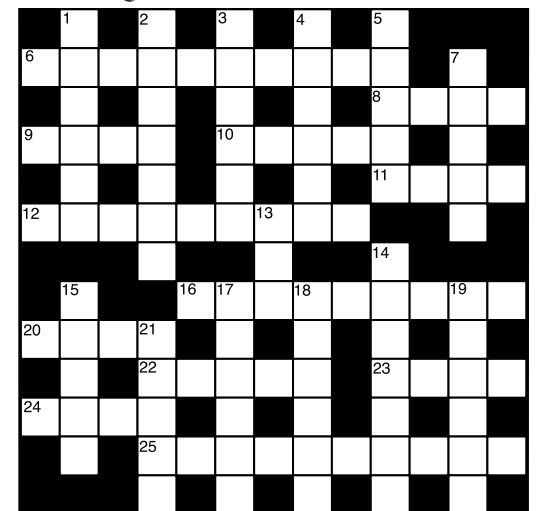
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"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8189



ACROSS

- Capital city (10)
- Bird (4)
- Old (4)
- Essential (5)
- Dash (4)
- Residue (9)
- Bad dream (9)
- Facts (4)
- Seat (5)
- Tumble (4)
- Language (4)
- Threefold (10)

DOWN

- Ornament (6)
- Cheese (7)
- Rough (6)
- Figurine (6)
- Joint (5)
- Purloin (5)
- Animal (3)
- Hug (7)
- Bear (5)
- Typeface (6)
- Rush (6)
- Tell (6)
- Keen (5)

• Solution next issue.

Broader Horizons Careers Program

Late in Term 2, Year 9s participated in the Broader Horizons program facilitated by the North Central LLEN.

This program aims to give students hands-on experiences to explore career opportunities and build skills for their future. Through activities like industry visits, work placements, and mentorships, the program connects young people with local employers and real-world learning.

Thanks to the following local employers who gave up their time to give students a taste of their industry – Buloke Shire, Johnson Goodwin Village, East Wimmera Health Service, YMCA, Donald Steel, Signs R Us, Nutrien Ag and Landwehr Electrical.



• John McConville shows Ryan Needs the ropes at Donald Steel.



• Dan Cooper (welding) with John McConville, as Jack Reilly and Oakley Brennan watch at Donald Steel.



• Donald Children's Centre (YMCA): Victory Davis, Carly Pearse, Arleea Sarre, Susie Stratton, Milla Adams and Halle Rice.



• Sowing rig: Hugo Funcke, Zachariah Clapham, Myles Hollis, Elijah Mansibang, Ryan Needs and Dan Cooper, with Heath Griffiths from Nutrien Ag.

Donald Primary School

2026

prepare for Prep Session

We invite prospective 2026 Prep students and their families to come and see what makes DPS amazing.

Take a guided tour and meet our staff including School Principal Gavin Young, Leading Teacher Xanthi Campbell & Prep Teacher Teagan Anderson.

A great opportunity to come and see what DPS have to offer and ask any questions you may have.

Monday August 18th
10.30am –11.30am
Donald Primary School
Waddell Street Entry



• Jack Reilly, Ryan Needs (obscured), Dan Cooper, Myles Hollis and Oakley Brennan at Donald Shire Depot.

Church Notices

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

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES “East Wimmera Parish”

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

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Wyche Bowls Wrap

(By Barefoot President)

Well, not so much a wrap, but a “let’s get ready” for the coming season. If you have ever thought about having a roll, then this is the season to do so.

We are searching for new members, so if you know someone who is interested, give them a tap on the shoulder and send them our way. Do not fear about losing your weekend, we are just as interested in “social” members who just want to have a bit of fun and beverages. We often get asked about night or social bowls; that is every Friday at the club during the season. Please keep your eyes out for future announcements about our season opening and “come and try Fridays”.

I’d like to send out a big thank you to the small contingent of bowlers who keep the club ticking over with

Wednesday social bowls during the winter.

Break-in

Unfortunately, we also had some other visitors during the break. A few weeks ago, some desperados targeted the club. Our Dowling Security System kept them out for the most part, until they decided to smash a window to gain entry. They went to a lot of trouble to remove our safe from the premises. They were not well-rewarded for their efforts either, but if you see some unlikely lads wearing Wycheproof Bowls Champion badges, that you don’t think they may have earned legitimately, please give us a hoy.

Complete Mess

Worst of all, the trespassers left the clubhouse in a complete mess, upending bags and draws. I had no idea we had so much “stuff” in the office and bar. There was little floor space as the miscreants brought a lot of the club’s past to our attention. Some of the things people had tucked away for a rainy day were baffling.

This was our excuse to have a good clean out. Rather than put a lot of the out-dated materials back into their hidden compartments, we filled several bins. A massive thank you to the regular crew that



• Line marker.

turns up for these moments. It was great to see members down there helping out at this time of year. A special thanks to Phil, one of our prized “social” members, and to Carol and Spike Jones who had to delay their trip to the football to initially deal with the incident and speak to the police.

Better Times

Anyway, on to better times ahead. We have our Annual General Meeting on Monday, the August 25, at 7.30 at the clubrooms. Members – this is your chance to get involved in the committees. There has been a lot of talk from people about getting on (or off) these boards and to do so, you need

to fill in the nomination forms that were sent out and make sure they are returned before the date and time on the notice. There is no use complaining about people who do nominate, and the job they do, if you did not put your hand up.

Thank You

I’d also like to take this opportunity to thank our many sponsors. These voluntary clubs rely heavily on the kind donations of such supporters. We know many of them are small and local and give a lot to other sporting clubs and organisations.

This edition’s shout out goes to the Wycheproof IGA which has also held its Christmas break-ups at the club for

the past two years. These are great nights and with the very generous donations made from the last IGA gig, the club was able to purchase a line-marker (pictured). Now we just need to name it. Billy, Harry, Jimmy or Narelle have all been considered. Contact the club with your suggestion.

Finally, please keep an eye out for announcements for the season opening. We are really looking forward to welcoming new members this year. Over the “off-season” we get a lot of interest, only for that to dissipate when the season starts. Please think about joining us in any capacity this season. The earlier the better.

Cheers and thanks.

Hard-Fought Draw in Junior Hockey

In the highlight of the day on the hockey field, the second and third placed under-12 teams had a great tussle at Charlton.

Both teams started strongly, having plenty of the ball, but neither could break through the other’s solid back line. Eventually, the Bulls found a way through and Denley Tyler opened the scoring.

The Bulls continued to press hard in attack, but Charlton’s defence held firm. Charlton then pushed forward and earned a short corner, making the most of it to score its first goal just before half-time to even the game.

In the second half, both sides kept up the pressure, but the defenders on both ends proved difficult to beat. After a couple of excellent saves in front of Charlton’s goal, Charlton managed to slot one through to take the lead.

Fired up, the Bulls combined well and levelled the score. The final five minutes were intense, with both teams driving the ball into their forward lines, earning short corners, but the defensive lines stood tall.

The match ended in a hard-fought 2-2 draw. Bulls awards: Jakoby Saggars and Samuel Ferrier. Charlton awards: Foley’s Hill Best On, Grace Morghem; Auxiliary Kiosk, Ruby Wright; Connect Coffee, Harriet Morghem, Charlton IGA Mars Bar, Toby Bourke.

Underage

In what can only be described as a master class from the ladder leaders, the Bulls had a very tough day as the premierships favourites amassed seventeen goals.

With a forward line stacked with options, the ball moved at frenetic pace and was repeatedly hit into the back of the net with Murphy Fitzpatrick scoring 6, Amali Fitzpatrick 4, Ruby Wright 3, Sophie Roberts 2 and Rhys Gahan 2.

Against the flow of the game Lana Angel did well to score a goal for the Bulls in what was a very difficult assignment. Final score:

Charlton 17 defeated Birchip-Watchem 1.

Charlton awards: Fitzpatrick Transport, Ruby Wright; Charlton Bakery, Megg Fitzpatrick; Charlton Bakery, Sophie Roberts; Connect Coffee, Toby Bourke.

For Birchip-Watchem: Shaylee Field (Sharp’s Bakery) and Lana Angel (O’Connors).

Minkey

In their penultimate game of the season the minkey players displayed exceptional skills and teamwork. The improvement over the season is showcased in the quality of the games, as it is evident they are putting their training into practice. Charlton awards: IGA Mars Bar, Lila Lanyon; Connect Coffee, Olive McGurk; North West Ag Player of the Round, Mia Wright. Birchip-Watchem awards: Sonny Sheridan (Bulls Canteen) and Imogen Noonan (Troy & Brooke Morris).



• Thomas Noonan and Olive McGurk fight for the ball, looking on is Jon Morelos.



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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

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PAGE 10 — “The Buloke Times”, Friday, August 15, 2025.



• Saturday Men's winners, left to right, Kelvin Clark, Robert Male, Garry Green, Richard Gallagher; Tim Steele, Leon Smith, Brad Hancock and Cameron Steele.



(By Course Language)

Last weekend was the 101st annual Donald Golf Club Tournament. With the course having been mowed and whipper snipped to within an inch of its life, and perfect weather above, the course couldn't have presented any better given the poor spring last year and the late break this season.

With small fields for the 3 days we were, however, very grateful and appreciative of the large group of regulars from Mt. Xavier Golf Club who make the long journey up each year.

Results

Friday: Ladies 4BBB – "A" Grade winners, Heather Hogan and Leonie Boxall, 45 points. Runner-up, Wendy Hewitt and Debby Barling, 41 points.

"B" Grade winners, Brenda Brennan and Helen Wee Hee, 43 points. Runner-up, Kerry Raven and Carmel Fitzpatrick, 41 points.

Men's 4BBB – "A" Grade winners, Brad Bath and Geoff Harvey, 41 points, on count back. Runner-up, Luke Kelly and Ron Thoulis, 41 points.

"B" Grade winners, Anthony Hogan and Sam Beavis, 40 points. Runner-up, Richard Gallagher and Leon Mann, 38 points.

Saturday: Ladies 18 hole – Scratch winner, Mandy Male, 80. Runner-up, Kerry Raven, 83.

Handicap winner, Karen Germano, 72 nett. Runner-up,

L. Maddalena, 75 nett.

Men's 27 hole – Scratch winner, "A" Grade, Tim Steele, 105. Runner-up, L. Skrypko.

Handicap winner, "A" Grade, Leon Smith, 121-18-103. Runner-up, Luke Kelly.

Scratch winner, "B" Grade, Richard Gallagher, 123. Runner-up, M Maddalena.

Handicap winner, "B" Grade, Gary Green, 141-28.5-112.5. Runner-up, S Lowe.

18 hole – Scratch winner, "A" Grade, Brad Hancock, 72. Runner-up, M Kiellerup.

Handicap winner, "A" Grade, Cameron Steele, 80-8-72. Runner-up, S McGregor.

Scratch winner, "B" Grade, Robert Male, 89. Runner-up, Geoff Harvey.

Handicap winner, "B" Grade, Kelvin Clark, 89-18-71. Runner-up, A Johnson.

Sunday: 2 Person Ambrose (any combination) – "A" Grade winners, Mario and Lorraine Maddalena, 76-16-60. Runner-up, Brad and Carmen Bath, 72-11-61.

"B" Grade winners, Kelvin Clark and Anthony Hogan, 74-

22-52. Runner-up, Geoff and Leonie Harvey, 81-24.5-56.5.

The Donald Motor Lodge raffle winner, Julie McLennan; 2nd prize (hamper), Lynn Boyle; 3rd prize (hamper), Marilyn Knights.

Thank you to all those who helped over the weekend and in the lead up, it's always "all hands-on deck" for these events and our members always step up to the plate to make sure everything runs smoothly.

With all the golf that was played over the weekend there should have been plenty of mishaps to report on, but none made it into the "scribe's" notes. However, a little duck did tell me, that after the president was pictured in the "Buloke Times" placing some decoys on the dam last week, he was seen Friday, about lunch time, trying to feed them a couple of golf balls.

Who would have thought that you could hit the same branch, with consecutive shots, and finish in the dam, in the same spot?

Coming Up

This week's tournament sees Royal Wycheproof take its turn in the Kara Kara roster.

At Donald there is another stroke round with the Donald Pharmacy Monthly Medal and Pies Putting.

Our "Chicken Run" is getting closer, starting on Friday the 22nd at 4.30 p.m.. Come along for a social 9 holes of golf, all welcome.

Dad Jokes

Would you like to hear the story of how I climbed Mt Everest? – I made it up.

If you're ever worried about sitting around and not doing much, don't worry, you'll never be as lazy as the person who named the "fire-place".

A good friend of mine, Peter Tickle, met the woman of his dreams and wanted to marry her, however Tess, was reluctant to take on his surname.

There is only one thing that makes me throw-up – A dart board on the ceiling.

There will be a hecklers anonymous meeting tomorrow night at 7 o'clock – bring your own boooos.



• Sunday 2 person ambrose winners, "B" grade, Anthony Hogan and Kelvin Clark; "A" grade, Mario and Lorraine Maddalena.



• Friday Men's 4BBB winners, "A" grade, Geoff Harvey and Brad Bath; "B" grade Sam Beavis and Anthony Hogan.



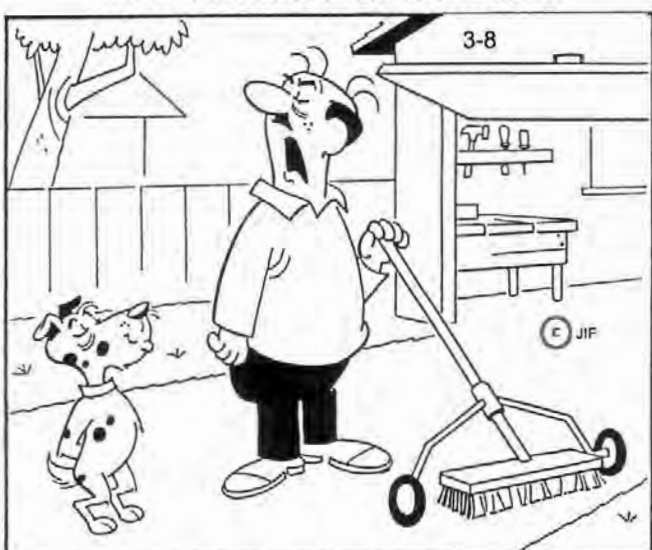
• Friday Ladies 4BBB, left to right, winners Heather Hogan and Leonie Boxall; runners-up Wendy Hewitt and Debby Barling.



• Saturday Ladies winners, left to right, Lorraine Maddalena, Karen Germano, Mandy Male and Kerry Raven.

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"I know I don't do too much work around the yard but a broom with trainer wheels?!"



• ACT (blue and gold) and NSW (light blue) National 12-&-Under Championship teams: Deniliquin's Henry Pisasale is kneeling fourth from the left (#7).



• The smallest and tallest: 12-and-under players Ollie Nankarrow (NSW) and Ned Simon (VIC) display the size difference in some of the national championship players.

The Future of Aussie Rules

The National AFL 12-and-under football championships were held at Maroochydore, Queensland, from August 4 to 10.

Maroochydore, a Sunshine Coast city of 70,000 people, was an ideal location with the ovals only 5 minutes from the airport. The girls' and boys' teams came from all states and terri-

tories (except Tasmania) and played in warm conditions around 22 degrees Celsius. Sub-tropical weather appeared on the final day where the grounds were affected by 30mm of rain in overnight

storms. Victoria dominated the boys' competition. Their initial squad of 1000 boys was trimmed to 23 players after a series of practice matches. Country players from Ballarat,

Cobram and Geelong made the squad. In contrast, the Northern Territory side had no trial games due to their off-season and had difficulty in putting together their best players.

However, they managed to have representatives from the Tiwi Islands. The NSW side managed to win two games with a side made up predominately of country players from as far as Deniliquin, Griffin, Albury and Wagga districts.

In the NSW side was Henry Pisasale, of Deniliquin, a son of Sophie Pisasale (nee Guthrie) and grandson of Chris and Jenny Guthrie, of Rich Avon. (In his football days, Chris was an outstanding player in Donald's defence).

Bulls Reserves Reign at Charlton

It was a tough day for Charlton reserves in the penultimate round of the season against Birchip-Watchem at Charlton Park.

The signs were ominous from the start, with Lochlan Sirett a strong focal point up forward, taking the first grab, but accuracy proved elusive. It wasn't until midway through the first term that Bodie Colbert snapped the opening goal with Stefan Pye adding another late, giving the Bulls a 2.4 (16) to 0 lead at quarter-time. Wayward kicking continued as four more behinds preceded majors to Callum Goode and then Pye, before another flurry of behinds. Matthew Rickard goaled on

the siren and, by half-time, the Bulls had amassed an inaccurate 5.13 (43) but the Bulls' defence held sway, preventing the home side from scoring. Luke Dunne battled hard in the centre for the Navies, but the dominance of Ty Colbert and Pye around the ball was difficult to counteract. The Bulls piled on three straight goals, through Sirett, Lewis and Goode, before Goode added two more for the quarter. Patrick Lakin chimed in during the final minute as

Birchip-Watchem surged ahead 11.15 (81) to 0 at the last change, restoring some respectability to the scoreboard after earlier inaccuracy. Joseph Durie and Travis Salmon tried hard in the back-line but the Bulls' dominance continued in the final term. Rickard showcased his versatility with another goal, while Tison Wiantara, back from holiday, injected pace and class to add two. Goals from Riley Doran and Bailey Baxter further stretched the margin as the Bulls' goal tally closed in on their 18 behinds.

Charlton's only score board reward came in the final four minutes, albeit a behind on a tough afternoon. With one match left to tune up against Donald, and with injuries affecting both senior and reserves lists, including reserves spearhead Matt Berry, the Bulls' priority this week will be keeping everyone fit. Final score: Birchip-Watchem 16.18 (114) defeated Charlton 0.1 (1). Best for Birchip-Watchem: Stefan Pye, Ty Colbert, Bodie Colbert, Matthew Rickard, Tison Wiantara, Joshua Woods. Best for Charlton: Luke Dunne, Joseph Durie, Travis Salmon, James Dean-Gilley, John Leathan.



• Charlton ball: Stefan Pye, Josh Woods, Joe O'Donnell falling, Bodie Colbert running alongside.



• Birchip Watchem's Riley Doran with ball, Connor Boyle facing, Matt Berry background, Bodie Colbert (14).

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- ☐ NEVER OVERLOAD POWERBOARDS
- ☐ CHECK SMOKE ALARMS MONTHLY
- ☐ CLEAN CHIMNEYS AND FLUES YEARLY
- ☐ TURN OFF ELECTRIC BLANKET BEFORE BED
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Bulls Netballers’ Day at Charlton

It was a big day for the Birchip-Watchem players, who won all five divisions.

14-&-Under “A”
Charlton 2 def. by Birchip-Watchem 32.

Charlton awards: TeeJet Best, Lily Lane; FHN Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Isabella Stahl; NWAG & Charlton Caravan Park “Have a Crack”, Anna Fitzpatrick.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Awhina Kahukura and Mia Sharp.

17-&-Under “A”
Charlton’s girls had a strong start with the attackers working hard, moving well with their drives and front cuts. With plenty of rotations all the girls continued to play well together. Down the other end Charlton defenders faced a tough challenge, but worked hard as always. Anika Holmes-Brown and Maggie Riley combined for a standout performance in the ring. Unfortunately Birchip-Watchem took a strong lead in the second quarter, which set it up for the win. Credit to Charlton for still playing well and encouraging each other!

Charlton 22 def. by Birchip-Watchem 48.

Charlton awards: IGA Charlton best, Anika Holmes-Brown; FNH Ladies Auxil-

iary Coaches, Lacey Smith; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Rosie Fitzpatrick.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Cassie Tynan and Gracie Ferrier.

“C” Grade
A great start for Charlton’s “C” grade girls who held their own against a strong side, keeping in the scores right for the first half. Special mention to Taylah Giles, who stepped up again into the goal ring shooting well along with Jac Leslie. Lily Campbell back again provided strong drives and defence through the centre. Another comeback story this week with Kirsty McKenzie back out on the court after welcoming baby #2. In defence Brooke Prior held strong in GK with Zoe Carney getting hands to plenty of ball in GD. A good team performance leading into next week’s last game for the season!

Charlton 30 def. by Birchip-Watchem 56.

Charlton awards: Jack Thompson Construction Best, Brooke Prior; S&D Consulting Coaches, Zoe Carney; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Taylah Giles.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Maddy McQueen and Steph Coffey.

“B” Grade
A solid start by the girls this week with both Erin and Sarah Blair coming on to provide some difference on court. Some beautiful defensive work by Anika Holmes-Brown gaining some opportunities in which Tahli Robert’s converted down the other end. All girls down the court fought hard for every loose ball. A tough opposition with Birchip-Watchem running away in the end, but still plenty of great plays made.

Charlton 29 def. by Birchip-Watchem 51.

Charlton awards: Tey’s Charlton Feedlot Best, Emily Olive and Anika Holmes-Brown; Tey’s Charlton Feedlot Coaches, Stella Nicolson; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Tori Hutchins.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Beau Haslam and Megane Greenaway.

“A” Grade
A strong start by Charlton defenders with Issy Soulsby getting tall hands to put pressure into the ring, followed by some beautiful rebounding by



Claire Smith in GK. Second quarter saw Claudia Lee step into GA with some great passing into Chloe Walsh at GS. Unfortunately for Charlton, a strong quarter by Birchip-Watchem saw its lead push out. Third quarter was a strong one by Charlton’s girls with Chloe rotating well in the goal circle and shooting and defence pressure still on. Into the fourth Charlton showed no signs of slowing, breaking down Birchip’s zone to get the ball down the court well, with Megan Bruns providing some great support through the transition. Whilst the score didn’t go Charlton’s way, it was a great game to watch showing the girls never stopped fighting.

Charlton 54 def. by Birchip-Watchem 63.

Charlton awards: Walsh Motors Best, Claire Smith; Walsh Motors Coaches, Megan Bruns; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Maggie Riley. Connect Coffee and Stacy’s Dental Lucky Volunteer of the Day: Liz Riley.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Toni Jones and Issy Atkins.

• Above, “B” Grade: Charlton’s Emily Olive (GA) passing to Stella Nicholson (WA). Bulls’ players are Sophie Parfrey (C) and Eva Coffey (WD).



• “A” Grade: Claire Smith (GK) passes to Megan Bruns (GD).

Jye’s Back to His Best

Inspired by Jye Roberts’s first game since his accident, Charlton under-17s jumped out of the blocks against the Bulls and didn’t let up, with Jye being awarded “best player” after kicking four goals.

In a remarkable story of resilience, determination and perseverance, Jye ran through a banner to mark the occasion, surrounded by teammates and admiring supporters, and by the 10 minute mark of the first quarter he had recorded his first goal.

Bayley Kemp secured a goal for the Bulls to stem the flow, but it was short lived as Charlton added two more majors to give them a 5.3 (33) to 1.0 (6) lead at the first break.

There was no let up from the Navies, who despite having no chance of September action, were on a mission, motivated by Jye’s courage. Murphy Fitzpatrick was getting first use of the ball in the midfield and Sebastian Zagame was omnipotent, with his only blemish some inaccuracy in front of goals. Only three goals resulted for the Navies from eight scoring shots, but at half-time they were ahead by fifty points and the signs looked ominous for the Bulls.

Charlton put on a dominant quarter of play with Liam Monaghan and Samuel Olive featuring strongly, but again the home team’s supremacy was blighted by inaccuracy. Jye Roberts kicked his fourth, and Leigh Van Boven and Sebastian Zagame kicked truly late in the quarter to add some reward for their repeated entries. At the final change Charlton led 11.17

(83) to Birchip-Watchem 1.0 (6).

Max Field and Cameron Jones were getting a work out in the Bulls’ backline, and Noah Dean and Ollie Cook were doing their best in the midfield, but they were no match for the height and speed of the Navies and their task was made even more difficult in the final stanza, as Charlton found the accuracy that had eluded it early.

Sebastian Zagame added two goals, Jodan Chamberlain added three and Ethan Soulsby added one to give Charlton a massive 115 point win in a game that will be remembered for the heroics of their mate.

Final score: Charlton 17.20 (122) to Birchip-Watchem 1.1 (7). Best players for Charlton: Jye Roberts, Liam Monaghan, Samuel Olive, Leigh Van Boven, Murphy Fitzpatrick, Sebastian Zagame. For Birchip-Watchem: Noah Dean, Oliver Cook, Cameron Jones, Max Field.

Under-14s
The Under-14s game kicked off at 9.38 a.m., ahead of time of time, but the Bulls’ players weren’t as quick off the mark.

On a very slippery ground there was lots of sliding and fumbling of the ball, but it was Charlton which opened its account first, scoring two successive behinds, the only scores in the first quarter.

The Bulls responded well after the break, fighting hard and working well as a team. They ran hard after that ball as it soared from one end of the field to the other and were the only team to score in the second term, albeit registering only one goal from six shots. At half-time Birchip-Watchem was ahead 11 to Charlton 2.

The Bulls’ spirits were high, opening with a quick goal, and the team work happening was good to watch. Charlton was also up and about, and the ball was going from end to end, but goals were hard to come by for both teams, as both added 2 behinds. At the last change the Bulls 2.7 (19) led Charlton 0.4.

In the final quarter the Bulls were on fire. Hamish Jones was proving a good addition, and the Tylers were working hard to keep the scoreboard ticking over for the Bulls. They finished the day with a final goal from Oscar Sharp and a great win 6.11 (47) to Charlton 0.4 (4).

Award winners for Birchip-Watchem: Hamish Jones (Noonan Tyres and Jake & Billy Noonan), Archie Tyler (TMC Enviro), Denley Tyler (Bulls Canteen), Des Coffey (IGA Birchip). For Charlton: Charlie Zagame, Darcy Olive, Liam Monaghan, Sam Cossar, Isaac Roberts, Thomas Fitzpatrick.



• “C” grade: Lily Campbell (C) passes to Taylah Giles (GS) with Jac Leslie (GA) and Ebony McCarthy (WA).



• Jye Roberts kicks for goal, Archie Tyler on the mark.

Donald Hosts Calder United Netball Teams

14-&-Under “B”

Donald girls started strong, putting into play the skills they had been working on at training and holding their own against a small but determined Calder side. Calder gained a slight upper hand, leading the game by three goals going into the final quarter. Further changes and a strong team effort brought the margin back to just one goal in a very exciting finish.

Final score: Donald 7 def. by Calder United 8.

Donald awards: Aria Brennan (Spuds Cafe), Indi Goldsmith (Donald family butcher).

14-&-Under “A”

Donald had a great contest against Calder in the 14“A” match on Saturday, with both teams vying to secure their spots in third and fourth place. It was quality netball from start to finish. Well done to Donald for holding strongly under pressure, showing great passages of play and solid defence. Turnovers were traded multiple times, with both teams fighting hard to win the ball back. Donald held the lead from the opening whistle and maintained it right through to the end. A big thank you to the umpires for the fantastic job they do each week, and to Calder for always bringing a great contest and such enthusiastic support.

Final score: Donald 22 d. Calder United 16. Donald awards: Layla Griffiths (The Clothes Bin), Layla Hepworth (Love Shack Giftware).

17-&-Under “A”

The Donald girls took on a strong Calder United side whose players included some of the club’s top senior netballers. The team embraced the challenge, using the match to experiment with new positions and combinations. There were some great

passages of play, with solid ball movement and good defensive pressure. The girls showed grit and determination right to the final whistle, and while the scoreboard didn’t reflect their effort, their teamwork and willingness to learn were clear to see. Each week they continue to grow as a team, and this game was another valuable step forward in their development.

Final score: Donald 4 def. by Calder United 112.

Donald awards: Kailie Krause (Gilchrist & Co), Halle Rice (Harvest Cafe).

“C” Grade

Donald’s tough run home continued on the weekend, coming up against ladder leader Calder United. The impressive Calder side applied relentless pressure from the first whistle, causing Donald to make unforced errors and turnovers. As the game progressed, Donald began to settle, playing smarter netball by controlling the tempo when it had the ball and driving forward, rather than rushing under Calder’s pressing defence. The final quarter was a highlight, with Donald players channelling their frustration into a determined contest for every ball.

Final score: Donald 20 def. by Calder United 83.

Donald awards: Molly Harrison (Jasper and Co) and Makere Dillon (Mensland).

“B” Grade

Calder United took the lead early in the first quarter. Donald fiercely defended. The Donald attacking end was strong with Megan Tonkin Emma Downes and Zara Staples doing their best to get the ball into the goal ring.

Donald picked up the pace a little in the second quarter. Courtney Doak, Kim Griffiths and Jess Nunn worked hard to

try to stop the strong Calder United team from scoring. But the Lions were too strong and put a bigger gap in the score.

Going out hard in the third quarter Donald managed to seal the first goal. Zara and Claire Adams worked well in the ring together and managed to gain a few more goals. Jess had a few really good intercepts, despite Calder United’s effective performance which saw it take a bigger lead. Donald defenders kept a tight defence and stayed strong all the way to the final siren.

Final score: Donald 16 def. by Calder United 48.

Donald awards: Emma Downes (Gilchrist & Co), Jess Nunn (Bev’s Baubles).

“A” Grade

Donald took to the court with great defensive pressure from the outset, creating plenty of movement up and down the court. Ally and Anna combined well with lots of possessions. Calder United began to find its rhythm late in the first quarter, gaining the upper hand.

The Lions capitalised on loose balls and kept the scoreboard ticking over. Donald fought hard in a tough and physical contest, not letting Calder do it easily. Abby Griffiths continued driving hard down the court and maintained pressure on her opponent throughout the entirety of the game.

Milla and Zoe continued their efforts to break through Calder’s tough defence and produced some beautiful goals, but Calder’s fight was well and truly in motion.

The final quarter maintained the fast pace, with Donald producing some great passages of play despite the differing scoreline. It was great to see Lainey Mortlock back in the Royal Blue, and she slotted in seamlessly to each position!

Final score: Donald 27 def. by Calder 51.

Donald awards: Lainey Mortlock (IGA), Milla Adams (Donald Hotel).



• Emma Downes (Donald) and Gabrielle Ives (Calder United) fight for the ball Zara Staples (Donald) and Paige Arnel (Calder United).



• Clair Adams defended by Grace Scott; Kim Griffiths is watching on.

Calder Women Win at Donald

What a season the Donald women’s hockey side has had this year!

With goals, wins and draws under their belt, this has been one of the best years the team has had, and Saturday’s game was no exception.

Donald went into the game fighting hard and Calder came out just as hard. They went straight down to Donald’s defensive end, where Erika and Fiona were able to make some quick defensive plays and get the ball out of the D. Sarah B was able to get a goal past Charlotte to make the score 1-0. Kailie received a green card before Calder was able to score again.

There was so much play through the middle of the field with Hannah, Isobelle and Louise working hard to get the ball down Calder’s end, and Louise assisted Lilly to get a goal that just floated past Calder’s goalie, Sue

Anne. The team has come so far this year and must be commended on its performance. The ladder certainly doesn’t reflect the improvement that this women’s team has made this year, under the leadership of Lauren. Congratulations on a fabulous season ladies.

Calder United goals: Sarah Botheras (2).

Donald goal: Lillian Pritchard (1).

Calder United awards: Meal Voucher (Terminus Hotel), Sarah B; Meal Voucher (Bridgewater Hotel), Tanya G; Beauty Bliss Skin and Body voucher, Sandy P; \$20 voucher (Balinese Massage Bendigo), Ruby I; IGA Powerade, Cassie P.

Donald awards: Della Vedova, Hannah Werner and Lillian Pritchard; Best on, Fiona Stephens.



• Calder United’s Laura Harrison attempts to block Donald’s Hannah Werner as she makes her way up the field. Giving chase are from left: Keely Allan (CU), Kailie Krause (D) and Tanya Goddard (CU).

Track Record at Charlton Trots

(By Peter Hibberd)

Even though it was only a 6-race program at Charlton last Monday, it will go down in history, as the track record for a mile rate was broken not only once, but twice. The time of 1-52.8 set by Ellas Puppeteer dates back to September 14, 2015. What was more amazing was that the 2 horses that broke that time are trained by the powerful Emma Stewart stable.

The first horse to break the record was in the opening race for the fast class horses. Miki to Success, only still lightly raced, was driven by Jackie Barker. It sat outside the leader and came away to an easy win.

After all the sectional times were adjusted, the official mile rate of 1-52.7 was declared. But it was in the third race that took everybody's attention – two very promising 3-year-old pacers, the undefeated Look Perfect and In An Ideal World, which has won 3 races in its career. From the early part of the race, they were running at the front of the field. With quick early sectionals, the race broadcaster said if they keep going at this rate, they will

give the track record a fright. Well fright they did. After an epic battle up the home straight, Looks Perfect came away to win by 2 metres in an adjusted time of 1-52.0. The winner was driven by former local Ryan Sanderson.

Other Results

Race two: Night Whisperer, trained by the Ainsworth stable, after a run of second placings, returned to winning form with Ashley Ainsworth driving.

Race four: Salute To Sunny, a trotter that was on her last chance to show something for Horsham trainer Janet Excell, turned her form around by winning. Having not been placed in her previous 21 race starts, driver Kerryn Manning was back on the fence in the

run, but used the sprint lane to get through and win at the big price of \$34.00.

Race five: Ryan Sanderson completed a driving double with Yesnoletsgo. Had a good trail in the run and won quite easily. Only having its fifth race start, it will only get better with racing. Trained in Shepparton, it is amazing how many horses from that region come to Charlton and go home winners.

Race six: The locals were happy after the win of Fair Chance. Owned, trained and driven by local identities, it came a very strong finish to win. After winning recently at Melton, the amazing thing was the winning price of \$12.00.



• A new track record to Looks Perfect with driver Ryan Sanderson and stablehand Leesa McLayne. The winner is trained by the Emma Stewart stable.

I think the club would be disappointed with only a six-race program, as there was plenty of nominations when they were issued. Next meeting: Monday, September 29.

Success

The continued success of

trainers who have transferred to the Charlton Harness Training Centre continues to grow. This current season has seen a fight for "bragging rights".

At the moment, Tori Hutchins has had 98 starters for 21 wins and 28 placings.

Michael Gadsden has had 131 runners for 16 wins and 41 placings. Of Michael's 41 placings, a big percentage of those were second placings. Followers of Charlton-trained horses would be having a good year.



• The Ainsworth stable is a regular supporter of all Charlton meetings. After 3 consecutive second placings, Night Whisperer, driven by Ashleigh Ainsworth, defeats Alderbaran Anton, driven by Jackie Barker and Apex, driven by Ewa Justice.



• Driver Ryan Sanderson completed his driving double with Yesnoletsgo defeating Whenimready, driven by Kerryn Manning, and Stylistic driven by Luke Dunne.



• After 21 unplaced runs, Salute To Sunny wins its first race. Driven by Kerryn Manning it used the sprint lane to defeat Joe Lou driven by Ross Graham and Me And Zac driven by James Herbertson.



• Some very happy locals. Trainer Leon Fanning, owner Andrea O'Gorman and driver Luke Dunne after the win of Fair Chance. This completed a double for the horse following a recent win at Melton.

Down the Middle?

Nine Donald lady golfers enjoyed a Fun Day ambrose event on Wednesday, sponsored by Love Shack.

The winners for the day were Debbie Burton, Carol Stuchbery and Jo Beavis with 61 nett from runners-up Kerry Raven, Beris Jones and Jenni Campbell with 64 nett.

Nearest the pins were Kerry Raven, Donald Auto Electrical 3rd; Margot Paynter, Weir's IGA 7th; Kerry Raven, NuFarm 14th; Debbie Burton, Donald Community Bank 16th.

Thanks to all who helped in the kitchen and brought afternoon tea for the tournament. A good time was had by all.

Next week

Clothes Bin monthly medal.

Highlights and Lowlights

There is a new club, the "Funny Club", welcome Carol,

Jenni and Jenny. Enid joined the "Swish Club". Jenni, Beris and Kerry joined the "Gobblers Club".

The Buloke Times

Coloured Photographs

Copies of "Times" photos can be purchased from our office/s.

Photos not published may also be available.

Call in to our offices, McCulloch Street, Donald, phone 5497 1222; or Cumming Avenue, Birchip, phone 5492 2735.

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At Granite Church 10.30 a.m. Baptist Union of Victoria

ANGLICAN "Parish of Charlton-Donald"

Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird 0435 593 395

Friday, August 15 St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, August 17 St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m. St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m. Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.



Twenty-Three is the Critical Number

(By Shane O'Shea)

Sea Lake-Nandaly needs to defeat Calder United by a minimum 23 points if it is to displace the Lions from second spot on North-Central's ladder, and secure a berth in the second semi-final against Birchip-Watchem.

If Calder United wins, the current order of teams will not change, with the Lions second and the Tigers third.

And nor will it change if Sea Lake-Nandaly wins by a margin less than 23 points.

For weeks now, the significance of the round 16 clash between the pair, at Wyche-proof, has become increasingly clearer, with percentage likely to decide the finishing order, depending on which team wins.

And over recent weeks, there have been wild fluctuations in the respective percentages (the difference between combined winning and losing scores through the season), due to the disproportionate influence of huge scores for and minimal scores against.

Calder United boosted its percentage by 11.2 when it defeated Charlton by 116 points in round 14 (246.3 to 257.5), and then added another 29.4 per cent (to 286.9) when it smashed Donald by 208 points last Saturday.

Sea Lake-Nandaly likewise benefitted from a 203-point drubbing of Donald in round 14, increasing its percentage by a whopping 32.2 per cent (243.5 up to 275.8). An indication of the vagaries

created by such huge winning margins, however, can be gleaned from the Tigers dropping 1.4% (to 274.4) despite defeating Wedderburn by 65 points last Saturday.

Where Donald managed 10 points against the Lions and 2 against the Tigers, increasing the value of those teams' massive wins, Wedderburn managed a respectable score in comparison of 6 goals, 6 points (42), slightly lessening the overall gap between Sea Lake-Nandaly's "for" and "against" scores, and thus causing its percentage to reduce.

And a similar scenario could play out tomorrow, with Calder United's percentage likely to take a bigger hit, particularly if it loses. A margin of just 23 points could hold the key as to whether the Lions or Tigers front up in the first weekend of finals, against Boort.

Tomorrow's clash, to be played out in front of what is expected to be a packed "Green Mill" stand, will be a ferocious confrontation between two talent-laden teams.

At Daryl Wilson's disposal is a United midfield that was at the top of its game last Saturday, even without the influence of giant ruckman Dean

Putt. Koby Hommelhoff, Zane Keighran and Steven Kennedy ran riot, superbly supported by joint coach Jordan Humphreys and George Turner. And the two-pronged attack of Jack Exell and Mitch Farmer feasted ravenously on the opportunities relentlessly served up to them.

The inclusion of Matt Wade would further strengthen the Lions' potent attacking arsenal.

Injuries will, however, prevent the Lions from fielding their best possible line-up, but the same will apply to the Tigers.

Over recent weeks, joint coaches Bryce Delmenico and Billy McInnes have been re-assembling their line-up, but an ongoing spate of injuries continues to frustrate the plan to achieve maximum strength come the finals.

The recent return of Kane Donnan and Luke Martin provides two crucial pieces in the Tigers' jigsaw, while talented young guns Lachy McClelland and Cruz O'Sullivan have added plenty of run, helping to cover the absence of the injured Tyson McKenzie and Tom Cox.

Possibly the most challenging question facing the Tiger leaders, however, is



• The talls get higher in this ruck contest. Lions Dean Putt and Tigers Ryan O'Sullivan battle in the air while Thomas Cox (Tigers #17), Steven Kennedy (Lions), Matt Wade (Lions #5) and Wade Donnan (Tigers) battle at ground level during round 2.

how do power forward Josh Jenkins and midfielder Oscar Brownless fit into the mix?

Both have had limited match conditioning, and for team structure and consistent cohesion going into the business end of the season, they need to front up tomorrow. Or do the Tigers back in the players who have helped them fight their way through a challenging injury-riddled period?

With Wade and Trent Donnan, Max Cahoon, Austin Mertz, Jack Poulton, Brodie Adcock and the indefatigable Ryan O'Sullivan forming the basis of their formidable line-up, whichever combination runs out on to the oval at Wyche-proof, it will be primed for whatever challenges the Lions have to offer.

In a game worthy of finals-like status, tomorrow's clash will be one of the highlights of the home-and-away series. If Dean Putt is fit to play, the Lions should win, but without him, they may struggle to contain the Tigers' dynamic midfield, fed by the astute ruck work of O'Sullivan.

End to Season of Pain

The remaining three games in round 16 will bring an end to a very challenging season for Donald, St. Arnaud and Charlton, during which wins have been few and far between.

The Royal Blues take on the undefeated Birchip-Watchem,

on the Bulls' home turf at the George Cartwright Oval, with very little chance of causing an upset.

Coach Daniel Pearce and his charges have fronted up each week, determined to provide the strongest opposition possible, and will again be on the front foot tomorrow, but up against a well-rounded combination with eyes firmly focused on the Halfhide Premiership Cup team prize, there is little chance of the Bulls showing any leniency.

From Birchip-Watchem's perspective, it is probably not the ideal lead-in to its finals campaign, with a week's rest to follow, prior to the second semi-final. But the game still has to be won. And then there is the rare opportunity to go through a home-and-away season undefeated, so expect Hamish Hosking, the Rippon brothers, Meyrick Buchanan, Dale Hinkley and Ben Edwards to look to dominate from start to finish.

Boort, with its finals berth locked and loaded, can build momentum towards its first semi-final appearance with a confidence-boosting win over Charlton. But it could also be a danger game for the Magpies, if, with nothing to lose, the Navy Blues' Mitch Collins, Rhys Thompson, Ben Lanyon and Pat Soulsby conspire to create an intense, pressure packed battle, and

succeed in blanketing Boort's key play makers, including Jhye Baddeley-Kelley, Lachlan Hall, Kayne Rutley and Carlos Egan.

At home, Boort, with so much to play for, should win.

Wedderburn's season of what might have been also reaches its conclusion at home at Donaldson Park tomorrow, against the visiting St. Arnaud, which also has been unable to achieve the results hoped for.

The Redbacks, with Jackson and Mitch McEwen, the ageless Danny Benaim, Mitch Jensen and Hamish Lockhart performing consistently, should have a match winning edge over the Saints' best, including Kurt Torney, Jay Kirwood, Daniel Gifford and future cornerstones of the senior team, Jackson Needs, Owen Lowe and Jake Male.

• To all teams and players finishing up tomorrow, be it football, hockey or netball, thank you for playing your part in another successful and enjoyable season of North-Central winter sport. And to all teams looking forward to finals action, good luck tomorrow, and in the weeks ahead.

• North-Central football's "best and fairest" vote counts, including the 2025 Feeny Medal, will be live streamed on Saturday night, starting from around 7 p.m..

GOLDACRES NORTH CENTRAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

ROUND 16

SATURDAY AUGUST 16TH, 2025

CALDER UNITED LIONS	VS	SEA LAKE NANDALY TIGERS
WYCHEPROOF REC RESERVE		
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM BULLS	VS	DONALD ROYAL BLUES
GEORGE CARTWRIGHT OVAL		
BOORT MAGPIES	VS	CHARLTON NAVIES
BOORT PARK		
WEDDERBURN REDBACKS	VS	ST ARNAUD SAINTS
DONALDSON PARK		