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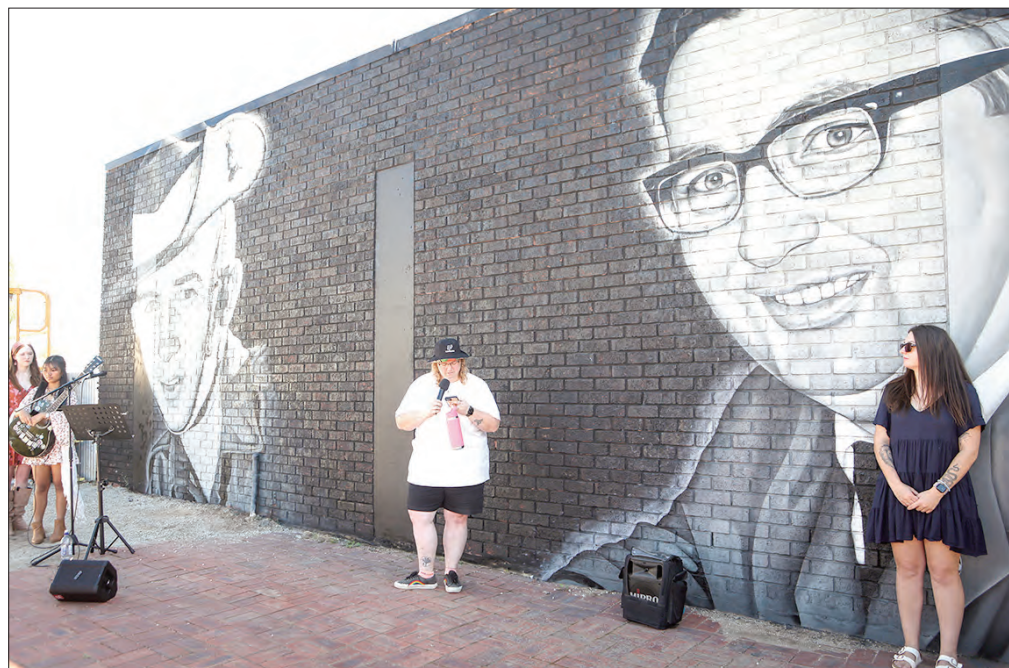
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Friday, March 14, 2025

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



• Mali Heart committee member Emily Noonan reveals the story behind the mural featuring Frank Hunt (left) and Ray Naughton.



• Birchip P-12 High School students Annabelle Bennett and Bambi Navarro entertain the crowd with a number of '60s classics.

Honouring Two Birchip Legends

More than 55 years ago, despite being 6,000 kilometres apart, Birchip residents Frank Hunt and Ray Naughton made history on the very same day. Now, their legacies are forever captured in a mural by artist Matt Hannah.

The mural, painted on the Commonwealth Bank wall, was unveiled at the Mali Heart Street Art festival on Saturday.

The connection between Frank Hunt and Ray Naughton is immortalised in Redgum's 1983 song "I Was Only 19", which includes the

line "Frankie kicked a mine the day that mankind kicked the moon." This lyric encapsulates both of their stories – one of sacrifice, the other of innovation.

Frank Hunt

Frank Hunt OAM enlisted in the Army at just 17 after leaving Birchip, serving in

Vietnam. At 19, he was severely injured in an explosives attack, losing his leg in the blast.

Despite his injuries, Hunt demonstrated extraordinary resilience, using mud to slow the bleeding and his shirt as a bandage. His bravery – both

in battle and in enduring his injuries until medical help arrived – remain an inspiration to many.

Ray Naughton

Ray Naughton was a radio and antenna expert who lived, worked and raised his family in Birchip. Ray would communicate with the astronauts who undertook the Apollo 11 mission and he would often be the only person on earth who would

receive communications from the mission.

Naughton created a 250-metre wide and 30-metre-high antenna from his home office, capable of bouncing off the moon. NASA scientists were impressed with his knowledge and sent Ray on an all-expenses-paid trip to America to share his experience.

"The contrast between these two significant events demonstrates the depth of

human resilience, ingenuity and determination – both of which these two Birchip men had in spades," Emily Noonan, Mali Heart Street Art committee member, said at the unveiling.

Members of both the Hunt and Naughton families were in attendance for the official unveiling, delighted to see their loved ones honoured in such a meaningful way.

• Continued on page 2.

Charging Up Energy Bill Savings

More Victorian suburbs and towns will be plugged in to neighbourhood batteries, helping lower power bills, get more solar on to Victorian rooftops and provide backup power for communities during extreme weather events.

The Mallee region will be home to two of 65 new battery locations being announced as part of round two of the \$42 million Neighbourhood Battery Program.

At Donald

Donald Community Power Plant will receive a battery system on a redundant Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water redundant water storage

unit, to provide household electricity bill reductions.

The Salvation Army in Mildura will receive a battery to reduce energy costs, which will allow savings and income to be redirected to frontline community services.

Neighbourhood batteries can soak up cheap, renewable energy from rooftop solar during the day and feed it back into the homes or organisations they are connected to at

night, when power usage is high.

Other neighbourhood batteries include Housing Choices Australia sites across Melbourne, Koo Wee Rup Community Centre, Venus Bay Community Centre and Trafalgar Recreation Reserve in Gippsland, Reefton Fire Station in the Yarra Ranges, Pyalong Recreation Reserve Hall in Central Victoria and more.

Back-up Power

These neighbourhood batteries can be paired with solar to provide back-up power to these buildings to act as community hubs for people to access power during prolonged outages.

These batteries will help Victoria reach its target of at least 2.6 GW of energy storage by 2030 and 6.3 GW by 2035 – enough energy to power around half of Victoria's homes.

We're also helping First Peoples corporations and organisations access the benefits

of neighbourhood batteries with the First Peoples' Solar and Storage Initiative – jointly funded with the Albanese Labor Government the initiative will deliver more solar and battery storage to soak up renewable energy and keep power prices down.

There are now 90 neighbourhood battery projects across metropolitan and regional Victoria. For a full list of neighbourhood battery locations visit energy.vic.gov.au/grants/neighbourhood-batteries.

"Home of Batteries"

"Victoria is the home of batteries – which soak-up cheap renewable energy during the day to drive down bills for Victorian families," said Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio.

Member for Northern Victoria, Jaclyn Symes, said: "These batteries will help keep costs down and power flowing to essential services during extreme weather events so that Victorians can continue to access the help and assistance they need."

Breaking Barriers: An Event for All

The Buloke Neighbourhood Houses invite you to an extraordinary event on Sunday, March 23, 2025, celebrating leadership, resilience, and the power of communities.

This is an event for everyone – all genders, all ages, all welcome – because shaping the future is a conversation we all need to be part of.

At the heart of this event is Fabian Dattner, a visionary leader, social entrepreneur, and CEO of Homeward Bound. With a lifetime dedicated to

empowering women in leadership, Fabian has inspired thousands across the globe. Her thought-provoking keynote address will challenge perceptions, spark new ideas, and leave you feeling motivated to make a difference.

Joining her is Sophie Arnold, President of the

United Nations Association of Australia (Victoria) and a passionate advocate for human rights and international relations. As the guest speaker, Sophie will share her insights on the importance of inclusive leadership and the role of strong communities in driving positive change.

Panel

Alongside these powerhouse speakers, the event will feature a panel of remarkable local women, change-makers, who will share their experiences, challenges, and triumphs in shaping their industries and communities.

But that's not all, expect great social networking, delicious food supplied by Tuscan on Calder, and an uplifting atmosphere where inspiration

meets action. This is an event not to be missed!

Tickets are selling fast, so don't miss out! Secure your spot before March 16, 2025.

To ensure that as many people as possible can attend, free buses will be running from towns across the Buloke region. Don't let transport be a barrier, simply book your seat when reserving your ticket and join in this inspiring day.

Location: Charlton Park.

Date and time: Sunday, March 23, 2025.

Book now: Through your local Neighbourhood House or via Humanitix <https://events.humanitix.com/resilient-women-empowered-communities>

Let's come together to inspire, challenge, and lead the way forward. Will you be there?

Online Launchpad Workshops Stimulate Local Business Ideas

Buloke Shire recently received a burst of entrepreneurial energy, hosting a dynamic online luncheon 3-day event last month that attracted 26 forward-thinking participants from across the shire and beyond.

The gathering served as a vibrant launching pad for innovative ideas — from creative start-up names and medical support initiatives for rural areas, to community volunteer projects.

“These lunch-and-learn events were all about sparking creativity and providing the support needed to turn innovative ideas into reality,” said Buloke Mayor, Cr. Alan Getley.

“Sometimes, all it takes is a little momentum and a supportive environment to transform a concept into a thriving business or project.”

Participants had the opportunity to explore their ideas, receive expert guidance, and build connections that will help propel their ventures forward.

The “Make A Change” Program, delivered by Jumpleads, is renowned for creating a collaborative atmosphere and have a strong understanding of the needs of the Buloke community.

“It comes at a time that our community is needing a boost, recognising the importance of



• Buloke Shire Council Mayor Cr. Alan Getley.

community and support in driving the future of business innovation across Victoria,” added the Mayor.

“We are pleased to be able to offer this opportunity under the Victorian and Australian

Government’s Community Recovery Program and look forward to hearing more about some of the innovative projects that have moved ahead as a result of this initiative.”

With Doctor Distribution Changes... Regional Health Crisis Escalates

Member for Mallee and Shadow Assistant Minister for Regional Health, Dr Anne Webster, says Labor has doubled down on its regional doctor distribution disaster as it again changed the Distribution Priority Areas this week.

“Metropolitan Australians can see a doctor relatively quickly and close to home, compared to regional Australians,” Dr Webster said.

“Mallee constituents have to wait weeks if not months, and at times travel for two hour round trips, to see a doctor. We have a dire maldistribution of the doctor workforce and this week Labor has made that worse, not better.

“So I utterly reject the Albanese Government’s claim that this announcement is a ‘no losers’ approach. When you keep shifting the goalposts in favour of metropolitan communities, of course you can claim there’s no losers when regional Australians are

abandoned outside the playing area.

Changes

“In 2022 the incoming Labor government changed the distribution priority areas (DPA) to include Modified Monash Model (MMM) 2 regions, which captured most of the larger metropolitan areas of Australia. Labor’s 2022 policy saw the number of doctors leaving regional Australia increase 56 per cent in the first six months.

“As I have said before in the press and parliament, Labor robs regions to buy votes in the inner cities. This week’s inclusion of swathes of the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Mount Barker in Adelaide further illustrates



• Dr. Anne Webster.

that Labor does not care one bit about rural, regional and remote Australians.”

Shifting

“I hope Labor shifting Hopetoun in Mallee from ‘rural town’ to ‘remote’ will help their local doctor shortage – but changes like these illustrate that the MMM is broken.

“The Federal Government’s Working Better for Medicare Review recommended moving away from MMM to the Department moving to progressively use the GP catchment area as the prime building block to establish DPA status.

“I strongly hope that the Coalition wins government at the upcoming election so more rural, regional and remote Australians can see a doctor.”

Letters to the Editor



Support Thanks

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.— Through your illustrious publication may I express our gratitude for the support we received at Donald’s Family Butcher after the Esoteric Festival was so unexpectedly refused permission to run.

After a post on social media by Justin Trollop, our manager, that we now had an unplanned excess of meat in stock, the local and Esoteric communities came to our aid so quickly and in such great numbers that we actually ran short by the day’s end, and there were some customers who wanted to help, we couldn’t supply!

Through a Herculean effort, Justin and staff managed to restore stock by Saturday, for which we are all entirely grateful.

It’s a very moving experience for us to feel the support of our community to that extent, and it will never be forgotten.

Thank you, everyone!

Our sympathy goes out to the organisers of Esoteric and the would-be festival vendors who were caught with unsaleable stock, some of whom took huge losses and could not take advantage of this wonderful community kindness.

Yours sincerely

Leo Tellefson,
Donald’s Family Butcher
52/54 Woods Street
Donald 3480

Esoteric Festival

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.— Pragmatic common sense should be a mindful virus that infects regulation generally.

Regarding Esoteric festival, what are the health concerns? When sick, call a doctor! Council prognosis differs, forced to call an offsite municipal surveyor?

Hardly fair to either profession, how has the division of labour become divergent regulation?

Of “health concerns” detail, we can’t be told, is it privacy provisions or commercial in confidence or non-disclosure agreements, etc, etc, etc, all in place caring to shield the less connected to cognition.

The result, a general public left in a foggy bubble of discombobulation thus professional complexity becomes impertinent silliness.

Democracy was at last Monday’s (3rd March) special council meeting earning some public satisfactions at processes concluded. Probation was earned by impassioned speeches by the elders, six busloads of locals with petitions totalling fifteen thousand signatories. All in public attendance were polite not interjecting nor shouting, approving with respectful applause. No state or federal members present nor were they pressured to attend; perhaps they were with a record number watching proceedings online, with me.

The shaking, “no” head, of the shire CEO at the exact moment the council VOTED yes to grant a planning permit was discourteous.

Councillor Milne “guided by governance regulation” then read out the conditional matters congruent to the granted planning permit, reading for fully twenty-eight minutes, notwithstanding, two sips of water and the turning of pages.

Learned very experienced highly qualified life long friends elsewhere, expressed “I am amazed” and similar.

This conjunction of improbable unhappy outcomes had to happen here to a local FAMILY and small community, not a big corporate.

A parliamentary inquiry dealing with some “points of order” should be effective to good for the seventy councils in Victoria. What use the monitors report recently delivered for such outcomes, with recommendation for more regulation?

Think about it all, we are ALL together in this ridiculous moment, keep the doors open, be kind, be considerate of each other.

Get sorted for the upcoming B&S ball for the young, fix your health concerns, ask a doctor their opinion and carry-on.

Kindest possible regards,
William Carr,
St George’s Hall,
Donald, Victoria 3480

Honouring Two Birchip Legends

• Continued from page 1.

Colouring Competition

The Mali Heart Committee also organised a colouring competition for the Birchip P-12 School Primary students, who coloured in local attractions including the Mallee Bull statue, Birchip Hotel and murals.

Winners included: Prep, Billy McLoughlan; Grade 1/2, Layla Wheeler; Grade 3/4, Nate Kilroy; Grade 5/6, Addison Hamilton.

Contributions

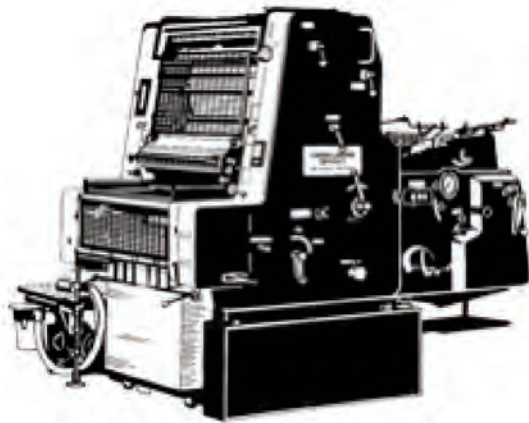
Emily Noonan thanked the generous financial contributions of Cargill Cares and the Buloke Shire Council towards the mural, as well as the

Birchip Hotel and Noonan Builders who provided support to enable the painting of the mural.

Birchip High School students, Bambi Navarro and Annabelle Bennett entertained the crowd on vocals and the guitar, playing a number of ‘60s songs including “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “Puff the Magic Dragon”.

While a few final details will be added to the mural in the coming week, the Birchip community and its visitors will forever be reminded of the incredible achievements of Frank Hunt and Ray Naughton – two local legends whose contributions to history will now never be forgotten.

The Buloke Times



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World Day of Prayer... “I Made You Wonderful”

Driving through the countryside, to attend the World Day of Prayer service, held at the Granite Community Church, last Friday, March 7, was a new experience for a few of the ladies attending the service.

As the ladies and gentlemen entered the church, they were able to view, on the big screen, scenes from the Cook Islands. The Christian women of the Cook Island prepared the worship service. The theme was “I made you wonderful”.

The service opened with the Māori word “Kia Orana”, which means “welcome, may you live long, may you live well, may you dance with the waves”.

The greeting was followed by the song, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made,” sung by Ruru Maeva in language, showing on the screen with the congregation joining in, in English.

Experiences of three Cook Island women were read by representatives from St. George’s, St. Mary’s and St. Andrew’s, (Donald Uniting Church), and the prayers of thanksgiving, confession, and petition were led by a representative of Granite Community Church.

Message

The message was brought by Susan Barnes, who has been in pastoral ministry for the past 30 years, sharing ministry with her husband, Ross. Susan is a qualified librarian, working in public and school libraries as well as gaining a degree in Christian Ministry. Susan and Ross have three children and four grandchildren.

Susan spoke of God making us, loving us, and with us. He did not create and then let the world run its course, but rather God is with us. Like the valuables in the Antique Show having a mark, so we have God’s mark on us. He is always near and compassionate.

Susan shared a story of a young lady who wanted to buy a Bible in a particular translation. She set off to buy it in a certain bookshop. When she arrived, the young lady found the shop closed. Disappointed, she went into the nearby supermarket to buy a few items to take home.

While there she happened to see on a shelf a few books, one of which was a Bible in the translation she wanted! Coincidence? No, God had orchestrated it. Why? Because He cares. He has our best interests at heart.

The special project for the Cook Islands for 2025 was explained, on video, the need for domestic violence trauma counselling and Sunday School teachers’ training. The offering of \$375 is being sent to go towards this project.

This is an amazing organisation as thousands of people would be praying for the people of the Cook Islands, every hour, right around the world, starting at the International date line for over 24 hours.

Next Year

Next year, 2026, Donald Uniting Church will host the service and the service will be prepared by Christian ladies from Nigeria. Afternoon tea was enjoyed by everyone.



• Alison McEwen and Susan Barnes from Bendigo at Granite Community Church on World Day of Prayer.

Five Councils Form Alliance

Councillors and CEOs from Buloke, Gannawarra, Loddon, Northern Grampians and Yarriambiack Shire Councils, along with representatives from the Municipal Association of Victoria and Rural Councils Victoria, met in Charlton last week to discuss the ongoing impact of transmission lines, renewable energy developments and mining.

These Councils encompass the planned route for the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector (VNI West) transmission line and represent 12.5% of Victoria’s land mass.

Buloke Shire hosted the meeting after a suggestion from the Northern Grampians Shire to try to explore common ground on transmission and renewables challenges all Councils in the Wimmera,

Mallee/Loddon region have been facing over recent years.

“We have common issues of serious concern in respect of major proposed transmission lines and the large number of renewable developments,” said spokesperson, Alan Getley, Buloke Shire Council Mayor.

“These concerns include the impact on our acute housing shortage during the construction boom, the lack of

social licence which has alienated many farmers, the environmental impact, the detrimental impact on roads and the impost this has had on Council resourcing.

“We realise we will have a stronger voice if we work together rather than individually.”

An outcome of the meeting is the formation of a working group with representatives of each Council present on the day.

As Cattle Herds and Sheep Flocks Decline... Production Records to be Broken

Australia’s national cattle herd and sheep flock are both expected to decline slightly as record production, slaughter and exports meet demand, according to Meat & Livestock Australia’s (MLA) 2025 Cattle and Sheep Industry Projections.

The cattle herd is projected to fall by 1.4% to 30.1 million head in 2025 due to increased turn-off of older breeding cows and dry conditions in Southern Australia.

The sheep flock will fall 7.4% to 73.2 million head due to the increased turn-off of older breeding ewes and tough seasonal conditions across key sheep producing areas.

According to MLA Managing Director, Michael Crowley, the Cattle and Sheep Industry Projections show that the red meat industry is ready to respond to global demand in 2025.

“Record production and elevated slaughter rates are being met with strong demand from well-established relationships with customers throughout the global supply chain,” Mr Crowley said.

The Cattle and Sheep Industry Projections are an important tool for the industry to understand the forecast conditions facing the industry.

“By consulting with producers, processors, agents, and government, MLA creates a clear forecast of the national herd and flock, slaughter, production and carcase weights for the cattle and sheep industries.”

Cattle

Australia produced more beef than ever in 2024, despite slaughter volumes being 7% below the previous record in 2014. This was due to

higher carcase weights, primarily due to increased grain-fed production.

“Producers are growing more efficient and productive cattle compared to 10 years ago. This is important considering the significant global demand for beef will continue this year, leading to another record production year,” Mr Crowley said.

“Australia is currently in an opposite supply cycle to major beef-producing competitors such as the United States and Brazil. As the US begins its long-overdue herd rebuild and drought conditions in Brazil ease, global beef supply is expected to tighten.”

As record production continues into 2025, efficient logistics and supply chain management will become increasingly important.

“Australia is well-positioned to achieve record production and export volumes once again.”

“With increasing carcase weights, storage space has become more valuable, and efficient logistics are now essential to maintaining processing flow and preventing bottlenecks in the supply chain.

“Looking ahead, Australia’s investments in domestic production, processing capacity, and global trade relationships have positioned the cattle sector well for the next few years.”

Sheep

Older breeding ewes retained from the 2020–22 rebuild will finally exit the system in 2025, contributing to the decline in the national flock.

Sheep slaughter is forecast to decline 17% to 9.8 million head in 2025, following the record rates of sheep turn-off at the conclusion of 2024.

Lamb slaughter is forecast to reach 26.2 million head, which is a slight 0.5% decline from 2024. However, this still represents the second-largest slaughter year on record behind 2024.

Despite the decline in the national sheep flock, lamb production continues to operate at historically high levels reaching 628,648 tonnes in 2025. This is in part driven by genetic changes in the flock with a focus on improving weight gain and yield in lamb carcasses.

“Given the elevated levels of sheep slaughter at the end of 2024, it is expected that lambs not processed last year will be processed in the first months of 2025,” Mr Crowley said.

“In addition, Australia and New Zealand account for more than 80% of global sheepmeat exports. However, the long-standing decline of the New Zealand sheep flock provides an opportunity for Australian sheepmeat exporters to continue their global dominance in 2025.”

Corack East Wind

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 1pm-6pm

Commencing 19 March, 2025

Meet the project team, find out more and provide feedback

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex

Boardroom

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex
Calder Hwy, Charlton

www.corackeastwind.com.au

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info@corackeastwind.com.au

Corack East Wind

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DEATH COLLINS.— Jack
31/07/1943 - 09/03/2025
Passed away peacefully, in Donald
Loved husband of Marj (dec.). Loved uncle and great-uncle to all his loving family.
Re-united with Marj



DEATH COLLINS.— Reginald "Jack"
A long-term employee of the Donald & District Racing Club prior to his retirement in 2013.
Jack will be sadly missed. Our deepest sympathy to family members – our thoughts are with you.

—Committee, staff and members of the Donald & District Racing Club.

DEATH COLLINS.— Jack
The Members of the Donald Bowls Club are saddened by the sudden passing of a long time member, past president, past greenkeeper, past president of the Wimmera Association.

*We will miss
"That's as wide as Dunstan's dog casts" and
"That's as skinny as I would like to be".*

FUNERAL LINSDSAY.—
A celebration service for the life of Ashley William Lindsay will be held at St Kevin's Catholic Church, 80 Barnett St, Avoca, on Friday, March 21 at 1 p.m. Burial will follow at the Avoca Monumental Cemetery.

The service will be livestreamed, please go to the livestream tab on our website kellyfuneralsbirchip.com.au where a tribute can be left.

Mark and Raelene O'Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP
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BEREAVEMENT THANKS
We, the family of the late Mrs Marion Bayles, wish to convey our heartfelt thanks for the wide-ranging expressions of sympathy via personal messages, phone calls, cards, attendance at the funeral, or just a hug. Each was truly appreciated. Special thanks to the wonderful staff at Goodwin Village who gave Marion so much love, care and support during her time there.

— Brian, Sarah, Rebecca, Joanne and Andrew.

DONALD TYRE & EXHAUST CENTRE
Will be
CLOSED UNTIL
Monday March 24
Sorry for any inconvenience

An invitation
100 Year Celebration
of St Andrews' Uniting Church
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Sunday, March 23
10.30 a.m.
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Anyone with current or former connections to St Andrews is cordially invited.
Luncheon, history and entertainment to follow

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DONALD GOLF BOWLS CLUB INC.
Annual Meeting
Bowls Section
Tuesday, April 8
8 p.m. start
(following monthly meeting)
Agenda:
• President's Report
• Financial Report
• Election of Office Bearers and Members to Committees
• General Business
Geoff Rigby, Sec.

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International Women's Day

RESILIENT WOMEN empowered communities
Free event!
Come together for an inspirational afternoon celebrating women's achievements and address the challenges still faced in achieving gender equality.
Keynote Speakers: Welcome in Country, Guest Speaker, Panel Discussion
With local change-makers and community leaders!
March 23rd
Charlton Park
1pm - 5pm
Everyone Welcome!
Boys allowed!
Register by March 16th via the link or at your local Neighbourhood House
<https://events.humanitix.com/resilient-women-empowered-communities>
Free buses from Buloke towns
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Australian Government, Victoria Government, Buloke Women's Network, Bendigo Bank, Community Bank, Charlton & District

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Are you a landholder who may be impacted by the proposed

VNI WEST TRANSMISSION LINE?



If yes, we are extending an opportunity for you to provide input to the Agricultural Impact study.

The Agricultural Impact study is part of the Environmental Effects Statement or EES which is a process that aims to ensure feedback from landowners is included in project planning and decisions and is a key document informing Government of the projects impacts to assist the decision if the project goes ahead or not.

RMCG is an independent consulting firm with a 35 year history of working in the fields of agriculture, environment, and regional development and we have been engaged to assess the potential agricultural impacts of the VNI West transmission line's construction and operation.

RMCG are keen to better understand first hand landholder's concerns related to agricultural impacts caused by both the construction activity, and the ongoing operation of the Transmission lines. RMCG also want to learn from landowners on actions that may minimise these impacts.

Your insights as a landowner along the proposed route will help ensure that the study accurately reflects the potential agricultural impacts this project may cause.

The discussions will be kept confidential and the information gathered will be used to help inform the Agricultural Impact report.

How to Participate

To register your interest to have a one-on-one discussion at a time and place most convenient for you please call the RMCG at our Bendigo office on 03 5441482. Our senior team members George Warne or Daryl Poole will then be in contact with you to arrange a suitable time and place to catch up with you.

Alternatively, if you simply wish to respond to a survey, please access the online survey using the link or QR code.



Here's Oakley, Outdoing Dad

Back in 2004, former Donald resident Josh Hollis participated in the World's Greatest Shave with Donald High School's student representative council, raising \$600 for the Leukaemia Foundation.

Now residing in Townsville, Josh's influence has clearly passed to his son Oakley, who participated in the "Rock the Chop" campaign this year. Oakley surpassed his father's impressive fundraising figure by amassing a total of \$3,670 in donations.

Oakley's family has been deeply affected by cancer in the past, with his grandfather, Trevor and great-auntie Therese diagnosed with prostate cancer and leukaemia respectively and both sadly losing their battles against the disease.

Oakley dedicated his fundraising effort to his grandfather, Trevor, who no doubt would be very proud of his achievement.

Many thanks to members of the Donald community and Oakley's extended family for their generosity, and also to his "Bulldog" football family in Townsville.

• Top right: Oakley Hollis's long locks before the "big chop".

• Right: "Pa would be proud" Oakley Hollis raised over \$3000 for cancer research.

• Below: From the "Buloke Times" March 19, 2004: Josh "Mullet" Hollis participating in the Shave for a Cure campaign.



Students and Staff Support Shave



Donald High School students and staff were actively involved in the Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave for a Cure Campaign, the S.R.C. raising \$600, which will be passed on to assist the Foundation in supporting patients and their families living with leukaemia, lymphoma or a related blood disorder.

"Times" Classifieds

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Casual Position

We are a successful poultry shed building company looking to find additional strong workers to join our site crew. We are looking for labourers who are hardworking and willing to work as part of a team with the right attitude. The position includes concrete work for piers and slabs, steel framework, erection and roofing. The job location is in **Huntly North** and is a casual position starting **April 7, 2025**.

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Birchip

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"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8168 - SOLUTIONS

Across - 1, Clog. 7, Apparatus. 8, Avid. 9, Soil. 10, Dart. 11, Memo. 14, Substitute. 16, Bloodhound. 19, Omen. 22, Stop. 24, Rake. 25, Gold. 26, Overjoyed. 27, Cede.
Down - 1, Claim. 2, Opium. 3, Aplomb. 4, Ballet. 5, Hard. 6, Lucrative. 12, Expletive. 13, Oslo. 15, To-do. 17, Harrow. 18, Upkeep. 20, Moose. 21, Nudge. 23, Part.

CHURCHES

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

Donald, 10 a.m.,

Holy Communion

Wycheproof, 10 a.m.

Birchip, 10 a.m.

Contact Number: 5497 1033



www.granitecommunitychurch.com

At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.

Speaker: Ross Barnes
Baptist Union of Victoria

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)

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779

Parish Co-ordinator
- Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976



• Annabelle Bennett and Bambi Navarro sing at the Mali Heart Art Festival Mural Unveiling.

New Mural Unveiled

Birchip P-12 School Students Annabelle Bennett and Bambi Navarro were asked to sing at the unveiling of the new mural at the Birchip Mali Heart Art Festival over the long weekend.



The mural captures two important moments in Birchip history in July of 1969 — the involvement of local veteran Frank Hunt who was severely

injured in the Vietnam War and the achievements of local Ray Naughton who successfully sent and received signals to the moon from his backyard radio tapping headquarters. Both events were mentioned in the Redgum song "I was only 19".

Annabelle and Bambi, dressed in appropriate '60s attire, complemented the mural unveiling by entertaining the crowd with four folk songs from the era with vocals and guitar.

Leadership Workshop

On Tuesday, March 4, the Grade 6 students had the opportunity to travel to Horsham to attend a leadership workshop run by Lorin Nicholson. He is legally blind but has shown an incredible amount of resilience in his life by continuing to achieve his goals. Lorin shared stories from his childhood and spoke to the students about taking risks and setting out to achieve what they really want.

He taught the students about the 10 keys to becoming a great leader and how to implement these in their day to day lives. The students were involved in some interactive activities where they got to experience what it would be like to be blind themselves. They assisted each other to overcome problems encountered when they were unable to see.

All of the students had a wonderful day and benefited from the information that Lorin shared.

Public Health Wait Times Unacceptable

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has taken a stand on the increasing public health wait times in regional Victoria, raising the issue directly with Minister for Health, Mary-Anne Thomas, through a Question on Notice.

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has called on the Minister explain the reasons behind the increasing wait times for public surgeon consultations and surgery waiting times and also provide a timeline on

when these wait times will improve.

As part of her appeal, Ms Benham cited the case of a constituent who has been waiting five months for an appointment with a general surgeon after receiving a positive

result from a home bowel screening test. Despite being classified as a Category 1 patient by his general practitioner — indicating the need for urgent medical attention — he has been informed that an appointment may not be available for another three months.

"These wait times are simply unacceptable. They are dangerous and putting lives at risk," Ms Benham said. "Regional Victorians are already significantly disadvantaged when it comes to accessing healthcare, and there must be urgent changes to the system to ensure timely medical attention for those who need it most."

Ms Benham stressed the severity of the issue, emphasising that an eight-month wait for an initial consultation with a surgeon for a Category 1 patient is beyond belief.

"The Labor government must urgently implement strategies to attract specialist doctors to regional areas and improve access to essential healthcare services," she said.

"Without targeted action to address the specialist shortage and improve healthcare accessibility, regional Victorians will continue to suffer unnecessarily."

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drive on less than 5 hours sleep, you're 4 times more likely to crash.

Driving tired? Wake up to yourself.



Mali Heart Street Art Festival

For the fourth time, the annual Mali Heart Street Art Festival returned to Birchip on Saturday, bringing together locals and visitors alike for a day of shopping, hospitality, and reconnecting with family and friends along the bustling Main Street.

With more than thirty stallholders participating, this year's festival offered a diverse range of products, including baked potatoes, waffles, cookies, clothing items and plants. The steady flow of foot traffic from 10 a.m. onwards reflected the strong community interest, as attendees browsed the stalls and soaked up the beautiful autumn sunshine.

A highlight of the event was the presence of young entrepreneurs who eagerly showcased their budding businesses, selling handmade slime, dog leads and craft items. Shoppers found great deals at Birchip Playgroup's Style Swap in the BCG Garden, where a variety of second-hand clothing was available at budget-friendly prices.

Meanwhile, the Birchip Historical Society welcomed visitors to explore its extensive collection of research and artefacts on Ray Naughton and Frank Hunt.

Creativity in Action

Local artist Kristie Dean's studio was a hub of activity, offering pottery lessons and painting sessions that attracted both children and adults. The hands-on experience provided a rewarding challenge for those keen to experiment with clay and artistic expression.

Emily Noonan, Mali Heart Street Art committee member, said that the day provided an opportunity for community members to come together and put aside any division.

"The Mali Heart Festival provides an opportunity for everyone to come together as one to connect through art, music and fun without the pressures of everyday life," she said.

"Neighbours, families and friends can enjoy the day leaving differences in opinions behind."

Birchip Hall

The air-conditioned hall offered a welcome escape from the warmth of the day, with a delightful morning tea prepared by Wirrim CWA



• Cathy and Michael Kujath with their Lego model, which took two years to create.

members, featuring their much-loved scones.

Inside, the Birchip Lions Club Photography Exhibition attracted a large crowd, with visitors voting for their favourite photograph. The people's choice award, sponsored by Bourke's Butchers, was won by Tony Litt for his series of photographs capturing the Birchip floods.

A new attraction this year was an impressive Lego display by Birchip residents Michael and Cathy Kujath. Their detailed model, featuring a to-scale replica of their Fraser Street house along with other complex designs, captured the attention of festival-goers of all ages.

Live Music

Live music added to the festival's atmosphere, with Bambi Navarro and Annabelle Bennett performing 1960s classics during the official mural unveiling. Meanwhile, busker Grim Fawknar entertained attendees with his lively set under the shade of the palm trees.

Emily Noonan said that the committee wants to incorporate more activities into future Mali Heart festivals.

"We want to incorporate more art, music and opportunities for people to connect," she said.

"We will be back next year and are always looking for

feedback and other committee members to join and help."

A Community-Driven Success

The Mali Heart Street Art Festival added to an action-packed weekend for Birchip, made possible through the collective efforts of local volunteers and businesses. Emily thanked the many people who contributed to its success, as well as other local committees for ensuring an enjoyable long weekend for all.

"Congratulations and thank you to the RSL, Birchip Hotel and Birchip Harness Racing Club for collaborating and making this such a brilliant weekend for all in Birchip," Emily said.



• Busker Grim Fawknar.



• Maureen Donnellon in the Historical Society with the research on Ray Naughton.



• Mali Heart Committee Members Carol Reid, Jess Bidstrup, Sharee Dobson, Maureen Donnellon, Emily Noonan.



• Stallholders Amanda and Noah Dooley.



• Young entrepreneurs Lucy Coffey and Addison Hamilton.

Shines Again in Cumming Avenue



• Festivalgoers browse the many products on offer on Cumming Avenue.



• Jakoby Sagers and Kristy Knights prepare the waffles.



• St. Andrew's Uniting Church.

A Big Project – 100 Years Ago

On the corner of Blair and Woods Streets, early in 1924, a new building was commenced! It was to replace the first Church building erected in Donald.

The foundation stone of the church was laid by Sen. J. F. Guthrie, on the 23rd of February, 1924, and the solid brick church was built over the ensuing months.

The magnificent building was constructed and ready for occupation in March, 1925.

The significance of the date is the reason for a special service of Celebration on the Anniversary to be held – and that will be on March 23, 2025, at 10.30 a.m..

Of course there is a considerable story to cover those 100 years. What follows is some of that story – there is much, much more!

The original entrance, from the corner of Blair and Woods Streets, entailed mounting bluestone steps to the original floor level, which then sloped down to just above ground level. The seating capacity was somewhat greater than since 2009 when the building was greatly altered. In the wider part of the building the right side (facing away from Woods Street) had four rows of pews square on to the main body of the church, and the left side had raised seating for a choir and an organ.

The preacher's pulpit was originally central and raised, but alterations in the 1940s saw it re-situated to one side. A Communion Table and ornate chairs then occupied the central section of the front of the church building.

A church bell – which can be heard all over town – is high in the 80ft steeple, activated by rope from the original entrance, these days 5 minutes before the start of worship on a Sunday morning.

A feature not noticed or known of by many is that firstly, the cathedral ceiling is not a full cathedral style as the design anticipated. The top portion of the ceiling is flat, and secondly, the top three

panels of the huge stained glass window facing Woods Street are not visible inside the building!

A Plan

In the days of the ministry of Rev Margaret Russell, along with her husband John, a plan was conceived to modernize St. Andrew's, to level the floor, to make access with no steps, and to completely reverse the internal furniture to what it had previously been. The new plan also was to install better electronics and numerous other minor additions.

In the process, white ants (termites) which were known to be under the choir area, were found to have invaded the entire church flooring bearers, so eradication and restoration was timely indeed. Termites are highly selective – the heavy bearers were in a great state of disrepair, whereas the actual flooring was in good condition!

The large hall, stage, kitchen facilities, meeting rooms and toilets were originally built, altered and then added to in the 1960s. In the process the original Presbyte-

rian building was demolished (1967) and one of the meeting rooms now occupies that site.

The whole area became part of the Uniting Church in Australia in July 1977 and has stood as a town landmark, and a much used set of buildings.

The local History Society, at its Monday evening meeting on March 10, was given a most comprehensive history spanning 150 years – of which the present St Andrew's covers only 100!

Isabelle Flett was the guest speaker, and she spun a fascinating tale of the corner of Woods and Blair Streets and its buildings.

Centenary Celebrations

Anyone interested is welcome to the Centenary celebrations, a service of Worship on 23rd of March, 2025, at 10.30 a.m. – see the advertisement in the pages of the long standing "Buloke Times"!

The celebrations will be led by Rev. Margaret and John Russell – would you believe it is more than 10 years since Margaret was our ordained Minister resident in Donald?

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Shining Success at Wycheproof Lions Club Show and Shine

The Wycheproof Lions Club Show and Shine event revved up the Calder Highway, to the Mt. Wycheproof & District Racecourse on Sunday over the long weekend, with a stellar lineup of quality entries rolling in from near and far.

Gleaming machines, sunshine and a fantastic crowd made for a top-notch event. The Wycheproof Lions Club will present a comprehensive event report in the “Buloke Times” over the forthcoming weeks. For now a few photographs.



• Polished. Powerful. Pure Perfection. There were rows and rows of vehicles displayed, from vintage classics to muscle car magic, the event brought the horsepower and the shine to the racecourse. On lookers were left contemplating, “Which would you take for a spin?”



• Post International Women’s Day, celebrated on Saturday, Sharelle Dickson, from Mt. Egerton, Ballarat, was judged the winner of the “Best Ladies Ute” category on Sunday. Michelle loves her Holden, and mentioned, “The utility is all original and I secured from the original owner back in 2021. Best of all it had only travelled 72 kms!” Sharelle enjoyed her day out in Wycheproof and attended alongside members from the Ballarat and District Early Holden Car Club, many of whom stay locally, too. Michelle was planning to fill up her vehicle with petrol and stay a night in Charlton prior to her return to Ballarat – an example of the economic impact these events bring for all communities across Buloke.



• Straight “outta” the ’70s and ready to cruise. The racecourse provided the perfect location for the vehicles and motorbikes. This Sandman wagon was certainly serving up retro vibes, road trip dreams, and just the right amount of cool. Many on course were left thinking, “Who’s packing their bags and hitting the highway?”

For Junior Footy and Rugby Seasons... Mouthguard Warning

With 100,000 sport-related concussions occurring in Australia each year, Aussie parents and local athletes are being urged to be “mouthguard safe” ahead of the 2025 junior and amateur AFL and rugby seasons, to give themselves the best chance of avoiding serious head or oral injuries.

The warning comes amidst research suggesting there is one concussion every 5.7 games in youth Rugby League. While separate studies from the Australian Dental Association suggest sports-related injuries account for nearly 40 per cent of dental injuries, yet only 36 per cent of Australians wear a mouthguard when playing contact sport.

Dr Cathryn Madden, Head Dentist at Bupa Dental, said a properly fitted mouthguard is a players’ best defence against serious sports injuries like broken jaws, fractured teeth and even lacerated tongues, which can be involuntarily bitten during an unexpected hit.

“Whilst less expensive over-the-counter boil and bite mouthguards are certainly better than zero protection, they run a significantly higher risk of being dislodged or not protecting all essential areas, which increases the risk of sustaining a serious injury for players,” Cathryn said.

“A custom-made mouthguard will be designed to fit a player’s individual mouth shape and dimensions, providing a player with the protection they need on game day

or training, and a parent with valuable peace of mind when watching from the sidelines.”

Bupa Health Insurance members with eligible Extras cover who attend participating Bupa Dental Members First Ultimate clinics will also receive a no-gap experience on standard fitted mouthguards across its national network of practices.

“Once you have your mouthguard sorted, you can

focus more on enjoying the game and all the physical and mental benefits that come with being involved in community sport.

“All it takes is a short visit to your friendly local dental clinic to get a scan or impression of your teeth and choose your favourite team colours for the mouthguard, before a subsequent visit to ensure the mouthguard fits firmly and comfortably.”

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WHAT'S ON:

- CHARLTON PUNT OFF 5
- PUNTERS CLUB AND BOOKIES
- FASHIONS ON THE FIELD
- KIDS SHOWBAGS
- LIVE MUSIC
- LOCAL LEGEND PUNTING COMP
- NORTH CENTRAL LEAGUE GRAND CLASSIC SULKY RACE
- ST.JOHN OF GOD 'BUBBLES' IN THE BUSH TEAM TEAL FUNDRAISER 11AM SHARP

Cricket Concludes

Wimmera Mallee cricket reached its climax on Saturday with strong victories by the Donald-Jeffcott “A” grade and Watchem Panthers “B” grade sides.

“A” Grade

Champion Player, Darky Dunstan trophy: David Lang, Marnoo, 756 points.

Batting Aggregate: Nic Baird, Marnoo, 428 runs.

Batting Average: Lachlan Jones 335 runs, 83.75 average.

Bowling Aggregate: David Lang, Marnoo, 31 wickets.

Bowling Average: David Lang, Marnoo, 31 wickets, 7.55 average.

“B” Grade

Champion Player, Perc Beasley trophy: Ty Colbert, Watchem, 651 points.

Batting Aggregate: Ty Colbert, Watchem, 431 runs.

Batting Average: Billy Sexton, Charlton, 298 runs, 59.6 average.

Bowling Aggregate: Elliott Fitzpatrick, Charlton, 21 wickets.

Bowling Average: Elliott Fitzpatrick, Charlton, 21 wickets, 8.38 average.

Junior Country Week

Under-13s: Morgan Greenaway.

Under-15s: Ethan Soulsby, Charlton.

Under-17s: Austin Dean, Watchem.



• Morgan Greenaway, Under-13 award.



• “B” grade bowling aggregate: Elliott the only player to qualify by taking at least 20 wickets.



• Austin Dean (Watchem) Under-17 award.



• Ty Colbert (Watchem) “B” grade champion player and batting aggregate.



• Billy Sexton (Charlton), “B” grade batting average.



• Ethan Soulsby (Charlton), Under-15 award.

North Wimmera Claims Wimmera Midweek Crown

• Continued from page 16.

Ladies

Champion of Champions singles: Edna Anderson (North Wimmera) 26 d. Amy Hodgetts (Grampians) 24.

State Singles: Edna Anderson (North Wimmera) 25 d. Judith Albrecht (Wimmera) 22.

State Pairs: E. Fuller, D. Lowe (North Wimmera) 17 d. C. Arney, R. Wall (Grampians) 14.

State Triples: A. Hodgetts, A. Hodgetts, J. Seary (Grampians) 21 d. Thelma

Moresi, Amy Roberts, Lynne Southwell (North Central) 11.

State Fours: C. Arney, S. Blakey, S. Brennan, R. Wall (Grampians) 17 d. J. Arnold, N. Belot, Michelle Powell, Pam Rollinson (North Wimmera) 14.

Men

Champion of Champions: Chris Young (Grampians) 25 d. Steven Zsigmond (North Central) 23.

State Singles: Ron Baron (North Wimmera) 25 d. Steven Zsigmond (North Cen-

tral) 23.

State Pairs: Hunter Wingfield (Donald) and Steven Zsigmond (St. Arnaud) representing North Central 16 d. W. Albrecht, A. Krahe (Wimmera) 9.

State Triples: Tony Marland (St. Arnaud), Hunter Wingfield, Steven Zsigmond (North Central) 17 d. K. Clyne, G. Knight, C. Morrell (Wimmera) 9.

State Fours: Shane Powell, S. Langman, R. Barron, J. Barry (North Wimmera) 19 d.

D. Ballinger, K. Clyne, R. Dolby, D. Gloury (Wimmera) 6.

Mixed State Pairs: J. Curnow, M. Curnow (Grampians) d. D. Walton, W. Russ (North Wimmera) 8.

Men’s Novice Singles: Matthew Morrison (Wimmera) 21 d. Craig Newsome (Boort, North Central) 9.

Ladies’ Novice Singles: There are no details on Bowls Link, but Michelle Powell won the ladies’ title.



• Donald Golf bowler Colleen Raynes delivers her bowl. Watching on are Irene Gillett and Bill Livingston. Colleen was part of the winning team in this match.



• Ararat (Grampians) bowler delivers her bowl in the midweek pennant final held in Dimboola. About to pick up his bowl is George Wood.

Mallee Bull Cup Day Draws Huge Crowd:

The spirits weren't dampened at this year's Mallee Bull Cup Day, where over 1,000 locals and visitors gathered to witness harness racing at its finest.

Although stormy weather forced an early end to the day's races, celebrations continued well into the night, with live music from Run Bella Run keeping the energy high.

A Successful Day On and Off the Track

Despite the postponement of the final three races, Birchip Harness Racing Club President, Travis Knights, hailed the event a major success.

"Despite the weather forcing an early end to the racing, people stayed well into the night with the live music and after party creating a fantastic atmosphere," he said.

"Without a doubt it was a successful day for the club on and off the track."

The Buzz of the Mallee Bull Cup

This year's event attracted a large crowd, including many out-of-town visitors. Travis attributed the buzz surrounding the Mallee Bull Cup to its reputation as a family-friendly and uniquely enjoyable day out.

"I'd heard a trainer say in the media during the week that the Mallee Bull Cup is hard to explain, but it is a place you've got to go and find out for yourself. I think that is a great way to describe it," he said.

"The day is exceptionally laid back and extremely enjoyable and gives country people an affordable and fun family day."



• Renae and Ned Gentile.

Many attendees camped at popular local spots including Tchem and Watchem Lakes, supporting the local economy and businesses across the region.

Entertainment

Beyond the racing, there was plenty to keep attendees entertained. Children enjoyed a rock-climbing tower, jumping castle, face painting, and showbags, while families and friends caught up in the marquees. Those seeking shelter from the wild weather gathered under the shed.

Meanwhile, Run Bella Run kept the tunes rolling throughout the day, ensuring the crowd remained lively and their energy high.

Fashions on the Field

Racegoers embraced the opportunity to dress up, with a strong turnout for the Fashions on the Field competition. Judges Connelly Ryan and Keira Lowry awarded Muzzbet vouchers to the standout contestants.

Junior Lady of the Day was awarded to Ari Richmond, wearing a pink dress complemented by a silver headpiece. Jude McLoughlan took out Junior Male of the Day, looking dapper in a grey vest and matching trousers, paired with a white dress shirt and a striped tie.

Lady of the Day, Michelle Gixti, dazzled in a pastel patchwork floral dress with puffed sleeves, a statement wide-brimmed fascinator adorned with delicate embellishments, and accessorised with pearl-drop earrings, white gloves, and a sparkling beaded handbag.

Charlton teacher Hamish Ryan took out Gent of the Day, sporting a more casual look with a light-blue shirt and classic blue jeans, complemented by a stylish Akubra hat and RM Williams boots.

Team Teal

While entry to the event was free, SES volunteers collected donations at the gate for the Team Teal campaign, which raises funds for ovarian and gynaecological cancer research.

Volunteer Effort

Community events like Mallee Bull Cup Day wouldn't be possible without the dedication of volunteers, who put in countless hours behind the scenes to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for all.

From committee members and bar staff to those preparing meals and handling various behind-the-scenes tasks, their efforts ensure the Birchip Trots remain a must-attend event every March long weekend.

Thanks to the hard work of these volunteers, the Mallee Bull Cup continues to thrive, bringing people together for a day of racing, entertainment, and community spirit.



• All eyes are on the horses.



• Band Run Bella Run entertain the young dancers.



• Connelly Ryan and Keira Lowry judge the Young Lady of the Day.



• Brendan Beasley and Des Ryan.



• Imogen Boyle facepaints Phoebe Tyler.



• Luke Dunne is all smiles following his win.

“An Affordable and Fun Family Day”



• Connor Lee, Ollie Cook, Connor Boyle, Lachy Randall, Harry Cook, Riley Hogan, Josh Woods.



• Donnellon family.



• Michelle Gritrix took out Lady of the Day.



• Jack Knights, Connelly Ryan, Kristy Knights, Willow Ryan.



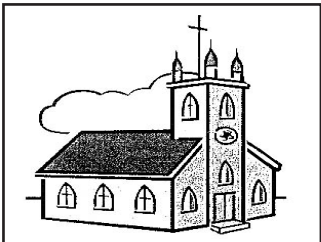
• Samuel Hogan, Emily Olive, Kasie Matheson, Blair Hogan, Georgia Hogan, Hamish Darby, Will Hogan.



• SES volunteers collect donations for Team Teal.



• Lady of the Day was taken out by Michelle Gritrix (second from right) in a closely contested Fashions on the Field. (Photos by Blake Lee.)



CHURCHES

**ANGLICAN
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Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
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Friday, March 14
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.
Christmas Crib Service.

Sunday, March 16
St. Martin’s, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George’s, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W’burn, 3 p.m.
Christmas Crib Service.

Labour Day Weekend Tournament:

In mostly superb weather conditions for three days of tennis, Donald Lawn Tennis Club's Annual Labour Day Weekend Tennis tournament was held on March 8, 9 and 10.

With the number of entries up from last year's tournament, with close to 140 individuals playing over the course of the three days, the quality of tennis was of a superb standard for the enjoyment of the many spectators and players in attendance. The round robin format used since 2007 again proved to work very well with most entrants guaranteed between three and six matches for each event over the course of the three days.

A warm summer and dry conditions in the weeks beforehand didn't detract from the excellent quality of the courts with a lush grass and an even good bounce, although late showers on Sunday afternoon meant three matches in the "A" grade and "C" grade men's doubles were postponed until Monday morning. The rain also meant the courts were a little bit low bouncing in the first few mixed matches for Monday's mixed doubles, but they dried out well and were back to essentially normal conditions by mid-morning. The excellent quality of the courts was in no small part due to the efforts of curator Kelvin "Acky" Adamson who put in many extra hours of work to get the courts up and running to the standard required.

The club, once again, says a big thank you to all those who made the effort to come from far and wide to play in the local tournament, as well as so many players from the surrounding area for their long-term support of this tournament. There were entrants from all over Victoria including Royal Park, Werribee and Hoppers Crossing, as well as a growing contingent from Horsham, with many promising to bring more competitors from their clubs for next year's tournament.

Sponsors have remained rock solid with the Bendigo Bank and Weirs IGA Super-

market continuing as major sponsors, as well as generous contributions from the many other local businesses in Donald. The club was once again very pleased to accept a significant sponsorship from regular visitors, Brett and Liz Smith and Katherine Reitter, who own Mirror Imaging Conveyancing. The club sincerely thanks all local businesses involved which made a financial contribution and/or donation to sponsoring the 2025 tournament, for their continued support.

A special mention and a huge thank you to treasurer Cherie Reilly, who co-ordinated the very busy kitchen for the weekend and spent considerable hours behind the scenes preparing for the tournament, such as ordering food, organising finances, trophies, tennis balls and prizemoney. Likewise, Jasmine Hollis, Carmel Lowry, Laila Reilly, Annabel Melino, Joe Melino, Fiona Reilly, Anne Campbell, Anne Maree Wright and Jenny Mortlock made significant contributions helping in the kitchen and also on Sunday night. Without this small band of hardworking volunteers, the kitchen wouldn't run as smoothly as it does. The club would also like to thank club secretary Meaghan King for manning the bar for the busy periods of the day, as well as on Sunday night, and also making many coffees throughout the day. Jacob Bath and Mark Mortlock were also busy in the mornings cooking a barbecue breakfast for the hungry players and supporters, mowing and re-lining courts and selling club shirts throughout the day.

There were other players and junior mothers, who kindly donated some time over the weekend and the club is greatly appreciative of their help. Whether it was for an hour, or one to two days, a sincere thank you goes to all

those who volunteered their time for over the weekend.

A big thank you must go out to Paul Brooks, who expertly cooked (and carved) the roast meat for the Sunday night roast dinner. All would agree that the roast meal provided was superb.

Finally, the club would also like to thank all those in the local community who donated produce, slices, salads and anything else the club needed for the weekend to be such a success, both for the kitchen and the Sunday night roast dinner.

"Mortlock Entertainment Productions" also put on a stellar night's entertainment on Sunday night, with a horse race that netted the winner a \$100+ prize, as well as the cup challenge. There was a minor hiccup with a power loss just as the Sunday night two-course roast dinner was about to be served, but fortunately the power came back on and the night was able to proceed as normal. The club also took the opportunity during the night to remember the 25 year + contribution of long-time visitor and player John Fraraccio to the tournament, as well as the contributions of life member and club champion Colin Adams and long-time player and junior coach Kathy Hose.

The committee and members, led by president Stuart Potter, vice-president Dawson Hollis, tournament director Derek Hollis, secretary Meaghan King, treasurer Cherie Reilly, committee members Richard Reilly and Mark Mortlock, and curator Kelvin Adamson, can be justly proud of the way they have managed the courts, kitchen and the office over the three days. Derek, Mark, Richard and Meaghan as well as Jenny Mortlock were stalwarts in the office, keeping matches moving through smoothly. In particular Derek

• Continued on page 15.



• 2025 Mens Open Doubles winners: Carl(left) and Steve Hardingham (right) with tournament director, Derek Hollis (centre).



• Dressed to impress and ready for a fun day of tennis are Jarryd Prentice and Sophia Kakouratos.



• 2025 C Grade Mixed winners: Nathan Angelino (left) and Keiarah Brooks (right) with tournament director, Derek Hollis (centre).



• 2025 C grade mixed runners up: Noah Sacdpraseuth (left) and Nicole Nunn (right) with tournament director, Derek Hollis (centre)..

Three Ideal Days for Tennis

• Continued from page 14.

Hollis’s contribution to the successful running of the tournament cannot be underestimated. Not only did Derek spend considerable time before the tournament taking entries for each grade, finding partners for doubles entries, but he also organised each day’s draws, ran the office and was always happy to accommodate late entrants and make further adjustments, where necessary.

A sincere thanks once again must also go to life member Anne Maree Wright, who did a fantastic job in ensuring many of the “little” things that often get overlooked or forgotten were done, such as collecting signs and organising raffle items. Anne-Maree’s efforts certainly made the running of the tournament for the organising Committee that much smoother.

The winners of the John Fraraccio tournament raffle were:

1. Ruby Talty won the tennis racquet contributed by Troy Heenan at the Charlton News Agency.
2. Troy Wright.
3. Connor Trollop.
4. Jane Trollop.
5. Jacinta Hamilton.
6. Pat O’Shannessy.
7. Lindsay McLaren.
8. Susan Kamau.

The Labour Day Weekend tournament certainly reinforced how important this event is, to not only the tennis club, but indeed the whole Donald community. It may at times seem a huge effort for a small band of willing workers, but without the injection of funds to devote to maintaining the lawn courts in what can be a fairly dry climate, the club would be in dire financial straits. The arrival of well over a hundred extra visitors to the town is also, no doubt, very welcome to many local businesses.

In the end, all who attended the tournament would agree that the 2025 Labour Day

Weekend Tennis Tournament was a resounding success once again.

The Tennis Club looks forward to the community’s support for next year’s 72nd tournament, which will be held on the March 7, 8 and 9, 2026. It is hoped to see you all at the same time next year.

The 2025 results are as follows:

Singles, Saturday, March 8

Men’s Open Singles: Riley Faulkner; R/U: Jeff Friberg.

Men’s “A” Singles: Craig Toussaint; R/U: Darren Flaherty.

Men’s “B” Singles: Frazer Shurdington; R/U: Lachlan Smith.

Men’s “C” Singles: Noah Sacdpraseuth; R/U: Brendan Prentice.

Men’s “D” Singles: Timothy Symmons; R/U: Pat O’Shannessy.

Boys’ U/13 Singles: Nixon Beattie; R/U: Max Reilly.

Boys’ U/10 Green Dot Singles: Slater Perkin; R/U: Rafferty Shurdington.

Women’s Open Singles: Kate Lyn Perkin; R/U: Sophia Kakouratos.

Women’s “B” Singles: Fiona Reilly; R/U: Jacinta Hamilton.

Women’s “D” Singles: Jo Fincher; R/U: Carmel Lowry.

Girls’ U/10 Green Dot Singles: Maggie Kelm; R/U: Zetta Beattie.

Doubles, Sunday, March 9

Men’s Open doubles: Carl Hardingham & Steve Hardingham; R/U: Brad Annear & Nick Olynyk.

Men’s “A” grade doubles: Craig Toussaint & Mark Wright; R/U: Peter Hayes & Ross McIntyre (final played on Monday).

Men’s “B” grade doubles: Noah Sacdpraseuth & Rata Sacdpraseuth; R/U: Mark Mortlock & Samuel Mortlock.

Men’s “C” grade doubles: Josh Talty & Braxton Hollis; R/U: Don Gravina & Brendan

Prentice (final played on Monday).

Men’s “D” grade doubles: Blair Ross & Sam Ross; R/U: Peter Mazza & Alan Robertson.

Women’s Open doubles: Kathryn Reitter & Elizabeth Smith; R/U: Sophia Kakouratos & Janine McDonald.

Women’s “B” grade doubles: Fiona Reilly & Laila Reilly; R/U: Jo Fincher & Jacinta Hamilton.

Women’s “C” grade doubles: Sue Gravina & Noeleen Mazza; R/U: Scarlett Funcke & Macie Mortlock.

Women’s “D” grade doubles: Kathy Connors & Cassandra Mazza; R/U: Sarah Jardine & Nicole Nunn.

Mixed, Monday, March 10

Open mixed doubles: Jeff Friberg & Kate Lyn Perkin; R/U: Brad Annear & Karen Annear.

“A” grade mixed doubles: Stuart McDonald & Kathryn Reitter; R/U: Craig Toussaint & Janine Wright.

“B” grade mixed doubles: Nick Olynyk & Alice Padget; R/U: Christian Belcher & Fiona Reilly.

“C” grade mixed doubles: Nathan Angelino & Keiarah Brooks; R/U: Noah Sacdpraseuth & Nicole Nunn.

“D” grade Mixed doubles: Brendan Prentice & Rebecca Wenn; R/U: Brendan Blick & Katherine Blick.

Congratulations to all the winners and runners-up. The Donald Lawn Tennis Club hopes to see you all in 2026 as well as all the other 2025 entrants for the 72nd Labour Day weekend tournament.

To conclude the season the club will run its club championships for both men and ladies on Sunday, March 16, beginning at 9.30 a.m.. A barbecue lunch will follow, along with a few presentations. All members and families are most welcome.

• More tournament photos to come next issue.



• Vladimir Gisca stretches to get racquet to ball.



• Jim Grogan leaps high for this lob return as Amber Hollis watches confidently at the base of the court.



• Fiona Reilly belts back a forehand return on Monday and her mixed partner, Christian Belcher is ready for what's to come.



• Jordan Bath delivers down a first serve in his first set on Sunday.



• Jacinta Hamilton serves past her partner Jo Fincher during the doubles on Sunday.



• Members of the Donald Golf, Sunnyside, Ararat, and Warracknabeal played the Wimmera Bowls Region Midweek Pennant Final with Warracknabeal eventually winning the title.

North Wimmera Claims Wimmera Midweek Crown

North Wimmera representing Warracknabeal scored three wins to take out the Wimmera Bowls Region's Midweek Pennant finals, played at Dimboola on Wednesday.

North Central was represented by Donald Golf, which enjoyed success in its first game, against Sunnyside, but came up against strong opposition in its second game against the eventual winner, Warracknabeal, and then went down narrowly in its final game against Ararat.

Contested in a round robin format, the four midweek premiership teams from the Playing Areas that comprise the Wimmera Bowls Region, each team played three games

of 15 ends, which produced the following results:

Round 1
Donald Golf 55 d. Sunnyside (Wimmera) 29.

Bill Livingston, Sue Donnellon, Brenda Dixon, Peter Hibberd (s) 16 d. Hans Verheul, Roger Macinnes, Margaret Dolan, Rex Bergen (s) 8.

Beris Jones, George Wood, Joyce Hollis. Geoff Rigby (s) 14 lost to Debra Macinnes, Robert Dolan, Norma Hair, Jim Hadden (s) 18.

Corazon Stopps, Shirley Evans, Robert Reseigh, Shane O'Shea (s) 25 d. Roger Weight, Paul Southcott, Barry McIntyre, Jillian Coutts (s) 3.

Warracknabeal (North Wimmera) 47 d. Ararat (Grampians) 27.

Michelle Powell, Ian Hewitt, Brian Taylor, Noreen Belot (s) 12 lost to Neil Billett, Irene Gellie, Eileen Dunn, Majorie Robertson (s) 16.

Lauren Arnold, Shane Powell, Bill Kerr, Jing Robertson (s) 23 d. Margaret

Carmichael, Ju Kaczynski, Richard Fisher, Kerrin Gellie (s) 2.

Isobel Davison, Robyn Goodwin, Graeme Shalders, Edna Anderson (s) 12 d. Edward North, Carmel Beer, Mick Dowd, Rosemary Dowd (s) 9.

Round 2
Donald Golf 23 lost to Warracknabeal 49.

Peter Hibberd 6 lost to Noreen Belt 21.

Geoff Rigby, with Enid Brasier playing second, 8 lost to Jing Robertson 15.

Shane O'Shea 9 lost to Edna Anderson 13.

Ararat 40 lost to Sunnyside 51.

Majorie Robertson 13 lost to Rex Bergen 18, Kerrin Gellie 18 d. Jim Hadden 10, Rosemary Dowd 9 lost to Jillian Coutts 23.

Round 3
Donald Golf 35 lost to Ararat 39.

Peter Hibberd, with Colleen Raynes playing second, 18 d. Majorie Robertson 9.

Geoff Rigby 11 lost to Kerrin Gellie 14.

Shane O'Shea, with Beris Jones playing second, 6 lost to Rosemary Dowd 16.

Sunnyside 40 lost to Warracknabeal 51.

Rex Bergen 13 lost to Noreen Belot 19, Jim Hadden

18 d. Jing Robertson 11, Jillian Coutts 9 lost to Edna Anderson 21.

North Wimmera, Warracknabeal team will now compete against other Regional winners in the Bowls Vic State Championship, to be played in Bendigo in April.

Wimmera Region State Finals

Over the recent Labour Day long weekend, Ararat hosted the Wimmera Region State event finals.

North Central representative performed very well, including achieving wins in the State Pairs and State Triples.

Details of the weekend's finals are listed on page 11.

• Continued on page 11.

Grass Court Greatness: 72 and Still Smashing It

The Wycheproof & District Lawn Tennis Club's 72nd (wow!) annual Labour Day Long Weekend Tennis Tournament, served up another hugely successful event in the community under near-perfect skies.

With fourteen pristine grass courts presented ready for action (and 2 hard courts), the weekend was destined for success on and off the courts, all largely thanks to the tireless efforts of many volunteers, alongside legends like

father/daughter duo Garry and Mary-Anne Pollard.

A comprehensive tournament event wrap-up will be featured via the club in the "Buloke Times" over the forthcoming weeks.



• Mary-Anne and father, Garry, nets in hand, were snapped Friday afternoon setting up courts ahead of the tournament. The club is fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers who bring the tournament to life year after year. The Pollard family and tennis in the district go hand in hand, a legacy woven through generations on the court.

Cricket Concludes



• Team of the Year: Nick Germano (St. Mary's), David Lang (Marnoo), Nic Baird (Marnoo), Daniel Atkins (Donald-Jeffcott), Jacob Patching (St. Arnaud), Lachlan Jones (Donald-Jeffcott), Rylee Smith (Birchip), Cooper Anderson (Donald-Jeffcott), Jonty Randall (Birchip), Ed Landwehr (Donald-Jeffcott), Lachlan Patching (St. Arnaud), Brodie Dennes (St. Mary's). Award winners were announced at the conclusion of the respective games and can be seen on page 11.