

DONALD

Phone: 5497 1222

Articles to:
news@buloketimes.comAdverts to:
admin@buloketimes.com

The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

BIRCHIP

Phone: 5492 2735

Fax: 5492 2863

Email:
birchipblc@
bigpond.com

Published Tuesdays and Fridays

PP331336/0000 1

Friday, May 16, 2025

PRICE (inc. G.S.T.) \$2

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

Art and Photography On Show

The opening night of the Donald Art and Photography Show, Friday, May 9, was enjoyed by all who attended.

Accompanied by the background music by Leo Tellefson, people wandered around the 250-plus entries, viewing the beautiful artwork and photography. These were attractively arranged on screens hired from the Charlton P&A Society. Sitting at the base of each screen footing were pot plants from "Goldy's Patch" managed by Karen Goldsmith, adding to the ambience of the show.

The show was organised by the Donald Learning Group. The art judge was Lauren Larkin, Director of the Horsham Art Gallery, whose comments were appreciated by both the artists present and the viewers. Lauren was impressed by the overall high standard of the art.

Awards

Lauren awarded the Best Work of the Show – Any Medium to Leanne Onley for "Unpredictable" – \$1000. Lauren wrote: "I want to get

swept out to sea in this work. It drew my eye, time and time again as I wandered around the room. The touch of white against the harsh blacks and blues of the ocean gives a gentle touch. Truly a wonderful painting."

Best Work of the Show – any Medium – Runner-up was awarded to Tarli Bird for "Kenyan Time" – \$500. Lauren's comments were: "As I looked through the 'flywire' I see the vivid landscape. The colour telling its own story, each time I look at it".

Guest Artist

Tarli Bird was the guest artist for the show with a wonderful display of her work. Tarli's artwork features fine thread sown in parallel lines across the painted background, giving the painting a vibrant finish, catching the light and changing the colours slightly across the artwork. Tarli also conducted

• Continued on page 2.



• A look into the Art and Photography Show.

Seedling Survival in Marginal Moisture



• BCG CEO Fiona Best, Louisa Ferrier and Alicia Gault assessing germinated wheat at Birchip.

The practice of dry sowing has become increasingly common with frequent years of below average rainfall in the sowing season.

Dry sowing, where crops are sown into a dry seed bed before season breaking rainfall, has helped farmers decrease production risk and manage workload.

With persistent warm, dry conditions and no rain forecast on the horizon, concerns on how long germinated crops can survive on marginal moisture is at the forefront of grower minds.

BCG conducted a study in 2008, where seedling survival was observed over 2.5 weeks before follow-up rain was received. The study determined germinated but not emerged crops survived at least 2.5 weeks before further rain was received.

Similarly to the research conducted in 2008, BCG is currently investigating seedling

survival across the region. Initial assessments have been made at grower paddocks in Birchip, Curyo and Quambatook and will continue throughout the season, to determine how long the germinated seed can remain viable, how establishment was affected, and how safe it is to dry sow with no rain on the forecast.

Rainfall

Rainfall received during summer has provided moisture at depth, but crops were sown into dry topsoil. The ANZAC Day rainfall event varied across the region, with totals ranging from 0-5mm in some areas and over 60mm in others. This rainfall proved enough to germinate dry

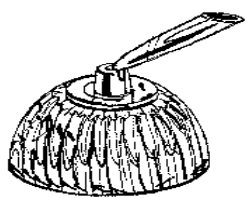
• Continued on page 2.

Next Week's "Times"

Saturday, May 17, has been listed as a bye for all three North-Central League team sports – football, netball and hockey.

That being so, there will be no "Buloke Times" on Tuesday of next week, May 20.

After Friday of this week (May 16), the next issue of the "Times" will be on Friday, May 23.



Letter to the Editor

What Sense in Two Cents?

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Editor.— I have been a resident in Birchip for almost 20 years, but recently moved to Melbourne. I still own the property in Birchip and still have to pay rates.

The cost of living has hit me hard and so, because I was behind with my rates, I reached an agreement to pay the balance in 4 roughly equal instalments.

I paid the final instalment of \$149.62 on 17th April and breathed a sigh of relief having got this financial burden off my back at last.

Alas I have just received a further rate notice for the outstanding amount of 2 cents, payable by the end of May.

I am asking the Council to come to their senses and waive this debt or I will have no choice but to send them a 5 cent piece and expect 3 cents change by return mail.

David Bell

Pascoe Vale

(But formerly of 10 Sherwood St, Birchip)

Art and Photography on Show

• Continued from page 1.

a painting workshop on the Sunday afternoon. Sixteen ladies enjoyed a different experience as they painted from a photo they loved and then enhanced it with the parallel thread work.

Other Winners

Other winners included Best Oil or Acrylic \$500: Teresa Siesman with "Kalbam Rhapsody".

Best Watercolour \$500: Rhonda Willoughby with "Gunbower Creek".

Best Other Medium: Steve Morvell with "Standing Strong, African Cape Buffalo".

Best Water Colour: Rhonda Willoughby with "Gunbower". Art judge's note: "The detail is exquisite."

Best Wearable Art: Jo Malham with "Still Can".

Best Secondary School Art: Paul Watson.

Best Primary School Art (Prep,1,2): Jon Woods with "Blue Curtains Frame the Story".

Best Primary School Art (Years 3-6): Cooper Williams.

People's Choice: Teresa Sieman with "Kalbarri Rhapsody".

Photography

Winners of categories: Anna Fay, Peggy Coats, Shel Turley, Jodie Drake, Julia Pearse, William Hudson.

Best Print of the Show: Jodie Drake.

Best print by local photographer: Jodie Drake.

Best Print of Show (No restrictions): William Hudson – "Southern Lights".

Winner of Raffle – Julie Robinson. Prize: "Tower Hill Lagoon" by Noel Gude.

Volunteers

This beautiful event would not be possible without the assistance of volunteers. Thank you from the Donald Learning Group Board to the 30-plus volunteers who set up the screens, hung the art and photography work, attended the entrance table and were available to pack up. Thank you too, to the Buloke Shire for the use of the Donald Memorial Hall. A big and important thank you to the sponsors who made the Show attractive to the entrants: Bendigo Community Bank, DCIRF, Donald 2000, Donald Family Butchers, Donald Learning Group Inc, Donald Lions Club, Horizons – Local and Beyond Inc, Spuds Cafe, Viatek Alison, Dion Woods, Extreme Heat Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning



• "Through the Window" – Cooper Williams Year 3.



• "Sahara" – Tarli Bird.

Seedling Survival in Marginal Moisture

• Continued from page 1.

sown wheat and canola at Birchip and Curyo, and for canola to germinate and emerge at Quambatook. Barley at Birchip, sown 4 cm deep into moisture following the ANZAC day rain has not germinated yet.

Scepter wheat observed at Birchip, sown dry on April 25 to 1cm depth, has germinated with roots and shoot. Hybrid canola at Curyo, sown dry on

April 11 to 2-3 cm depth, showed some germination with roots developing.

BCG will continue monitoring seedling survival on marginal moisture over the coming weeks to determine how long germinated but un-emerged seeds can survive and if establishment is affected.

Options

If you are still weighing up your options, BCG is hosting a short informal Q&A forum

online this Thursday, May 15, at 12 p.m. for farmers and advisors navigating canola establishment challenges.

Whether you're dealing with patchy emergence, unsure about plant population thresholds, or considering a resow, this is your chance to ask questions and hear directly from the researchers and agronomists.

Go to <https://bit.ly/canola-webinar> to RSVP.



• BCG's Jess Bidstrup looking for canola at Curyo.



• "Standing Strong - African Cape Buffalo" – Steve Morvell.



• "Unpredictable" by Leanne Onley, winner of the first place prize.



• *Protesting the emergency services tax on the steps of Parliament House on Tuesday, May 13, 2025.*

Farmers Angry at New Levy

(By Carey Brennan)

Angry Farmers and CFA members from all over Victoria gathered on the steps of Parliament House in Melbourne on Tuesday to protest the proposed new tax by the State Government.

This bigger protest followed the Bendigo and Melbourne CFA member protests on Friday where fire trucks blockaded Jacinta Allan's office in Bendigo and parked at the front of Parliament House in Melbourne.

Local farmers stepped off their tractors and took time out from sowing crops to come together to encourage the cross bench MPs to vote against the Emergency Services and Volunteers levy, which will be collected by Local Government through rates notices for ALL landowners in Victoria.

The proposed levy will replace the already increased Fire Services Levy currently paid by all landowners. The new levy will increase all residential properties by 99%, commercial properties by 100% and all farm land by 189%, it is calculated on the

Capital Improved Value of the property. This unfair and inequitable tax comes from a desperate State Government which is trying to make a bad budget look better when it is released next week.

Rally organiser, Rupanyup Farmer, Andrew Weidemann started proceedings and introduced the speakers. Peter Marshall, secretary, United Firefighters Union, spoke about the need for better funding for firefighting and emergency services, but stated that the billions that would be raised from ratepayers through this levy would not be used to fund FRV, CFA and SES groups as claimed. He also said that it greatly disrespected our volunteer CFA firefighters by asking them to pay for the privilege of being a member, when they willingly give up their time to attend major fires like the recent Grampians fires.

Marshall's comments were supported by Brad Batten, MP, Leader of the Liberal Party and Coalition, Danny O'Brien, MP, Leader of the National Party, Emma Keally, MP, Member for Lowan and Deputy Leader of the National Party, Brett Hosking, VFF President and Kevin Butler, Farmer and Founder of Blaze Aid.

The rally was well supported by MPs from the Opposition and cross benches. Many of the regional MPs have been dealing with the fallout of this proposed tax during community meetings where the farmers appear to be bearing the heaviest burden that would see them paying thousands of dollars at a time when many require assistance due to severe drought, especially in the south-west of the State. There were no Labor MPs attending the rally, despite having been invited.

The vote on this new tax has been moved for a second time to Thursday, 15th, as the Labor Party has not had the numbers to push it through the Senate.

\$400,000 for Donald Power Plant Project

GWMWater is a step closer to trialling a community energy initiative in Donald thanks to \$400,000 in funding from the State Government.

Funding from the 100 Neighbourhood Batteries Program will support the water business to progress a Donald Community Power Plant Project.

The pilot initiative aims to reduce electricity bills and improve local grid stability by installing a grid-connected battery in Donald. If the initiative is successful, this project may be expanded to other towns within the GWMWater service area.

The proposed battery would be installed at the redundant GWMWater water storage site on Racecourse Road in Donald. There are plans to expand battery capacity and include additional solar generation at the site, if additional external funding can be secured. GWMWater has been working with Donald 2000 Inc.

and Powercor Australia to develop project concepts.

In January 2024, GWMWater was awarded \$85,000 from the Water Minister's Climate Challenge to explore the feasibility of a community energy project for Donald. Building on this initiative, GWMWater submitted the application for \$400,000 in additional funding to commence implementation of the project.

Facilitating community energy initiatives is an integral component of GWMWater's Clean Energy Strategy. This strategy outlines GWMWater's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2035, which includes sourcing 100% of electricity from renewable sources by 2025, while ensuring that energy investments do not result in increased water bills for customers.

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

SIGNS 'R'US

BUSINESS FOR SALE OR LEASE

25 Racecourse Rd., Donald

Excellent opportunity to own
or lease your own business.

(If not sold or leased, business
will close by end of June).

Mob: 0408 856 375
or 0409 959 046

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

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

21 May - Charlton
Charlton Park Community Bank Complex

28 May - Donald
Scout Hall, Racecourse Road

4 June - Birchip
Birchip Leisure Centre

11 June - Charlton
Charlton Park Community Bank Complex

www.corackeastwind.com.au

info@corackeastwind.com.au

1800 498 550

Corack East Wind

"The Buloke Times", Friday, May 16, 2025 — PAGE 3

"Times" Classifieds

Phone Donald 5497 1222, Birchip 5492 2735

Email admin@buloketimes.com

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.

FUNERAL TUNSTALL.— Suzanne "Sue"

22/12/1954 - 14/05/2025
Passed away peacefully
at East Wimmera Health,
Wycheproof.

Much loved mother and
mother-in-law of Cameron
and Wendy.

Cherished Nana of Emily,
Sarah and Jake.

Loved daughter-in-law of
George (dec.) and Winifred.
Loving sister of Debbie
and her family.

Sue will be deeply missed
by family & friends.

For funeral arrange-
ments see: [kellyfunerals.
birchip.com.au](http://kellyfunerals.birchip.com.au)

Mark and Raelene O'Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP

Inc. **KELLY**
5492 2547

IN MEMORIAM

Arthur Samuel
James Hallam

09/05/1934 - 17/05/2022

3 years ago today
since you left us.

Time slips by
but life goes on
but from our hearts you
have never gone.

We think about you
all the time.

I have so many
memories of you.

—Love always,
your loving wife Lois
and family

AMBULANCE
PHONE NO.
000



Printed and published for the propri-
etors by Robin Letts, at the office of
"The Buloke Times", 6 McCulloch
Street, Donald.

GARAGE SALE

2 Meyer St, Donald
(entry Waddell St.,
via shed opposite DPS)

Saturday, May 17
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Furniture, household &
kitchen items and lots
more.

Watchem's Biggest Morning Tea

TUESDAY, MAY 20
10.30 a.m.

AT THE WATCHEM
FIRE STATION
Please bring a plate to
share

All Welcome



Donald
High School

Fete

Friday, May 23
12 noon

~ Home made cakes
and slices
~ Sit-down coffee shop
milkshakes, cafe-style
coffee, sweets.
~ Baked potatoes
and BBQ
~ Grocery Hamper raffle
~ Longest kick, face-
painting, chocolate
lob and many more
activities.

Everyone welcome!

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

DATES Monday 16th & Wednesday 18th June

TIMES 9:30am - 4:30pm (both days)

COST FREE

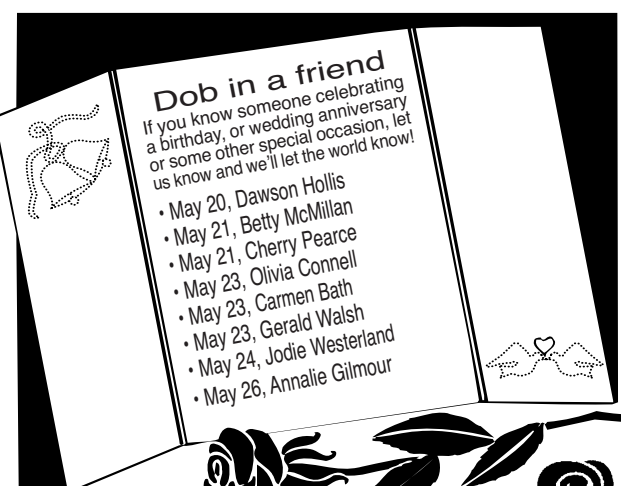
VENUE Birchip Community Leisure Centre
Catering provided.

Locals of Buloke and surrounds are encouraged to
sign up for FREE Mental Health First Aid training.

A great professional development opportunity and
an invaluable asset to any workplace or club.

**Attendance at both days is required to complete
the course.** Places are limited so please confirm you
place quickly!

Please call Stacey: **0467 746 606** or email:
stacey.keller@ewhs.org.au to secure your place.



Darrell Lea
Fine Chocolates



If you know someone celebrating a special anniversary, let us know at
Donald Newsagency & Emporium
For all your Greeting Cards, Wraps, Ribbons and Stationery needs.
37 Woods Street, Donald. 'Phone 54971510.

Harberger

Coming Soon!

Vehicle Servicing | Car & Truck Tyres

Ph. 5497 1420

16-18 Racecourse Rd, DONALD



Donald High School

ROTTEN RITIN' COMPETITION

**Open to students, parents, teachers and
wider community members**

~ Comedic writing competition ~ 4 categories
~ 150 words or less each piece.

- 1. Worst Community Story Starter:** Open to Everyone
- 2. Worst Community Poetry:** Open to Everyone
- 3. Worst Student Story Starter:** DHS students only
- 4. Worst Student Poetry:** DHS students only

Deadlines close Friday, May 30 via email to
Christopher.rodger@education.vic.gov.au or
written submissions to DHS, Camp St, Donald
attention Christopher Rodger.

**Don't forget to include your name, contact details
and the category you're entering.**
Further details see article on page ?



Students researched, brainstormed at least 5 designs and trialed prototypes prior to the
construction of a final trebuchet. Materials used: masking tape, small spoon or bottle top,
icy pole sticks and elastic bands.

Competition between the groups was fierce with Evie and Samuels' designs receiving a
highly commended.

Trebuchet Design - Evie Donnellon & Samuel Mortlock
DONALD HIGH SCHOOL YR 8 TED



Mensland

OUTFITTING MEN SINCE 1959

EOFY COMING UP SAVE TAX ON

Improve your corporate image

• Corporate Work Wear •

Custom Design - You give us the
idea and our in-house Graphic
Designer will design your logo.

IN STOCK or ORDER IN

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

GET YOUR ORDER IN
BEFORE EOFY

Just ring or email mensland@inet.net.au and we will **deliver your order.**

For Promotions, Specials and
Competitions, [us on Facebook](#)

Find us on

70 Woods Street, Donald — 5497 1211

"Times" Classifieds

Donnellon's Bulk Haulage

Pty Ltd
BUYING ALL GRAINS
BULK CARRIERS of . . .

- Gypsum
- Fertilizer
- Gravel
- Woodchips
- Road Base Materials

Public Weighbridge 3008
Phone Bill
5492 2333 or 0428 136 483

Mark and Raelene continue the Kelly and O'Halloran names, known and trusted for personal, dignified and professional service for over 60 years. From two of the smallest family owned businesses in the Mallee.



5492 2547 90 Curlewis Street Swan Hill
KELLY **swanhillfunerals.com.au**
* * * 5032 1011
1 Morrison Street, Birchip 3483
kellyfuneralsbirchip.com.au 24 Hours 7 Days a Week
MARK & RAELENE O'HALLORAN
Funeral Directors AFDA

BUSINESS FOR SALE

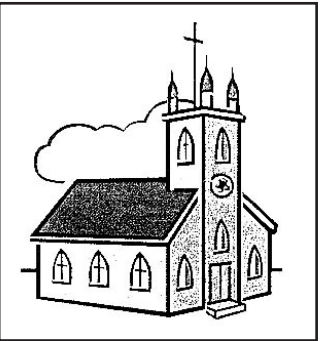
DONALD TYRE AND EXHAUST CENTRE

Genuine sale due to ill health.
91 Woods St., Donald

Excellent opportunity to own
a well-established business.

Contact Brenton: 0433 840 202

CHURCHES



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

CONSUMER
AFFAIRS VICTORIA

IS YOUR RENT GOING UP?
IS YOUR TOILET BROKEN?

RENTERS, YOU HAVE RIGHTS

KNOW THE
**FUNDA-
RENTALS**

Learn more at
[consumer.vic.gov.au/
fundarentals](http://consumer.vic.gov.au/fundarentals)





• 1918c Buckrabanyule Hall.

Charlton 100 Years Ago

(Information from "East Charlton Tribune")

May 9 to 13, 1925.

Faithful Church-Woman: In the parish Hall the congregation of St Martin's Church of England said farewell to a faithful member in Mrs A. J. Barber. The Vicar (Rev. A. E. Freeman) presided. In connection with the various meetings and functions of the Ladies' Guild she had been a great helper, and had done good work for the Flower Show and Fete. She attended Church twice on Sundays. The Sunday School Superintendent added his tribute, referring with pleasure to how

well-conducted were Mrs Barber's children in the Sunday School. The Vicar then asked Mrs Barber to accept a pair of silver vases, and a set of silver spoons, as a token of esteem and appreciation from the congregation.

Brilliant Ball: A Grand Ball, under the auspices of St Martin's Church was held in the Victoria Hall; and everyone agreed it was a very fine turn-out. The attendance must have numbered 100 couples or more, and all enjoyed themselves immensely. The floor, which had been pre-

pared by men of the Church, was in particularly fine order. The music provided by the Charlton Jazz Trio was of the best. A feature of the Ball was the brilliant array of costumes, eg. Miss A. Hannabry - white satin with scarlet feather trimming; red shoes and white stockings; white feather hair band. The supper was on an elaborate scale - a tempting array of ham and tongue sandwiches, fruit salads, trifles, jellies, cakes, etc.

Refreshing Rain: The dry spell broke when a steady, but mild and satisfactory rain set in - a rain which was ideal from the point of view of the farmer. The man on the land will now be enabled to make excellent progress with his work. On the Post Office gauge, the fall up till 9 a.m. on Monday was 39 points; and the 24 hours following added 74. Rain continued to fall at intervals on Tuesday. We have learnt by telephonic inquiries, the record up till 9 a.m. on Tuesday was: Buckrabanyule, 115 points, Wychitella, 76 points.

Concert and Dance: Probably never before in the history of Buckrabanyule has such a large crowd been seen at a concert and dance as that which assembled for the functions which succeeded the recent Sports Carnival and American Fair. Artists from Charlton, Boort and other parts of the district reinforced the local talent, to provide a

programme that was lengthy, varied and altogether most enjoyable. Items were: songs, recitations, one string violin solo, duets and trios. For the dance which followed, good music was provided by the Wedderburn Orchestra. Mr Joe O'Donnell made an attentive and efficient MC. An excellent supper was provided by the ladies of the district.

Buckrabanyule Effort: In the Hall a meeting was held to report progress in connection with the recent Sports Carnival and American Fair. A profit of about £174 would be the result. The overdraft is £153, so this will clear it off. The meeting was well attended and everyone spoke of the kindly feeling which animated the whole gathering. Special references were made to the donors of Charlton, Barrakee, Woosang, Marmal, and Wychitella, in respect of the many gifts received. Great assistance was freely given by several members of the Woosang Sports Committee.

An interesting Announcement: Country people and town residents will note with pleasure that, from now onwards, Melbourne Bitter, as well as Carlton Ale and Victoria Bitter, is on draught at McAuliffe's East Charlton Hotel.

Tennis Club Cannot: At the meeting of the Tennis Club Committee the proposal of the Golf Club that the Tennis Club should join with that organisation and the Cricket Club in extending and improving the present Golf Club House was carefully considered. The Tennis Club decided that it was unable to join in. It is considered that a Tennis pavilion, to be of any real value to the members, must be right on the courts - and this would not be so in the case of the Golf Club House.

MICHAELS OF DONALD

Belvedere By George Crenshaw
www.belvedere-cartoons.com



"Times" Classifieds

ripples OF CHANGE
From small ripples grow BIG WAVES OF CHANGE

Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association
neighbourhood HOUSE WEEK 12-18 MAY '25

East Wimmera Health Service
Cultivating Healthy Communities

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Campus Negotiable
Nurse Practitioner
Community Nursing - Acting Nurse Unit Manager
Birchip
Resident Lifestyle Coordinator
St Arnaud
Director of Finance and Administration
Associate Nurse Unit Manager
Ward Clerk
Registered Nurse
Enrolled Nurse

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

EWHS is an Equal Opportunity Employer, we welcome applications to all positions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, LGBTQI+ People, and People of All Abilities.

Motel Accommodated Coach Tours

'Pick up and return to your home'

Request the itinerary for the many tour highlights

SPLENDID SINGAPORE

10 days Tuesday 1st July \$7870

Highlights: Luxury Hotel Accommodation, Stunning Singapore, City Lights Tour, Botanic & Orchard Gardens, Singapore River Cruise, Raffles Hotel High Tea, The Singapore Zoo, Singapore Flyer, Marina Bay Sands Lookout, S.E.A. Aquarium, Changi District, National Museum of Singapore, Gardens by the Bay, English Speaking Guides.

DARWIN via CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

15 days Monday 28th July \$9460

Highlights: Central Australia, Coober Pedy, Ayers Rock, Kings Canyon, Alice Springs, West MacDonnell Ranges, Tennant Creek, Katherine Gorge Cruise, Kakadu, Yellow Waters Cruise, Darwin, Mindil Market, Litchfield National Park.

COOBER PEDY, AYERS ROCK, ALICE SPRINGS

9 days Monday 28th July \$6215

Highlights: Adelaide, Port Augusta, Central Australia, Coober Pedy, Umoona Opal Mine, Ayers Rock, Kings Canyon, Alice Springs, West MacDonnell Ranges, Standley Chasm, Alice Springs Reptile Centre, Alice Springs Desert Park, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Alice Springs School of the Air, Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

PERTH & SOUTH WEST COAST

15 days Friday 29th August \$7540

Highlights: Perth, Gloucester Tree, Margaret River Chocolate Factory, Cape Leeuwin and Lighthouse, Pemberton Timber Mill, Valley of the Giants, Albany, Whale Watching Cruise, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Super Pit Tour, Great Australian Bight, Nullarbor, Port Augusta, Adelaide, Mannum.

CAPE YORK AND THURSDAY ISLAND

10 days Sunday 21st September \$6460

VIETNAM

17 days Tuesday 23rd September \$8690

NORFOLK ISLAND

(No passport required)

10 days Saturday 25th October \$6290

NEW ZEALAND DISCOVERY

19 days Thursday 30th October \$11,750

SAPPHIRE COAST

9 days Saturday 15th November \$4620

PLUS MANY MORE TOURS AVAILABLE - CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Tour costs include: luxury coach travel, motel accommodation twin share, admissions, air fares and meals as per itineraries.
- **Pick up and return to your home.**
- For bookings or to request a full itinerary that details the many tour highlights, please contact Brendan's Australian Tours, Ararat.

Brendan's Australian Tours

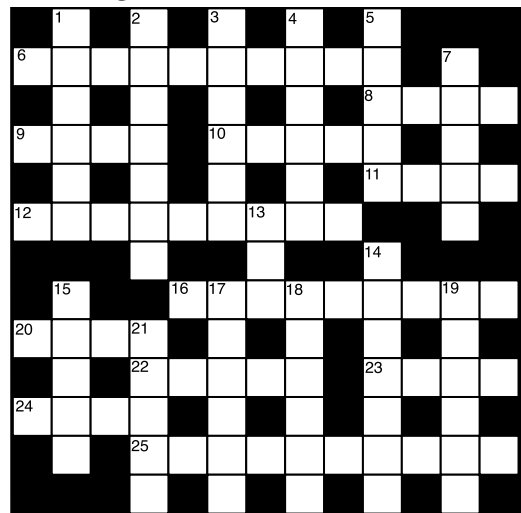
Toll Free 1800 981 187 / Ararat

www.brendanstours.com.au



"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8177



ACROSS

- Smug (10)
- Image (4)
- Stone (4)
- Bird (5)
- Cut (4)
- Weed (9)
- Incredulous (9)
- Shoot (4)
- Coverlet (5)
- Snatch (4)
- You (4)
- Unlikely (10)

DOWN

- Metal (6)
- Clap (7)
- Detestation (6)
- Stone (6)
- Planned undercover operation (5)
- Perch (5)
- Observe (3)
- Cloth (7)
- Correct (5)
- Cheerful (6)
- Fuel (6)
- Fertile (6)
- Fit out (5)

• Solution next issue.

Neighbourhood House Week in Buloke Shire: “Ripples of Change”

Neighbourhood Houses in Buloke Shire joined communities across Australia in celebrating Neighbourhood House Week from May 12 to 18 under the uplifting theme, “Ripples of Change”.

Neighbourhood House Week is a time to recognise the vital role Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres play in fostering connection, support, and growth in over 1000 towns across Australia.

Held annually during the second full week of May, this national initiative shines a light on all the Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres nationwide that quietly, yet powerfully, enrich the lives of thousands every day.

In Buloke Shire’s Neighbourhood Houses, from Sea Lake to Charlton and Birchip Neighbourhood Houses to Wycheproof Resource Centre and Donald Learning Group, you’ll find stories of growth and generosity unfolding every day.

The Spirit

The spirit of this year’s theme “Ripples of Change” is felt in every friendly gathering, shared cup of tea, and community-driven project across Buloke. The idea that small actions can spark wide-reaching impacts resonates deeply in our rural towns, where community connection is not just valued, it’s essential.

Buloke Neighbourhood Houses open their doors to everyone so they can experience a warm, welcoming environment which is a lifeline to many. People of all backgrounds and ages feel seen, supported, and empowered.

Whether it’s a local taking their first steps into digital literacy through a workshop, neighbours coming together to start a community garden, or a volunteer offering their time to support others, each action sends ripples of kindness through the social fabric of our towns and all of these

moments of connection and learning foster confidence, reduce isolation, and build the foundation for resilient, inclusive communities.

A Reminder

This week was a reminder that meaningful change doesn’t always come in grand gestures. It often begins with the smallest of interactions, a welcoming smile at a sewing group, a casual conversation over lunch, or the discovery of a new interest in a class.

Whether it’s learning a new skill, meeting someone new, or being inspired to start something positive in the community, these stories highlight the everyday magic happening in our midst – and the difference each of us can make because “small ripples grow big waves of change.”

So, as Neighbourhood House Week culminates in the Buloke Shire, take a moment to celebrate the people and places making ripples of change in your communities. Reflect on the kindness, the learning, the laughter, and the quiet strength that flows through every Neighbourhood House.

Because together, those ripples can grow into waves – shaping a brighter, kinder, stronger future for us all.



• Ellie Stacey and Jenna Alday with Neighbourhood House coloured cupcakes.



• Mia Ayars at Charlton Neighbourhood House with Ripple Effect Challenge Cards.

Keep Abreast with Local Happenings!

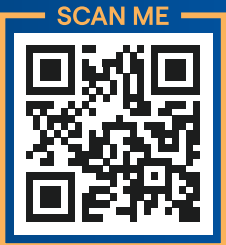
Don’t forget Your Local Newspaper



Available from all district newsagents, or direct from the “Times” Offices, Donald or Birchip; or ring the Donald office (5497 1222) to arrange email or postal delivery.



At Victoria Police, you will enjoy a purposeful career making a real difference in your community. With more benefits including a generous starting salary, 9 weeks paid leave, and access to ongoing training and support. Start your career with Victoria Police today.



MADE FOR MORE

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

White Card Training for Charlton Students

This week, together with the North Central LLEN, Charlton College Year 10 students took an important step toward future careers in the construction and trade industries by completing their White Card training – a nationally recognised certification that prepares individuals to work safely on construction sites across Australia.

The training, formally titled “Prepare to Work Safely in the Construction Industry”, is essential for anyone wishing to step on to a construction site, including students undertaking work experience in building, carpentry, plumbing, electrical, and other related fields.

Led by accredited trainers, the one-day course covered vital topics such as:

- Identifying and managing workplace hazards.

- Understanding safety signage and protocols.
- Using personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Knowing workers’ rights and responsibilities under WHS laws.

Students engaged in a mix of theory and hands-on learning and demonstrated strong commitment to understanding the importance of safety in high-risk environments.

Upon successful completion, students received their official White Card, giving

them the green light to participate in construction-related work experience and setting the foundation for future apprenticeships or trade pathways.

A big thank you to the North Central LLEN for its invaluable partnership with Charlton College. Its collaboration with the school helps provide the students with additional resources, opportunities, and guidance, assisting them in striving for success both in the classroom and beyond.



• White card training for the year 10s.



• Anika Holmes-Brown (left) and Josie Larmour (right) wearing personal protective equipment.

Police Beat



Swan Hill

Vehicle intercept: Just after midnight on Saturday the 10th of May, police intercepted a vehicle on the outskirts of Swan Hill. The vehicle was searched and police located a quantity of what is believed to be methamphetamine and cannabis. A 31-year-old male occupant of the vehicle was arrested, interviewed, charged and bailed to attend court at a later date to answer drug related charges.

Burglary: In the early hours of Tuesday, May the 6th, offenders have smashed the front window of a business in McCallum Street, Swan Hill and stolen 6 bicycles. One of the bikes was found in Splatt Street.

Gannawarra

Car fire: in the early hours of Friday the 9th of May, the CFA located a car fire on the outskirts of Kerang. The vehicle, a Mitsubishi ute, had been reported stolen earlier in the morning from the Murra-bit area. The investigation is ongoing.

Fatal Accident: Emergency services responded following a crash in Swan Hill West on Wednesday morning. It is understood the driver of the car lost control of the vehicle on Sea-Lake-Swan Hill Road. Officers located driver, a 26-year-old man from the Buloke area, deceased inside the vehicle about 7 a.m.. An investigation into the cause of the crash is under way.

Wyche. Probians Admire Caravan Park Facilities

[From Wycheproof Probus Club]

The Wycheproof Probus Club held an interesting meeting at the Wycheproof Caravan Park in May.

The meeting venue was the camp kitchen where the new facilities were on display. This is a new shelter doubling the floor space previously available.

In this new section stainless steel cooking facilities are installed and were admired by the group.

We then went across and had a visit to the new Cabin. It is suitable for disabled people with ample circulation flooring and lots of sleeping spaces. Members felt that it is a great addition to our town and provided another layer of accommodation, which is known to be in short supply.

Lastly we walked across the admired green grassed areas to the new Ablutions block which was displayed and examined by the Probus members. We were most impressed by the cleanliness of the facility and intrigued by the standard mirrored layout

for both the men’s and women’s sections.

We were then provided a barbeque luncheon. Cooked and plated by the Caravan Park Committee, making use of the camp kitchen cooking facilities, tables and chairs.

The general feeling of the membership was that it was a great opportunity to be welcomed and inspect our local facility. And to be allowed to examine what is available for our visiting friends and relatives to use.

It has also set the Club thinking of other local facilities that we could have a tour of.

So the Probus Club is a most welcoming group that has interesting tours and speakers and is available to retired, semi-retired and also stay-at-home people, who wish to have an enlightening interaction with locals at least once a month.



• The group looking at the new Cabin at the Wycheproof Caravan Park. Back row (left to right): Suzie Morrison, Dave Watkins, Viv Gilleland, Leanne Rose (Secretary), Wendy Turnbull. Front rows: Reg Pollard, Viv Parish, Ian Marquis, Juliya Ambrizas, Clare Keane, Lyn Nicholls, Will Russ (President), Elaine Storey, Martin Duke, Win Tunstall, Rob Grylls, Glenda Humphrey, Des Nicholls, Russell Bedgood, Lorraine Milburn, Judy (guest). Absent: Lyn Grylls, Deb Crockett, Eleanor Pollard, Mary-Anne Duke, Eleanor Pollard, Adrian Jorgensen and Marie Harrison.

Vera Woods Celebrates a Remarkable Century

Vera Woods celebrated her 100th birthday anniversary last Friday surrounded by love, laughter and four generations of family, relatives and friends.

The festivities stretched across several days and locations, starting with lamington cake at Sharp's Bakery, followed by a joyful gathering with residents and staff at the Birchip Nursing Home, and culminating in a special celebration in Bendigo on Mother's Day with 80 relatives and friends.

A highlight of the celebration for Vera was receiving a letter from King Charles and his wife Camilla, although she said she would have preferred one from the Queen.

Born on May 9, 1925, in Edithvale, Melbourne, Vera was one of six children born to Adelaide and Alfred Roberts. Her early years were spent in Aspendale, where her family ran a Palais and picnic grounds.

After finishing school, Vera took on a variety of jobs, testament to her spirit of adventure. She worked in the office of a hops garden in Myrtleford, took on roles in Warwick, Queensland, and later found work at Myer in Bendigo.

During World War II, Vera's two older brothers enlisted and served in New Guinea, tragically losing their lives in service to Australia.

Her connection to the rural community of Wilkur South began through visits to her Lang relatives. It was there that she met Norman Woods, her future husband. The couple married in Bendigo in 1953 and together raised six children, Graham, Jeanette, Dianne, Cheryl, Debbie, and John while farming at Wilkur South.

Vera and Norman eventually settled in Warracknabeal after their son John took over the family farm. Vera and Norman cherished their years there, although life brought its share of heartbreak. In 1998, their daughter Debbie died in a car accident near Glenorchy, and just four months later, Norman passed away. Another tragedy struck in 2006 when their grandson Jack, son of John and Ros Woods, lost his life in a car accident at Wilkur South.

Despite these deep personal losses, Vera has remained an enduring symbol of strength and warmth. Small in stature but generous in spirit, she is admired and loved by all who know her.

Her family credits the reason for Vera's longevity, apart from good genes, to her ability to accept things in life and to smile and be happy.

Now residing at the Birchip Nursing Home, Vera expresses heartfelt gratitude for the kindness and care she receives from the lovely staff. As she reflects on her century of life, Vera remains a beacon of resilience and joy, a woman whose life has touched many and whose stories will continue to inspire generations to come.



• Vera at the bakery: Roger Lehmann (son-in-law), Tony McQueen (grandson), Jeanette Williams (daughter), Charlise McQueen (great-granddaughter), Dianne Lehmann (daughter), Allan Williams (son-in-law), Tara Sharp (granddaughter).



• Vera at Birchip Nursing Home. Left to Right: Allan Williams (son-in-law), Tegan Spence (granddaughter), Quinn Woods (grandson), Oscar Sharp (great-grandson), Tony McQueen (grandson), Charlise McQueen (great-granddaughter), Mia Sharp (great-granddaughter), Roger Lehmann (son-in-law), Vera Woods, Lindsey Brain (son-in-law), Jeanette Williams (daughter), Cheryl Brain (daughter), Dianne Lehmann (daughter), Ros Woods (daughter-in-law), John Woods (son), Linc Lehmann (grandson). Absent: Graham Woods (son), Marlene Woods (daughter-in-law).



• Vera giving the crowd her royal wave.



• New sign, old timetable.

V/Line Timetable Discrepancy

It has been noted that V/Line bus stop signs in the area have been upgraded recently; however, the timetables have not.

Timetables shown at each bus stop may not be the most current schedule and could give an inaccurate indication of arrival and departure times.

It is therefore recommended that commuters confirm travelling times with V/Line train and coach services, prior to purchasing their tickets.

For further information, visit ptv.vic.gov.au or call 1800 800 007.



• Please note, the timetable pictured here is no longer current. Commuters should confirm current schedule with V/Line prior to travel.

Victorian Farmers Left High and Dry?

The Victorian Government has yet again failed to commit to support Victorian farmers grappling with worsening drought conditions.

This week, in question time, Minister for Agriculture, Ros Spence, refused to commit to key relief measures as farmers across the state battle relentless dry conditions.

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Emma Kealy, has slammed the Government for its continued failure to adequately support Victorian farmers.

With South Australia stepping up with a \$73 million drought support package, Victoria has offered farmers \$60m less – a mere \$13.5 million – despite the same devastating dry conditions impacting both states.

“Our farmers have been left high and dry by the

Government, which is more focused on delivering another cruel tax blow for farmers rather than giving them the support they need,” Ms Kealy said.

“The Government has forgotten about our Victorian farming families facing crop failure, livestock losses, and rising debt due to relentless dry conditions.

“It’s diabolical negligence and will have an impact on not just our farmers, but also drive up the cost of food for all Victorians.

“If the South Australian Government can provide meaningful, immediate support for their farmers, then why can’t Labor do the same here in Victoria?”

Tax Hike

Making matters worse, the Victorian Government is attempting to ram through a massive emergency services tax hike this week that will see farmers paying up to 189 per cent more – at the very moment they are facing drought conditions and financial hardship.

The Minister’s refusal to commit to waiving the emergency services tax hike – a key measure adopted in South Australia – shows the Government is out of touch with the realities on the ground.

“Farmers in drought-hit regions should not be hit with crippling tax bills while they struggle to keep their stock alive,” Ms Kealy said.

“Labor’s refusal to act shows a fundamental lack of care and compassion for the same people who put food on our table and contribute so much to the state’s economy already.

“Six weeks ago, the South Australian government extended their drought support. Our Victorian farmers can’t wait any longer for Labor to provide support on this side of the border. Every extra day without support puts stock, farms and farmers’ mental health at risk.”

One Hundred Years Ago

From the “Birchip Advertiser”, May 22, 1925.

Local and General Cultivation near channels: The Water Commission for some time been contemplating the passing of by-laws and regulations to prevent clearing, grubbing, cultivating, or fallowing of the land in the Wimmera Mallee District situated within one chain of any channel located in country where there are likely to be “blows”.

The Commission would, of course, only deal with those channels which are liable to be sanded up and would not enforce the by-law where there is no danger of the channel being affected. The reason for the by-law can be well understood when it is known that the cost of clearing out those channels runs into many thousands of pounds a year, which in turn has to be met out of water rates charges, and thus the water rate may have to be increased if the heavy expenditure of channel cleaning is not in some way reduced. The Commission proposes enforcing the regulation in a reasonable manner, but it feels that it is essential in quite a number of districts.

Spelling Bee: The following are the results of the spelling test (100 words) held at S. S. 3443 Lenrich.

Middle Department: Jack Pratt 97%, Hugh Cecil 96, Knightly Grant 95, Jessie Cahoon 94, Roy Ferrier 93, Hilda Mitchell 92, Teddy

Clark 90, Margaret Cecil 90, Mick Fletcher 90. Senior Department: Jean Fletcher 99%. Norman Ferrier 99, Mary Coundon 98, Gladys Fletcher 97, Clarrie Ferrier 97, Betty Clark 95, Eric Cecil 93, Grant Cahoon 90, Douglas Clark 87, Valda Cahoon 84.

H E S Hostel

To the Editor.—The movement in connection with the building of a Hostel for the Higher Elementary School seems to be at rather a standstill, for which I am disappointed. My personal view is, that Birchip and District have an opportunity that should be grasped with both hands and make the town the scholastic centre of the middle north. To the citizens out of Birchip it is more important than it is, but the Birchip people should take the initiative in getting it started. I would suggest to Rev. Whitworth and all the ministers of different churches that they call a meeting for some Saturday afternoon and see that everyone was invited to be present. This matter is important to parents,

especially those who want to see their children receive a good secondary education—and all fathers and mothers whatever their means, should attend and support the object to the best of their ability. After the Birchip meeting, other meetings should be convened at Watchem, Massey, Curyo, Watchupga, Woome-lang and Lascelles, or any other place along the line. By this means a large committee could be formed with power to collect and get promises of assistance. I feel this matter to be of paramount importance. At present the greatest drawback the school has is lack of accommodation for the children and teachers. I feel sure if the citizens will find the necessary money to build the hostel, it will not be long before the Education Department makes the Higher Elementary School into a fully fledged High School, and Birchip will then become the educational centre of the Lower Mallee.

E. RESEIGH
“Cambrai Park” Birchip.

DUNSTAN WOOL

Woolgrowers, for

- PROMPT CLIP VALUATIONS
- COMPETITIVE PRICES
- PAYMENT ON WEIGHING

Phone Donald 5497 1003

a.h. Glenn Dunstan 5497 1815; mob. 0427 971 004

AT DONALD: Every Friday at the Wool Store, Hammill Street, all day.

Professional Funeral Home

Providing a caring and compassionate service to the surrounding districts 24 hour service.

Philip and Karen Davey

**A.G. ADAMS & Sons**

OFFICE & CHAPEL Ph. 5452 1111
39 Fitzroy St, Kerang
info@adamsfunerals.com.au

More hours, more learning, more play



Children in Buloke Shire can now have more time to learn through play, with 16-20 hours of free Pre-Prep every week.

Learn more at vic.gov.au/pre-prep



Netballers’ Pink Day at Wedderburn

The day started well for the Bulls on the purple courts, amidst a sea of pink for PLAY4BCNA Pink Sports Day.

The Bulls won the first four games of the day, but the final three senior games went the way of the Redbacks.

GO
The GO netball team played an excellent game, showing incredible teamwork and individual skill throughout. Ari Richmond demonstrated some beautiful shooting, while Greta McClelland made some fantastic passes to set up the play. Sadie Bourke was steady and reliable whilst Ava Boyle impressed with her strong defensive plays, and Olive McLoughlan showed great awareness by consistently finding space.

Amelia Baker made smart leads and Harper Noonan’s solid defence was impressive. Remi Bowen was all over the court, with several crucial intercepts. Jock Richmond gave 100% effort, contributing both offensively and defensively. Zayvier Sagers in his first game back, earned the award for his fantastic teamwork and great passes in the ring along with Remi Bowen. A fantastic game by all with some wonderful teamwork on display.

14-&Under “B”
Right from the first whistle, the Bulls were switched on, with goalers Georgia Tynan and Issy Sharp forming a strong combination in the ring.

In the second quarter, the Bulls continued to apply pressure to Wedderburn. Frankie McClelland was everywhere in the centre, driving the ball forward with precision, while Addison Hamilton applied relentless pressure in wing defence, picking off passes where she could.

The third quarter was a more evenly matched contest, with both teams tightening up defensively. Lucy Coffey was instrumental in stopping the Redbacks’ advances, repeatedly reading the play and intercepting key passes.

The Redbacks, led by Chelsie Tansley and Georgia Martin in defence, responded with their best period of the game, working hard and turning over the ball where they could. However, both teams managed to have an even third quarter scoring 5 goals. Wedderburn still led 12-10

heading into the final quarter. Birchip-Watchem finished the match strongly, refusing to let up. Stacey Bowen worked hard all game and Olivia Barber capped off a brilliant performance at goal keeper applying heaps of pressure in the ring. The Bulls worked even harder, Hannah Hogan was feeding well into her sister Tilly Hogan and they were able to overtake Wedderburn’s lead.

The game was intense, with both sides battling hard for control, but Birchip-Watchem’s composure in the final minutes secured its narrow victory 17-14. Wedderburn’s defensive pressure challenged the Bullettes throughout, creating a fast-paced and physical contest that kept spectators on edge. Both teams will look to build on these performances in upcoming rounds, with the Bullettes aiming to maintain their strong form against tough opposition moving forward. Congratulations to award winners Addison Hamilton and Olivia Barber, both taking the court in defence.

14-&Under “A”
Starting strong with Gemma Tynan and Anieka Boyle shooting accurately, the Bulls had a 12 goal lead at quarter time. The Bulls continued to play well together and although Destiny Donald was applying plenty of pressure in defence for the Redbacks, it was not enough to slow down the more experienced Bulls team.

The Bulls’ Awhina Kahakura made it very difficult for the Redbacks to find scoring opportunities, playing a great game in GK and putting her body on the line to get intercepts. Birchip-Watchem mercied the Redbacks, with the best on court being named Sienna Richmond, who played a great game showing her versatility as she moved from the midcourt to shooting. Final score: Birchip-Watchem 32-2. Awards for Birchip Watchem; Frances McClelland and Awhina Kahakura.

17-&Under “A”
Birchip-Watchem delivered a strong and commanding performance to secure a convincing win against Wedderburn.

The Bulls dominated the court with sharp passing, solid defence, and accurate shooting, maintaining control throughout the match. Their teamwork and communication were evident, allowing them to build and sustain a comfortable lead.

The first quarter started with Birchip-Watchem working through its game plan. Beau Haslam was a prominent target in GS and when the ball was placed into her hands by midcourters Cassie Tynan and Zara Lowry, she could not miss. At the other end Wedderburn shooters Kayla Cramp and Amelia Buschman were also accurate when they put their shots up.

Second quarter began with Birchip-Watchem making a positional change and moving Esther Bourke into WD. She worked hard in the mid court all game taking numerous intercepts where she could. Birchip-Watchem’s mid court was still moving the ball down into attack, but Wedderburn’s Dakota Martin was relentless in attacking and defending throughout the mid court, making Birchip-Watchem work harder to deliver the ball into the goal ring. At half-time Birchip-Watchem had maintained its lead with scores 40-13.

After the half-time break Birchip-Watchem knew it had to keep working hard to maintain its lead against Wedderburn. Defensive duo Lana Angel and Eva Coffey used their height and tight pressure to contain Wedderburn’s shooting attempts and never stopped their pressure throughout the whole game. Birchip-Watchem’s Asha Lee was using her speed to work the ball up the court and was finding good position in the goal ring.

The fourth quarter started with more positional changes for both sides. Wedderburn’s Emily Caruana had been strong in attack all day delivering the ball to her shooters. Birchip-Watchem continued to apply pressure across the court for the entire game and although Wedderburn fought hard it struggled to break through Birchip-Watchem’s defensive pressure.



• WA Rebecca Turnbull, Steph Coffey, Emily Gleniste, Sarah Turnbull, Hannah Wilson.

The 73-26 goal win will be a boost to Birchip-Watchem’s confidence following some close contests in recent weeks. Award winners were Cassie Tynan, who showed great agility and skill across the court, and Eva Coffey who was steadfast in defence.

“C” Reserve
The “C” reserve clash between Birchip-Watchem and Wedderburn delivered a thrilling contest, with the Bulls narrowly edging out their opponents 31-30 in a nail-biting finish.

From the first whistle, the intensity was high as both teams brought energy and precision to the court. The Bulls’ shooting end was led by Jay Connelly, who was instrumental in keeping the scoreboard ticking over. Her composure under pressure and accuracy in the ring proved vital in such a tightly contested match.

In the mid-court, Amy McEarchern showcased her attacking flair, driving the ball forward with confidence and linking beautifully with the shooters. On the defensive end of the mid court, Emily Hotker played a crucial role in disrupting Wedderburn’s flow, applying relentless pressure and creating key turnovers throughout the match.

Defensively, the Bulls stood strong with Emily Barber and Ada Bourke forming a strong back line. Their ability to read the play and intercept crucial passes helped stall multiple Redbacks’ advances, particularly in the final quarter when every possession mattered.

With the game hanging in the balance in the final minutes, the Bulls showed grit and composure to hold on to their narrow lead and secure the 31-30 victory in front of a vocal home crowd. Jay Connelly and Amy McEarchern received the best-on-court awards for their exceptional contributions in shooting and mid court attack, respectively. The Pink Ladies Day Award, selected by the umpires, was awarded to Ada Bourke for her outstanding defensive performance.

“C” Grade
The game started off well with the Bulls in the lead. The defenders were working well together to turn over a few centre passes and the team

moved the ball smoothly down to the goalies.

Hannah Wilson had an outstanding game running through the centre, feeding the ball into attack and bringing it out of defence and Ellie Kenna was consistent in the wing defence position putting pressure on the Redbacks’ pathway to goals.

However, Wedderburn never relented and its goalies’ accuracy was instrumental in securing a come-from-behind win, 55 to 44. Birchip-Watchem awards: Ellie Kenna and Hannah Wilson.

“B” Grade
The Bulls started their first quarter with strong defence from Cheyenne Parsons and Stacey Hamilton, who continually worked hard to keep Wedderburn’s shooters on their toes. An unfortunate wrist injury to Holly Hinkley caused a reshuffle in the lineup seeing Eva Coffey step into wing defence.

The second quarter began with Toni Jones moving into goal attack for the Bulls and using her speed well to move around the ring. Tylah Haslam helped move the ball flawlessly down the court and fed the ball into the shooters, but Wedderburn also had good momentum down the court and accurate shooters and at half-time it led 30 to 24.

The third quarter saw Beau Haslam step into goal defence, using her height to get plenty of rebounds. The Bulls managed to keep the goals levelled in the third quarter, and the margin remained at 6 at the final change.

During the last quarter Sophie Parfrey continued to work tirelessly in centre for the Bulls, channelling the ball down the court into the ring. Zali Angel continued shooting accurately and using her strength and height under the post for rebounds. However, Wedderburn came out strong in the last quarter with Olivia and Grace Lockhart putting up plenty of shots, leading to the final score of 62 to 43 Wedderburn’s way. Birchip-Watchem awards: Stacey Hamilton and Toni Jones.

“A” Grade
Birchip-Watchem “A” grade was back to the late afternoon timeslot after trialling playing first, before “B” and “C” grade last week and the conditions were superb for a

winter sport with the sun shining and no wind.

Despite Wedderburn being in the lead at all the breaks, the score was deceiving as it was a closely fought contest with the potential for the Bulls to take the lead at any stage. It was also a very physical game across the whole court, showcasing strong contests and every player’s determination to go after every ball and convert to goals. This meant that small errors ended up being costly as each team capitalised upon any mistakes.

The first quarter saw an evenly matched game with only 2 goals difference at quarter time. Zali Angel was utilising her strength and height from some well-placed passes from her teammates to shoot some lovely goals while the Wedderburn shooters were also quick and accurate.

In the second quarter, Wedderburn was able to extend its lead slightly by another 3 goals, meaning that the Bulls were down by 5 at half-time. But still very much in with a shot.

The energy of the game was still very high and the 3rd quarter was intense as neither team wanted to give an inch. Khiana Brooks moved into goal attack, providing some drive into the circle and the Bulls’ mid court also switched it up, resulting in this quarter being level in goals scored.

Heading into the last quarter, the Bulls were down by 5 goals but after last week’s comeback against Calder Lions, no one had written them off with plenty of spectators staying to watch for the final outcome.

The players did not disappoint, fighting it out until the end, with the Bulls getting very close at one stage. However, some small passing errors crept into the game with the pressure that Wedderburn was applying, whilst Wedderburn remained composed and enacted some positional changes that enabled it to hold its lead until the final siren.

Finals scores: Wedderburn defeated Birchip-Watchem 54 to 48.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Sammi Mitchell and Sassia Coffey.

All Birchip-Watchem awards were sponsored by Noonan’s Contracting.



• “C” grade: Ash Tierney GK, Ashley Woods GS.



Distracted drivers won't see the fine coming.

Just because you can't see the police, doesn't mean you can't be seen.
Mobile phone and seatbelt detection cameras are out there to keep our roads safe.
If you use your phone illegally while driving, you will face a minimum fine of \$593
and 4 demerit points. Chances are you will be caught.
Anywhere. Anytime. Anyone.

TAC

VICTORIA
State
Government



Bull’s Reserves Dominate

Birchip-Watchem reserves returned to the winners list last Saturday, comfortably defeating Wedderburn at George Cartwright Oval.

Both teams were blessed with a blend of youth and experience. The more mature bodies for the Bulls included Alex Noonan, Matt Rickard and Edward Rickard, while the Redbacks could look to the leadership of Robert Tonkin, Chris Hargreaves and Luke Last.

The first quarter was the closest of the contest, with both teams hitting the scoreboard with multiple majors. Birchip-Watchem’s man mountain full forward Alex Hay opened his account with two first quarter goals, while fellow forwards Bailey Baxter and Connor Boyle also opened their accounts.

For Wedderburn, Hudson Pidoto and Chris Hargreaves

both kicked goals to keep the Redbacks within reach of their opponents. Impressively, between the two sides there were six goals scored for the quarter with no behinds. The Bulls led by 12 points at quarter-time.

Birchip-Watchem lifted a gear in the second quarter, spurred on by diminutive midfielders Riley Hogan and Connor Lee. What Hogan and Lee lack in height they make up for with neat skills and game sense. They ran rings around their Wedderburn opponents and had the ball entering the Bulls’ forward fifty frequently.

Alex Hay was the chief beneficiary and he kicked three more goals to take his

individual tally to five by half-time. Fellow key forwards Matt Berry and Callum Goode also goaled and the Bulls were away. Wedderburn could only find a solitary goal via Joshua Turnbull, leaving Birchip-Watchem in a commanding position at half-time, 39 points up.

Wedderburn needed to respond quickly if it was to stay in the contest, but Birchip-Watchem continued its dominance in the third term. Joshua Woods was effective in the ruck for the Bulls and Riley Hogan continued to dominate clearances. Three more goals to Hay and singles to Goode and Boyle had the Bulls rollicking to the finish line.



• Reserves: Left to right, Lachlan Maher (W), Alex Noonan (B-W), Aaron Smith (W), Harry Cook (B-W), Riley Hogan looking on.

In the backline for the Bulls, Alex Noonan was steadfast at centre-half-back, ensuring that Wedderburn couldn’t enter its forward fifty without a struggle. Again the Redbacks could only manage a single goal for the quarter, courtesy of Matthew Lockhart. The Bulls had the match in hand at the final change, leading by 66 points.

With the result all but decided the contest petered out somewhat in the final term. Birchip-Watchem had been

deadly accurate in the first three terms but lost its radar in the final quarter, kicking two goals and four behinds. Bailey Baxter took his personal tally to two goals and Hay took great glory in reaching a nine-goal haul.

Pidoto added a second goal to get the Redbacks on the scoreboard in the final term, but the match belonged to the Bulls. The 75-point margin was a pleasing result heading into the week off.

Final score: Birchip-Watchem 16.10.(106) defeated Wedderburn 5.1.(31).

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Riley Hogan (O’Connors), Alex Hay (YBS Ag), Alex Noonan (Agrifac), Connor Lee (Donnellon’s Bulk Haulage), Baley Baxter (Nutrien Ag), Joshua Woods (Ryan Commodities).

For Wedderburn: Robert Tonkin, Rhordan Holt, Luke Last, Aaron Smith, Hudson Pidoto, Finn Turnbull.

Wedderburn Juniors Strong at Birchip

The under-17s were anticipating a close contest with both teams looking for their first win.

Unfortunately for the Bulls they came up against the strongest team Wedderburn had fielded all season, with the inclusion of some Inglewood players on a bye.

The first tap out went Wedderburn’s way but Ollie Cook held up play with some great tackling, resulting in a behind followed up by a goal from Ollie, but Wedderburn responded scoring a goal straight back.

The ball rebounded back and forth, and the Bulls had a shot at goal, but another behind resulted. Wedderburn moved the ball from end to end and kicked a third goal to take the lead at the end of the first quarter 3.1 (19) to 1.3 (9).

The Redbacks came out strongly in the second stanza, and had lots of action at their scoring end. Although they were experiencing some errant kicking early, they straightened up and added a further five goals to see them extend the score to 8.3 (51) while the Bulls remained 1.3 (9).

The Bulls responded to the enthusiasm of their coach Bill Lee and scored the opening goal of the third quarter, again through Ollie Cook. The Bulls applied great pressure and prevented Wedderburn from creating too much damage on

the scoreboard and at the final change Wedderburn 10.6 (66) led the Bulls 2.3 (17).

Wedderburn regained the ascendancy in the final quarter, scoring the first two majors of the term. Besides a couple of behinds from the Bulls, the visitors continued to do all the scoring in the quarter with impressive accuracy as they added 7 goals and only three behinds to amass 17.9 (111) and contain Birchip-Watchem to 2.5 (17). Liam Budge was their most proficient, scoring 6 goals for the match, while Calub Gault added 4.

Awards for Birchip-Watchem: Willow Ryan (sponsored by Noonan Tyers with Brad and Connely Ryan), Noah Dean (sponsored by YBS), Ollie Cook (sponsored by Birchip Café), and Archie Tyler (sponsored by Bulls canteen). Best for Wedderburn: Aaron Smith, Tate Lovett, Liam Budge, Deacon Tansley, Max Dean.

Under-14s

Wedderburn continued on its winning way in the under-14s, having only lost one game for the season, although it took a half to find its momentum against the determined Bulls.

Jed Coffey worked hard in the ruck to try to get the Bulls

first use of the ball and Willow Ryan was having his usual influence, but scores were hard to come by for both teams in the early stages of the game. Both teams had had four scoring shots in the first half, but unfortunately for the home team they hadn’t split the big sticks and Wedderburn had scored two apiece, giving the Redbacks a 2.2 (14) to 0.4 (4) lead at the half-time break.

Wedderburn found its mojo in the penultimate quarter with Jagger Benaim and Tyler Pearce getting on top of the game and lots of its running forwards found avenues to score. At the last break the Redbacks had steamed ahead 5.5 (35) to 0.5 (5) and they kept this momentum rolling into the final stanza. Willow Ryan brought some joy to the Bulls as he added a goal to their miserly tally, but Wedderburn was too strong, winning 8.6 (54) to Birchip-Watchem 1.5 (11).

Best players for Birchip-Watchem were Willow Ryan (Noonan Tyres and Jake and Billy Noonan), Jed Coffey (TMC Enviro), Aki Norton (Bulls’ Canteen), Liam Spezza (IGA Birchip). For Wedderburn: Jagger Benaim, Tyler Pearce, Bastian Noordennen, Brodie Turnbull, Addison Roberts.



(By Course Language)

A perfect Autumn weekend greeted our golfers, unless you’re desperately looking for that much anticipated break in the season, for a Stableford event with knock-out matches also being played.

Richard Gallagher has advanced to the final and must wait for a couple of other matches to see who will be his opponent.

The winner for last weekend with a fine 37 points was Matt Clarke closely followed by Richard Gallagher on 35 points. Matt, for the second week in a row, birdied the Donald Mechanical and Tyre sponsored second.

The “Nearest The Pins” were: The Donald Auto Elec 3rd, Maree Egan; Weirs IGA 7th, Robert Burton; Nufarm 14th, Robert Burton; Bendigo Bank 16th, Kelvin Clark.

Matt Clark has been in good form the last couple of weeks. It’s amazing how much better you play with some pristine golf balls. It did take Matt a while to find some good balls after his dog had taken most of them out of his bag and chewed them into a non-playable state. Good dog?

With no football on because of a bye this weekend, it would be great to see anyone who’s keen to fill in a couple of hours come along and have a hit. The course is in desperate need of a rain but I’m sure you’ll still enjoy the day.

Winner of the wood raffle: Glen Merrifield.

Dad’s Army

Four veterans played off for glory last Thursday with Major General Howley showing them a clean pair of heels to have a good win. If anyone would like to join in, you are more than welcome to attend role call on a Thursday for a 1 p.m. hit off.

Coming Up

May’s Monthly Medal sponsored by the Donald Pharmacy and Pies putting will be on this weekend. One added twist to this is that it is to be played off the Red Markers.

Dad Jokes

I got woken the other night by a tap on the door – I really need to get a plumber to remove it.

Did you hear about the kleptomaniac baker – he really takes the cake.

My wife had her driving test today. She got 8 out of 10 – the other 2 jumped out of the way.

A mate of mine just spent \$500 on a Limo and discovered that the fee didn’t include a driver. He spent all that money and had nothing to “Chauffer” it.

Carmel’s Big Golf Day Out

Charlton’s Carmel Fitzpatrick had a sensational day out on Wednesday, taking full advantage of the dry conditions to score 39 points.

Carmel also had nearest the pins on both the Charlton Newsagent 7th and 14th hole. Wendy Hargreaves was runner up with 36 points. Eilly Rosewall won the 12 hole event with 22 points.

Charlton’s ladies team continued its pennant matches on Monday with mixed results, seeing them slip to fourth on the ladder. Wycheproof is hosting the third round on Monday. Good luck to all players.



• Eilly Rosewall (left) and Carmel Fitzpatrick.



• Under-14s: Bulls’ Sienna Richmond tries for goal.

Donald Hosts Charlton Netballers

14-&-Under “A”
Quarter 1: Donald started off strongly with the WA and GA setting up well on the line for set plays. Early points on the board by Donald set it up for the remainder of the game. Charlton was utilising space on the court well and was strong in its attacking of the ball. Donald had to change up some game play, and the GK and birthday girl River Stirling was strong in the circle making it hard for Charlton to feed into the circle.

Quarter 2: Donald made some changes in this quarter with some girls getting on the bench to rest up to jump on the court for the ’17s match. Strong mid court control by Evie Donnellon created flow down the court as the Centre. The communication between the attackers and defenders in the mid court made Donald strong, the court was not congested. Charlton played strong close defence and good cover over its players, Donald had to work harder for the ball.

Quarter 3: Donald really shone in this quarter, showing great depth and understanding of play. Charlton shooters held strong, working well as a team and their circle defence was always looking to pick off any missed shots with good height on the elevation.

Donald continued to keep the court free of congestion. Layla Hepworth worked hard as a WD, showing her speed and good read of play. Layla Griffiths and Sophie Burke were a great team in the goal ring, both had accurate shooting and great support of one another.

Quarter 4: Donald continued to show its strength in this quarter, with lots of positive chatter on the court and good decisions being made. Donald continued to play at a high level with good determination and skill being shown. Well done to both teams, Charlton is always a clean fun match with great supporters. Thanks to the umpires and a big shout out to Chloe Italia, Sophie Burke and Patience Beavis who stepped up to play U17s and Lucy Robinson who umpired her first seniors game.

Donald awards: Lucy Robertson, Donald Family Butcher; Layla Griffiths, Gilchrist & Co.

Charlton awards: TeeJet Best, Rosie Fitzpatrick; FHN Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Lila Schofield; Nutrien Ag &

Roberts Windrowing “Have a Crack”, Anna Fitzpatrick.
17-&-Under
Quarter 1 saw a strong start from Donald, with great teamwork and a composed effort to control possession by slowing the ball down. Charlton’s defensive pressure was intense, challenging the Donald goalers and capitalising on intercepted passes to gain early momentum.

In quarter 2, Donald made several rolling substitutions, injecting fresh legs on to the court to counter Charlton’s physical presence. There were some impressive passages of play, with Donald shooters combining well under pressure and showing great teamwork to convert opportunities. Defenders also stepped up, applying full-court pressure, while the attackers worked hard to deliver the ball into the goal circle.

The third quarter was marked by resilience and learning, as the girls implemented strategies from training and responded well to sideline coaching. Despite the scoreboard, Donald continued to fight, with new player combinations across the court creating some strong plays. The attacking end worked tirelessly, though Charlton’s defenders proved difficult to break through.

In the final quarter, Donald finished on a high note, posting its highest score of the match. The determination and “never give up” attitude of Donald’s players shone through, with rolling substitutions keeping energy levels up and mid-courtiers linking well to move the ball forward. The defenders read the play expertly to create valuable intercepts, and every player gave it their all until the final whistle. The team’s hard work, resilience, and weekly improvement is something to be extremely proud of.

Donald awards: Arleea Sarre, Clothes Bin; Halle Rice, Love Shack Giftware.

Charlton awards: IGA Charlton and Ergo & Mane Beauty Best, Taylah Giles; FHN Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Lacey Smith; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Anika Holmes-Brown.

“C” Grade
In a tightly contested and entertaining netball match, Donald secured a thrilling 52-49 victory over Charlton after trailing for most of the game. The match opened with Charlton showing dominance,

particularly through its long-range shooting, with several impressive goals. Donald’s Mak Dillon stood out with a few strong rebounds, while Tiarnah Hepworth impressed early with accurate shooting. It was a special day for Halle Rice, who took to the court for her first senior game. At the end of the first quarter, Charlton led 18–11.

Charlton continued to press in the second quarter, moving the ball quickly down the court and maintaining pressure. Megan Godkin-Briggs played a key defensive role, snatching a couple of intercepts, while Jorjah Roberts and Julia Pearse provided sharp and accurate passes into the shooting circle. Another milestone came as Asha Pearse made her senior debut. Despite Donald lifting its intensity, Charlton held on to a 31–26 lead at half-time.

The third quarter saw Donald begin to close the gap, with sisters Alyssa and Tiarnah Hepworth combining effectively in the shooting circle. Strategic rolling substitutions kept Donald’s energy levels high. Jorjah Roberts added to her tally of intercepts, and Godkin-Briggs continued to provide strong support, recovering several loose balls. Heading into the final term, Charlton held a narrow 39-37 lead.

Donald came out firing in the last quarter, capitalising on a turnover to score early and then equalising shortly after. Tiarnah Hepworth’s fantastic shooting helped Donald pull ahead, with Belicia Francis offering strong support in attack. The hosts held their nerve in a tense final few minutes to clinch a 52-49 comeback victory.

It was a memorable match with standout performances, senior debuts, and a nail-biting finish that showcased the determination and teamwork of both sides.

Massive congratulations to Asha Pearse and Halle Rice on their debut senior game for Donald.

Donald awards: Jorjah Roberts, IGA Best On Court; Halle Rice (first senior game), Donald Hotel Incentive award.

Charlton awards: Jack Thompson Construction and Ergo & Mane Beauty Best, Zoe Carney; S&D Consulting Coaches, Taylah Boyle; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Ebony McCarthy.

“B” Grade
Quarter 1: Donald’s “B” grade girls took the court against Charlton. It was always bound to be a great game to watch. Donald started out well moving the ball swiftly down the court from defensive turnovers. Courtney Doak and Rachael Meulendyks worked well together in the defensive ring. Donald 8, Charlton 6.

Quarter 2: Donald’s goalers Millie Lydom and Zara Staples picked up the rhythm early in the second quarter, with the assistance from Megan Tonkin (WA) and Tori Kelm (C) working the centre of the court. Megan intercepted the ball at every chance she had

to stop the ball from entering the Charlton attacking end. Donald 22, Charlton 16.

Quarter 3: An unfortunate injury forced Donald to make some changes in the defensive end. Abby Griffiths and Milla Adams sharing the role of GD both worked well in the defensive ring with Rachael. Donald proved to be too strong and continued to lead going into the last quarter. Donald 33, Charlton 21.

Quarter 4: A good lead starting out the last quarter; the Donald girls knew all they needed to do was to hold on to their centres to see the game out with their first win for the season. All girls pulled together as a team with some lovely netball court wide. Donald 44, Charlton 27.

Donald awards: Rach Meulendyks, Jasper & Co; Millie Lydom, Mensland.

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

“A” Grade
Milestone for the game: Xanthi Rice game 450 and Ally Doak game 200.

Donald was on a mission to bring home a win for these 2 girls and that it did.

Quarter 1: In a fast-paced and competitive match, the mid court players proved instrumental, dominating their opponents and setting the tone for the game. Their relentless pressure and sharp intercepts led to numerous turnovers, giving their team repeated opportunities to gain possession and transition into attack. The cohesive play between the centre Abby Griffiths, wing attack Xanthi Rice, and wing defence Ally Doak, disrupted the opposition’s rhythm and showcased outstanding teamwork and tactical discipline. Donald 14, Charlton 11.

Quarter 2: Donald consistently applied pressure that resulted in a high number of turnovers. Its ability to read the play and shut down passing lanes gave it a clear edge. The second quarter was particularly impressive, with a flurry of defensive intercepts from Sara Adams GK and Anna Sudholz GD that halted the opposition’s momentum and allowed Donald to keep the lead. Donald 25, Charlton 17.

Quarter 3: The momentum continued into the third quarter, where the attacking end began to shine. The attackers Xanthi Rice WA and Abby Griffith C worked seamlessly to feed accurate and well-timed passes into the shooting circle, allowing the shooter Zoe Grigsby and Milla Adams to capitalise and convert with confidence. The connection and communication in the attacking third showcased the team’s growing cohesion and control over the game. Donald 38, Charlton 30.

Quarter 4: In the final quarter, the team maintained its composure and demonstrated great consistency down the court. Clean transitions, disciplined play, and solid communication ensured they closed out the game confidently and in control. Donald 49, Charlton 39.

Donald awards: Gilchrist & Co, Ally Doak; Bev’s Baubles, Milla Adams.

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

Down the Middle?

Five Donald players vied for the coveted Jasper & Co’s voucher.

Stableford was the play for the day and the winner was Luke Kelly with 33 points on a countback from Jenni Campbell. Nearest the pin on Donald Auto Electrical’s 3rd was Jenni Campbell and Weir’s 7th was Maree Egan.

Next Week
Monday golf: Assemble at 9.45.

Monday 19th: Pennant at Wycheproof.

Wednesday 21st: Stableford & Clothes Bin Monthly Medal.

Monday 26th: Final day of pennant at Boort, not Sea Lake as previously mentioned.

Highlights and Lowlights
The pennant team had a win and a square last Monday. In the morning they drew with Birchip and in the afternoon they won 2–1 against Charlton.

Welcome to Marg Quick who visited after golf to help celebrate nonagenarian, Brenda Brennan’s birthday anniversary. Thanks also Marg for providing a plate of your famous powder puffs for all to enjoy. Brenda’s birthday celebrations started last Friday and continued on through Sunday and then to Wednesday. And amid all that, she managed to play a great game of golf. You’re a super star Brenda.

The second group of players to hit off on Wednesday watched as two of the more senior players hit off. After adding up their ages, it came to an amazing 170 plus years. They certainly set a high bar to aim for. The club found out three things about Luke Kelly on Wednesday – 1. He nearly has at least one



• Brenda Brennan celebrating her 90th birthday anniversary at golf.

birdie in every round, 2. He loves playing amongst the trees and 3. His favourite food is Margie Quick’s powder puffs.

Player Profile Brenda Brennan

For how long have you been playing golf? About 50 years. June Cross, Beryl Milne and I travelled down every Monday for lessons before we joined the Wednesday comp.

What do you enjoy about golf? The company and therefore the laughter.

What’s the best part about your game? I usually hit straight down the middle.

What advice would you give to anyone who is thinking of taking up golf? If possible, join the club and learn the game.

What’s your best score? 83 at the Minyip tournament many years ago.

What’s the best shot you’ve ever played? Almost a hole in one on the 16th.

Who is your favourite golfer? Rory McIlroy.

What is your current position in the club? Nothing at the moment, previously secretary and match committee.

CHURCH NOTICES

**UNITING CHURCH
(North Central Living Waters Cluster)**
Donald, 10 a.m.
Wycheproof, 10 a.m.
Birchip, 10 a.m.
Contact Number: 5497 1033



**ANGLICAN
“Parish of
Charlton-Donald”**
Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
0435 593 395
Friday, May 16
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.
Sunday, May 18
St. Martin’s, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George’s, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W’burn, 3 p.m.

Bulls Set the Standard

• Continued from page 16.
team to beat, having won all its games, including surviving probing challenges from Sea Lake-Nandaly and Calder United, teams also expected to feature prominently this season.

What makes Birchip-Watchem such a formidable force is its combination of a powerful midfield, a most efficient defence that has conceded the least number of goals so far (36), and a potent attack which has scored the heaviest of any team (106 goals). The Bulls also have three of the competition’s top 10 goal kickers, Ben Edwards 39, Joe Reid 16 and Nic Rippon 15.

As its current position indicates, Boort is next in line, its defence, led by Keiren Wilson, having conceded 44 goals, while its attack, featuring Jye Baddeley-Kelly (28 goals), Kane Rutley (16) and Peter Barbopoulos (12) has registered a combined 95 majors.

Calder United, after a steady start, is starting to hit its straps, restricting all opposition to just 38 goals, whilst its forwards, including Jack Exell (15) and Jordan Humphreys (11) out of a combined total of 77, are having a more dynamic impact on the scoreboard.

The recent return of Humphreys has provided a game changing fillip for the Lions, his on-field contribution in just two games elevating his team to previously unattainable heights.

Sea Lake-Nandaly’s stuttering start to its title defence can be gauged by the number

of goals for and against. Its defence is as frugal as ever, conceding just 36 goals, the equal lowest across the league, but its attack has accumulated just 59 goals, led by Tyson McKenzie’s contribution of 11, ranking the Tigers well behind the three teams above it, and only marginally ahead of fifth-placed Wedderburn.

Wedderburn has been very good, defensively, led by coach Tom Metherell, conceding just 43 goals. But the Redbacks have struggled to capitalise in front of their own goal, booting just 54 so far, twenty of which were scored against Charlton. The injured Mitch Jensen is their leading contributor with 13, which includes one bag of 10.

Road Ahead

Looking at the next four rounds, Birchip-Watchem has games against Boort (A), St. Arnaud (H), Charlton (H) and Donald (A), and will start a firm favourite to win all four.

Boort needs to perform well against the Bulls to regain the momentum, which it had been building until last Saturday’s reality check against Calder United.

It then has winnable games against Wedderburn (the Magpies’ only realistic challenger for a top four finish), St. Arnaud and Charlton, both of which it defeated comprehensively in earlier rounds.

Calder United can continue to build its confidence and percentage at the expense of St. Arnaud, Charlton and Donald, before venturing up the Calder Highway in round 9 to confront Sea Lake-Nandaly.

It’s a midseason clash that has all the hallmarks of a final, between a proud champion and one of its most serious would-be challengers.

Sea Lake-Nandaly’s lead up to round 9 consists of games against Charlton, Donald and Wedderburn.

Wedderburn has two important clashes it needs to win in coming weeks, against Boort in round 7 and Sea Lake-Nandaly in round 8, as well as games it should win against Donald and St. Arnaud, if it is to remain in touch with the top four.

The gulf that currently exists between the top five teams and Charlton (2 wins), St. Arnaud (1) and Donald appears destined to widen, given the injuries all three teams are currently experiencing, increasing the stress on their already limited resources.

One positive for the Navy Blues, Saints and Royal Blues is the game time all three are being able to provide for young footballers, who can only benefit from the experience.

Make the most of your weekend away from local football, hockey and netball, in preparation for round 6 on May 24.

• Happy birthday anniversary to local football devotee, Bill Anderson, who attained 90 years young on Wednesday. Bill’s knowledge of, and dedication and contribution to local football is an inspiration.

• Congratulations to Wedderburn’s under-17s, who won their first game since 2018, defeating Birchip-Watchem last Saturday.



• Under-12 coach Tim McClelland talking to his charges.

Hockey Time for Bulls and Redback Juniors

It was a quiet day at the hockey field with the Bulls having no seniors and Wedderburn having no underage.

But there was plenty of enthusiasm from the younger players who took to the Birchip-Watchem field which, although looking green bathed in sunshine, would benefit from a good soaking of rain.

Minkey

Two games of minkey were played with an older team taking to the first field and a younger team playing a five-a-side match, on the second field. The older players were able to keep play flowing and there was lots of shots on goal, while the

younger players had more space to carry the ball and pass off to team mates in space. Lucy Noonan and Heidi Kilroy teamed up well in the mid-field to dribble the ball and pass off, and had several runs back into defence to save oncoming shots at goal. Hamish Noonan and Imogen Noonan were steady in defence and Jaylah Haslam provided options out on the wing. Awards for Birchip Watchem went to Heidi Kilroy (Troy & Brooke Morris), and Charlie McAuliffe (BWHC Canteen).

Under-12

Wedderburn was bolstered by the inclusion of Ryan Goss, Grace McAuliffe and Oscar Sharp from the Bulls, which meant a good game ensued with eleven players on the field for both sides.

River Ryan combined well with Des Coffey and Sadie Bourke through the midfield, and Samuel Ferrier provided some speedy runs downfield to create space for the Bulls to move the ball into the goal D. Grace McAuliffe and Ryan Goss were putting plenty of pressure on their teammates in defence though as they entered the attacking zone.

Players adhered to coach Tim McClelland’s instructions to pass wide out from defence and they are slowly realising that they really do have more chance of scoring from less of an angle.

Despite goalie Lara Polkinghorne stopping several of

the Bulls’ scoring opportunities, they were able to add four goals with Denley Tyler the most opportunistic in the forward line scoring on three occasions.

Des Coffey also scored a good goal from a run into the D, but the Bulls didn’t have it all their own way, especially in the second half with Oscar Sharp providing plenty of run and niggles against his peers, and his persistence was eventually rewarded with a goal for the Redbacks.

Greta McClelland was good in the midfield, especially as her confidence grew in the second half when she created plenty of turn overs and defended well against the forward momentum Wedderburn was building, as did Jett Hinds in the latter lines of defence.

Jude McLoughlan and Milla Haslam were quick to move back into defence and mark their player when the opposition had the ball, as instructed by their coach, and Lucy Coffey was as reliable as always, stopping the ball and clearing it wide out of trouble on multiple occasions. When the ball did get deep into the goal mouth, Logan Cullen was impressive in his first game as goalie to only let the one goal in.

Final scores: Birchip-Watchem 4 defeated Wedderburn 1. Awards for Birchip-Watchem: Greta McClelland (Sharp’s Bakery), Ryan Goss (TMC Enviro).

Lions Roar at Home

With the day being perfect for footy on Saturday at the Lions Den in Wycheproof, Calder United took on the Boort Magpies in what was to be the match of the round!

Boort recruited well over the off season and was sitting undefeated on top of the table, with a great win over the reigning premier Sea Lake-Nandaly the previous week.

And the newest club in town, Calder Untied, showed glimpses last week against the Bulls, this was sure going to be a ball-biter!

The Lions flashed out of the blocks with their coach Humphreys hitting the scoreboard in the first 40 seconds. Baddeley-Kelly was starting to run and looked dangerous until Kennedy goaled for Calder.

James Keeble and Ethan Coleman then goaled for Boort to get the score back close. With the siren sounding at quarter-time, the Lions had the lead 2.4 to 2.1.

The start of the second quarter the Lions once again flew out of the blocks with Matt Wade kicking his first for the day, but it wasn’t to end there. Exell provided so much up the ground and was able to slip forward to kick his

first major. Calder proceeded to dominate the Boort line up with no answers for the dominant Lions forward Jordy Humphreys.

At the 9 minute mark Humphreys kicked his second for the day and the next four goals in 10 minutes!

Egan and Wilson were battling hard but missed for the Magpies that would have given them some confidence, but then it was play of the day with Spencer Allan streaming through the centre to kick his first goal for the Lions. Any time the Magpies looked like they would go forward they were repelled by the General Madden and his troops down back for the Lions. Calder led at halftime 10.7 to 2.4.

Billy Forrester had been playing well in the reserves and had been given the call up to the main game. Capitalising on his opportunity he fired the first shot in the third quarter. Peter Barbopoulos managed to take a strong mark and answered with his first for the day. But as quick as the ball was back to the centre, Zane Keighran nailed his first major. Calder continued to dominate out of the centre with Putt and Wilson having a great battle, but the Lions’

mids were working like clockwork but missing the next five shots on goal.

It wasn’t until both Exell and Keighran hit the scoreboard again leading into the three quarter time break that the scores rose 15.15 to 3.4

The last quarter was a complete dominance with Humphreys having his seventh for the day within the first 30 seconds. Barbopoulos got his hands on the ball again and tried to get some respect back for the Magpies, but it was Humphreys bringing up his eighth with a left foot dribbler from the boundary. Excel dropped his third, playing his

Jeremy Cameron type role, and even Big Dean Putt pulled one out of the ruck to have his first. Kennnedy and Farmer then added more pain for the Boort outfit, only to have Maddern go forward to kick his first for the club. Koby Lloyd finished his day with a goal to end the game. 23.16 to 4.5

Best for Boort: James Byrne, Lachlan Hall, Tom Potter, Jayden Dick, Keiren Wilson.

Best for the Calder United: Zane Keighran, Jordy Humphreys, Oscar Madden, Steve Kennedy, Jack Ecell, Dean Putt.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Adult

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978
mensline.org.au

StandBy Support After Suicide
1300 727 247

Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal
headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal
lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm)
online forums: saneforums.org

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au
Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au

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



Bulls Set the Standard

(By Shane O'Shea)

Almost a third of the way through North-Central's 2025 home-and-away series, the competition's eight clubs take a break tomorrow to enable local junior hockey players to compete in the annual Junior Country Championship in Melbourne.

Good luck to all 88 hockey players, their coaches and support staff. JCC is a wonderful opportunity for you all.

With five rounds completed, the ladder structure of teams is starting to settle, with Birchip-Watchem (Charlton and Donald) and Boort (St. Arnaud and Charlton) with a more favourable draw in comparison to the other potential finalists.

The next four rounds will give an even clearer picture as to the standings of clubs and provide a pointer to their prospects later in the season.

This season, clubs play each other at least twice, and two opponents three times, to complete the 16 rounds.

It is those two additional games that provide Birchip-Watchem (Charlton and Donald) and Boort (St. Arnaud and Charlton) with a more favourable draw in comparison to the other potential finalists.

It also throws up the prospect of a possible qualifying final type clash between Calder United and Sea Lake-

Nandaly to round out the home-and-away season.

To get to that point, however, there is a lot to be played out, starting with rounds 6 and 7, which will complete the first full round of the home-and-away season. And then after rounds 8 and 9, it will leave one full round of home-and-away fixtures prior to the finals.

Bulls Lead Pecking Order

Birchip-Watchem has already established itself as the

• Continued on page 15.



• Bulls' Rhona Conboy is under pressure from Lions' Matthew Wade during round 4.

Regional Croquet

The Victorian Association Country Regionals were held at Geelong from April 27 to 30, 2025.

Murray Valley Croquet Association (MVCA) was one of seven districts from around Victoria to participate. Lois Munro from Swan Hill (representing MVCA) is the Division 3 champion winning 5 out of 6 games. Lindsay Patullo (Charlton)

was runner-up in Division 1, only losing to the winner in the final game. Anne Kenny was Division 2 representative and Margaret Bowen Division 4. MVCA finished third in the team aggregate. Next year's event will be held in Ballarat.

Round Robin

On Saturday, May 11 the first of this year's MVCA Round Robin event was held at Charlton in beautiful autumn weather. Lawns were full with 21 Golf Croquet players and 5 Association Croquet players. Players came from Boort, Swan Hill, Mildura and Charlton. The Golf Croquet winner was Denise McDougal (Boort) with 4 wins and 33 hoops. The Association Croquet winner was Naomi Patullo with 2 wins, 30 hoops. The club looks forward to travelling to Boort on June 14 to meet again.



• Regionals, Anne Kenny, Lindsay Patullo, Lois Munro, Ian Potter and Margaret Bowen.



• Division 3 winner, Lois Munro.



• Carmel Terrington (Geelong region president) with Division 1 runner-up, Lindsay Patullo.



• MVCA Round Robin, Naomi Patullo and Denise McDougall.