

DONALD

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The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

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Published Tuesdays and Fridays

PP331336/0000 1

Friday, September 19, 2025

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

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



• Top row: Heidi Start, Sheena Fitzpatrick, Amali Fitzpatrick, James Fitzpatrick, Samuel Olive, Leigh Van Boven, Tully Bourke, Ethan Soulsby, Sebastian Zagame, Zachary Derks. Bottom row: Chelsea McCallum, Natasha Saunders, Zoe Carney, Georgia Wright, Emese Clarke, Josie Larmour, Zali Heenan, Ruby Radcliffe, Sarah Blair, Anika Holmes-Brown, Emmersyn Nelson, Michael Olive, Craig Kelly, Fletcher Holmes-Brown, Isabel Soulsby, Annie Olive, Joesph Monaghan, Kim Fitzpatrick, Rhys Thompson, Claire Smith.

Charlton College Tops Regional High Schools

Charlton College has been listed as the top regional school for Victoria in the “Herald Sun” newspaper’s Top 100 Public High Schools, having ranked eighth in the whole state.

Each year, “The Herald Sun” publishes its “Top 100 Public High Schools” list, a ranking that has gained considerable attention among students, parents, and educators in Victoria.

Drawing on a range of data sources, particularly academic performance metrics, the list aims to identify and celebrate government-run

schools that demonstrate excellence in education.

While these rankings provide valuable insight to school performance, they also raise important questions about what constitutes a “top” school and how such judgments are formed.

The list does not rely on academic results alone. It frequently takes into account socio-educational advantage,

a factor that measures the relative socio-economic status of a school’s student population.

This metric helps contextualise academic results by recognising that schools in more disadvantaged areas may face greater challenges. By including this information, the list acknowledges that academic performance is not the sole reflection of a school’s effectiveness or the

efforts of its teachers and students.

In an article in the “Herald Sun”, journalist Rebecca Borg wrote that Victoria’s country students are making their mark at the highest level, with rural and remote schools seizing more than a fifth of the spots in the top 100.

While Charlton ranked the highest regional school, listed as eighth out of one hundred (and only headed by metropolitan schools), other institutions included Wycheproof P-12, ranked at number

25; Boort, 85; and Donald High School, 94.

Charlton College has only 132 students attend from Prep to Year 12, and it also has the lowest fees of any institution in the top 10 list, with an extraordinary student to teacher ratio.

Acting principal at Charlton College, Craig Kelly, said “We’re really proud to see our school ranked so high on the list. It’s a real reflection of the hard work everyone puts in – students, teachers, and the whole community. This

shows we’re heading in the right direction, and we’ll keep doing our best to make sure every student has the support and opportunities they need to succeed”.

Data sourced from News-Corp; original story from the “Herald Sun” can be found at: <https://www.heraldsun.com.au/education/regions/victoria/australias-top-100-public-high-schools-victorias-best-government-secondary-schools-ranked/news-story/e1d95acf3eb5ad1f4e717f0ea8d5f135>

Sharee, a Bulls Member for Life

Stephanie Coffey, secretary of the Birchip-Watchem Football Club had the privilege of awarding Life Membership to Sharee Dobson at the club’s vote count and presentation day on Sunday.

“This recognition is not given lightly. It is reserved for those whose service, commitment and contribution to our club has been nothing short of exceptional,” said Stephanie.

“It is reserved for those whose name has become synonymous with the purple, green and white, whose efforts have shaped the very fabric of who we are.”

Sharee’s dedication, hard work and passion for the Birchip-Watchem Football Club has been one of consistency, reliability, and selfless dedication.

Sharee began her formal involvement with the Birchip Football Club when her son Derek started playing under-14s in 1994. As a parent of a player she undertook the usual rostered roles of time-keeper and goal umpire.

At the same time, she was heavily involved in the Birchip-Watchem Hockey Club as a premierships player, junior coach, committee member and “B” grade badged umpire.

Formal Roles

In 1999, Sharee began 25 consecutive years of formal roles within the Birchip-Watchem Football Club when she was elected secretary of the junior committee. Her chief role in this position was to be team manager of what was then under-14s and under-16s. This role included submitting team sheets, handing out vote cards, collating votes for weekly awards and organising sponsors for weekly awards. Sharee was junior secretary for Birchip-Watchem’s 2000 under-16s premiership.

For eleven years Sharee was secretary of the BWFC Ladies’ Committee. As part of this role, she undertook the huge responsibility of co-ordinating Thursday night dinners on a weekly basis. This was before the days of Thursday night teas being shared with other community groups, so once you put your hand up you were locked in to cooking every week. Sharee co-ordinated orders from wholesalers and supermarkets on a weekly

basis and was in the kitchen every Thursday night cooking and co-ordinating the kitchen crew. On some of her years on the Ladies’ Committee Sharee also coordinated orders and rosters for Saturday night teas and the canteen.

In 2005, Sharee’s son Derek finished his playing career with the Bulls, having settled at university and a new football club in Ballarat. For many empty nesters, having children no longer involved with the club would mean they were freed of their volunteer roles. For Sharee, if anything, she ramped up her involvement.

Sports Trainer

In 2009, Sharee began her role as a sports trainer for the football club. Throughout 15 years in the role, Sharee kept up to date with all relevant certificates (and ensured other trainers were, too). Sharee was regularly present for all four football matches on game days plus training days when required during both pre-season and the season proper.

• Continued on page 2.



• Birchip-Watchem’s newest life member, Sharee Dobson, in the Birchip-Watchem box, where she spent much of her volunteer time, with daughter-in-law Lyndel Dobson, son Derek and grandsons Henry and Tanner.

Tourers' Support for CHARTSEC

The Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre (CHARTSEC) is proud to announce the successful acquisition of a generous grant to upgrade its classroom furniture, thanks to the support of Skeeta Grimshaw Tourers Motorcycle Club.

This funding will allow the Centre to enhance its learning environment with new, modern furniture designed to better support student engagement, comfort, and safety during road safety education sessions. The upgrade has provided benefit to hundreds of students who participate in the Centre's programs each year.

"We are incredibly grateful for this funding," said Brett Schofield, Manager, CHARTSEC.

"Quality classroom furniture not only improves the learning experience, but also reinforces the importance of a

safe and structured environment – something that aligns perfectly with our aims of promoting traffic safety, including the importance of teaching good attitudes and choices when driving."

The Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre plays a vital role in the local community, delivering interactive and practical road safety education to 15-18 year-old students. The Centre's programs aim to instill lifelong safe road use habits, contributing to the broader goal of reducing road accidents and fatalities in the region.

"Our new furniture has provided better learning conditions,

since being installed late last year, and has welcomed many students back to an improved, learner-focused space," said Brett.

"We thank the president and all the Skeeta Grimshaw committee and members for this very generous donation.

Crucial Facility

"CHARTSEC is a crucial facility for the Charlton and surrounding district, providing important Driver Safety Training to hundreds of students, from Apollo Bay to Murrayville.

"Our Centre is also in desperate need of a new classroom. We have applied for



• Tracy Dalrymple and Al Nicolson (right), from Skeeta Grimshaw Tourers, with Brett Schofield (centre) manager, CHARTSEC, looking comfortable in the new classroom furniture, generously donated by Skeeta Grimshaw Tourers Motorcycle Club.

funding on numerous occasions, the past 10 years, under various Local, State and Federal Government Funding opportunities, without any success.

"We are in the process of obtaining updated costings for a new classroom, to allow us to have a fresh proposal prepared, ready to submit to any

possible organisation, foundation, corporate company, business or community group, Government authority. In the meantime, any generous Donation, large or small would be greatly appreciated."

For more information about the Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre or its

Driver Ed programs, please contact, manager Brett Schofield, Manager on Brett.Schofield@education.vic.gov.au or visit the website: <https://www.charlton.vic.edu.au/chartsec/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067834574397>



• Keith Brusnahan's Massey Ferguson 35 is still very much in use, mainly for slashing on his farm, but it gets a weekend off work for once, to be parked at the Donald Show's static display on October 11.

Calling all Classic Tractors!

Come on... Get your tractors in gear! There's only three weeks until the Tractor Pull kicks off at Donald Show, October 11. Entries are still needed; it's not much of a competition if you don't bring your tractors along!

The committee is hoping for up to 30 entries in the Tractor Pull, and being held in conjunction with Charlton's Show the following weekend, enthusiasts can take advantage of two local events in which to participate; October 11 and 18 respectively.

With the help from major sponsors North West Ag and Adams Family Farms and with Bild Group helping to prepare the track, everything is set up and ready for you to rev up your engines. There is even local transport available at a reasonable cost, but

places are limited and bookings essential.

So if you have a classic tractor sitting in your shed craving one more moment of glory, why not bring it along to the Donald Tractor Pull and demonstrate some of the strength that agriculture was built on in the region?

There are four classes you can enter: up to 50 hp; then from 50-80hp; 80-120hp and 120-200hp, with trophies presented to the winner of every class.

There's no sense in keeping your classic tractor hidden

in the shed, when there is such a brilliant and local opportunity to see what your machine can do!

If you don't think your tractor has quite enough life left in it, there is also a static display for classic tractors which would be a perfect place to show off the history of your machine without putting a strain on the chain.

Anyone who would like to get involved should get in contact with Neil McEwen on 0428 915 259 or James Doak on 0427 503 551.

Sharee, a Bulls Member for Life

• Continued from page 1.

The selection of drinks she would prepare for pre-season training was a sight to behold. Both powerade and water were available in big Daddy Cools, all freshly iced and available in players' choice of cups or drinkers. Ziplock bags of mineral bath salts were ready for any player to take home if they wanted or simply a recommendation and reminder of the powers or Radox.

Jumpers

During pre-season Sharee also helped with the inventory of footy jumpers, ensuring all numbers and sizes were checked off before the season began, chucking out the jumpers that needed binning and ensuring we knew which new ones we had to order.

Sharee was diligent with overseeing the treatment of injured players and regularly followed up with players during the week to check on their progress. Sharee would pack the trailer for away games and ensure the trainers' room was organised and well stocked.

Last to Leave

Sharee was frequently the last to leave the changerooms after a game on Saturdays, ensuring they were left neat and tidy and that lost property was collected. Birchip-Watchem never get any complaints about how their rooms are left

after an away game and that is largely due to Sharee's time spent picking up lost property, drink containers and rubbish.

Sharee would ensure any lost property was returned to its home rooms and a post went on Facebook as to what was left behind. If ever anyone had a question about lost property, Sharee was the first person they needed to ask.

On game day Sharee was also a frequent go-to person for boundary umpires and waterboys to get their required uniform and supplies and helped players source uniforms when required.

Sharee had a vast array of fruit cut up and at the ready for players throughout the day and was delighted to take over the ordering of lollies in recent years as well. She gladly took on additional little roles as required and was the designated magnet creator for Trevor Ryan in recent years, printing name magnets for the Bulls and the opposition to go on the team boards.

Extra Curricular

Sharee was 100% committed to her role and as the years went by extracurricular activities would be available and grandchildren arrived to be visited and babysat. Regardless, it was extremely rare for Sharee to ever miss a game day. On those rare occasions, Sharee would give several weeks' notice and also provide

constant reminders in the lead up to her absence of what jobs would need to be done. Often it was not a hindrance to the players and committee at all, as Sharee would ensure there were extra trainers on deck and that all of them knew what additional roles they'd need to do.

Sundays

Sundays were big days for Sharee too, as she volunteered to wash the jumpers of many of the players. It was not uncommon for Sharee's bathtub to be filled with footy jumpers to soak off the dirt, then her washing line would be full to dry them off. These lucky players were presented with freshly washed and folded jumpers to play in the following Saturday.

It is estimated that when pre-season training, regular training and game days were all added up, Sharee would spend around 300 hours each year performing her trainer's duties.

Socially

In addition to her official roles within the club, Sharee was an active member of the club socially. Sharee was a regular attendee at Thursday night and Saturday night teas. She frequently volunteered to bartend at social events held outside the Leisure Centre and offered her house on multiple occasions to host meals at the Progressive Dinner.

Both during her time as a member of the Ladies' Committee and for many years afterwards, Sharee was always the kitchen leader for the casserole tea on Goods & Services Auction night. With players tasked with serving tea and doing dishes on these nights, there was no one better than Sharee at getting them all in line. Many past players would remember Sharee's efforts on those nights.

Off-Field

Sharee was passionate about the club off-field as well as on. She was present at every Annual General Meeting and Stephanie said, "I can certainly vouch over my time as secretary that there was rarely a general meeting where Sharee didn't catch up with me beforehand and give me a list of items she wanted discussed. If the matter was resolved to her liking I would gladly report back to her, if not, I had my excuses at the ready about why it didn't happen – or maybe I would pretend I forgot to bring it up".

Sharee loved talking about footy, whether it was the on-field selection and play or the off-field antics of the players. Many coaches will attest that Sharee would often share her thoughts with them at Thursday night training, on who should be selected and why.

"Best Club Person"

Sharee's contributions to the club saw her awarded the

prestigious "Best Club Person" award on three occasions. To put this into perspective, the Best Club Person is chosen by the footy club president from an extensive list of valuable volunteers, but three separate presidents could not look past Sharee as being the Best Club Person.

Coinciding with her work for BWFC and BWFC Ladies' Committee, Sharee was heavily involved with the Birchip-Watchem Hockey Club as a premiership player, premiership coach and committee member. Her contributions to BWHC saw her awarded life member of the club in 2019.

Although she retired from her role as a full time trainer this season, Sharee has still been involved behind the scenes. Prior to every home game, she messaged fellow trainers to let them know who the doctor on call was so that it could be written on the whiteboard in the trainers' rooms. Various other reminders have been texted through, and it was great to have her back on the sidelines for a couple of home games.

Throughout her tenure Sharee has always taken great pleasure when the players at the club procreate. It was a common sight during training for Sharee to be on the interchange bench on duty as a sports trainer, while at the same time voluntarily rocking

a couple of the footy and netball players' kids in a pram.

Sharee was happy to volunteer her services so that all players could train. It was also common at Thursday night tea to see Sharee sitting at a table with dinner in front of her and a baby in her arms.

Survival

Country sporting clubs don't survive on talent alone, they survive on people like Sharee – people willing to put in hours upon hours of work, year after year, with never a question or concern that they won't keep coming back. Sharee was never a football player, never a football coach, never on the football committee. Yet, her resume is as impressive as anyone's.

Sharee has given her heart and soul to the Birchip-Watchem football community and everyone who is and has been connected to the club is all the better for it.

The tribute that Stephanie Coffey had compiled and read out concluded with a video of good wishes and humorous anecdotes from former coaches and players, highlighting the esteem in which Sharee is held by the Birchip-Watchem community.

Sharee was greeted with a standing ovation and a large round of applause as Danny Lowry presented her with a Life Membership badge and a large caricature.

Five Hundred at BCG’s Main Field Day:



• Over 500 farmers converged at BCG’s Main Field Day to hear the latest research, and connect with their peers and the broader industry.

“Farming is the Art of the Possible”

BCG’s Main Field Day on Wednesday, September 10, brought together more than 500 farmers and industry representatives from across north-west Victoria, with decision-making on farm at the heart of the program.

Attendees heard from leading researchers including Professor James Hunt (University of Melbourne), Professor Chris Preston (University of Adelaide), Dr James Nuttall (BCG), Dr Andrew Fletcher and Dr Greg Rebetzke (CSIRO), and Dr Grant Hollaway (Astute Ag).

Topics ranged from variety performance and nitrogen strategies through to alternative chemistries, to paraquat and using tools like BioScout to detect disease spikes.

Standout Sessions

Among the standout sessions was Dr James Nuttall’s exploration of crop-soil interactions in the 20-metre soil pit, offering farmers a tangible view of how roots of wheat, barley, canola and pulses access water and nutrients, and the “Farming without paraquat” session, preparing growers for a future with restricted herbicide use. Beyond the formal presentations, networking and peer-to-peer conversations provided invaluable opportunities to

share insights and experiences.

BCG CEO Fiona Best officially opened the event, acknowledging both the challenges and opportunities of the season.

“Farmers are continually making decisions in complex environments,” she said.

“Our aim is to ensure that every decision point is supported by the right information at the right time, and that farmers feel connected to their peers and the wider research community.”

Collaboration

Chairman John Ferrier said the day reflected the strength of BCG’s partnerships. “Collaboration is central to what BCG does. Bringing together world-class researchers, local knowledge, students and industry partners ensures our region is well placed to tackle challenges and embrace new opportunities.”

Local farmer Alan Bennett captured the spirit of the day on the afternoon’s farmer panel, remarking, “Farming is the art of the possible, and you’ve got to find a solution to find a way through.”

Student Presence

This year’s event also featured a strong student presence, with over 60 students from regional schools taking part in a dedicated stream facilitated by Joe Collins (BCG) and Claudia Cox (North Central LLEN).

Students explored career pathways in agriculture and engaged in an interactive trial, pulling plants from the ground to learn about crop growth stages.

Partners

BCG partnered with Agriculture Victoria, which deliv-

ered its GRDC Southern Pulse Agronomy field day alongside the Main Field Day. The North Central LLEN collaborated on the student program, while sponsors present on the day included Cloud-break Grain Marketing, GE Silos, Intergrain, WFI Insurance, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Grain Growers, RAGT, O’Connors, Balco, Action Steel and RB Sellars.

Challenges

Fiona Best summed up the sentiment of the day: “This season has presented its challenges, particularly with a dry start, but seeing farmers share knowledge, learn from researchers, and connect with peers reinforces the strength of our community.

“Together, we’re navigating rising costs, making informed decisions, and finding ways to achieve strong yields and healthy, resilient farm businesses.”

Making Life with Dementia Better: “Nobody Can Do It Alone”

This is a significant time on two fronts as we mark Dementia Action Week and World Alzheimer’s Day.

Dementia Action Week runs until Sunday, with this year’s theme “Nobody can do it alone”. On Sunday, we also mark World Alzheimer’s Day – a global effort to raise awareness and challenge the stigma around Alzheimer’s and other dementia.

Shadow Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, Tim Bull, urged everyone to reach out and reconnect with someone affected by dementia.

The Theme

“The theme this year is fitting – nobody can do it alone,” Mr Bull said.

“This is a time to highlight the importance of connection and for us all to make a team effort and make life better for

the more than 400,000 Australians living with dementia.

“A supportive community is so important as we must challenge the stigma that can come with dementia.

“Most Australians know someone who has been impacted by dementia. After a diagnosis, many people with dementia report losing contact with friends.

“Support can be as simple as starting conversations that foster empathy and awareness.”

Leading Cause

Dementia is the leading cause of death for Australians, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

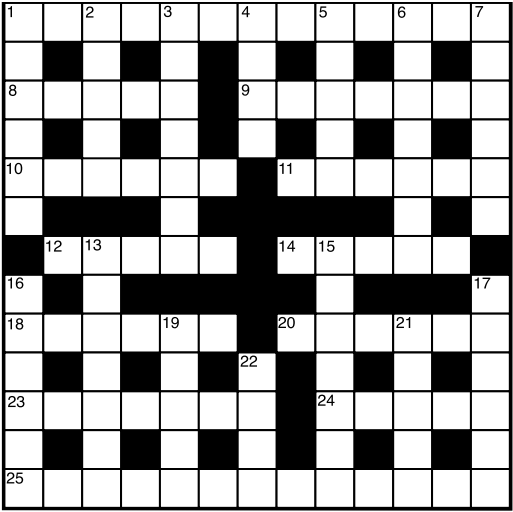


• Tim Bull.

Small lifestyle changes can have a positive impact on reducing risk, with 43 per cent of the dementia burden in Australia linked to six modifiable factors: Being overweight or obese, physical inactivity, high blood sugar levels, high blood pressure in mid-life, smoking and impaired kidney function.

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8194



ACROSS

1. Skin specialist (13)
8. Disease (5)
9. Performance (7)
10. Drain (6)
11. Border (6)
12. Reptile (5)
14. Concur (5)
18. Summary (6)
20. Singing voice (6)
23. Learner (7)
24. Rent (5)
25. Port official (7-6)

DOWN

1. Harm (6)
2. Send (5)
3. Severe (7)
4. Monster (4)
5. Happen (5)
6. Extreme (7)
7. Helm (6)
13. Hopelessness (7)
15. Ape (7)
16. Support (6)
17. Layer (6)
19. Fruit (5)
21. Brag (5)
22. Drink (4)

• Solution next issue.

Church Notices

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

"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.

DEATH FLETCHER.— Susan Mary

Late of Birchip on
September 14, 2025,
at Bendigo Hospice.

Loving wife of Jim.
Loved mother and mother-
in-law of Darren and
Vicki; Angela and Steven.
Loved Ma Ma of Baden
and Kat, Alexandra and
Harley, Madeline (dec);
Alec, Darcy and Chloe.
Great-grand Ma Ma of 6
great grandchildren.
Aged 75 years.

*Cherished in life
and death.*

DEATH FLETCHER.— Susan "Sue"

Fond memories of a special
friendship over many years.

We will miss you.

—Valerie, Carol & Travis

FUNERAL FLETCHER.—

A service of thanksgiving
for Susan Mary Fletcher
will be held at St Mary's
Catholic Church, 2 Corack
Rd, Birchip (Civil service)
on Monday, September 22
at 11.30 a.m.

A private cremation will
follow.

The service will be
livestreamed (please go to
the livestream tab).

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

Mark and Raelene O'Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP

Inc. 
5492 2547

WANTED TO BUY

Old bottles with town or
company names. Marble
bottles, ginger beers,
milks etc. Cash paid. Ph.
0405 264 661.

GARAGE SALE TOMORROW

23 McCracken Ave,
Donald

Saturday, Sept. 20
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Garden equipment, large
pots, tools, plants, chest
of drawers (white), single
bed & mattress (excellent
condition), Kelvinator
fridge, (3 yrs old), and
lots more!

Birchip Men's Shed A.G.M.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 25
AT THE SHED
(27 Cumming Ave)

Lunch at 12 noon,
followed by AGM.

**All welcome,
and bring a friend!**

Cyber Security & Scam Awareness Sessions

Friday, Sept. 19

Tuesday, Sept. 30

9.30 - 10.30 a.m.

Donald Learning Group Inc
(31 Woods St, Donald)

Morning tea provided

RSVP Bendigo Bank
5497 1194 for catering

An advert. in
"The Buloke Times"
can cost as little as \$10,
and up to 5,000 readers
will see it.

DONALD 2000 DONALD WHOLE OF TOWN GARAGE SALE THIS SUNDAY, September 21 9 am start

MAPS CAN BE COLLECTED FROM

Harvest Café or
Donald 2000
Facebook page



Charlton RSL THANKS

A big thank you to all
who supported the **2025
Charlton Diggers Day**
raffle and golf day,
with special thanks
to Charlton Golf Club,
Charlton Oasis, the
players and the many
sponsors, without
whose help the day
would not have been
possible.

Raffle winner: Adam
Drake, Bendigo.

BULOKE COLLECTABLE VEHICLE CLUB

SHOW N SHINE

OPEN TO ALL
CARS
TRUCKS
BIKES

FOOD
VENDORS
BREKKIE
LUNCH
DRINKS

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21ST 2025
BIRCHIP LEISURE CENTRE
SWAP MEET & MARKET \$10 PER SITE

Vehicle entry inc driver \$10
Multiple categories & awards
Kids Activities

ADULT \$5 UNDER 12 FREE

Email for Pre registration of Vehicles, Swap Meet & Market Sites

Registrations 8am - 11am 1:30 pm Presentations

For more information: Phone 0437846988 or email BCVC.est2015@gmail.com

DONALD 2000 INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 24, 2025
7.00 p.m.

DONALD RAILWAY STATION Walker St, Donald

Business

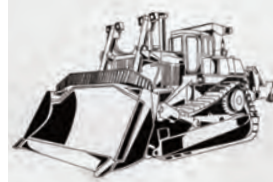
- Receive the Reports and Financial Statements of the Association for 2024/25.
- Election of Office Bearers and Committee for 2025/2026.
- Consideration of Motions advised prior to the AGM.

Nomination forms for all positions available from
Yvonne Brown, secretary.

R. & L. DOUGLAS EARTHMOVING

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- Digging new dams
- Shed pads
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Let's come up with a solution that works!

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Find us on Perry Contracting Transport & Spraying

Preliminary Notice WYCHEPROOF SPECIAL SPRING STORE SHEEP SALE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 12.30 p.m.

**Quality 1st BL/Merino X
& Merino Sheep**

Further entries invited, contact your local Elders agent.
Full details all lines next issue.

FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS CONTACT:

Sam Crow 0455 506 622

Aaron Zwar 0407 979 866

Greg Boyd 0428 328 928

Bailey Baxter 0429 508 204

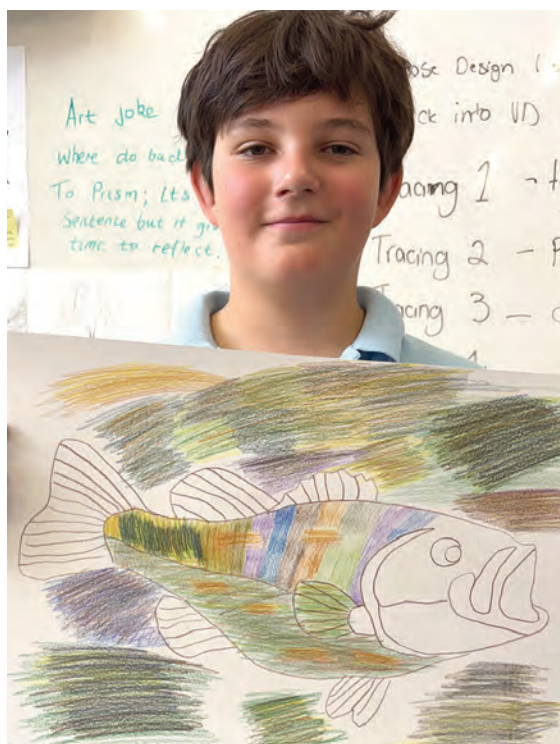
Jason Rice 0417 087 019

Matt Rowlands 0447 818 304

Matt O'Connor 0427 845 954



ELDERS WYCHEPROOF
03 5493 6400



In the recent art exhibition in
Donald and on display at the
Donald High School foyer,
Year 7 Art students
enjoyed exploring a variety
of multimedia options.

These are some of the
students whose work was in
progress.

Toby Lydom

DONALD HIGH SCHOOL

Mensland

OUTFITTING MEN SINCE 1959

Great label

OIL SKIN VEST

now

\$99.00

BURKE & WILLS
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Competitions, us on Facebook

Find us on

70 Woods Street, Donald — 5497 1211



SHOW AND SHINE

Car, Truck And Tractor

Sunday, September 28



10 a.m. CHARLTON PARK

General Public enter via Calder Highway

\$10 per person

8 a.m. - 9.30 a.m. entry

10 a.m. judging (trophies awarded for each category)

For more information: Derek 0439 911 083



Wheels on A79

wheelsona79@gmail.com

All entries via 1 Lundy St

\$10 per vehicle

with maximum 2 people

Professional Funeral Home

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

Philip and Karen Davey



A.G. ADAMS
& Sons

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39 Fitzroy St, Kerang
info@adamsfunerals.com.au

25 ACRE LIFESTYLE BLOCK ON EDGE OF TOWN

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Neighbourhood House Coordinator

Reports to: Committee of Management

Hours: 25 hours per week

Award: SCHADS 2.3-3.1

Purpose

The Coordinator leads the daily operations and strategic development of CNH, ensuring compliance with funding agreements and delivering high-quality, inclusive community development programs.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead community engagement and development consistent with NHCP principles.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate annual and strategic plans in collaboration with the Committee.
- Ensure delivery of at least double the funded activity hours as per NHCP guidelines.
- Manage staff, volunteers, and contractors, fostering a safe, inclusive, and productive workplace.
- Build partnerships with local organisations, schools, Council, and Buloke and Mallee Neighbourhood House Networks.
- Prepare reports, budgets, and funding submissions.
- Ensure compliance with service agreements, legislation, and governance requirements.

Leisure & Lifestyle Coordinator

Reports to: NH Coordinator

Hours: 10 hours per week (12-month contract)

Award: SCHADS 2.1

Purpose

To develop and deliver programs supporting health, wellbeing, social inclusion, and community connection, with a focus on carers, adults, and vulnerable groups.

Key Responsibilities

- Plan and run health and well-being programs (exercise, social groups, educational sessions).
- Coordinate the Carers Group and liaise with external health agencies.
- Support community car initiatives and other inclusion-focused programs.
- Collect feedback and report outcomes to the NH Coordinator.
- Promote programs to increase participation across diverse groups.

Finance Officer

Reports to: Committee of Management

Hours: 10 hours per week

Award: SCHADS 2.1

Purpose

To manage financial operations for CNH and its social enterprises (including Mallee Creatives), ensuring transparency, compliance, and sustainability.

Key Responsibilities

- Maintain accurate financial records and reporting systems.
- Prepare monthly financial reports for the Committee.
- Manage accounts payable, receivable, and payroll.
- Oversee budgets, cash flow, and compliance with funding agreements.
- Support grant acquittals and annual audits.

Applications close Friday, October 3, 2025 at 5 pm. Further information can be obtained by email president@charltonnh.org.au. Applications can be submitted electronically to the email address above or sent to P.O. Box 2, Charlton, VIC 3525.



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Times”, 6 McCulloch Street,
Donald.*

At Cropping Group Field Day... Students Serve Up Success

Wednesday, September 10, saw the annual Birchip Cropping Group (BCG) Field Day draw more than 500 farmers, researchers, and community members just five kilometres from Birchip's town centre.

This year, the spotlight wasn't just on the cropping trials and cutting-edge research, but also on the impressive culinary skills of Birchip P-12 School students.

Supported by BCG, which have been long-time champion of the school, the first and second Year Certificate II in Cookery classes, assisted by the Year 9 Passion Project class, catered for the entire crowd. The menu showcased both skill and variety, with

warm Mexican pulled beef rolls, sticky chicken drumsticks with rice, and fresh stir-fried vegetables among the favourites.

Despite the chilly wind, the hot meals provided a welcome comfort for attendees. Students prepared the food at the school before transporting it to the site, where they cooked, plated, and served with professionalism and enthusiasm. Their conduct on the day drew high praise, with



many noting that the students were a credit to themselves and to Birchip P-12.

Ongoing Support

The catering opportunity was just the latest example of BCG's ongoing support for the school. Over the years, the group has donated equipment to the cookery program, funded initiatives such as the school's homework club, hosted students for work experience, and partnered on agricultural education projects. The strong partnership has not only enriched classroom learning, but has also given students valuable real-world experiences like the Field Day.

Principal and staff expressed pride in the students' efforts, noting that opportunities like these highlight the strength of the connection between the school and its community. With full bellies and warm smiles, it was clear that the catering team had served up more than just good food – they had delivered a taste of Birchip's future talent.



• Cassie Tynan, Mia Sharp, Asha Lee and Beau Haslam wear their new RB Sellars hats at the BCG field day.



• Students Will Ryan, Beau Haslam and Darcey Poyner serve up food with teacher Connolly Ryan.

"Times" Classifieds

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Competitors are encouraged to enter their classic tractors with prizes awarded in various classes and for participation. Limited local transport assistance is available at a reasonable cost, but spaces are limited, so be sure to book early.

Want to get involved? Contact:
Neil McEwen on 0428 915 259 or James Doak on 0427 503 551.

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Birchip Celebrates Youth Fest

September is Youth Fest across Victoria, a month-long celebration recognising the energy, creativity and contributions of young people in our communities.

Supported by the Victorian Government, Youth Fest provides opportunities for young people to come together, share their talents, build connections and have their voices heard.

In Birchip, Youth Fest was celebrated through a partnership between the Birchip Neighbourhood House and the Birchip-Watchem football, netball and hockey clubs, where young people are intrinsically connected.

The morning saw all three codes celebrate the culmination of their winter sports season with vote counts and the presentation of awards. In the afternoon, the oval was transformed into a festival space

where young people enjoyed a bouncy castle, rock climbing wall and cha cha ride.

The children's lunch packs and the rides were provided free with a combination of funding provided by the Bulls' joint catering committee and the Victorian Government's Youth Fest and Amplify programs, their 2025 Drought Support Package "Look Over the Farm Gate" supported by Agriculture Victoria, and the Commonwealth Government's LDAT program run by the Australian Drug Foundation.

The entertainment was about more than just fun, it was a way to say "thank you" and acknowledge the vital

role young people play in community sport, whether as players, coaches, umpires, scribes, scorers or as volunteers in the kitchen on Thursday nights, or the canteen on home games.

Manager of the Birchip Neighbourhood House, Simone Christie, said the day was "an opportunity to give something back to our young people and celebrate everything they have achieved".

It was a great day that highlighted fun and connection and it reminded the whole community of the importance of investing in youth participation to help strengthen the future of our region.



• Cha Cha: Olive McLoughlan, Amber Hogan, Harper Noonan.



• Jake Noonan and kids.



• Rock climbing wall.

As Government Wipes Its Hands...

Disability Housing Support Under Threat

Victoria's Minister for Disability, Lizzie Blandthorn, has refused to intervene in a stand-off that could lead to almost 2000 Victorians with profound disabilities having their supported independent living homes closed by January 1.

Shadow Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, Tim Bull, said it was disappointing the Minister had completely wiped her hands of being involved in resolving a funding impasse between the state and federal governments and private providers. "A large number of Victorian supported independent living homes that care for the state's most vulnerable residents face immediate closure unless this matter is resolved. The state is a key player as a provider of last resort, but the Minister is refusing to be involved," Mr Bull said.

No Negotiation

"Asked in question time if the Allan Labor Government would continue its 'transition funding' provided to keep these homes open and residents with a roof over their head until the matter is resolved, Minister Blandthorn said 'there is not a negotiation to continue that'.

"It is a disappointing commentary to hear that the Minister is point blank not prepared to entertain the state being part of the solution."

Disability workers, advocates, unions and housing providers say the situation will come to a head on January 1, when the Allan Labor Government's transition fund is cut off without the matter reaching resolution, leaving these homes unable to operate.

In 2015, the state government announced five organisations would take over Victoria's former government-run disability group homes as part of the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Shortfall

NDIS funding left a shortfall in running costs for homes in Victoria, and the state agreed to transition funding to fill the gap while the matter was resolved in

line with the national framework.

This transition funding will come to an end on January 1, with federal and state Labor having been unable to resolve the matter. As a result, some of these homes have already announced closures with many more to follow.

The five providers – Aruma, Scope, Life Without Barriers, Melba Support Services and Possability – have issued a joint statement confirming that funding shortfalls will not allow them to continue current services.

Mr Bull said it disgraceful that the state and federal governments have not sorted this out by now, given they have had years to do so. He called on Ms Blandthorn to end the uncertainty facing these families and agree to be part of the solution, particularly in the short-term.

Charlton 100 Years Ago

(Information from "East Charlton Tribune")

September 12 to 16, 1925.

Accident to Boy: A serious accident befell young Andy Spence. While riding a young horse along Armstrong Street, he was thrown with great force to the metal road, sustaining severe head injuries and concussion of the brain. Later in the day, his condition had improved considerably, but he is still far from well, and Dr Wilson, who attended him, has ordered him to bed for a week or more. Andy, who is employed by Mr W. Burton, lives in Menzies Street, and is well

known to many people in the town.

Buckrabanyule Ball: A most successful and enjoyable plain and fancy dress ball was held in the Buckrabanyule Hall. There was a record crowd in attendance. The hall was tastefully decorated with purple and gold streamers and foliage, the work of Miss A. Stephens and members. Mr W. Crutch was a most efficient MC. Prizes were awarded as follows: Most effective lady, Miss A. Liege (Valentine); Most effective

gent, Mr Stewart, (Quaker); Most original couple, Miss I. Edwards and Mr D. Smale (doctor and nurse). Best sustained character, Mr W. Crutch (professor); Special prize, Miss S. Haig (Argus); Some other costumes were:- Miss A. Larmour, Danger Signal; Miss M. Larmour, Pillar Box.

Dramatic Club: The Amateur Dramatic Club, which for the past four years had been discontinued, was re-formed at a meeting held at the Mechanics' Institute. The following committee was formed: Rev. A. Freeman, president; J. M. Smith, secretary; C. O. Williams, treasurer; Mr W. J. Morse, stage manager and director; Miss Grever and H. Gamble. The main aim of the club is to give entertainments in aid of local charitable and church causes. At the end of this year it is intended to produce a four-act drama, entitled "The Ticket of Leave Man," the proceeds to be in aid of St Martin's piano fund.

Golf Record: Playing in last Wednesday's tournament at the Charlton links, Mr P. Rogan created a record for the course. He completed the round in 76 off the stick, thus finishing 3 up on bogey. Mr Rogan is an enthusiastic and very promising golfer, and at present is in rare form.



• 1918c Buckrabanyule Hall.

Coonooer Bridge: At the school concert and sale of gifts last week, the takings amounted to over £20. Mr R. Postlethwaite carried out the duties of chairman most successfully. Master Jack Shepherd won the doll, donated by Messrs Dimlow and Co, St Arnaud. The concert was enjoyed by a good audience, many of the items being enthusiastically encored. Some of the programme was: Recitation, "My Pony," Clive Watts and Os Carroll; "Old King Cole," fiddlers, Frank Postlethwaite, Ray Hartley, Laurie Phillips; Song, "Where Are You Going to My Pretty Maid," N. Reed, D. Williams.

The National Anthem was sung, after which supper was served. A short dance terminated the evening.

Basketball Final: The Inglewood basket ball team visited Charlton to play the final game for the shield in the Northern H.E.S. Sports Association. The business people showed their interest by kindly consenting to close their shops until 2 o'clock, and this action was much appreciated by parents and scholars of the school. The match proved an easy win for the home team 18 goals to 2. The Charlton team was: Freda Edwards, Alice Arundell, Ida Hando, Susie

Lang, Gwen Edwards (captain), Edith Paterson and Lorna Jeffrey. Charlton holds the shield for the third consecutive year, as well as holding the tennis shield for the fifth consecutive year – a record.

Junior Grand Final: The match between Teddywaddy and Woosang resulted in Woosang winning the premiership for 1925. The score was Woosang 5.2; Teddywaddy 2.8. Best players for Woosang: Les Parry (captain), H. Round, H. Lanyon, C. Stewart, A. Baker and K. Cosar. Best players for Teddywaddy: J. Wright (captain), Con Maher and J. Sait.



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Sunday, September 21
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St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.

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Register Your Burn-off Online: **Be Prepared!**

With Victorians across the state preparing their property for fire season, emergency services are urging landowners to register their burn-offs online, through the Fire Permits Victoria website.

Spring is a common time for landowners to take advantage of the favourable weather conditions to conduct burning off activities. However in most areas in Victoria, less than 50 per cent are registering their burn-offs online, with many unnecessarily waiting on hold to register over the phone.

The quickest and easiest way to register your burn-off is by using the Fire Permits Victoria website at www.firepermits.vic.gov.au/notify.

In some areas where the highest number of burn-offs are registered each year, such as Healesville, Olinda and Mt Evelyn in the Yarra Ranges, and Kyneton and Woodend in the Macedon Ranges, as many as 60 per cent of registrations are by phone, leading to longer wait times during busy periods.

Triple Zero Victoria Chief Operating Officer Nicole Ashworth said registering burn-offs online was fast,

easy and allowed call-takers to focus on higher priority calls.

Ideal Time

“Spring is the ideal time to prepare your property ahead of the fire danger period, which makes it one of the busiest times for people registering their burn-offs by phone,” Nicole said.

“That’s why we always urge landowners to plan ahead and save themselves some time by jumping on to the Fire Permits Victoria website and registering well in advance, especially when suitable weather conditions are forecast.”

Preferred Platform

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan said the Fire Permits Victoria website is the preferred platform for community members to register their burns.

“By registering your burn-off, it allows emergency services to verify the fire is not

an emergency before unnecessarily calling out local brigades,” Jason said.

“It also allows us to display burn-offs on the CFA website so the public can see where a burn-off is taking place, preventing needless calls to Triple Zero (000).

“Over the past year, CFA responded to nearly 900 escaped burn-offs, which utilised around 19,000 hours of our volunteers’ time. Please don’t leave your burn-off unattended and only burn-off when conditions are favourable.”

The website allows you to notify emergency services of your burn-off, and also check and apply for a permit, if necessary.

However, if your burn is taking place within the next two hours, you must register your burn via the phone line on 1800 668 511.

For more information about burning off safely, visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au/burnoff.



• The CFA is reminding Victorians to register their burn offs to help local emergency services understand if a fire is not an emergency before arrive on the scene.

Make Sure

Before you notify us, make sure you:

- Follow regulations or laws by CFA and local council.
- Notify your neighbours if the burn will generate fire and smoke.

• Check the weather forecast for the day of the activity and a few days afterward.

• Postpone your activity if high fire risk conditions develop.

• Establish a gap in vegetation or fire break of no less

than three metres cleared of all flammable material.

• Have enough people to monitor, contain and extinguish the burn safely and effectively. Never leave a burn-off unattended.

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Charlton Golf Ladies Visit Club Barham

Fifteen ladies from Charlton Golf went on a road trip to Club Barham for a 4BBB stableford event.

The game saw the Janice Boyle and Alison Tormey team winners with 48 points, followed by Kim Laffin and Wendy Hargreaves on 46 points, with other teams close

showing no fear in putting on rapid greens.

Nearest the pins were: 1st Anne Kenny; 12th, Wendy Laffin. Most shots out of the

bunkers: Chris McGurk and Marj Bartlett.

The results for the 2025 season showed improvement in Charlton's commitment to golf, with good competition

each week; also success in Kara Kara, Veterans and Victorian Sandscapes competitions.

The Eclectic winners were: Silver, Wendy Laffin, 74-5.5-68.5; Bronze, Diane Roberts, 83-13.5-69.5.

"C" Grade: Alison Tormey 91-22-69.

Most birdies: Mary Headon, 2. Chip ins, Chris Livingston, 3.

Player of the year trophy winner was Wendy Laffin.



• Back: Wendy Hargreaves, Alison Tormey, Janice Boyle, Chris Livingston, Mary Headon, Kim Laffin, Wendy Laffin, Eily Rosewall, Diane Roberts. Front: Marj Olive, Cathy Rogan, Carmel Fitzpatrick, Marj Bartlett, Anne Kenny, Chris McGurk.



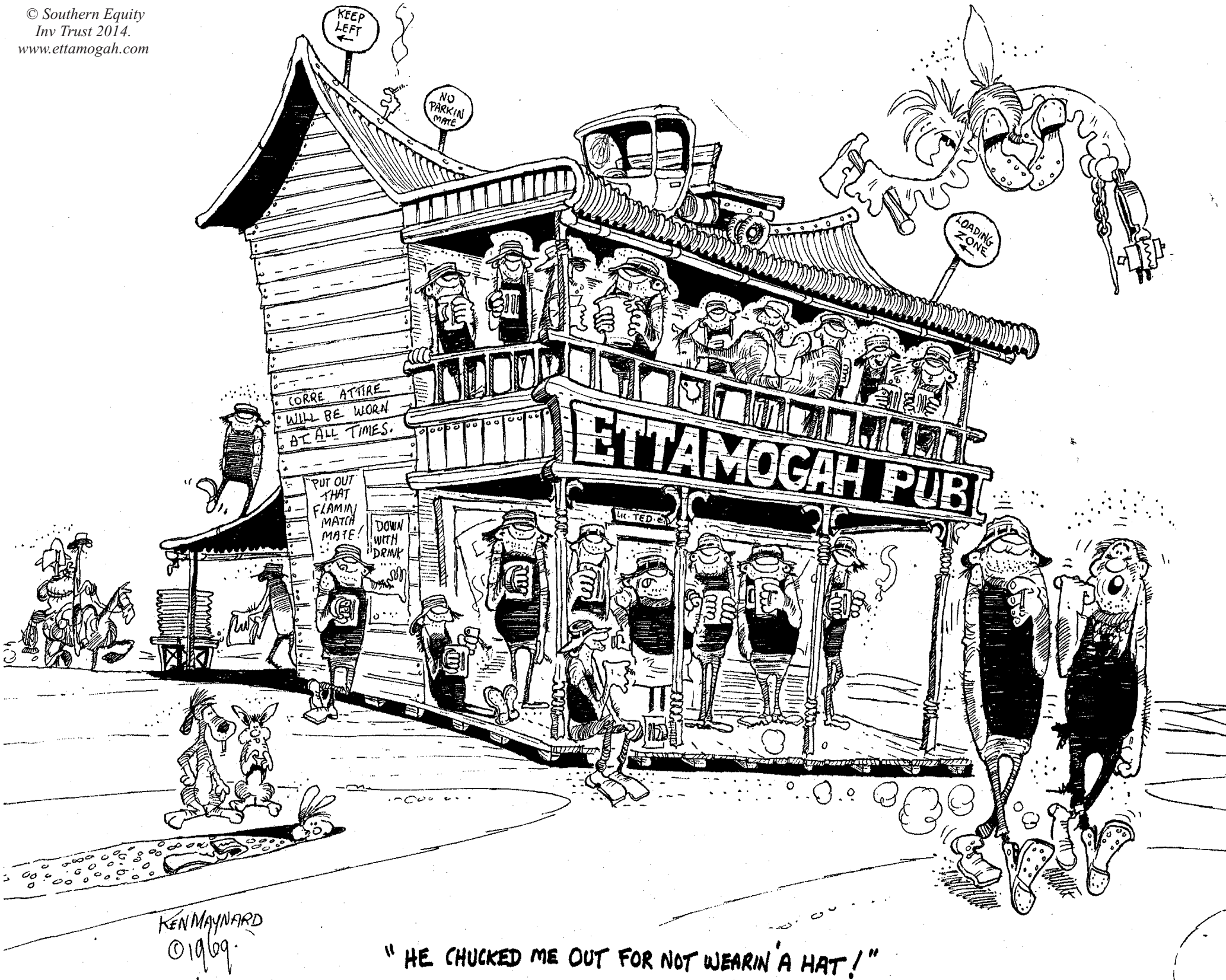
• Wendy Laffin.



• Alison Tormey and Janice Boyle.

The Ettamogah Pub Mob

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Birchip-Watchem Senior Vote Count

The Birchip-Watchem Football, Netball and Hockey Clubs came together on Sunday, September 14, for their annual vote count and presentation day, a celebration that recognised not only the achievements of players on the field and court, but also the contribution of families, volunteers and the wider community.

Following the morning session dedicated to the juniors and a delicious lunch of roast meats cooked by Joshua Richmond and a smorgasbord of salads donated by players and families, the senior vote counts and presentations got under way, while the children adjourned to the oval to enjoy the free rides.

The program of events progressed at a steady rhythm with MC Fiona Best keeping proceedings flowing as seamlessly as possible, beginning with a welcome to the life members from all three codes. This was followed by the presidents' address from Brad Ryan, Allie McAuliffe and Monique Saggars, acknowledgements of coaches, umpires and trainers, counting of votes, and the presentation of trophies, awards and life membership to Sharee Dobson.

The clear message that emerged from the presidents, coaches, officials and the trophy recipients was that Birchip-Watchem is a special club, sustained by a loyal and committed extended community.

Senior football coach Ash Connick said, "If you have been part of this club for a long time, you might not realise this is not the norm. The strength of this club, the volunteers, the sense of community and the passion of the people who contribute their time and skills are extraordinary. It is a very special club."

That view was echoed throughout the day by speakers from both football and netball, particularly those who were new to the Bulls this season, and fortunately for both the football and netball clubs there has been lots of new players in 2025. Not only players recruited and travelling to play football with the Bulls, but partners taking to the netball court and many new faces in all grades of senior football and netball who had relocated to Birchip to work on farms, in local businesses and at the Birchip Cropping Group.

In 2025 the club has been blessed with talented athletes and passionate people who enjoy the true reason we play

sport, which is to be part of a community. Senior netball coach Stacey Hamilton captured the spirit of this unity by repeating her regular reminder to players: "We are better together, we make each other look good."

Football

In football, the best and fairest count produced plenty of excitement, with Ben Lakin finishing strongly with some impressive finals performances to win the 2025 best and fairest award with 69 votes, ahead of Hamish Hosking who also had a stellar year, finishing with 64 votes. Others to poll consistently included Nick Rippon with 62 votes, Dale Hinkley 57, Ben Edwards and Daniel Bell 56 and Jacob Christie and Rhona Conboy with 52.

Coach Ash Connick awarded trophies to Meyrick Buchanan for Most Consistent, Charlie Frank Best Utility, Rhona Conboy Most Determined and the Coaches award to Bill Lee. Ben Lakin capped off his exemplary season winning the Best in Finals award.

Reserves

Matt Rickard polling 69 votes, to head the reserves count ahead of Connor Lee with 58 votes. Alex Noonan, Connor Boyle, Josh Woods and Riley Hogan also polled consistently to finish in the top six.

Other individual awards went to Alex Noonan for most consistent, Riley Hogan most determined, George Addis as most improved, and Stefan Pye Best in Finals. Connor Boyle was awarded the respected "Milney Medal" in memory of Ben, which was presented by Graeme and Sam Milne.

In addition, Callum Goode was recognised with a certificate for reaching his 100-game milestone, while Jake Noonan was commended as an inspirational leader who continues to give his all to the club on and off the field.

Netball

The four senior grades of netball commenced with the "C" reserve count with Emily Barber setting up a commanding lead to win the Best and

Fairest with 26 votes, ahead of joint runners up Jay Connelly and Ada Bourke with 16 votes. Emily Hotke was awarded Stephanie Coffey's coaches award and acknowledged by Brenda Doran for her commitment to earning her "C" grade umpires badge.

The "C" grade count was won by coach Stephanie Coffey with 49 votes, ahead of runner-up Hannah Wilson with 36 votes. Maddie McQueen was acknowledged with the coaches' award.

"B" grade saw Stacey Hamilton finish on 32 votes to be awarded Best and Fairest, while Toni Jones polled 30 to win runner-up. Stacey also claimed best in finals and Sammy Mitchell received the coaches award.

In "A" grade, Zali Angel capped off a remarkable season, adding to her under-17 best and fairest title by polling 47 votes to also secure the "A" grade Best and Fairest, an extraordinary double that underlines her talent, skill and impact as a young player stepping up to the highest level in local competition.

Khiana Brooks was runner-up with 33 votes and Romi Miller was awarded the coaches award for her commitment to the club in her first season, despite a long-term injury sustained early in the year.

Special presentations

Football trainers, Tanya Hogan, Aidy Connelly, Murray Paley, Ollie Dalglish, Wendy Buteux and Jeremy Dean and netball trainer Rachel Ferrier were presented with gifts as a thank you for the many hours they have contributed to training nights, game day and maintaining their skills and qualifications for the benefit of the players.

Joshua Richmond and the catering committee team of Jacinta Bourke, Nadine Frank and Connely Ryan received thanks for their ongoing efforts and in return Joshua thanked everyone who had contributed to their catering gigs throughout the season. He highlighted the leaders of the Saturday night dinner teams and the regular Thursday night crew of Robbie Lee,



• Netball seniors: Madeline McQueen, Hannah Wilson, Emily Hotker, Khiana Brooks, Ada Bourke, Romi Miller, Stephanie Coffey, Stacey Hamilton, Zali Angel, Emily Barber. Absent: Jay Connelly, Toni Jones, Sammi Mitchell.



• Best club person presented to Joshua Richmond (centre), pictured with football club president Brad Ryan (left) and Peter "Budgie" Russell.

Tim McLoughlan and Claire Cook.

A special presentation was made to Tess Lee for her volunteer efforts, by football president Brad Ryan, and Tess responded with a heartfelt message of appreciation to the players and committee for the friendships, fun and support she had enjoyed over the season.

Football Club Best Club Person

The prestigious best club person award donated by the Russell family in memory of Colin and Pat was popularly awarded to Joshua Richmond.

Football club president Brad Ryan said, "As a first-time president you quickly find out when you need a

hand, and you also discover who is prepared to put theirs up. While many people have been willing and committed volunteers, Josh has always gone above and beyond with his catering efforts, and that goes a long way to explaining why our club is so highly regarded as a true community club."

Joshua is well known for his exceptional and fanatical catering skills and organisation. The meals served after Thursday night training are often described as restaurant quality, with menus that always feature a wide variety of choices. On an average Thursday, the catering committee serves around 120 adult meals and 30 children's meals, with those numbers swelling during the finals to about 150 adults and 40 children.

On behalf of the Russell family, Peter "Budgie" Russell proudly presented the award to Joshua, who said, "I hold the Russell family in high esteem, and I am chuffed to win this award."

In accepting the award, Joshua paid tribute to the co-operation and support shared across the three codes and thanked the Birchip Community Leisure Centre for its role in providing a first-class kitchen to work out of and a family friendly facility for everyone to come together.

Beyond the votes and awards, the day was about more than individual accolades. It highlighted the vital role of junior and senior

coaches, trainers, sponsors, trophy donors, committee and executive members, along with the supporters, volunteers, families and local businesses who drive fundraising and ensure the club continues to be sustainable. Together, they form the heartbeat of Birchip-Watchem football, netball and hockey and are the reason the clubs continue to thrive.

There was obviously disappointment that the two senior football teams fell short in the grand final, but coach Ash Connick reflected with admiration, saying, "You have to keep putting yourself in a position to be disappointed if you want to earn the rewards that everyone so passionately wants and deserves."

The disappointment expressed by players throughout the day was a testament to the culture the club has built. It was clear their feelings were not just for themselves, but for the volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes and the supporters who follow the club so passionately, and it was evident that they will continue to work hard in all codes to see their teams continue to strive for that ultimate prize.

The enduring message from the 2025 season was that Birchip-Watchem is a club where newcomers are welcomed, volunteers are genuinely appreciated, and success is defined as much by spirit, community and camaraderie as by results on the scoreboard.



• Senior football trophy winners: Riley Hogan, Connor Boyle, Charlie Frank, George Addis, Alex Noonan, Meyrick Buchanan, Bill Lee, Rhona Conboy, Connor Lee, Matthew Rickard, Ben Lakin, Hamish Hosking, Stefan Pye.



• 2025 under-17s Premiers Sea Lake-Nandaly Tigers: Back row left to right: Joel Donnan (coach), Cooper Symes, Charlie Mitchell, Jack Leo, Callum Mott (hiding), Cruz O'Sullivan, Ewin Conlan (hiding) Jack Brown (hiding), Judd Durie, Hugo Warne, Coby Wight, Connor Michael (assistant coach) Angus Renney, Brody Kelly, Charlie Cox (assistant coach). Front row: Oscar Conlan, Taj Borlase, Jacob Cox, Seth halliday, Brayden Allen, Nate McClelland, Cooper Kelly, Archie Alday, Ryder Newick, Zander Wight. (Photo Blake Lee.)

Under-17s Premiership to Sea Lake-Nandaly

Sea Lake-Nandaly under-17s have taken out the 2025 Community Bank Charlton & District Premiership, taking home the Charlton & District Community bank Cup, and the Jeff “Woofa” Guild Shield!

Judd Durie starred for the Tigers in their second straight grand final, and also walked away with the AFL Victoria Medal, for player judged Best on Ground in finals.

Ryder Newick starred in-front of the sticks, kicking 4 majors, with Cruz O'Sullivan named by the Tigers as third best.

For the Magpies, it was Cooper Gooding, Brodie McPherson (4 goals) and Luke Boyd named as the top 3.

Sea Lake-Nandaly 10.7 (67) d. Boort 7.2 (44).

Goals for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Ryder Newick 4, Angus Renney 2, Nate McClelland, Cruz O'Sullivan, Hugo Warne, Coby Wight.

For Boort: Brodie McPherson 4, Cooper Gooding, Seth Muller, Flynn O'Rourke.

Best for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Judd Durie, Ryder Newick, Cruz O'Sullivan, Nate McClelland, Hugo Warne, Cooper Symes.

For Boort: Cooper Gooding, Brodie McPherson, Luke Boyd, Rylan Chislett, Riley Wagner, Jake O'Flaherty.



• The Tigers celebrate their under-17s win.



• Under-17s Best on Ground, Sea Lake-Nandaly's Judd Durie.



• Captain Judd Durie celebrates the under-17s win with Jack Leo. (Photo Blake Lee.)



• Boort's Riley Wagner is tackled by Cooper Kelly. (Photo Blake Lee.)



• Boort's Deacon Hird is ready to kick under the pressure from Tigers Jacob Cox, (left) and Charlie Mitchell during the under-17s match.



• Sea Lake-Nandaly under-17s run through their banner. (Photo Blake Lee.)

Saints are Under-14 Premiers

St Arnaud Football Club kicked off Grand Final Day with its 22nd Premiership, in the under-14s competition.

In their most recent previous encounter, the Magpies executed a brilliant game plan, which kept the Saints without scoring a goal. This time however, it was a different story, with the Saints going into attack early, and as it would turn out, frequently.

Finn Wilson, usually found roaming around the half-back line was switched forward, with the move paying immediate dividends, as he piled on 6 majors, to gain him the Uniting Church Medal for his efforts.

Duncan Kirk was named second best (to go along with his best on ground medal from underage hockey he would later receive), with

Sam Greenaway also among the best.

For the Magpies, it was Archer Lee, Tristan Broad, and Noah Howe among the better players.

St Arnaud stormed home with a convincing win, to take home the Uniting Church Under-14s Premiership Cup, and Shield!

Congratulations to Dan and Tyson and troops on your premiership, a just end to a great season highlighted by improvement across the board. Congratulations also to Nath and his boys, they played some seriously good under-14s football across the season, improving along the way, after at one point looking

like missing finals might be on the cards.

St Arnaud 12.8 (80) d. Boort 2.5 (17).

Goals for St Arnaud: Finn Wilson 6, Charlie Baldwin 2, Isaac Johns 2, Arley Reyne, Jack Wait.

For Boort: Noah Howe, Connor McNally.

Best for St Arnaud: Finn Wilson, Duncan Kirk, Samuel Greenaway, Chase Hendy, Patrick Zsigmond, Jesse James.

For Boort: Archer Lee, Tristan Broad, Noah Howe, Luca Lanyon, Connor McNally, Seth Muller.

• Right: John Goode with Under-14s Best on Ground Finn Wilson.



• Under-14 Premiers St Arnaud: back, left to right: NCFL Emcee Dean Lockhart, Riley Wilson-Cook, Riley Batters, Bailey McNaulty, Jack McNally, Zach Green, Calan Wickham, Xavier Batters, Sami Weir, Noah Hando, Maddox Stewart, Jack Wait, Maurie Wood, Tyson Johns, Chase Hendy, Dan Greenaway, Jesse James, Lewis Lowe, Duncan Kirk, Xavier Taylor, Finn Evans, Finn Wilson, Isaac Johns. Front, left to right: Leo Kay, Ben Greenaway, Damian Yole, Pat Zsigmond, Lewis Ezard, Spencer Kay, Sam Greenaway, Kayden Keating, Charlie Baldwin, Charlie Kirk, Ned Ezard, Arley Reyne, Oliver Goode. (Photo Blake Lee.)

Non-Stop Netball Grand

Seven grades of North-Central Netball played premiership matches at Wedderburn's Donaldson Park, on Saturday, September 13.

A beautiful Spring morning welcomed the early birds to Wedderburn, as junior players took to the court to decide the 2025 season premiers.

14-&-under "B" Birchip-Watchem v. St. Arnaud

The 14-&-under "B" game between Birchip-Watchem and St Arnaud was a great showcase of the skills that both teams have developed over the season.

St Arnaud got off to a strong start in the first quarter, moving the ball well and delivering some effective passes into the goal circle to take an 8-4 lead.

In the second quarter, St Arnaud extended its advantage to 14-7, holding firm despite consistent defensive pressure from Birchip-Watchem across the court.

The third quarter was tightly contested, with both teams stepping up their defensive efforts, but St Arnaud maintained control at 18-10.

Both teams came out strong in the final term, keeping the intensity high, but St Arnaud finished confidently to secure a well-earned 25-14 win.

14-&-under "A" Boort v. Donald

The first game of the day started with a few nerves and easy turnovers – to be expected considering most of these girls were playing off in their first grand final! Donald managed to steady first, picking up a few valuable turnovers and leading at the first break.

A tight second quarter with some terrific passages of play from both teams. Boort managed some great passes into its tall shooter, picking up a few valuable goals and bringing the score back to level at half-time.

Another close contest throughout the third term.

Pressure down the court from both teams saw some basic and silly mistakes. The score continued goal for goal with no team being able to make a break ahead. The supporters were in for a great battle in the final term to see who would take this game!

Boort held on for the final quarter winning the contest by four goals. A great game by both teams.

Final scores: Boort 22 d. Donald 18.

17-&-under "A" Birchip-Watchem v. Calder United

This contest promised some great netball for all at Donaldson Park. Calder United was off to a super quick start. Birchip-Watchem backed this up with some terrific intercepts, pegging back a few goals and eventually taking the lead. A well-contested start to the game.

Beautiful goaling from both ends was a pleasure to watch. Fierce competition across the court saw turnovers to both teams with some great action in the goal circles and the mid-court. The pressure was on as the game continued goal for goal.

Calder United turned up the heat towards the end of the third quarter, bridging the gap on the few goals lead that Birchip-Watchem had created. The contest was immense with all players under pressure.

Critical turnovers throughout the last quarter brought the game back on centre. The result was on a knife's edge, with every mistake or missed goal presenting an opportunity for the opposition. In the end Calder United proved too strong, its relentless pressure and accuracy too much for Birchip-Watchem. An outstanding game by both teams.

Final scores: Birchip-Watchem 47 def. by Calder United 51.

"C" Reserve

Boort v. Calder United

Boort took an early lead finding access to the post with relative ease, while Calder United displayed patience with the ball, but missed attempts proved costly.

In the second quarter there were lots of turnovers, with defensive pressure particularly strong from Boort. Calder United made some tactical changes, but couldn't make any ground up on the scoreboard.

In the second half Boort continued to dominate. Its team combination of experience and youth was too strong for the Lions, easily outplaying them across the court. The Magpies continued to outplay Calder United throughout attacking, mid-court and defence, leading them to a relatively easy win by 28 goals. Congratulations to Boort for a great display of netball.

Final scores: Boort 48 d. Calder United 20.

"C" Grade Calder United v. Wedderburn

Another match that promised to keep everyone on their toes in the stands! Calder United and Wedderburn seemed evenly matched for the entire game. There was often only a few goals between them, or level scores throughout the match.

The teamwork and tactical pressure from both sides made for a great game. Goalers were working well at both ends with only two goals difference at half-time.

Calder United managed to edge a few goals in front in the third term, following some terrific intercepts and exchange to goal. Despite its efforts, Wedderburn was unable to turn the deficit around, going down by three goals in the end. Another fantastic game to watch, well done to



• "C" reserve netballers in action in Saturday's grand final. With Boort's Boort Brooke Arnold (GS) securing the ball while under pressure from Calder United's Dekoda Barber (GK) and Hayley Yasel (C).



• Not a seat left in the house during the "A" grade netball final between Wedderburn and Sea Lake-Nandaly.

both teams for their efforts.

Final scores: Calder United 46 d. Wedderburn 43.

"B" Grade Calder United v. Wedderburn

Wedderburn came out strong in the first quarter, but Calder's defence kept it within reach of the 9 goal difference. Both teams came out fighting in second quarter and both showed immense defensive pressure down the entire court. The accuracy of Wedderburn allowed it to extend its lead 29-16. The defensive pressure from both teams continued

into the third quarter, with the mid court working tirelessly for both teams. After a tough last quarter Wedderburn proved its strength and came out on top with the win.

Final scores: Calder United 30 def. by Wedderburn 51.

"A" Grade Wedderburn v. Sea Lake-Nandaly

An electric atmosphere welcomed the start of the "A" grade match. A few stumbles by board member Kylie Walsh announcing the teams on the mic certainly provided some entertainment and eased the nerves of the players! First goal to the Tigers, followed by a huge eruption from the crowd. The match was played at a super high intensity, going goal for goal throughout the

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• "A" grade Tigers' Nakia Nunn (GS) and Redbacks' Sophie Cockrell (GK) reach for the ball with Grace Farrell (SLN) and Maddison Postle (Wedderburn) alongside the action. (Photo Blake Lee.)



• "C" grade Stephanie Cooper.



• "A" grade best on court Gabby Munari.



• "B" grade best on court Aliza Lockhart.



• "C" reserves Sophie Gilmore.

Finals at Donaldson Park

• Continued from page 14.
easy and important goals, therefore gaining critical turnovers and conversions at the other end. Sea Lake-Nandaly's goaling and poise improved late in the second term, but it was still unable to improve the score deficit. A late miss by Wedderburn right on the whistle left Sea Lake-Nandaly with a small window of hope!

A few important turnovers saw Sea Lake-Nandaly edge the score back to within five goals during the third quarter. The intensity and pressure continued with spectators on

the edge of their seats. Wedderburn continued with its high-pressure game, drawing vital fingertips and turnovers of the ball. Heading into the last quarter, Wedderburn was in the lead by 9.

Sea Lake-Nandaly started the final term strongly, taking the first goal off its centre. If it was to have any chance, Sea Lake-Nandaly needed to start strongly and early in this last quarter. Wedderburn continued with its dominant play, not allowing Sea Lake-Nandaly back into the game. The Tigers threw everything they had at it, but weren't able to

drag the score back to where they would like it. The "Masters of the Premiership" Wedderburn was once again too good and took the game by eight goals. Sea Lake-Nandaly threw everything at it but couldn't quite match the Redbacks in the end. A quality match to end the day with.

Final scores: Wedderburn 46 d. Sea Lake-Nandaly 38.



• 17-and-under Jessie Fawcett.



• 14-and-under "A" Victoria Lanyon.



• 14-and-under "B" Jaylah Campbell.



• Boort Under-14 "A" netball premiers. (Photo Blake Lee.)



• Boort's under-14 "A" team celebrate their win. (Photo Blake Lee.)



• Under-17 "A" Birchip-Watchem's Zali Angel and Calder United's Lana Fawcett face off. Also pictured Gracie Humphreys and Tessa Sheahan, and umpire Eliza Perryman. (Photo Blake Lee.)

Harness Racing Roadshow at Charlton

• Continued from page 16.
\$100,000. The benefits of this race will be amazing. With quite a few local clubs in this category, here's hoping for a local win.

Other Options

Harness Racing Victoria is looking at many other options to improve their racing product, including:

- Mile races on Friday nights to fit in with TV coverage.

• Betting in the run (while race is being run).

- Horse ownership in syndicates for minimal outlay.
- On-course prestige for owners.

Question Time

Many questions were asked; one that interested me was lighting of the Charlton track. The response was "no", the cost was about 2 million,

but with the lighting of the football ground a lot of underground work had already been done so the cost would be less. It would be up to funding from local agencies for this to happen. Other clubs have asked the same question, but in some cases lighting will not help.

Next up, a day of harness racing in Charlton on Monday, September 29.



• Supporters from the local area attended the harness racing roadshow at Charlton with owners, trainers and drivers.

Charlotte Does Charlton Pony Club Proud

Congratulations to Charlton Pony Club's Charlotte Stewart, who won Reserve Champion in the 2025 State Ride to Time Maiden at Moonee Valley on Saturday, September 6.

Riding her horse Phoenix, Charlotte rode the 1000 metres in a time of 200:75, only 75 hundredths of a second off optimum time and only 0.15 behind the winner; so close!

Only racing jockeys are allowed to ride the track at Moonee Valley, so this was an amazing opportunity, the significance of which was not wasted on Charlotte as she took a podium placing. For the State finalists to be given

the privilege to ride on such a track is a special honour that only being a part of Pony Club Victoria can bring to a lucky few.

Sponsors

Charlotte especially thanks her sponsors, Dale and Jane, from Hyland Sportswear, for their generosity in creating and allowing her to wear some very special Hyland Sportswear Silks. Hyland race colours have been worn to

victory in thousands of races worldwide including Melbourne Cups, Cox Plates, Caulfield Cups, Golden Slippers and the Dubai World Cup. The Hylands have been in business for almost 50 years, established by Dale's father Gerard in 1976.

Charlotte's sponsorship included a track timer and her choice of any design silks made on-site at the Melbourne-based business. Car-

olyn Stewart (Charlotte's proud mum) is cousin to Jane Hyland and was influential in the design of the silks, wanting to showcase the Hyland Sportswear Business and incorporating its logo. They looked absolutely fabulous, and Charlotte was very privileged and honoured to be wearing them. (And promoting her favourite cousins along the way – winners wear Hyland!)

National Championships

Charlotte and her pony Jess have also been selected to represent Victoria in the mounted games senior team and pairs, which is an amazing achievement. Charlotte is an inspiring young equestrian who is proving that big things can come from small clubs. Well done to Charlotte and all the best competing in the upcoming games at Pony Club Australia's National Championships.



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• H.R.V. chairman Bernard Saundry (left), with Charlton president Andrea O'Gorman (centre) and H.R.V. CEO Matt Isaacs at Charlton on Tuesday night.

Harness Racing Roadshow at Charlton

(By Peter Hibberd)

The harness racing executives were very impressed with the attendance (54 people) at the harness racing roadshow at Charlton on Tuesday night.

The previous night only 20 attended at a similar event in Kilmore. Attendees came from the local area and also Swan Hill.

C.E.O Matt Isaacs, alongside other executive members, gave a comprehensive report of the battle, and decisions made over the last 30 months to try to get things back to a level playing field. Starting off with a \$25 million debt, it

will return to a positive result in financial year 2026.

They have made some major decisions that have been part of this including:

- No Wednesday meetings.
- Reduction of staff from 110 to 69.
- Reduction of races with less than 7 runners, unless the race is 2 or more years old.

Wagering turnover is the key, as the statistics say you

must have 9 runners to make it a profitable race.

They gave insight to the five focus areas in 2026, which was well received.

Slot Race

In what will prove to be one of the biggest things to happen, I believe, one of the clubs which race once a year will be given the chance to run a slot race with prizemoney of

• Continued on page 15.



(By Course Language)

With the local footy done and dusted for another year, the golf season, too, has only one week to run before the course gets packed away for the summer break.

It would be nice to play for a few more weeks but some spring growth on our fairways will be more beneficial than a couple more weeks of mowing.

Last weekend was the last Monthly Medal, sponsored by Donald Pharmacy and Pies Putting. With the grass already getting a bit longer, there were a few who struggled coming to terms with the course. The winner was Brad Bath with 77-5-72 one shot in front of Luke Kelly on 84-11-73. Luke was also unlucky with the Pies Putting, losing that on a countback to Brad, again, with 22 putts each. Thanks to the Kelly family for donating the balls for the Pies Putting again this year, it's just a pity there is a reference about Collingwood in the title, I'm sure people would be much happier winning something with the Tigers in the name.

The "Nearest the Pins" were, Donald Auto Elec 3rd, Brad Bath; Weirs IGA 7th, Kelvin Clark; Nufarm 14th, Brad Bath; Bendigo Bank 16th, Colin Cullen.

Thanks to those willing members who helped out last Saturday with the track patching at the races, the weather made the job a little more enjoyable. The club appreciates your efforts.

Unfortunately, there was a bit more vandalism on the course last Sunday, smashing tee markers may seem like

fun until you smash your club or worse, get caught doing it. The consequences of the latter won't be pleasant.

We would like to welcome a new sponsor on board with the club this week in Perry Contracting. Owen and Wendy run a local contract spraying and cartage business and we are thrilled that they have agreed to support our club. If you need a hand getting the crops sprayed in a timely manner or need some grain carted at harvest time, please give them a call and support them as they support our local club.

Dad's Army

With the peace talks failing, 4 veterans resumed the battle last Wednesday. Richard Gallagher was adjudged the winner but I'm not sure whether he or the course won the fight.

Junior Golf

Three grades of juniors played last Friday with Luca Rice winning Division 1, Division 2 was taken out by Liam Stopps and Josh Woods was the winner of Division 3. This will be the last week for the juniors and it will start an hour earlier at 3 as school finishes at 2.30.

Chicken Run

Another successful night was had at the chicken run with good weather making it even more enjoyable. This is our last run for the year this Friday night, with our club sponsors also invited along as

a thank you for their support throughout the year. The winner of the umbrella last week for the funniest story went to a fella who, after finishing his hole, grabbed his bag and buggy and headed off to the next tee. It wasn't till he got there that he realised that his sticks were not only a set of ladies' clubs, but also that they were right-handed and he plays left.

Coming Up

This weekend will be a Red Markers Stableford event sponsored by Perry Contracting and there is Vets in Wedderburn next Tuesday the 23rd.

There will also be a trip away organised in the next few weeks, so keep an eye out on your messages for more information.

Dad Jokes

What month of the year has 28 days? All of them.

I once got kicked out of class for being too sarcastic. The teacher yelled at me and said, "What would your parents say if I called them?" I replied "Hello".

Why should you never brush your teeth with your left hand? Because a tooth brush is much better.

When I get bored I call Best Western Hotels, and when they answer "Best Western", I say, "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" and then I hang up.