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Phone: 5497 1222

Articles to:
news@buloketimes.comAdverts to:
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The Buloke Times

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Phone: 5492 2735

Fax: 5492 2863

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birchipblc@
bigpond.comPublished Tuesdays and Fridays
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For the Shire of Buloke, and the districts of Birchip, Charlton, Donald, St. Arnaud, Watchem and Wycheproof



• From left: Donald's Shane Wall and wife Judy, children Claire, Dean, and grand daughter Susie-Wren Wall.



• Adrian Murphy with his family at the GIAV Annual General Meeting in Melbourne last week. Left to right: Harry, Adrian, Gabby and Bridie.

Grain Industry "Life" for Shane Wall, Adrian Murphy

The Grain Industry Association of Victoria (GIAV) has proudly announced the induction of Adrian Murphy and Shane Wall as Life Members, recognising their outstanding service and dedication to the Victorian and Australian grains industry.

GIAV President Jeremy Swincer said the honour reflects the remarkable influence both men have had on the sector.

"Adrian and Shane have each demonstrated exceptional commitment, vision, and leadership over many decades. Their contribution has not only strengthened

GIAV but also enhanced Victoria's and Australia's global reputation as reliable, innovative suppliers of grain," the President said.

Shane Wall has spent more than three decades building grower and market connections, leading in grain marketing, policy, and risk management. Widely re-

spected for his strategic vision, he has helped position the Victorian industry for resilience and long-term growth.

Adrian Murphy is recognised for his leadership in grain accumulation, quality standards, and international market development. A strong advocate for excellence and

mentorship, he has played a pivotal role in upholding Australia's reputation for quality and reliability.

Secret

The announcement, made during the GIAV Annual General Meeting, was kept a closely guarded secret with the help of family members.

A big thank you was extended to Shane's wife Judy, children Dean, Claire, and grand daughter Susie-Wren Wall, along with Adrian's wife Gabby, children Bridie, Harry, and Lucy Murphy, for

their top-tier secret-keeping skills. Attendees described it as "a truly special moment" to witness the surprise and emotion on the faces of the two recipients.

Life Membership is one of the Association's highest honours.

Above and Beyond

"This recognition is reserved for individuals who have gone above and beyond in their service to the grains sector. Adrian and Shane embody the spirit of collaboration and dedication that

makes our industry strong," said Mr Swincer.

Their induction ensures that Adrian Murphy and Shane Wall's names will be remembered alongside other industry greats, inspiring future generations of leaders to continue strengthening Victoria's and Australia's grains industry.

Adrian is the son of Minyip couple Tom and Margaret Murphy and is currently working at Riordan Grains, Lara.

A small community with a big voice calls for rethink on Bendigo Bank agency closure:

Wycheproof Asks, "Why?"

Broadway turned into a boardroom as Wycheproof locals – business owners, customers, and yes, even a four-legged friend – were photographed gathered outside of the Bendigo Bank agency to voice their concerns regarding the recent announcement that the agency is set for closure.

With signs raised declaring "Where is the community in Bendigo Bank?" and "WHY are you leaving us when we need YOU?", the passionate group collaborated, shared stories, and stood united; reminding all who passed by that country voices carry, and this town counts.

The community of Wycheproof has plenty to say and wants the bank to reconsider.

The people of Wycheproof are deeply concerned by the recent announcement that Bendigo Bank will fully close its agency in the town. This decision, made without broad

community consultation, has significant implications for residents, local businesses, and the liveability of the rural community.

More Than An Inconvenience

For Wycheproof, the loss of banking services is more than an inconvenience. It means:

- Elderly residents without easy transport face barriers to accessing their money.

- Local businesses managing cash takings will be forced

• Continued on page 2.



• It's a tough blow for a small community like Wycheproof – losing a bank agency is about more than transactions, it affects confidence, convenience, and the sense of being "on the map." This isn't solely about dollars and cents – it's about dignity, inclusion, and the sustainability of rural communities (not only Wycheproof).

Art and Photography Exhibition

[From Charlton Arts Inc.]

Charlton Arts Inc. is preparing to hold the Annual Art and Photography Exhibition from the October, 10 to 13.

Preparations are under way, and all artists and photographers are encouraged to enter their artworks in the various sections of the exhibition.

For Artwork, the open sections are: Best Exhibit any media, Best Oil/Acrylic, Best Watercolour, Best Drawing and Best Other Media.

For Photography there are two sections: Best Photographic Print Unaltered (no post-processing or manipulation once the photo has been taken). Cropping and enlarging of the print are allowed. Best Photographic Print – Digitally Manipulated (this section is for any other photo where changes have been made in any way to the original photograph on the camera.

Prize Pool

The total prize pool for the Art and Photography sections is \$5000.

Students: For senior secondary students there is a section for both art and photography, also with prizes attached. There is also an artwork display by our younger local school children.

Enquiries and entry forms can be obtained from our coordinators, Sue Stokes 0404 850 961, Sue Walsh 0407 140 336 or email charltonartexhibition@gmail.com

The Exhibition will begin with the Official Opening on Friday, October 10, at 6.30 p.m..

Tickets will be available at the door for \$25 (including supper and complementary drink) or Early Bird tickets are available from Charlton Neighborhood House for \$20.

The judge will announce the winners of each section and comment on those winning entries.

Demonstrations

Over the weekend there will be three demonstrating artists: Jenny Pollard showing us her expressive drawings and humorous cartoons; David Beaty will be demonstrating his craft of weaving, and Marie Perger will be showcasing her patchwork.

For the viewing public, the exhibition will be open on Saturday, 11th, and Sunday,

12th, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., and on Monday 13th from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.. Cost \$5.00 per day.

This year there are two raffle prizes, a painting titled “Peaceful Morning” by Jon Crawley and an Acrylic Print/Photograph titled “Lake Fyans”, sponsored by GWMWater. The raffle will be drawn on Monday afternoon.

Multiple Events

Charlton will have multiple events over this weekend full of creativity, community and colour. The Charlton Art and Photography Exhibition, will showcase the incredible creativity within the region, from breathtaking landscapes to the striking portraits and expressive photography. This is a must see event for art lovers of all ages.

The Lions Swap Meet on Sunday morning, the North Central Garden Club holding their Open Gardens on Sunday and the Courthouse Gallery will be open on Saturday and Sunday.



• “Lake Fyans” Sponsored by GWMWater.



• “Peaceful Morning” by Jon Crawley.

Throwing Good Money After Bad

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has criticised the State Government for wasting taxpayer money on short-term fixes at Mildura West Primary School (MWPS) instead of delivering long-overdue new classrooms.

Ms Benham said the Government announced that \$637,433.39 would be provided to MWPS through its 2025–26 Planned Maintenance Funding program.

“That’s over half a million dollars being poured into tired, outdated buildings when we should be focused on providing new, fit-for-purpose classrooms, not repairing tired, white-ant damaged classrooms,” she said.

“Expert architects have recommended demolishing five classrooms, but instead an incredible amount of money is being spent just to patch them up.

“I first visited MWPS in 2023 and saw firsthand the conditions students are forced

to learn in. It is absolutely appalling that children are learning in buildings that should have been demolished years ago. If this was a city-based school, there would have been action already.

“Only a Patch”

“These upgrades are only a patch. The buildings will soon deteriorate again, leaving the school back in the same position, relying on chipboard and plywood to repair the damage,” she said.

Ms Benham praised the persistence of the school community in advocating for new classrooms.

“Together with the school, I have long been campaigning for proper upgrades. For too long, the Labor Government has ignored the needs of regional schools and families. I will continue to fight to ensure every child, no matter where they live, has access to safe, modern learning environments.”



• Jade Benham.

Master Plans

MWPS has had two master plans, the most recent in 2018. Students are currently learning in the main building, which has been divided up by the school itself and is being held together with plywood. The only parts of the master plans completed are one building and a renovated toilet block.

“There have been master plans but what we need now is action. Our schools deserve more than just cosmetic fixes. They need real investment in their infrastructure,” Ms Benham said.

VicGrid Sets New Requirements

VicGrid is setting new requirements for renewable project developers to meet minimum standards of engagement and benefit sharing with regional communities and landholders.

Recently released for consultation were draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines that set out 48 expectations on engagement and the sharing of benefits with locals.

Developers will need to demonstrate how they will meet these expectations as a condition of being granted access to the grid in Victoria.

These expectations cover a lot of the things communities have been telling VicGrid are of concern to them, including impacts on neighbours, non-disclosure agreements, insurance, and decommissioning.

There’s a chance now for people to have their say on this draft guide and on the standards they think developers should be held to.

“This is about setting the standards of behaviour we want to see from solar, wind and battery developers in Victoria,” said VicGrid Chief Executive Alistair Parker.

“Developers who want to access the grid will need to show they are doing the right thing by regional communities and meeting government standards for community engagement and benefits.”

Proposed New Rules

Also released for community and industry feedback are proposed new rules that will manage how renewable energy projects gain access to the state’s transmission network:

Access and Connections Consultation Paper: an overview of the proposed new

network access arrangements including proposed transitional arrangements for projects under development.

Draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines: details of the assessment that will apply to projects outside renewable energy zones.

These reforms are all part of the Victorian Access Regime and aim to encourage development in renewable energy zones and increase transparency about what projects must do to gain access.

Further information, including how to provide feedback, is available on the Engage Victoria website – engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime

Next Week’s “Times”

Due to the AFL public holiday and subsequent long weekend, there will be no edition of the “Buloke Times” published on Tuesday, September 30, 2025.

The next edition of the “Times” will be available for purchase on Friday, October 3, 2025.

Wycheproof Asks “Why?”

• Continued from page 1.

to travel long distances, increasing risk and cost.

• Families and community groups who rely on personal service will be left behind.

“Abandoned”

“Wycheproof has always supported Bendigo Bank, but right now we feel abandoned,” said Martin Duke, President of Wyche Alive (the Town Forum).

“We are asking Bendigo Bank to pause and rethink this decision. Small rural communities like ours cannot absorb blow after blow to essential services.”

The community is calling on:

• Bendigo Bank to engage directly with locals and explore alternatives before finalising the full closure.

• Buloke Shire Council and local MPs to advocate strongly on behalf of Wycheproof.

• Residents and supporters to stand together and voice their concerns.

Wycheproof may be a small town but is committed to voicing strong opinion on the closure.

The community is proud and resilient and know that access to basic banking is not a privilege – it is a right.

Special Display for Flower Show

The residents of the Birchip Campus of East Wimmera Health Service have recently been enjoying visits to countries around the world including Hawaii and Mexico.

Secretary of The Birchip Friends of East Wimmera Health Service, Carol Reid, saw the flowers the residents had made for their Hawaiian themed adventure and organised for the residents to display these at the 2025 Flower show at the Birchip Community Leisure Centre on Friday, October 17.

This will be in addition to the displays from the Birchip

P-12 students and Preschool children and the exhibitions in the craft, photography, cooking, gardening and produce sections of the show.

There will be delicious food to eat on the day, and to buy to take home, as well as other market types stalls, a sausage sizzle, lucky dips, ice creams and treats for the children.

It is a wonderful community event, so bring along the whole family to raise funds for the local campus of East Wimmera Health Service.

• *Right: The EWHS Birchip campus residents with the flowers they made made for their Hawaiian themed adventure, left to right: Roma Hogan, Vera Woods, Brenda McCredden, Judy Bowen and Margaret Naughton.*



Donald Show’s Massive Entertainment Program

The Donald Show 2025 is shaping up to be an unforgettable celebration of community spirit, fun, and family entertainment.

With an action-packed program across Friday, 10th, and Saturday 11th, October, this year’s show will bring together traditional favourites and fresh new attractions guaranteed to thrill crowds of all ages.

Music and Live Performances

The entertainment kicks off on Friday night with the Roadhouse Band, setting the scene with lively tunes to get the crowd buzzing. On Saturday, local favourites Darren Wardle and Jeff Woodward will take to the stage, performing a mix of classics and crowd-pleasers that will keep the atmosphere vibrant throughout the day.

Family Favourites and Kids’ Fun

Children will be spoiled for choice with an incredible lineup of activities: Professor Wallace’s Puppet Theatre – timeless comedy, cheeky characters, and delightful stories.

Balloonatic Bruce – creating larger-than-life balloon designs that wow kids and adults alike.

Janelle’s Face and Body Art – bringing colour, sparkle, and creativity to every face.

Mini Explorers Sensory Play – hands-on fun with textures, colours, and activities designed to spark curiosity.

Cookie Decorating with Mel & Co and Cupcake Decorating with Cupcakerella – deliciously creative activities for little chefs.

Cartoon Portraits with Irene – quirky, personal artwork to take home as a keepsake.

Action and Adventure

For those craving excitement, the show has plenty on offer: Tractor Pull and Display – the ground will shake with roaring engines and vintage power.

Laser Tag in the Mobile Spaceship Maze – fast-paced fun for groups or solo challengers.

MXW Pro Wrestling – family-friendly action, drama, and comedy with a local twist.

Animals and Wildlife Encounters

The animal attractions are back bigger than ever: Billabong Ranch Animal Nursery – hands-on fun with cuddly farmyard favourites.

Camel Rides – a unique chance to saddle up for adventure.

Fair Dinkum Fauna – interactive wildlife displays featuring reptiles and furry friends.

Tiny Goats & Co – cheeky goats full of personality, always ready for cuddles and photos.

Creative and Interactive Fun

The Furals activity space, proudly supported by Bendigo Bank, will give kids the chance to build, paint, and create masterpieces to take home. Meanwhile, the Photo Booth promises endless laughs and lasting memories for families and friends.

Gaming and Tech

Back by popular demand, Level Up Gaming will transform the Blue Room into a gaming hub, with the latest consoles, VR headsets, retro classics, and giant projector screens – a casual, inclusive space for gamers of all ages.

A Show Not to Be Missed

With so much on offer, the Donald Show is more than just an agricultural event – it’s the heart of the community coming alive with energy, laughter, and connection. From farmyard favourites to high-energy wrestling, live music to creative workshops, this year’s program has something for everyone.

Mark your calendars for Friday 10th, and Saturday 11th, October 2025, and get ready for two full days of entertainment, tradition, and fun.

To Tackle Victoria’s Crime Crisis... Nationals Unveil \$100 Million Plan

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has backed The Nationals’ \$100 million Safer Communities Plan to crack down on crime and restore safety across Victoria.

The Nationals have unveiled a comprehensive plan to crack down on crime and make Victorian communities safer.

“Labor’s soft-on-crime approach is failing all Victorians,” Ms Benham said.

The Safer Communities Plan will introduce tough new laws alongside targeted prevention programs to make a real difference in every community.

The plan builds on The Nationals’ Break Bail, Face Jail policy, ensuring offenders face real consequences. Key initiatives include:

- Jack’s Law for Victoria – giving police powers to conduct random searches in public areas to remove weapons such as machetes from our streets.
- Restart – a Victorian-first

residential responsibility and discipline program for serious and repeat offenders.

- Youthstart – co-ordinated community-based interventions to help at-risk young people make better choices.

Ms Benham said the Allan Labor Government had cut youth crime prevention funding from nearly \$13 million a year under the previous Liberal Nationals Government to just \$541,000 annually over the past three years.

“Families in Mildura and across Victoria should be able to feel safe at home, in their neighbourhoods and out in public. Our plan ensures offenders face real consequences, while also giving young people the guidance, support and opportunities they need to change their path.



• Jade Benham

“Youth crime continues to rise, yet Labor has abandoned prevention programs and refused to strengthen weak bail laws. The Nationals have a clear plan to restore community safety. Regional Victorians should not have to bear the cost of Labor’s failures.”

Letters to the Editor

Beautify Charlton

(The Editor, “The Times”) Dear Editor.– What is written here, is my personal opinion, it does not necessarily reflect the views of other members of Beautify Charlton. I have kept this as brief as possible.

Further to my Facebook post of about 12 months ago, this is to formally advise Beautify Charlton as a program has come to an end. It had been an 8 year process which I am sorry to say never reached the heights it was intended to. It would have, given half a chance. There was an enormous of amount planning, detail and volunteer effort involved.

Despite our group being fully invested in the program for this time, we never had the chance to really show our wares, to deliver our vision, and for all to see the positive impacts the program would have had on the town. That impact was vital because

Charlton is seriously challenged, the same as all our towns.

The Buloke Shire unfortunately never truly shared that vision, or grasped why it was so important. In a collaborative relationship, there has to be a fair dinkum approach from both sides. The Shire undoubtedly have their view. I have mine, and it is certainly best for me to get out of the space and allow clear air for others.

Our town is stuck in an impasse. The Shire have proven over a long period of time, they have been unable to present the complete thoroughfare suitably. That negatively impacts both in the retail sector, and in the wellbeing space of our community. Both are critical to the future and the relevance of any country town. Sadly, our community driven group was unable to fill the void.

The Shire no doubt have their issues. Staff morale and turnover being one of them.

Read into that what you will, but those problems start at the top.

In my view, the Shire have failed Beautify Charlton, and therefore Charlton, in understanding what community engagement and communication really require.

In our region I had never been a fan of Shire amalgamation. It has delivered our towns bureaucracy, and we deserve better. Floods included, Charlton fared no better under the Buloke Shire than it would have fared under the old Charlton Shire. Amalgamation driven from Spring Street, from both sides of politics, is unfortunately something we are stuck with.

I wish Ric, Wes and Darren all the very best. I wish you the full investment of energy, thought and consideration from the Shire, and open, honest and timely communication from them. And I wish you positive outcomes.

Thanks to all who backed, worked on, and supported Beautify Charlton.

Robin McRae,
Charlton.
Dementia Action Week
(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.– An immense thank you to everyone who was involved and spread the word during 2025 Dementia Action Week from September 15-21.

Across Australia, individuals and organisations supported our campaign “Nobody can do it alone”, encouraging everyone in the community to reach out and reconnect with someone in their life affected by dementia.

Social isolation and loneliness are, unfortunately, all too commonly experienced by many living with dementia. And, with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reporting this month that dementia is now the leading cause of death for all Australians, chances are that you know someone impacted and

can help be part of their support system – so that none of us have to face dementia alone.

On behalf of the estimated 433,300 Australians living with dementia and the 1.7 million people involved in their care, thank you for showing your support this Dementia Action Week.

While Dementia Action Week is only one week each year, the conversation and action to eliminate the lack of understanding that leads to stigma and discrimination continues year-round. For information and tips on how you can continue working towards a dementia-friendly future, please visit dementia.org.au/DementiaActionWeek.

For support any time, please contact the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Yours sincerely,
Merran Kelsall AO.
Chairperson, Dementia Australia.

"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 WILSON (Wall).— Elma June

Passed away peacefully
in St Arnaud,
on September 21, 2025,
aged 87 years.

Loving wife of Jim (dec.)
and much loved mother of
Roger, Debbie; Scott &
Veronica; and Murray (dec.).
Adored Gran & Granny of
Travis, Cameron, Matthew,
Aaron, Nathan, Nicole;
Ava and Finn. Treasured
Great-granny of 10.

*To be together
in the same old way,
Would be my dearest
wish today.*

Reunited together again.

Daughter of the late Perc
& Mary Wall. Loved sister
of Dotty (dec.), Edna, Colin
(dec.) and Ian.

FUNERAL WILSON.—

A service for Elma will be
held at the Uniting Church
St. Arnaud on Wednesday,
October 1, 2025 at 1 p.m.
The cortege will then
leave for the St. Arnaud
Lawn Cemetery.

KELL FUNERALS
ST. ARNAUD 5495 1043
NFDA EST. 1860

IN MEMORIAM

Michael John Gilligan
12/10/1982 - 01/10/2011

Love and adore you
Thinking of you
all the time,
always loving you
—Mum & Dad xxxooxxx

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Old bottles with town or
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CLOSED FROM
Thursday Oct. 2 to
Monday Oct. 20
*Sorry for any
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BIRCHIP TENNIS CLUB

A.G.M.
WED., OCTOBER 8
7 p.m.

AT THE CLUB ROOMS
*All players and family
representative of juniors
encouraged to attend.*

DONALD COMMUNITY PRECINCT (DCP)

A.G.M.
6 p.m.

WED., OCTOBER 22
**ANDERSON BLUE
ROOM**
All positions open.
*New members most
welcome.*

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

AMBULANCE
PHONE NO.
000



2025 Donald Show
Friday 10th & Saturday 11th October

P

Limited Disabled Parking Available
Please Specify whether space is required
inside or outside of grounds when booking
Book with Chloe
0400 275 737

DONALD PUBLIC CEMETERY TRUST GRAVE DIGGING CONTRACT

Applications are welcome for the
services of a Grave Digger for the
Donald Public Cemetery.

The contract is for a period of two
(2) years commencing on January
1, 2026 to December 31, 2027.
For contract details please contact
the secretary at email:
secretary1875@outlook.com

Tenders will close on October 24,
2025 at 5p.m.

DONALD

Presentation Night
DONALD ANGLING CLUB
FRIDAY, OCT. 3
6 p.m.
THE CLUBROOMS MEAL PROVIDED

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM FOOTBALL CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 21

7 p.m. BIRCHIP LEISURE CENTRE

All BWFC members welcome and
encouraged to attend

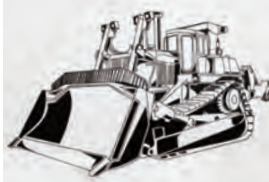
Nominations for executive or committee
positions to secretary, Stephanie Coffey,
at stephaniebirchip@gmail.com



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St Martin's Charlton

Sunday 5 October 9am

St George's Donald

Sunday, 5 October 11am

Holy Trinity Wedderburn

Sunday, 5 October 3pm

Enquiries:

Rev'd Judi Bird 0435 593 359



Charlton Art & Photography Exhibition

NEW VENUE | CHARLTON PARK | CALDER HWY, CHARLTON

Fri. 10th - Mon. 13th October 2025

Fri.: 6.30pm (official opening)
Sun.: 10am - 4pm

Sat.: 10am - 4pm
Mon.: 10am - 1pm

Admission: Official Opening **\$25 at the door**
Early Bird tickets from CNH **\$20**
General Entry Saturday & Sunday **\$5**
Children Under 18 **Free**

Email: charltonartexhibition@gmail.com

Phone: 0404 850 961 Charlton Art & Photography Exhibition

2025 Donald Show
Friday 10th & Saturday 11th October

PUBLIC NOTICE
FIREWORKS NOTICE
As part of the 2025 Donald Show, a
fireworks display is planned for
Friday 10th October 2025
at approximately 8:30 pm.
This is an early notice so you have time
to make arrangements for your animals.
Please ensure they are safe and secure
during this time.
Further details will be provided closer to
the event.



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.

Caleb Michael
DONALD HIGH SCHOOL

Mensland

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AT MENSLAND

We're still here just
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Free Skin Checks

Donald - Sat. 4th & Sun. 5th October

Donald Recreation Reserve
Bookings Colleen 0417 501 447

Charlton - Sat. 11th & Sun. 12th October

Outside Shire Office Charlton
Bookings Harry 0427 911 407

St Arnaud - Sat. 18th & Sun. 19th October

Market Square - Behind Shire Office
Bookings Marg 0417 391 585

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Further information available at
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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.

FOR SALE BY TENDER

Thalia district

“The High Gums” & “Nicholls”

827 AC - Ideal Cropping Land – 334 HA

To be offered in 2 separate parcels

Lot 1: “The High Gums” – 515 acres approx., currently sown to lentils.

Lot 2: “Nicholl’s” – 312 acres approx., currently sown to barley.

- Situated fronting Barbers Road, 18 km West of Wycheproof & 15 km SE of Birchip offering grain receival sites at both townships.

- Renowned Thalia district land with a fertile mix of red & grey soil types.

- Presenting in excellent condition having been managed with modern farming practices and crop rotations.

- Ideally suited to growing all types of cereal, pulses & canolas.

- Both lots well fenced with Wimmera Mallee pipeline connected, tanks & troughs included.

- Settlement February 2026, growing crops not included.

The offering of “The High Gums” & “Nicholl’s” presents an ideal opportunity to add to existing holdings.

Note: all land sizes indicated approx..

Inspection by appointment with the agent.

Tenders close 12 noon Friday, October 17, 2025.

Tender forms available from the selling agent



Elders Wycheproof 03 5493 6400

Jim Coffey 0419 830 682

Sam Crow 0455 506 622



OPEN FRIDAY 26TH OF SEPTEMBER COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS - SHOPPING EVENT

Kickstart your gifting for Christmas and see our
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54 Woods Street, Donald

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13 Enterprise Dr, Donald

**Design and Construction:
Donald Community Battery**



Contract Number: C01457

GWMWater invites tender submissions for the design and construction of the Donald Community Battery.

The Contract includes the following scope of works:

- > Design and network connection approval for a 'front-of-meter' connected Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
- > Supply and installation of a BESS of up to 500 kW / 1,500 kWh capacity in the town of Donald, Victoria.
- > Testing and commissioning of the completed BESS installation.
- > Maintenance and performance management of the BESS for 24-months.

A non-compulsory site inspection will be held at the site in Donald from 11 am on Tuesday 14 October 2025. To register for this site inspection please contact GWMWater's Project Manager Graeme Dick.

More information regarding this tender is available from the Buying for Victoria website, www.tenders.vic.gov.au.

Enquiries may be directed to Graeme Dick, Manager Strategic Infrastructure Projects at graeme.dick@gwmwater.org.au

Tender closes 2 pm, Thursday 30 October 2025.

GWMWater reserves the right to accept tenders in part.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

Mark Williams
Managing Director

GWMWater is an innovative water corporation providing, managing, operating and protecting water supply and sewerage systems within the Grampians, Wimmera and Mallee regions of Victoria.

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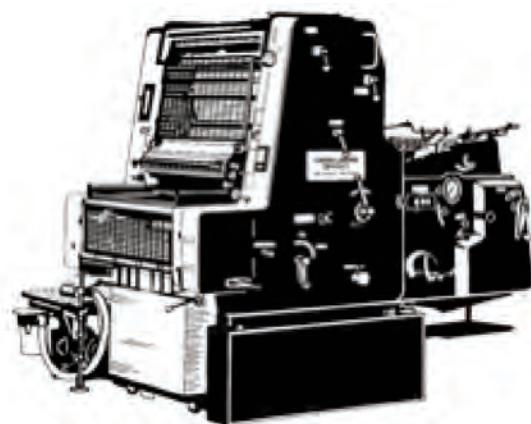
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Scholarships for Regional Students

The Country Education Foundation (CEF) of Bendigo is offering scholarships for the study of a range of courses at University or TAFE level.

The program includes a scholarship for the study agriculture at University level valued at \$2,000 per year for the first two years of the course.

Students attending schools in the municipalities of Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Loddon, Buloke and Mt Alexander are eligible to apply. Applications close November 30, 2025. Detailed criteria may be found at <https://cef.org.au/foundations/bendigo/>

The Country Education Foundation of Bendigo provides much needed financial assistance and support to local youth to help them achieve their education and training goals. It recognises that

the cost of rural students attending university is much greater than those of their metropolitan counterparts. Scholarship recipients also have access to a range of additional scholarships through the CEF of Australia <https://cef.org.au>.

Two scholarships were awarded this year to students from Bendigo Senior College and Rochester Secondary College for the study of Agriculture at Charles Sturt and La Trobe Universities respectively.

The CEF of Bendigo was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Bendigo to provide the opportunity for local businesses

and individuals to receive tax deductions on donations towards future scholarships. The Rotary Club of Bendigo has previously provided several scholarships to local students for the study agriculture.

The Bendigo CEF is one of a network of 48 local Country Education Foundations across Australia, all assisting their school-leavers to access further education and training, and investing in the future of their rural and regional communities. Since it was established in 1993, the CEFs across Australia have awarded 8,756 scholarship grants, totaling \$19,995,156.

Keep Game Day Fire On Field

As Victorians prepare to celebrate the AFL Grand Final long weekend, Victorian fire services are urging residents to prioritise safety when using barbecues and fire pits.

Whether you’re firing up the barbecue, lighting a celebratory fire pit, or just kicking back with mates, make sure your fire safety game is as strong as your team’s backline, because when it comes to protecting your home and community, we’re all on the same team.

This warning comes as firefighters recently battled a house fire in Sorrento which was caused by an electric smoker.

On Friday, September 5, CFA and FRV crews responded to reports of a house fire just after 10 p.m. on Vision Avenue.

Crews arrived to find a newly built house well alight where several firefighters worked on the fire for many hours before it was brought under control at 2.53 a.m. on Saturday morning.

Sorrento Fire Brigade Captain Michelle Croad said the incident was a good reminder to ensure every precaution is taken when using barbecues and fire pits this long weekend.

“You might think you have used a barbecue many times and that there is no or minimal risk, but they can become really dangerous,” Michelle said.

“A few simple safety steps could prevent you from losing everything.”

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan reminds Victorians this Grand Final long weekend that safety should never take a back seat.

“Fire pits are great for warmth and atmosphere, but they need to be placed on a flat, fireproof surface and kept well clear of anything flammable,” he said.

“Always allow at least three metres of space around the fire, keep a hose or 10 liters of water nearby, and ensure an adult is supervising at all times.”

Barbecues are another footy favourite, but they’re also a common source of fire incidents.

Last financial year, Fire Rescue Victoria and CFA responded to more than 960 barbecue and recreational fires across Victoria.

FRV Deputy Commissioner Community Safety Joshua Fischer says the long weekend often marks the first barbecue of the season for many households.

“Before you kick off your first snag of the season, make sure your barbecue is match fit!

“Don’t drop the ball on safety this long weekend! Just like in footy, one careless move can cost you the game and put your team (and family) at risk.”



• No matter the excitement on game day, don’t leave any fires unattended!

Energy Safe Victoria CEO Leanne Hughson echoed the call to prioritise safety, reminding Victorians to check their gas barbecues before use with three simple steps.

“Nothing beats great food and company on grand final day, but safety has to come first,” she said.

“Before firing up your barbecue, always inspect the gas cylinder, hose, and connections for damage; ensure all fittings are tight and secure; and do a quick soapy-water test to check for leaks. Taking a few minutes to check could make all the difference.”

Fire Pit Safety Tips

- Place fire pits on stable, non-flammable surfaces with three metres of clearance around and above.
- Check local fire restrictions and avoid lighting fires during CFA’s Fire Danger Period or on Total Fire Ban days.
- Never leave a fire pit unattended. Fully extinguish it with water before leaving or going inside.
- Keep at least 10 litres of water or a hose nearby, and ensure adult supervision at all times.
- Using fire pits or solid-fuel devices on Total Fire Ban days is illegal and can result in heavy fines.
- Never use petrol or accelerants on open flames.

Barbecue Safety Tips

- Test for gas leaks by spraying soapy water on connections and hoses – bubbles mean trouble.
- Use LPG appliances with modern safety fittings and always exchange cylinders through reputable suppliers.
- Never barbecue indoors. Maintain safe clearance from walls, fences, and flammable materials.
- If a fire starts, turn off the gas at the cylinder or meter – only if it’s safe to do so.
- If the fire can’t be controlled, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

Shadow Member Calls Out “Hollow Words”

Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government, Territories and Regional Communications, Dr Anne Webster, says the Albanese Labor Government’s response to a “REAL Deal” proposal for local benefits from “renewable” projects was as hollow as the way Labor are hollowing out regional Australia.

“I can’t believe the hide of the Minister to talk about community benefit when Labor at federal and state levels is railroading regional communities, like many of my own in Mallee, hell bent on reaching political targets so they can strut the global climate stage,” Dr Webster said.

“This isn’t regional development, it’s regional exploitation for political gain.”

The Regional Australia Institute is today launching its “Regional Energy and Legacy Deal” aka “REAL Deal” alongside a report, “Towards Net Zero: Building a Legacy”. The proposal suggests “social benefit” payments from energy project developers ought to be required to ensure genuine negotiations to communities.

Sceptical

“I am very sceptical about today’s announcement, which aims to also provide ‘certainty to investors’. Of course Australia wants to eliminate sovereign risk, but there is also a bigger risk to Australian taxpayers in picking winners. Wind projects are not progressing in Australia for at least two very sound regions,” Dr Webster, the member for Mallee in north-western Victoria, said.

“First of all, local councils like many in my electorate – and I commend them wholeheartedly for it – have spoken up for their communities saying they are not getting a good deal.

“Obscene”

It is obscene that farmers and landowners now face fines of up to \$12,000 for refusing access for the Victorian government’s transmission line. That is bad model corporate behaviour by the government, and the Albanese Labor Government are cheering Victorian Labor on.

“Secondly, the market is getting cold feet on onshore wind projects. Some say solar and batteries might gazump interest in wind investment. Hardly any wind projects have been approved this year, leading to Labor’s “Chicken Little” alarmism last week to scare Australians into accepting a quadrupling of the wind turbine rollout, a tripling of the utility solar rollout and sextupling of the battery rollout. Where will that rollout happen? In regional communities.

“The RAI needs to go back to regional communities and ask them whether any amount of money will be acceptable payoff for blighting their landscapes and turning regions into industrial wastelands of mines, lines and turbines on what will be former prime agricultural land.

“Labor has not lifted a finger to enable community benefit. Throwing chicken feed to community groups to buy off ‘social licence’ is not acceptable, true social licence or genuine investment in communities. Federal Labor have the levers but back in authoritarian Labor state governments that treat private property rights like tissue paper.

Railroading

“Labor are railroading communities as the PM and Mr Bowen are hell bent on political targets no expert (outside those under the government thumb) truly believes are achievable.”

Minister McBain used to speak about communities in her Eden-Monaro electorate needing to be “genuinely consulted”, acknowledging in August 2022 that community engagement of the transmission lines supporting Snowy 2.0 had not been ideal, saying, “There is some work to do by many companies in this process to properly consult with



• Ann Webster.

communities, to properly remunerate these landowners and to make sure that they are working with community to understand what the best line is going to be and how that will have an impact on our community long term.

However, Minister McBain herself faces a “REAL Monaro” campaign against the Coonerang Wind Farm (near Cooma, NSW) in her own electorate. The group admin posted on February 15.

“The Monaro community doesn’t want the Coonerang Wind Farm either! There is No social licence for this.”

Dr Webster said the Minister needs to lift her game for genuine regional development.

“I confess I did a double take after reading the Minister talking about her Government being ‘committed to ensuring regional communities are empowered to participate in the energy transition and experience its benefits’. That’s condescending nonsense and it’s certainly not what Minister Bowen and the Prime Minister are doing to regional communities.

“Labor’s aggressive rollout and railroading regional communities is why farmers in tractors chased the Prime Minister out of Ballarat in late August, and why Labor ministers are getting hostile receptions in regional communities.”



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School Finishes Term on a High Note

(From Geoff Rigby - Music Teacher)

Donald High's Annual Battle of the Bands took place on the last day of Term 3. Forty-one students from years 7-11, along with several of their teachers, presented a music extravaganza in which 17 songs were performed to an enthusiastic audience.

School Captains Texas Davis and Abbey Griffiths acted as MCs and introduced the various acts. Sixteen members of the School Choir performed "Rest", "7 Minutes" and "That's So True".

Year 7 girls Ellie Burke, River Sirling, Karleisha Anderson, Marnie Harmer and Isabelle Sandy, sang "Bad Habits", followed by Ellie and River singing "Shallow". Patience Beavis and Nevaeh Pearce then sang "FourFive Seconds", followed by Jasmine Anderson, Karleisha Anderson and Shanae Rotherham performing "2002". Jasmine and Shanae paired up to perform "Tennessee Orange", followed by Sophie Burke singing "Flowers". Sophie then joined Chelsea Hart and Isabelle Sandy to perform "Zombie". Jasmine Anderson

joined Chelsea and Isabelle to sing "Traitor". Evie Donnellon and Halle Rice sang "Stranger" and then teamed up with their brothers, Baxter and Luca to perform "Madeleine". Baxter and Luca then joined Daniel Cooper to perform "Revival and Nine Ball".

Then it was teacher Stuart Potter turn to "strut his stuff" by singing "Another One Bites The Dust" and then producing a lively performance of "Living on a Prayer", backed up by the Year 12 students.

All songs were performed to a high standard which showed off the wealth of musical talent in the student and staff ranks.

I would like to thank all the performers who played instruments and sang on the day and it was a fun way to finish



the term for most of the school's music students. I was very proud of all my music students.



• Siblings Luca and Halle Rice with Evie and Baxter Donnellon.



• Ellie Burke and River Sirling.



• Milla Adams and Chelsea Hart.



• Victor Sak.

Free Family Fun Day Next Week

A skate park "jam" and skateboard painting workshop are highlights of a free family fun day in Stawell next week.

The Stawell Skate Park Mural Family Day will run from 11 a.m. on Thursday, October 2.

Northern Grampians Shire mayor Karen Hyslop said the event was designed to celebrate the new mural, painted by the Blender Studios team in June, following community consultation on the design.

"To celebrate this wonderful new mural, council is providing an opportunity for the community to come together and enjoy a range of free activities," she said.

Jam Session

The 'Y' will host the skate park jam as part of its Skate Park Leagues program, which involves partnering with local

councils to bring events to skateparks.

"The jam session will be open to riders of all ages and skill levels," Cr Hyslop said.

"There will be extra scooters and skateboards for people to use, along with a heap of prizes and products up for grabs for people willing to have a go."

Cr Hyslop said the Grampians Community Health smoothie bike would also be on site.

"You can jump on the bike and pedal to make a fruity concoction," she said.

"There will also be free pizza and an opportunity to decorate cupcakes – there is something for everyone."

Grampians Youth Events/Amplify members DJ Zachat-tack and DJ Rome will provide the soundtrack for the event.

Workshop

Cr Hyslop said she expected a skateboard painting workshop, from noon to 2 p.m., would be popular.

"The workshop will enable participants to create their



• The Northern Grampians Shire community will celebrate the new Stawell Skate Park mural at a free family fun day on October 2.

own custom skate deck with the legendary Blender Studios team," she said.

"The workshop is a great opportunity for people interested in learning more about street art, as the lead artist will provide tips and tricks for a variety of mediums, including paint, markers, brushes, stencils and spray paint.

"You can also learn a range of techniques, such as layering, illustration and street-style lettering.

"It doesn't matter if you're a beginner or a talented artist, this workshop is open to everyone. You will also get to

take home your one-of-a-kind masterpiece."

Bookings for the workshop are essential, with a maximum of 15 places available.

People can register for the workshop online at <https://ngsc.elementorg.com/community-development/skateboard-painting-workshop-registration/> or via a link on the council's website: www.ngshire.vic.gov.au.

"The family fun day is one of several activities available

to keep families busy in the spring school holidays," Cr Hyslop said.

"Stawell and St Arnaud library and Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre are all delivering school holiday programs and there are several other events aimed at families running throughout the shire."

People can visit www.ngshire.vic.gov.au/Events/All-Events-Calendar for a full list of activities and events on offer in Northern Grampians Shire.

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A Century for Culgoa Church

The Sacred Heart Church Culgoa is celebrating its 100th year shortly on October 19.

Much of the following information was taken from a book published by Justine Severin called “A journey in Faith”.

Culgoa (Kaniera) was the first of the parish townships to build a Catholic Church. For at least 12 years prior to this, Masses had been celebrated in both the hall and school. The wooden Sacred Heart Church stood immediately on the north side of the present church. It was officially opened by Bishop Higgins on June 24, 1906.

The first Baptism recorded in Culgoa was Considine, Kathleen Kaniera daughter of Michael and Maria July 30, 1894. She later became Sister John of the St John of God order and died in her hundredth year, January 31, 1994.

The Sea Lake Parish was formed in March 1907 with Culgoa part of it, and Father Michael Quinn Parish Priest. In 1926 after 20 years the present brick church was built to replace the wooden one. Bishop Foley laid the foundation stone and the laborious task of carting materials from the railway station by horse and dray began.

Big Impact

Fr Davis, the Parish’s longest serving pastor (33 years) died in 1949, Fr Payne was appointed Parish Priest and he was to have a big impact on the parish, Culgoa in particular.

In 1950 Fr Payne began the annual Eucharistic Procession to honour Christ the King. These continued for 41 years bringing many blessings to the district. Up to 2000 people attended some years, but these numbers gradually dwindled to about 600.

Fr Payne had a special regard for Culgoa, and at his request, when he died in 1968, his body was brought back for burial there.

The Church continued as part of the Sea Lake parish, often having visiting priests come from Ballarat and surrounds to provide Masses in the area. Lay led assemblies began in the church in 1999 when priests were unavailable. The Culgoa Church became part of the Swan Hill parish in 2018 with a new parish name “Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee” and includes Swan Hill, Lake Boga, Lalbert, Sea Lake, and Nandaly churches. Mass is offered once a month at Culgoa.

Culgoa Eucharistic Procession, 1950–1990

(By Val Sewell)

The inaugural Eucharistic Procession took place in 1950 under the direction of the late Fr. Gerald G. Payne, who had succeeded the late Fr. William J. Davis, Parish Priest at Sea Lake for some 33 years.

This spiritual occasion, held to honour Christ the King, was advertised and promoted far and wide by Fr. Payne using an amplifier attached to his Dodge sedan. After early Mass, almost the entire Catholic community of all ages “swung into action”, removing pews to the outside and erecting the outdoor altar, organ, pulpit, and the huge cross base.

Colourful aerial bunting and flags fluttered in the breeze. Two 20-foot wire netting crosses at the north and east ends were decorated with vibrant spring flowers and greenery. In front of the altar, a huge cross was marked out and filled with thousands of individual flower petals. The children were mainly responsible for stripping the flower heads and placing the petals, resulting in a spectacular floral cross. Friends from other denominations kindly donated flowers for the crosses.

Fr. Payne also had bomb shells painted silver and used them as markers for the Procession course. As the Rosary was recited, a visiting priest had the honour of carrying the Monstrance, which held the Blessed Sacrament. The canopy bearers were members of the Holy Name Society and local parishioners. Children of Mary and young women were present, along with a large number of priests, altar boys, nuns, banner bearers, and flower girls wearing white frocks and veils, who scattered petals along the Procession course.

I can recall, as a teenager and banner bearer, wearing a shot taffeta ballerina frock—as did many other girls. Everyone complied with Fr. Payne’s requests without exception.

Usually, a Redemptorist priest preached an inspiring homily to the large crowd. Some arrived by bus, bringing with them many nuns from various orders, the Children of Mary, clergy, and altar boys.

This public display of faith concluded with Benediction.



• Fr. Payne.

Afterwards, the crowds adjourned to the Culgoa Public Hall to enjoy a complementary afternoon tea amidst much fellowship. The late Anne Walsh organised a delectable and “special” afternoon tea for the nuns, served in the hall’s cloakrooms.

The final Procession was held in 1990, inside the church due to inclement weather. Over the course of 40 years, thousands of devout



• The old church (pictured on the left) built 1906.

and loyal Christians and their families paid homage to Christ the King, receiving many blessings through their enduring faith and loyalty. For those who attended annually, the Eucharistic Procession was something of a reunion.

Fr. Payne was a man of great faith and vision. Culgoa’s Sacred Heart parishioners are indeed honoured to have him at rest in their cemetery.

Father Payne

(From Back to St. Mary’s Sea Lake 1958–1983 booklet)

During his time in the parish, Fr. Payne undertook a wide variety of work. His whole purpose was to teach the young the right path to God.

In addition to establishing the school, he also initiated the Culgoa Eucharistic Festival, which united Catholics from miles around. Buses transported people from as far

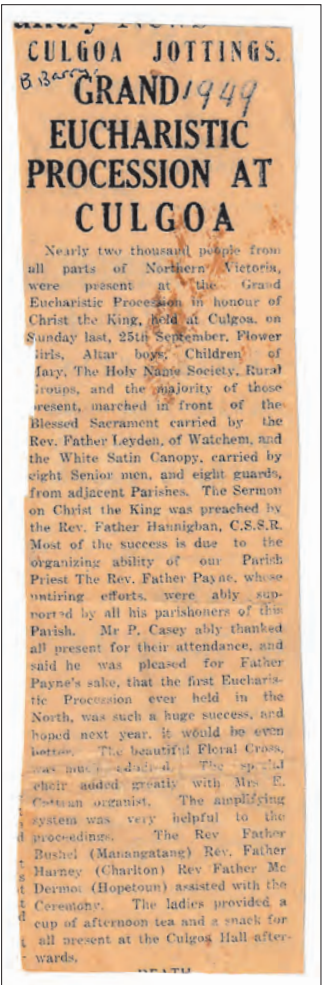
away as Swan Hill and Charlton.

Nuns and priests were invited to participate in the procession. Younger girls wore their First Communion dresses and scattered rose petals in front of the Monstrance, while the older girls carried the banners.

Following the procession, everyone was provided with afternoon tea at the Culgoa Hall, generously hosted by the Ladies of the Guilds.



• New church built 1926.



• Culgoa Jottings c1949.



• Procession circa 1926. People from all over the district used attend the Eucharistic procession once held there.



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A Footballer's Story

[From Wycheproof Probus Club]

The proud son of Wycheproof, football legend Mervyn Keane, was the Probus Club's September meeting speaker.

Merv played junior football with Wycheproof-Naraport before being recruited to Richmond, and playing VFL grand finals with that club.

Merv began by explaining his recent busy week, with Saturday in St Arnaud getting a feel for the opponents for the coming footy grand final.

Then the highlight of the week on Tuesday being a guest at the awarding of Mancel Giddings's OAM at Government House in Melbourne. Merv divulged that he had been helpful (by the advocacy of Peta Credlin) in fast tracking Mancel's nomination, reducing the processing time from years to one year.

Wednesday he was back at his new farmhouse at Wycheproof South. The old house had succumbed to the termites with only the chimney and dunny remaining. Now he has both a brand new house and full-size tennis court. He invited his old tennis mates in attendance to come and play any time.

Merv loves Wycheproof, which he left 55 years ago to follow his football dream, after a long time of kicking the football at home. His forefathers began settlement here in 1876 with a 30 acre allotment, but it took another 20 years before they could buy more land in the area. Merv spoke fondly of the many historic buildings in the town and hopes that the future will see them both retained and restored as necessary.

Books and Anecdotes

Merv has written two books – "You don't understand" and "Playing with the Field". He described the lad Anthony McDonald-Tipungwuti who is the subject of the first book. Anthony is from the Tiwi Islands, near Darwin, and his father had died when he was 2 years old, leaving

him with Anthony's alcoholic mother. He met a white lady, Jane McDonald, at school in Tiwi and when her husband died Anthony asked her to take him back to Gippsland, Victoria, with her. She virtually adopted Anthony, teaching him English and helping him attend school. He struggled with education and only passed some year 11 subjects, which was similar to Merv.

Merv recruited Anthony to the Essendon football club and he played his first AFL game in 2016. Merv visited the Tiwi Islands three times while writing his book. He believed that their shared experiences of isolation, spending all their time kicking the footy and lack of education bonded him to Anthony.

Merv also told some of the anecdotes in his book including the one called "Fire on Grassy Hill" where after a very hot summer day playing tennis (which had been suspended due to heat), Merv and his mates decided to go up Mount Wycheproof. Horsing around they started to clump grass together and put a match to it and then stamp out the fire. Unfortunately, the whole thing took off and despite all attempts it continued to burn. With the fire out of control the group ran away. Merv ended up under his Nanna's bed. He could hear the sirens starting and imagined the fire burning down the houses in Mount Street and the school. However, eventually when he stuck his head out, the place was all quiet. Apparently, the fire had been put out by the competent Fire Brigade.

Richmond

His last tale described when he was recruited to Richmond footy club in the late 1970s. Richmond legend Alan Schwab drove up to

Wycheproof in his Cadillac and had told Merv to meet him under the peppercorn tree (the name of the chapter in his book). Alan said to him "Merv we are going to make you into a champion." He now suspects this may have been a standard line used for new recruits; however, at the time it resonated with Merv, and he went to Melbourne.

After 6 months of not feeling worthy of being in the team, he was put in the back line and found his place. At the time he lived with Kevin Sheedy's mother, where his board helped her to support her own children, having lost her husband. Merv describes the experience at the Sheedy's as similar to living in an asylum. The place was packed with boarders, boyfriends, daughters- and sons-in-law.

Merv concluded his talk by answering a few questions from the footy loving audience members, and with a huge round of applause, and thanks from the president, the meeting closed.

Mystery Bus Tour

Some of the Wycheproof Club members had an entertaining day being led by our events organisers on a mystery bus trip in September.

We did not know where we were going, so watched with interest the route the bus took, to see if we could guess where we may be going!

We arrived in Bendigo at the Central Deborah Gold Mine and had a good look around at the displays, and enjoyed morning tea and biscuits.

We then travelled on the historic Bendigo talking tram. We saw the sights and were informed on history of the adjoining properties to the tramline. We also learnt the interesting history of the Bendigo trams, with a battery operated tram the first tram in the town in the late 1800s. Completely unsuccessful as the batteries at that time were not strong enough, and so horses were often used to pull the tram home!

Being in the middle of the day we had what the conductor called a full excursion, as for some of the other passengers it was standing room only!

We next had a good inspection of the Peppergreen Farm, to see what vegetables and flowers were being grown there, and what is in season. We then had a delightful relaxed meal prepared by the on-site training crew there. A big surprise was in store for Des and Lyn Nichols to find their grand-daughter is part of the cooking team, and had a wonderful reunion.

The members who attended the bus trip felt that was a very pleasant day, and well worth the commitment to a full day's excursion, and were most appreciative of the organisers of the day.



• Pictured from left: Des Nichols, Lyn Nichols, Jenny Mead, Clare Keane, Ian Marquis, Jill Grant, Rob Grylls, Mary-Anne Duke and Martin Duke at the entrance to Peppergreen Farm.

While Working at Heights... Firefighter Safety Enhanced

CFA is further enhancing the safety of its firefighters while working at heights with five new props recently added to its training centres across the state.

The \$8 million project included the construction of Safe Work at Heights props at CFA's Victorian Emergency Management Training Centres (VEMTC) at Sunraysia, West Sale, Longerenong, Penhurst and Central Highlands.

The existing prop at Huntly VEMTC has also been upgraded and plans are underway for Bangholme VEMTC to receive the new prop soon.

Acting Deputy Chief Officer Operational Doctrine and Training David Maxwell joined other dignitaries to officially handover the five new props at Central Highlands VEMTC.

Roof Access

"Safe Work at Heights training allows CFA members to safely access roofs that

aren't already fire affected," David said.

"The prop involves the use of a harness, ropes and anchoring to create a safe system for our members to access areas above two metres high.

"It allows the rigging of the system in a controlled environment under supervision, preparing our members for real-life scenarios.

"The training also closely aligns with other emergency services, allowing for cross agency support in multi-agency situations.

"This not only improves our safety and capability at incidents in Victoria; it also allows us to further support our interstate partners by deploying our

members to emergencies interstate when required.

Training Courses

"We've proudly delivered more than 160 of these specialised training courses to more than 900 members across the state, which accredited 140 brigades for Safe Work at Heights operations."

The training prop also has the ability to conduct Low Voltage Fuse Removal training which enables our members to disconnect overhead mains power to a structure at an emergency with specialist equipment.

CFA's VEMTC sites and props are also widely utilised by other emergency services and agencies, providing a broad range of practical skills and services to train members in a safe environment.



• Ballan and Geelong West firefighters.



• Wycheproof's proud son Merv Keane addressing the September Probus meeting.

New Crop of Contenders: Wheat Varieties for 2026

Growers are seeking wheat varieties that deliver both high yields and good disease resistance.

Many indicated at BCG's Main Field Day on Wednesday, September 10, that they plan to move beyond the popular Scepter and introduce new wheat varieties into their 2026 cropping rotations across north-west Victoria.

In the cereal variety session, "Top performers & ones to watch", BCG Research Agronomist Anna Marcus said, "Scepter is our baseline variety and most of the time, when a new variety is released, a common question is 'Is it better than Scepter?'"

Forty-eight wheat varieties were on display in the Grains Research and Development Corporation's (GRDC) funded wheat National Variety Trial (NVT) at BCG's Main Field Day. Wheat breeders from RAGT, Longreach, Intergrain and AGT were also in attendance to speak about the new varieties they have coming through.

During the session, growers reported they are considering varieties such as Shotgun, Matador, Calibre, Rockstar and Tomahawk CL next year, and keeping a portion of Scepter due to its high and reliable yield returns.

Important Consideration

Residue management is an important consideration when selecting a new variety. Due to a late start in many regions this year, the nine-month plantback period requirement for some residual chemicals applied this year may cause damage to emerging crops next year.

"If you're looking for a Clearfield variety, Tomahawk might be a good option," Ms Marcus added. "It has high yielding APW quality and a similar disease package to Scepter."

Highlighted

Some of the highlighted varieties and their characteristics presented by Ms Marcus:

- Murray: has one year's worth of data but showing promising yield results across the Wimmera, Mallee and North Central. APW quality.
- Matador: a few growers have already made the switch in the North Central. It's high yielding and has a slightly better disease rating than Scepter.

• Shotgun: a high yielding alternative to Scepter for the Wimmera.

• Rockstar: a high yielding alternative to Scepter for the North Central.

• Colt: A Yitpi type variety. AH quality and a good disease package. Has provisional triple rust resistance (stem, leaf and stripe). Flexibility around sowing time.

Grower Engagement

The high level of grower engagement at BCG's Main Field Day highlighted both the appetite for innovation and the careful consideration required when selecting new wheat varieties. With so many options on the table, decisions will ultimately come down to striking the right balance between yield, disease resistance, market opportunities and agronomic fit.

BCG's ongoing variety evaluation and extension work, supported by GRDC, will continue to provide growers with independent insights to guide confident decision making for future seasons.



• Growers are seeking wheat varieties that deliver both high yields and good disease resistance. Many indicated at BCG's Main Field Day on Wednesday September 10, that they plan to move beyond the popular Scepter and introduce new wheat varieties into their 2026 cropping rotations across north-west Victoria.

Strapping Good Photographs

Racing was held in glorious weather on September 13, and Donald's Matthew Rigby was trackside at the Donald club's most recent meeting.

Matt is well known for his racing enthusiasm and with his good eye for photography, he captures many of those personalities involved with the behind-the-scenes action of racing.

Pictured on this page are some of the recent runners at Donald's September meeting with their strappers. Strappers are responsible for the care of the horse while it is not on the track: tacking up, walking and warming up, cooling down and hosing off, amongst other things.

There is so much behind-the-scenes work that goes into country racing, not just what happens on the racecourse proper. It takes many hands doing many tasks to get these horses to the finish line. Next time you're at the track, be sure to thank one of these many people for their contribution to the action.

The next Donald race meeting will be the upcoming cup event on November 16. The club urges racegoers to get their bookings in early as tickets are selling fast, particularly the "Views Package" in the clubhouse, so don't miss out.

Additionally, with the start of the new season comes the time for membership renewals, and new members will be warmly welcomed. At a reasonable cost of \$50 per year and \$80 for doubles, it is well worth supporting your local racing club, which supports so many in your community.



• Race 6 winner, Count Ida, with strapper Ashlee Smith. Photo by Matthew Rigby



• Race 5 winner, Ripper, with strapper Emily Brown. Photo by Matthew Rigby



• Race 3 winner, Oraqua, with strapper Lee Purchase. Photo by Matthew Rigby

Don't Let Your Campfire Ruin Everyone's Grand Final

This Grand Final Long Weekend is a great opportunity for Victorians – and maybe even some inter-staters – to show off their ball skills at the MCG and campfire skills in our parks and forests.

The Conservation Regulator Victoria, CFA, Parks Victoria, and Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) are reminding campers about the importance of knowing the rules around campfire safety to protect fellow footy fans and the environment from the dangers of an escaped campfire.

"Anyone planning to have a campfire must check the weather conditions before

they go camping. They need to know if a Total Fire Ban is in place and what they can and can't do wherever they are going," said CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan.

Many people try to put out campfires incorrectly with soil, or not enough water to extinguish them completely. Fires that haven't been properly extinguished can smoulder under soil for days and reignite in the right conditions.

Make Sure

"If you are building a campfire, make sure you know how to build a safe one, don't leave it unattended while it is alight, put it out with water, not soil, and remember – if you light, you own it!" said Chris Hardman, Chief Fire Officer, Forest Fire Management Victoria.

To ensure campfires are safe:

- Before you light a fire always check fire restrictions, including whether a Total Fire

Ban is in place. Download the VicEmergency app or go to <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/>

- Plan ahead and consider alternatives for cooking such as a portable butane cooktop.

- Always follow the designated rules of your campsite. In national parks, fires can only be lit in purpose-built fireplaces unless marked otherwise.

- The campfire must not exceed one square metre, and three metres above and around your fire must be clear of flammable material.

- Branches and logs on your campfire must be no

longer than one metre.

- Don't leave a campfire unattended. An adult must stay within a 50-metre line of sight.

- Extinguish a campfire with at least 10 litres of water every time you leave the site.

- All rubbish must be taken home with you, not burned.

Report unattended campfires to DEECA at 136 186 or call 000 to report a bushfire.

For more on campfire rules go to: <https://www.vic.gov.au/campfires-stoves-and-bbqs>

Officers Visiting

"Our authorised officers will be visiting campsites

throughout Victoria's parks and forests making sure everyone is following the rules so we can all have a safe and enjoyable long weekend," said Kate Gavens, Chief Conservation Regulator.

"It Only Takes One"

"We want people to get out and enjoy Victoria's great outdoors, but unsafe campfires can have devastating consequences. It only takes one camper ignoring the rules to endanger the community and our environment," said Chris Mercier, Manager, Enforcement Capability, Parks Victoria.



• Part of the large crowd (several were “camera shy”).

Great Numbers for All Abilities Bowls

It was a perfect day for the Annual All Abilities Lawn Bowling event at the Stawell Bowling Club on Thursday, September 18, 2025.

This event is an initiative of the Access For All Abilities program (inclusive sport and recreation for all abilities) which is funded by Sport & Recreation of Victoria. Favourite AFL football colours was once again the theme for the event so there was a great mix of colour on and off the greens for the day.

Rhonda Allan, of the Mallee Sports Assembly, Wycheproof, once again liaised with the Stawell Bowling Club to “open” its doors for people of all abilities. As usual, it was very co-operative to support inclusive sport and recreation.

“The club is an ideal central regional location that is fully accessible and also has the right equipment to assist participants with limited mobility for the game of bowls,” Rhonda states.

“Each year its volunteer members are in full support to assist with the facilitation of the event.”

Many of our local lawn bowling clubs have now commenced their season so it is an ideal time to conduct the program hoping it encourages the participants to join up with their local clubs, even if it is only on a social basis.

Other partners for the event were Matt Jolly from the Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly (Horsham), Caitlin Johnston and Matt Begbie from Sports Central (Ballarat), and Peter Williams from Bowls Australia who were also on deck to assist on the day. Josh Thorton from

Bowls Vic. was an apology for the event.

The venue was decorated in helium balloons that were the colours of the remaining four AFL teams in the finals being Brisbane Lions, Geelong Cats, Collingwood and Hawthorn (thanks to Caitlin), and posters to add to the theme. Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly brought along bottled water for everyone. Peter assisted those involved with the lawn bowling and modified equipment was used to increase participation opportunities.

Rhonda welcomed everyone while they were having a quick cuppa and biscuit after arriving. All participants are graded before the day and were placed in different skill level sections. There was a level to suit every ability.

The Jack Attack kit provided a modified game to encourage increased participation. This equipment assists the new-comers and participants with limited ability with their game. This was very popular giving their game another angle of approach. There was also a tube device set up which allowed people with limited movement to join in on the game. There was plenty of action on all greens during the day.

Following play, everyone enjoyed a barbecue lunch and fresh fruit platters prepared by the Stawell Bowling Club. A big thank you to the club for hosting the day. Numbers were similar to last year; there

were 48 participants (people of all abilities), 24 staff/carers, 4 sports staff (Regional Sports Assemblies), 1 State Sporting Association and approx. 9 Stawell Bowling Club volunteers in attendance, making the total of 88 people which was excellent. Well done to all the supportive staff and carers that came along to assist and encourage the participants and help make it such a successful event.

The Stawell Bowling Club assisted with coaching, cooking and serving the food—a job well done and much appreciated by all. The volunteers also provided bowling equipment required for participation. At the close of the event, Rhonda presented club member Rita Pyke of the Stawell Bowling Club a “Certificate of Appreciation” for the continued support to inclusive sport and recreation. All participants were given a “Certificate of Participation” (developed by Bowls Vic) and everyone went home very happy with the day.

People travelled from all directions and there were participants and staff from the following: Pinnacle Powerhouse, Stawell; All About Care, Nhill; Grampian Giants, Ararat; Pinnacle, Gordon Street, Ararat; Pinnacle Inc, Viewpoint St, Ararat; Woodbine, Warracknabeal; Woodbine, Horsham; McCallum Day Services, Alfredton.

A great day was had by all, and here’s hoping to see more attend the 2026 event.



• Perfect day for participation



• Left to right: Matt Begbie and Caitlin Johnston (both from Sports Central, Ballarat); Rhonda Allan (Mallee Sports Assembly, Wycheproof); Matt Jolly (Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly, Horsham).



• Plenty of action on the greens.

It’s Tennis Time

Donald Lawn Tennis Club is calling for names from those who might be interested in playing competition tennis on Saturdays (and the occasional Friday night) in North Central Lawn Tennis Association’s 2025-2026 season.

Players play three sets (two men’s or two women’s as well as a third mixed set) in two sections. All players of whatever ability are welcome. Donald will be running two teams this coming season which begins on Saturday, October 11.

If interested, text your name to the Donald Lawn Tennis Club’s president on 0439 971 362 or search online for Donald Lawn Tennis Club’s Facebook page, and leave your name and contact details there.

All welcome!



• Darcy Harrison chips back toward the 18th scrape after overshooting to the bowling green fence during the “Chicken Run” on Friday night.



(By Course Language)

There were no takers for golf last weekend. With the footy finished most people took the opportunity to get away or just relax with family and friends.

The course is already starting to be “packed away”, so to speak. The ladies have started on the scrapes, blowing the sand in from the edges and all the signs, tee markers, cups, flags, scrapers and signs have already been brought in. Thanks to those members who have helped so far, and to the others, keep an eye out for working bees to follow in the next few weeks.

Junior Golf

The juniors had their last night of golf last Friday. The winners were Luca Rice, Liam Stopps and Josh Woods. After golf all juniors enjoyed a snag or two and a soft drink kindly supplied by the golf club. Many thanks also go to Harvest Café for their support of the juniors again this year, their pizza vouchers were certainly highly sought throughout the year.

Chicken Run

The final chicken run was also held Friday night with another great roll up. There were plenty of prizes given out, but I think the majority

went to Brod. Harrison, closely followed by Jon and Margot Paynter, who must be getting tired of cooking up the chooks they’ve won over the last few weeks. Thanks to Brad and Glenda from Spuds for sponsoring the chickens and the Donald Bakery for the savouries and other tasty treats they’ve supplied to snack on after the golf.

Coming Up

There is a Fara Day at Wedderburn today to support the Friedrich Ataxia Research Association. All monies raised will be donated to this cause, as they don’t receive government funding.

Other than that, there will be trips organised over summer every now and then, so keep an eye out for those messages and also a reminder that Mt. Xavier tournament is coming up in a few weeks, so get yourself organised and support them as they are great supporters of our tournament.

Finally, thank you to the “Buloke Times” for the

opportunity to place these write-ups in the paper. Even though a few of the Dad Jokes have been censored during the year (have to keep Robin on his toes), the forum you provide is an important part of what makes up the communities within the Buloke Shire and your readership area. Congratulations on your 150th year, and hopefully there are many more to come.

Dad Jokes

What’s the difference between Swine Flu and Bird Flu? – one needs oinkment and one needs tweetment.

A child asked his father whether they were Pyromaniacs? – he said “Yes, we arson”.

My wife and I are proof that opposites attract: she likes to talk, and I like to pretend that I’m listening.

I told my daughter, “Go to bed, the cows are sleeping in the field.” She asked “What’s that got to do with anything?” I said, “That means it’s pasture bedtime”.



• Brod Harrison putts on the 18th scrape during the “Chicken Run” on Friday night. The photographer promised that she wouldn’t use the next photo frames that show the ball sitting on the edge next to the ball already there.



• Jo Beavis celebrates as her putt falls in the cup on the final hole of the “Chicken Run”. Behind her is Mary Herben, ready to clean up.



• Group 1 of the final week of Junior golf on Friday night, left to right: Luca Rice, Chase Campbell and Lyric Davis.



• Group 2 of the final week of Junior golf, left to right: Isaiah Stirling, Liam Stopps and Abe Beavis.



• Group 3 of the final week of Junior golf on Friday night, left to right: Sophie Duynhoven and Josh Wood. Absent from photo Tobey King.



• Back row: Edwin Jince, Rosie Fitzpatrick, Sophie Roberts. Front row: Finn Schofield, Alodia Acantilado.

Charlton Completes Badminton Season

• Continued from page 16. the parents. The following awards were presented to the juniors:

Most Improved, Sophie Roberts; Most Improved in the beginners, Edwin Jince; All Rounder, Rosie Fitzpatrick; Rae Heenan's, Finn Scholfield; Rae Heenan's 1st year player, Alodia Acantilado.

Each week the club had 5 different sections.

Section 1: Sharks winner, Liam Monaghan; runner-up, Charlie Zagame.

Section 2: Stingrays winner, Clancy Bourke; runner-up, Darcy Olive.

Section 3: Jellyfish winner, Tom McGurk.

Section 4: Seals winner, Shalmaine Drummond; runner-up, Nate Lane.

Section 5: Dolphins winner, Mia Wright; runner-up, Lila Lanyon.

Then overall scores for girls' aggregate winner, Lila Scholfield; runner-up, Lily Lane.

Boys' aggregate winner, Liam Monaghan; runner-up, Charlie Zagame.

Beginners' aggregate, Nate Lane; runner-up, Shalmaine Drummond.

Thank you to those who sponsored the junior presentation.

A very big thank you to the parents who came and did their duty, as it makes the running of juniors so much easier for the organisers. The club

says a big thank you to Leigh Van Boven, who came along each week and umpired.

To all juniors, it is hoped to see you back again next season and all enjoy your summer sports, whatever you choose to play.

MICHAELS OF DONALD

bring you

Belvedere

By George Crenshaw
www.belvedere-cartoons.com

3-13

"And what makes you think anyone will buy bone flavoured icecream ?!"



• High School Age Basketball Clinic, left to right: Riley Jones, Noah Michael, Jack Reilly, Hugo Funcke, Emmett Geddes, Lithil Hitthamillage, Charlie Burke, Liam Stopps, Max Reilly, Chase Campbell, Lyric Davis, Damien Frankling, Layla Griffiths, Victory Davis and Ivy Frost.

Students Prepare for New Basketball Season

On Monday, September 22, former Donald resident, Damien Frankling, ran two coaching sessions for Donald Amateur Basketball Association ahead of their season starting mid October.

One session was for Primary Aged students and another for High School Aged students.

Damien currently is a domestic coach for the Williamstown Cannons and is also a current high level rep coach with the Altona Gators in the Victorian Junior Basketball League.

The sessions were fantastic and it's hoped to get Damien back again for more sessions in January.



• Primary School Age Basketball Clinic, left to right: Aki Norton, Jack Pearse, Ross Clark, Damien Frankling (middle), Ted Pearse (in background with ball), Joshua Woods, Marlie Adams, Jordan Jones, Anabel Robinson, Holly Goldsmith and Indi Goldsmith.

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8195

ACROSS

- 6. Dog (10)
- 8. Curve (4)
- 9. Wet (4)
- 10. Soak (5)
- 11. Dye (4)
- 12. Broke (9)
- 16. Worthy (9)
- 20. Shrub (4)
- 22. Approximately (5)
- 23. Entrance (4)
- 24. Fish (4)
- 25. Uncontrite (10)

DOWN

- 1. Herb (6)
- 2. Reptile (7)
- 3. Slave (6)
- 4. Muscle (6)
- 5. Unsuitable (5)
- 7. Perfume (5)
- 13. Tree (3)
- 14. Mischievous (7)
- 15. Should (5)
- 17. Sagging (6)
- 18. Aim (6)
- 19. Concealed (6)
- 21. Custom (5)

• Solution next issue.

Church Notices

ANGLICAN "Parish of Charlton-Donald"

Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird
0435 593 395

Friday, October 3
St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, October 5
St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.

www.granitecommunitychurch.com

At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.
Speaker: David Molyneaux
Baptist Union of Victoria

Charlton Completes Badminton Season

The 2025 Charlton Wednesday night badminton season came to a close on Wednesday, September 10, with the annual presentation dinner held at the Vale of Avoca.

Thirty-one people attended to enjoy a two course meal before presentations were made by president, Ethan Needs, to the winners and runners-up of the various events held during the season.

The Charlton Badminton Club singles championships were won this year by Troy Heenan, making it title number seven, and Naomi Fitzpatrick getting her name on the perpetual trophy for the first time. The two perpetual trophies, which were commenced in 1981, had been filled, so the club has revamped the trophies, keeping the historic record, but making room for many more years to come.

A raffle was also drawn during the night with Sandra Fanning winning the badminton racquet and Tom McGurk receiving a nice basket of chocolate assortments.

The club is very grateful to receive sponsorship from Teys Australia – Charlton Feedlot to help keep our fees at a reasonable level. Thanks also go to Bernadette Zagame and Rae Heenan for purchasing all the trophies and gifts, and to Rae for the table decorations.

The 2025 trophy recipients are all listed below.

Singles: Men's "A" grade, Troy Heenan; runner-up, Thomas Aykara.

"B" grade, Leigh Van Boven; runner-up Lachlan Start.

Ladies' "A" grade, Naomi Fitzpatrick; runner-up Sandra Fanning.

Doubles: Men's "A" grade, Thomas Aykara and Soni Easo; runners-up, Lachlan Holmes-Brown and Seb Zagame. "B" grade, Fletcher Holmes-Brown and Joe Monaghan; runners-up Henry Bourke and Brian Heenan.

Ladies' "A" grade, Abby and Lara Thompson; runners-up Sandra Fanning and Naomi Fitzpatrick.

"B" grade Lauren Riley and Stacy Thompson; runners-up Janette Wain and Bernadette Zagame.

Mixed doubles: "A" grade Troy and Rae Heenan; runners-up Ethan Needs and Naomi Fitzpatrick.

"B" grade: Ethan Soulsby and Lara Thompson; runners-up Peter Morrison and Val Bourke.

Men's aggregate, Troy Heenan; runner-up Thomas Aykara.

Ladies' aggregate, Lara Thompson; runners-up Claudia Lee.

Sections: 1, Troy Heenan; 2, Leigh Van Boven; 3, Jordan Start.

Charlton Ladies

The ladies just completed another successful winter badminton season that comprised 17 weeks of play, plus one week for the Annual Tournament, which saw 38 ladies from Geelong, Bendigo, Horsham, Ballarat and our own locals compete

in grades of friendly competition.

There were 16 ladies registered for weekly games with an average of 12 each Friday. On some weeks, they were joined by ladies from the Bendigo Association, thus adding depth and variation to the list.

At the completion of the winter season, Lisa Bruns was the winner of section 1, with Donna Sexton filling the runner-up position. Section 2 winner was Bernadette Zagame, with Maree Hooper the runner-up. The aggregate winner was Bernadette Zagame, and the runner-up, Lisa Bruns.

The Summer Competition will commence on Friday, October 10, at 9 a.m. in the stadium, and the invitation is there for any ladies to come and have a hit. Children are most welcome and will be looked after in the stadium foyer by those not playing at the time.

For any more details, please call on 0427 582 805, or 0419 915 519.

Junior Badminton

The junior season this year was very well supported with 42 juniors, ages being 9 years and 15 years, taking part in the weekly ladder system. Each week was well attended, making competition very good. The break-up and presentation night on September 2, and was well supported by

• Continued on page 15.



• The photo above is the 2025 Charlton Badminton Club Singles Champions Troy Heenan and Naomi Fitzpatrick.



• Pictured are Lisa Bruns, Bernadette Zagame and Maree Hooper.



• Back: Tom McGurk, Nate Lane, Liam Monaghan, Charlie Zagame. Front: Lily Lane, Lila Schofield, Lila Lanyon, Mia Wright, Clancy Bourke.

Donald Bowlers Down to Nyah

Donald played Nyah in bowls, with Nyah winning by ten shots.

David Romeo's team of P. and K. Wyllie and M. Wolski went down by 9, David winning 5 of the last 6 ends.

Acky Anderson's team of W. Hegarty, B. Milne and J. Meyer at end 13, 6 in front, lost the next 5 ends to be down 5, came back to gain a draw.

G. Eveurard, N. Barber, E. Adams and M. Quick struggled at 21 to 3 down, but improved after afternoon tea, losing by 6.

Lastly, Hunter, I. McEwen, C. Perry and Bo won 12 of 25 ends, including two 5s, with Hunter playing great draw bowls.

A good day was had by all.

Trash to Treasure

One person's Trash is another's Treasure!

Turn your Trash into Cash by advertising it for sale in the "Times" classified pages.

Phone the Donald office (5497 1222),

or Birchip (5492 2735);

Fax direct (5497 1407); or

email advertising@buloketimes.com