

DONALD

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The Buloke Times

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



“Aussies by Design” – and by Preference

They love being Australians – and they loved being at Donald’s Foletti Caravan Park for a five-day break, despite the early Spring weather.

Pictured are members of the “Humpy Club”, whose caravans, “Aussie by Design”, are the product of “Humpback Caravans”, of Wallaroo, South Australia.

The club was formed in Alford, South Australia, about ten years ago, and travels interstate to selected destinations for social gatherings every year.

Club member, Peter Hatcher, told the “Times” at the weekend that all travel

arrangements are made annually within the group.

“Dockets are kept from our purchases, and relevant councils are informed of how much we have spent in their area,” he said.

“We also have a ‘swear jar’, with proceeds going to a worthy cause such as the Flying Doctor Service – or, in this case, to the Donald Football Club, which manages the caravan park.”

As for the “Aussies by Design” caravans, Peter said

they vary in length from 14 to 40 feet – from single to triple axles.

• *Above: Circle of friends: Club members are rugged up and relaxed at the caravan park during the weekend.*

• *Right: Caravans alongside the caravan park lake and its island. More than 30 vans have been counted there in recent days. (Aerial photo by Jodie Drake.)*



The Madness of Emergency Services Taxes

As local government rates notices hit letterboxes across the state, farmers are highlighting the madness of the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund Tax (ESVF) now hitting the pockets of Victorian homeowners.

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) President Brett Hosking said the mounting outrage is adding more weight to calls to scrap massive increases in the tax.

“People are opening their rates notices to reveal this

new cash grab by the State Government,” he said.

“If you’re a homeowner, take a moment to consider that a farmer would be forced to pay 166 per cent of what you’re paying for a property

of the same value.

“The lunacy is, if I’m a homeowner and my neighbour’s house catches fire, people call 000. As a farmer and volunteer firefighter, if my neighbour has a fire, they

call us. Through the CFA we are the fire department and we’ll be slugged this backward tax for the privilege.”

The VFF has warned that the tax could exacerbate existing financial pressures on farming families, who already shoulder the cost of maintaining firebreaks, equipment, and volunteer firefighting commitments.

“It’s not just a tax, it’s a fundamental misunderstanding of who is already paying and protecting the community,” Mr Hosking said.

“There is absolutely no support for this tax...not from the fire services, not from local councils and overwhelmingly not from farmers and regional communities.”

• *Right: Brett Hosking.*



A Flag of Unity in Challenging Times

On Wednesday, September 3, an Australian flag flew proudly over the Birchip Cenotaph in a powerful symbol on Australian National Flag Day.

On this day in 1901, the Australian National Flag was raised for the first time above Melbourne’s Royal Exhibition Building. Nearly a century later, in 1996, the Governor General proclaimed September 3, as Australian National Flag Day.

The sight of the Australian flag is not only a symbol of history, though. It serves as a reminder of the strength, resilience and unity that binds our communities together, and the multicultural spirit that defines modern Australia.

While the Union Jack reflects our British heritage, the flag today flies above a nation enriched by people from every corner of the world.

The Commonwealth Star, with its seven points representing states and territories, symbolises inclusiveness, bringing diverse communities together under one shared identity.

The Southern Cross, visible only in our skies, connects all who call Australia home, regardless of where their journey began.

Multiculturalism

In towns like Birchip and across Buloke Shire, multiculturalism is lived daily. Doctors, nurses, engineers, hospitality staff, agricultural workers, partners of local farmers and many others, from many nations contribute

enormously to the fabric of our way of life.

Their skills, cultures and experiences sustain our health services, support farms, boost local businesses and broaden the social tapestry of our small towns. Their presence is a living example of the values of inclusion and unity that the flag represents.

Unifying Thread

More than an emblem, the flag is a unifying thread connecting generations. It has witnessed hardship and triumph alike, flying through times of war, natural disaster, sporting celebrations and cultural achievements.

On National Flag Day, its

presence at cenotaphs carries resonance because these memorials honour the sacrifices of servicemen and women, and the flag above them is a solemn pledge that their courage is remembered.

As the flag flutters above schools, shire buildings, homes and cenotaphs around Australia, on National Flag Day and every other day, it provides an opportunity to reflect on the values of respect, fairness and community that our flag represents.

The same values reflected every day in the lives of those who contribute to the strength and diversity of our small towns and the wider Buloke community.



• The flag raised over the Birchip Cenotaph.



Police Beat

Gannawarra

Burglary: Between 4 p.m. on Sunday the 24th of August and 1 p.m. on Tuesday the 26th, offenders have attended a property on Chugg’s Road, Cohuna. They have forced entry to a building and stolen a cash register.

Burglary: Between 1 p.m. on Saturday the 23rd of August and 7.30 a.m. on Monday the 25th, offenders have attended a property on Western Road, Cohuna. A white 2009 Hino truck was stolen from the address. The truck had a homemade box trailer attached and this was carrying a 2014 Koba U35 excavator.

Swan Hill

Vehicle theft: Between 5 p.m. on Tuesday the 26th of August, and 10 a.m. on Saturday, a 2011 silver Toyota Hilux ute has been stolen from a property on Pentel Island Road, Pentel Island.

Damage: Between 6 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday the 27th of August, force was used to break a keysafe at a property in Campbell Street, Swan Hill. The key was used to gain entry to the home. The offender was making himself at home when the owner became aware someone was at the property without permission. Police attended and located a 41-year-old male. He was arrested, charged and bailed to attend court at a later date.



Swooping Season is Here Again: Look Up, Victoria!

As the weather gets warmer and the days longer, we also start to see the occasional swooping bird. Native birds enter their breeding season in spring, and some may get protective of their young.

Lachlan Clarke, Manager Statewide Wildlife Advisory Services at the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) said: “Swooping is a normal, temporary behaviour for native birds like magpies, butcherbirds and masked lapwings to defend their eggs and chicks for a short time while their young are most vulnerable.

“Think of it as a warning sign. They’re telling you to keep your distance. While it can be a bit unsettling, it’s rare for them to make contact.”

Swooping can occur in both urban and rural areas, including parks, gardens, and along bike paths.

“Not all birds swoop during the breeding season, so the presence of magpies or other common swooping birds does not necessarily

mean you will be swooped,” Mr Clarke said.

This behaviour only lasts a short time, usually ending once the young have left the nest.

Some Steps

If you are worried about being caught out by a protective bird this spring, here are some steps you can take to feel safe, while also protecting our native birds:

- Avoid known swooping hotspots.
- Move quickly, don’t run if near a swooping bird.
- Wear protective head and eye coverings.
- Don’t harass birds, as this can escalate swooping.
- Don’t feed birds or destroy their nests.

Report a swooping incident on Victoria’s interactive

swooping bird map by visiting: www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/swooping-birds.

All native wildlife is protected by law. Harassing, harming or disturbing native birds and other wildlife is illegal in Victoria and penalties apply.

You can report wildlife crime such as harassing, harming or disturbing wildlife to Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000.

• Photo by Chris Gresham-Britt on Unsplash.



Schools Art Competition Celebrates Pollinators

Students across Australia are invited to be creative and shine a spotlight on the small but mighty pollinators in a new national art competition.

The Schools Pollinator Art Competition gives primary and secondary students the opportunity to learn about pollination and be inspired by the vital role pollinators play in food production and healthy landscapes.

Run by the When Bee Foundation, the Schools Pollinator Art Competition complements the popular Pollinator Photography Competition, which has attracted more than 1,200 entries since its launch in 2022.

Rewards

The primary and secondary school winners will each receive an individual Bees Are Amazing gift hamper and certificate valued at more than \$100, along with a

\$500 voucher to The Centre for Bee Education for a teacher of their choice.

When Bee Foundation CEO Fiona Chambers said she is excited to see the creativity that will come from students across the country.

“The Competition gives students the opportunity to unleash their imagination and creativity while celebrating the incredible diversity and importance of pollinators,” Ms Chambers said.

“The more students who learn about pollination, the more people will understand the vital role pollinators play in securing the food we eat and the landscapes we live in.”

Pollinator Week

The Schools Pollinator Art Competition runs in the lead-up to Australian Pollinator Week which starts on November 8 and ends on November 16. The winning artworks will be judged by the When Bee Foundation based on creativity, originality and how well they capture the world of pollinators.

The Schools Pollinator Art Competition is sponsored by Bee Friendly Farming, Rotarians for Bees and the Centre for Bee Education. Winners will be announced during the Pollinator Art Webinar in Australian Pollinator Week. Entries close Sunday, October 26, at 5 p.m. AEDT.

The Need for a Bushfire Plan

Ahead of the looming fire season, a recent CFA survey revealed that 40 per cent of Victorians living in bushfire-prone areas do not have a bushfire plan in place to save their family.

One in five people in these areas do not believe “leaving early” in a fire emergency is the best way to safeguard their loved ones, and 16 per cent would stay to protect their property.

CFA’s annual post-season bushfire community survey has been conducted every year since 2009 to understand the attitudes, behaviours and preparedness of householders living in bushfire risk locations in Victoria.

Despite the recent AFAC Spring Seasonal Bushfire Outlook indicating increased fire risk across several drought-affected parts of the state, the survey found that out of the 611 people interviewed, 24 per cent did not feel adequately prepared around their home.

Perception

Over the last two years, the survey shows the perception of a bushfire being a threat to Victorians and their property

has declined from very large to small, with 50 per cent of people not showing concern and nearly 40 per cent are not alarmed enough to warrant direct interaction with CFA.

Worryingly, those least concerned, and less likely to be prepared were located just 500 metres to one kilometre from bushland.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan expressed his concerns about the distressing statistics, warning Victorians that now is not the time to be complacent with an earlier and more active fire season predicted.

Never Too Early

“It is never too early to prepare. Don’t gamble with your safety this season. Residents living in high fire-risk areas must take their preparation more seriously,” Jason said.

“Take a moment to sit down with your household and make a plan so everyone

knows what they need to do and where they need to go if a fire threatens your local area.

“It’s easy to panic and make poor decisions if you’re not prepared, and the last thing you want in an emergency is to become trapped. Leaving early is your greatest form of protection.”

A further 31 per cent of respondents would delay leaving until threatened by a bushfire, waiting for the danger to increase or for instructions from emergency services.

Understand the Risks

“It is vital you understand the risks of your residential area and where you are travelling this summer. The best way to do this is to download the VicEmergency App and set your watch zones to your locations so you are alerted to warnings wherever you are,” Jason said.

“Don’t wait for an official warning before you take action to protect your family.

Resources Available

“We have a number of resources available on our website to actively help you prepare before it is too late, and our volunteers are always happy to help you with any questions you may have.”

CFA will be running a Get Fire Ready weekend on Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5, when many brigades will open their doors to connect with local community members, hoping to build public awareness and preparedness across Victoria.

“We’re seeing a concerning decline in property preparedness around Victorian households, so we’re really encouraging you to tidy up around your homes over coming weeks,” Jason said.

“Before the warmer weather arrives, ensure you move your winter piles away from your houses and sheds, give your trees a prune, clear your gutters and maintain the length of your grass.

“Get your emergency kit packed and ready to go, fill it with clothes, medications, toiletries, chargers and blankets and take it with you when you head to shelter.

“As we witnessed throughout the fires in the Grampians last season, the mountain of work done in the lead up to summer can make all the difference in lessening devastation on communities.

Shared Responsibility

“We want to be really clear this summer. Our members will always be prepared and on hand to assist you, but fire safety is a shared responsibility, and everyone has a role to play.

“We cannot have a fire truck at every property during a major bushfire. We need you to do your bit too and take small steps to be more fire safe this year.”

B’n’S Ball Finances Free-to-Use Barbecue

The Donald B’n’S “Duckz Nutz Ball” has once again shown its strong commitment to the local community with the installation of a brand-new, free-to-use barbecue at the Donald Angling Club.

Perfectly positioned by the water, the new facility is already proving to be a welcome addition for locals and visitors looking to enjoy a meal in one of the town’s most relaxing settings.

The barbecue project was fully funded by the Donald B’n’S, with the group proud to be reinvesting funds raised back into the community. It adds to a growing list of initiatives supported by the Donald B’n’S in recent years.

Among these are the organisation’s contribution to the Big Kookaburra, which has quickly become a much-loved town landmark, and the new seating around the football oval at the Donald Recreation Precinct, giving

spectators a more comfortable spot to enjoy local sport.

Beyond infrastructure, the Donald B’n’S also continues to provide ongoing donations to various community groups, ensuring a wide range of local organisations benefit from its support. Including the 2025 Donald Show, which is set to light up the sky with an epic display of fireworks and not only that, but the showgrounds will be illuminated in the week leading up to the show all fully funded by the Donald B’n’S.

A spokesperson from the Donald B’n’S said these projects reflect the group’s passion for “giving back to the community that gets behind us year after year.”

“The Donald barbecue is about more than just one weekend – it’s about making sure the whole town sees the benefits all year round. Whether it’s a barbecue by the lake, a seat at the footy, or backing in our community groups, we’re proud to play a part in keeping Donald strong and connected,” they said.

With more projects in the pipeline, the Donald B’n’S looks forward to continuing its long-standing tradition of combining fun with community spirit.

The next Donald B’n’S Duckz Nutz Ball is on Friday, April 17 and Saturday April 18, 2026.

As Mildura Member Calls For Funding...

Flood-Hit Buloke Still Waiting

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has called on the Treasurer and the Minister for Roads and Road Safety to urgently deliver long-overdue flood recovery funding to the Buloke Shire Council.

Speaking in Parliament, Ms Benham said Buloke is still dealing with the damage from the 2022-23 floods, with recovery works valued at between \$60 million and \$80 million, but the State Government has yet to release the funding it committed.

“Buloke was one of the hardest-hit areas, yet funding has been delayed, watered down, or tied up in shifting rules from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements assessors,” Ms Benham said.

“Council is being left to manage unsafe roads with only a fraction of the promised support. Families, school buses, contractors and emergency services are being forced to use roads that are not fit for purpose, and the risk increases every day.”

Warnings

Ms Benham noted council is now resorting to using variable message signs to warn road users of hazards, while reports of vehicle damage from unsafe conditions continue to increase.

Ms Benham said the Labor Government is prioritising large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the Suburban Rail Loop, with it’s \$11.66 billion cost blowout, over essential community needs like flood recovery.

“These recovery works are critical for public safety, and the Government needs to focus on what really matters for regional communities,” she said.

“This is completely unacceptable. A small rural shire like Buloke, already struggling with a limited ratepayer base and vast geography, can’t carry these costs alone. The Treasurer and the Minister must step up, honour their promises and support the community’s recovery.”



• Jade Benham.

EWHS Board Meets

The East Wimmera Health Service Board of Directors met at the St Arnaud Campus to progress several key initiatives, including the finalisation of the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan and preparations for compliance with the new Aged Care Act.

The meeting opened with a community engagement session attended by representatives from the St Arnaud Community, highlighting the Board’s commitment to local collaboration.

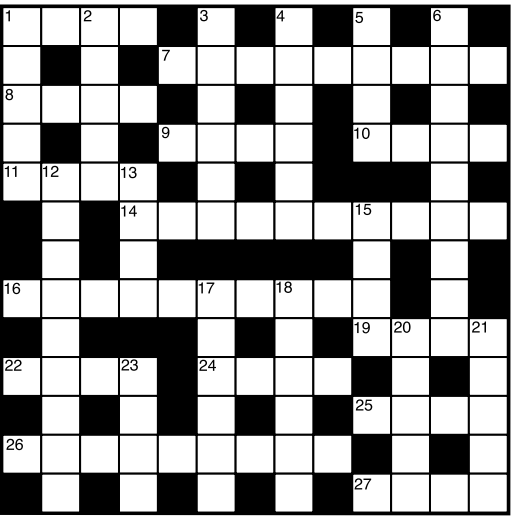
A major focus of the meeting was the draft EWHS 2025/2028 Strategic Plan,

which has consolidated stakeholder feedback into four strategic pillars.

The Board of Directors and EWHS staff continue to work proactively toward meeting the strengthened standards under the new Aged Care Act.

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8192



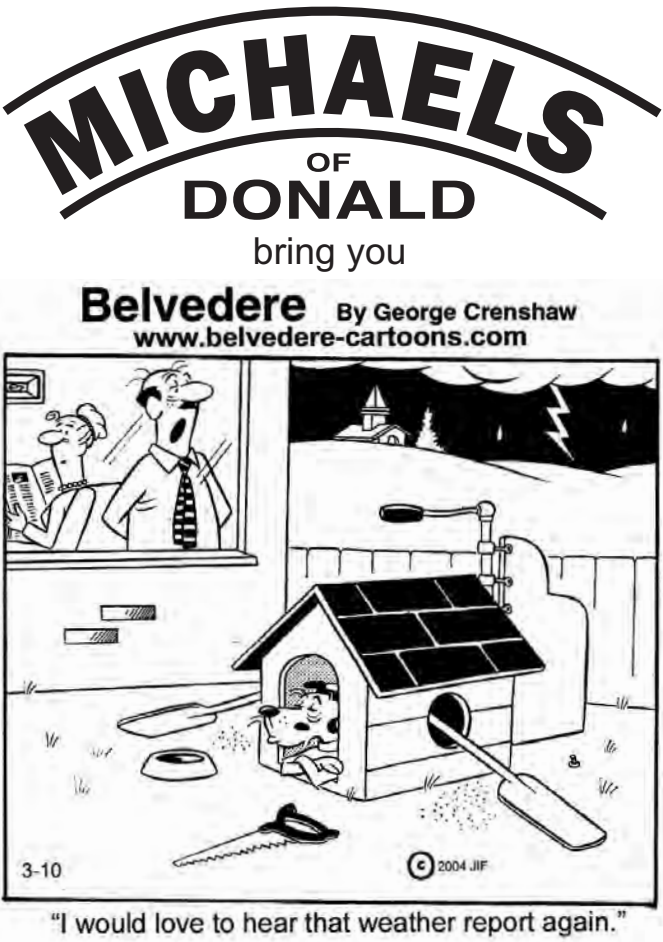
ACROSS

- Cipher (4)
- Cheese (9)
- Animal (4)
- Spoken (4)
- Rational (4)
- Fruit (4)
- Domestic appliance (4-6)
- Capital city (10)
- Delight (4)
- Gloat (4)
- Enthralled (4)
- Complimentary (4)
- Odd (9)
- Coin (4)

DOWN

- Ship of the desert (5)
- Cloth (5)
- Sea creature (6)
- Shout (6)
- Bird (4)
- Drink (9)
- Wrong (9)
- Fringe (4)
- Chant (4)
- Robust (6)
- Treat (6)
- Big (5)
- Occurrence (5)
- Stimulate (4)

• Solution next issue.



“I would love to hear that weather report again.”

Happy Father’s Day to all the Fathers on Sunday, September 7, 2025.

"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.

BIRTH

BELL - NOONAN

Daniel and Sophie are thrilled to announce the arrival of their daughter – Lola Margaret born on the July 28, 2025.



DEATH

HOLLIS.— John

On behalf of Corack East Fire Brigade we would like to send our condolences to the Hollis family. John was a life member of CFA. He was a member of the Corack East Brigade for 42 years and served as secretary for 18 years. John was also a much respected member of the Corack East community. Deepest sympathies to Dawn, Cynthia and families.

DEATH

NOLAN.— Michael James "Jim"

03/01/1937 - 31/08/2025

Loved youngest son of the late John and Veronica Nolan of Jeffcott.

Dearly loved brother of Bernie, Mary (Chandler), Rene (Rhode), and Therese (Brennan) all deceased.

We feel blessed to have had Jim in our lives. He will be fondly remembered for his loyalty to his family, community, sport and his love of life on the farm. He will be deeply missed.

—Kerry, Des, Lisa, Caitlyn and Scott Wood.

FUNERAL

NOLAN.— Michael James "Jim"

A funeral Mass will be held at St Patrick's Catholic Church, Boort on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 11 a.m.

See www.adamsfunerals.com.au for live stream details.

WANTED TO BUY

Old bottles with town or company names. Marble bottles, ginger beers, milks etc. Cash paid. Ph. 0452 264 661.

DONALD FIELD & GAME AGM

SATURDAY, SEPT. 6
6 p.m.
AT BULLOCKS HEAD TAVERN
All welcome



Working Bee

Sunday Sept. 7
at 9 a.m.

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



SOLICITOR

116 Napier Street,
St. Arnaud

Experienced practical advice in plain English

Appointments also available in Charlton, Donald and Wycheproof

Ph. 5495 2595
Karen@klp.net.au

Law Notice

Hilda May Fraser late of Goodwin Village, 22 Camp Street, Donald, VIC, 3480, Home Duties, deceased.

CREDITORS, next of kin, and others having claims in respect of the will of the above named deceased, who died on 20 November 2024 are required by the executor, Brian James Bayles, c/- the undermentioned solicitor, to send particulars of their claims to him by the 20 November 2025 after which date the executor may convey or distribute the assets, having regard only to the claims of which he then has notice.

MCL Legal
78 Napier Street,
St Arnaud VIC 3478

DONALD'S WHOLE TOWN GARAGE SALE
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21ST
REGISTER TODAY!
REGISTER YOUR ADDRESS AT HARVEST CAFE
OR TEXT 0412 1260 69 BY THE 15TH SEPT.
REGISTRATION FEE \$15



DONALD FIELD & GAME Father's Day Shoot

50 ASF HCP
+ SxS Novelty Shoot
SUNDAY, SEPT. 7
10 a.m. start

Proudly sponsored by
Brendarey Australian Whites

Live-Alones' Luncheon

Tuesday, Sept. 9
12 noon
CHOOSE FOOD
51 Woods St, Donald
Ph 0455 034 748 or pop in to book your place.



Charlton RSL

Digger's Day Golf Day

Sunday, Sept. 14
Ambrose pairs, hit-off from 1000 hours

\$60 golf, BBQ lunch, refreshments, afternoon tea, raffle, spinning wheel, good prizes.

Net proceeds to Bendigo Legacy.

Bill Freeman, sub-branch secretary
5491 1000

DONALD FOOTBALL CLUB

Annual Meeting

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14
8 p.m.

Nominations for the positions of president, vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer, committee members. Nominations close with the secretary, P.O. Box 110, Donald 3480, 8 p.m. Monday, October 13. Nomination forms available from the secretary.

P. Faulkner, Secretary.

Grade 6 to Year 7 - 2026 Parent Information Night



Learning. Respect. Resilience. Responsibility.

Wednesday, September 10

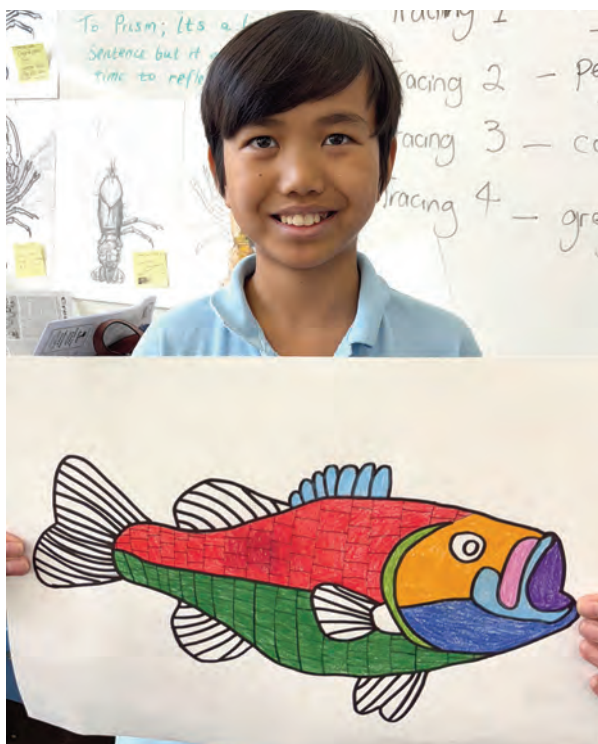
7.30p.m.

DONALD HIGH SCHOOL

All interested families welcome.

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.



Victor Sak
DONALD HIGH SCHOOL

Mensland

OUTFITTING MEN SINCE 1959

THIS FATHER'S DAY
IF ALL ELSE FAILS, GIVE A
Mensland
GIFT VOUCHER

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

Find us on [Facebook](#)

70 Woods Street, Donald — 5497 1211

2026 COACHING APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN



We are seeking expressions of interest for 2026 netball coaches -

A Grade
B Grade
C Grade
C Reserve
17 & Under
14 & Under A
14 & Under B
Go/Net Set Go

Any enquiries and applications to be submitted to bwnc12@hotmail.com

"Times" Classifieds

Need Help Applying for the \$100 Power Saving Bonus?

💡 Your local Neighbourhood House can help! 💡

The Power Saving Bonus (PSB5) is now open, offering \$100 to eligible concession card holders. Bring your concession card, medicare card and a recent electricity bill, and we'll help you apply — free of charge.



Call your local neighbourhood house to book or drop in during office hours.

WE ARE HIRING



North Central LLEN

Careers Practitioner

Part-time/Full time role (negotiable).

Are you passionate about supporting young people and helping shape their future pathways?

We are looking for someone with:

- teaching qualifications, including VCE, VET and/or Careers
- strong teamwork skills and the ability to work independently
- A commitment to student-centred approaches

Why join the North Central LLEN?

- Flexible working arrangements and generous salary sacrifice options
- Supportive, collaborative team culture making a difference in the lives of young people

For more information and a position description, Please contact Jacinta Sutton on 0491 776 984 or email j.sutton@ncilen.org.au



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Goodwin Village operates a 38 place residential aged care facility, has 35 independent retirement living units, and 6 community care clients.

PERSONAL CARE WORKER CERTIFICATE 3 OR 4

16 to 38 hours per week (full or part-time)

Goodwin Village currently has a position for a Personal Care Worker Cert 3 or 4 (full or part-time). The position involves being rostered approximately 2 to 5 days per week. Roster includes weekdays, weekends, mornings, evenings & night shifts. Access to training for Certificate 3 or 4 in Individual Support can be provided to the right unqualified applicant at no cost to them. Progression pathway for committed staff.

Key Selection Criteria

Applicants need to be reliable and interested in working in aged care, with an ability to work to established duty lists. Meeting all individual care needs of residents and clients is important. Applicants must have empathy for elderly people, a commitment to continuous improvement, and an ability to work in a team environment.

Applications for the positions must be made in writing by 5 p.m., Friday, September 12, 2025.

Further particulars, including the position descriptions for the role, are available from the:

Chief Executive Officer, Goodwin Village,
22 Camp Street, Donald,
Telephone: 5497 1304 **Facsimile:** 5497 1769.
Email: ahogan@goodwinagedcare.org.au

Anthony Hogan,
Chief Executive Officer.

DONALD CHILDREN'S CENTRE Job Opportunities:

Long Day Care, Kindergarten, Early Learning

Role: Various Educator positions

Job Type: Full-time, Part-time, Casual

Start Date: Immediate or can be negotiated

Qualification: Diploma/Certificate III or working towards -Early Childhood Education and Care

Our Opportunity

We currently have a vacancy at our Birchip/Donald/Wycheproof centres and are looking for Educators to join our motivated and enthusiastic team.

What's different about our services in the Buloke Area -Birchip, Donald and Wycheproof

- Welcoming communities and fabulous rural lifestyle
- Supportive management and professional development opportunities
- Small purpose-built early learning centres
- As part of the Y Ballarat, you will have access to structured support, leadership and shared services functions.

Join us and thrive in a rewarding Early Childhood career!

- Enjoy strong support and leadership allowing you to focus on what you love – working with children!
- Be part of a supportive and welcoming community
- Take advantage of Remote Area Benefits
- Generous staff discounts, including 95% off childcare fees
- Grow your skills and knowledge
- Inclusive friendly workplace.

Interested?

For a confidential discussion please contact **Marg Harrison** on 0499 510 265 or email marg.harrison@yballarat.org.au

To apply please follow the link at <https://yballarat.org.au/careers/> and search Y Ballarat - scroll to find Educators Role: Birchip/Donald/Wycheproof and click apply.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST WATCHEM-WARRACKNABEAL RD., WATCHEM WEST

Tightly Held Broadacre Cropping
529.91 HA / 1309.425 Ac

To be offered as a whole or in 3 separate contiguous lots

Lot 1: "Blair's" 282.48 HA / 698.025 Ac, 3 paddocks, soils consist of Wimmera grey & chocolate loams with very slight undulations of red loam. Includes residence, machinery sheds, grain storage inc 2 x new 80T silos, shearing shed with steel bugle sheepyards, Barley 2025, fronting sealed Watchem-Warracknabeal Road.

Lot 2: "Hill Paddock" 129.50 HA / 320 Ac, Wheat 2025, 1 paddock, Wimmera loams with undulations of red loams.

Lot 3: "Gwen's" & "Walder's" 117.93 HA / 291.40 Ac, 2 paddocks, Barley & Wheat 2025, fronting sealed Watchem West Road.

Recent cropping history includes Wheat, Canola, Chick Peas and Vetch in the rotations. Centrally located 31 linear kilometres Warracknabeal, 23 linear kilometres Birchip, 32 linear kilometres Donald.

Expressions of Interest

Closing Friday 3rd October, 2 p.m.

Inspection by appointment with the agent.



Jason Rice 0417 087 019
Rice Livestock Pty Ltd
— Elders Wycheproof

FOR SALE BY TENDER

"Lorrita"

1659 Acres / 671 HA

Cropping & Grazing Land

- Centrally located to Sea Lake, Berriwillock & Ultima fronting Clearys Road.
- A good mix of red & grey Mallee soil types.
- Sown to Maximus barley, growing crop included in sale, full cropping history available.
- Infrastructure includes – Entegra lock-up machinery shed with power & water connected, steel frame machinery shed power connected, 7 silos, steel sheep yards.
- As new fencing, both boundary & interior. Timber areas fenced for containment grazing.
- Wimmera Mallee water connected, tanks & troughs included.
- Excellent access to grain receival sites and livestock selling centres.

Substantial holding of versatile Mallee cropping and grazing farmland. Ideal for expansion of existing holdings or investment in this well held area.

Inspection by appointment with the agent.

Tenders close 12 noon Friday, October 10, 2025.

Tender forms available from the selling agent



Elders Wycheproof 03 5493 6400
Jim Coffey 0419 830 682
Peter Robertson 0417 636 348
Sam Crow 0455 506 622

BCG Main Field Day, September 10: Farming Without Paraquat – What Could Come Next?

With paraquat under review by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), farmers across north-west Victoria face uncertainty about the future of one of their most relied-upon weed control tools.

What happens to weed management if paraquat use is restricted or banned?

This critical question will be addressed at the BCG Main Field Day on Wednesday, September 10, at Birchip, where Angus Butterfield (BCG) and Professor Chris Preston (University of Adelaide) will present the session "Farming without paraquat: A

look at Group 14s, glufosinate and new technologies”.

Cornerstone

Paraquat has long been a cornerstone in no-till systems, helping growers control hard-to-kill weeds and manage glyphosate resistance. Its potential loss would represent a major shift for Australian farming systems.

Angus and Chris will guide growers through what a paraquat-free future could look like, backed by the latest research and practical insights.

“This session is about preparing growers for change,” Angus said. “There’s no single replacement for paraquat, but there are ways we can adapt. Our job is to give farmers the knowledge to make confident decisions if restrictions come into play.”

Chris added, "Paraquat has been critical for resistance management and conservation farming, but new pressures mean it's time to look seriously at what else is out there. Alternatives exist, but they require a shift in how we think about integrated weed management."

Findings from Trials

Angus Butterfield, BCG Research Agronomist, will share findings from BCG's trials on Group 14 herbicides such as Sharpen, Valor and Terrain. He will discuss how these chemistries can be integrated into programs, along with the benefits, risks, and economic considerations farmers need to weigh up.

Professor Chris Preston, a nationally recognised leader

in weed science, will explore how growers can approach different weed management problems on their farms using alternative chemistry. He will unpack how glufosinate and Group 14s can be optimised with new mixes and double knock strategies for best performance on-farm. Chris will also share the WeedErase, a cutting-edge blue light technology currently commercially available in the US as a home gardening tool.

Demonstration

Growers will have the opportunity to see a live demonstration of the WeedErase and ask questions about its practicality and potential role in future broadacre cropping systems.

The session will be interactive, giving farmers and agronomists the chance to discuss real-world applications and challenges.

BCG's Main Field Day provides growers, advisors and research with the latest in local agronomic research. Entry is free for BCG members and \$50 for non-members. To secure your ticket or to become a BCG member please visit the BCG website bcg.org.au.

“Enough Delays on Flood Recovery Funding”: Mayor

Buloke Shire Council Mayor, Cr Alan Getley, has followed up on recent comments made in Parliament by the Member for Mildura, Jade Benham MP, regarding the long-overdue flood recovery funding promised to the Buloke community following the devastating 2022–23 floods.

“Delays cost money and the delays in receiving this critical funding mean our staff have had to continually rescope and redevelop projects according to ever-changing goalposts,” said the Mayor.

“The Disaster Recovery Funding process keeps shifting and our community is left paying the price as frustration over crumbling roads grows.

"We've buffered complaints with explanations and reassurances, but enough is enough. These are not minor inconveniences – they are serious safety risks."

Council is managing a backlog of recovery works, yet only a fraction of the promised support has been received.

As a small rural shire with a limited ratepayer base and vast geography, the Council has reiterated it simply cannot carry these costs alone.

“We appreciate Ms Benham’s advocacy and echo her call for the government to honour their commitments,” the Mayor continued.



- *Cr. Alan Getley.*

“We’ve done our part. Now it’s time for them to do theirs.”

The Mayor also acknowledged the growing frustration across rural communities, particularly in light of recent reports of multi-billion-dollar cost blowouts in metropolitan infrastructure projects.

"When rural communities read about \$11 billion overruns in the city, that kind of money could renovate most of our infrastructure many times over," he added.

"We've had a gutful of being overlooked. Our communities deserve better."



• BCG research agronomist Angus Butterfield will share ways farmers can adapt if paraquat usage is restricted or banned by the APVMA.

WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2025

BCG MAIN FIELD DAY

550 SUNRAYSIA HIGHWAY, BIRCHIP VIC 3483

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 9:00 Welcome
- 9:10 Soil pit

Black

- 9:30 **Cereal varieties:** top performers and ones to watch
 - GRDC NVT*Anna Marcus, Ashlee Tierney (BCG)*
- 10:30 **Disease management:** past experience, future technology
 - BioScout Disease Trials*Dr Grant Hollaway (Astute Ag), Amy McEachern (BCG)*
- 11:30 **What's new in pulses:** variety updates & agronomy insights
 - GRDC Southern Pulse Agronomy*Ash Wallace, Audrey Delahunty (Agriculture Victoria)*

Blue

- 9:30 **Farming without paraquat:** a look at group 14s, glufosinate, new chemistry & blue light technology
 - Chris Preston (University of Adelaide), Angus Butterfield (BCG)
- 10:30 **Protecting pulse yields:** disease and soil strategies for lentils & chickpeas
 - GRDC Southern Pulse Agronomy*Ash Wallace, Audrey Delahunty (Agriculture Victoria)*
- 11:30 **Cereal varieties:** top performers and ones to watch
 - GRDC NVT*Anna Marcus, Ashlee Tierney (BCG)*

Yellow

- 9:30 **Emerging pulse opportunities:** Plant protein & metribuzin-tolerant lentils
 - GRDC Southern Pulse Agronomy*Ash Wallace, Audrey Delahunty (Agriculture Victoria)*
- 10:30 **From patchy starts to harvest:** later-season management options
 - GRDC Long Coleoptile
 - GRDC Canola Establishment*Lucy Giles (BCG), Dr Andrew Fletcher, Dr Greg Rebetzke (CSIRO)*
- 11:30 **Farming without paraquat:** a look at group 14s, glufosinate, new chemistry & blue light technology
 - Chris Preston (University of Adelaide), Angus Butterfield (BCG)

Red

- 9:30 **Disease management:** past experience, future technology
 - BioScout Disease Trials*Dr Grant Hollaway (Astute Ag), Amy McEachern (BCG)*
- 10:30 **From paddock to market:** cereal hay for dairy and export
 - AgriFutures Oaten Hay Trial*Alison Frischke (BCG), Marcus Crawford (Balco), Matt Glowery (farmer)*
- 11:30 **Make more from sheep:** realising benefits from sheep eIDs
 - Alison Frischke, Zoe Wilson (BCG), BreedElite, Joel Donnan (farmer), Cam Nicholson (farmer)

- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:00 Lunch & learn – soil pit with Dr James Nuttall (BCG) or ChatBCG in marquee with Jess Bidstrup (BCG)
- 1:30 Site overview with the Weir family
- 1:45 A nitrogen check up, *Professor James Hunt (University of Melbourne)*
- 2:10 Emissions accounting – What should I know? *Cam Nicholson (farmer & Nicon Rural)*
- 2:40 Farmer panel: Making decisions in the 2025 season, *Dr Yolanda Plowman (BCG)*
- 3:10 Official close
- 3:30 Nutrien Ag Solutions Sundowners & sandwiches, final tour of the site

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Council is seeking comments on a proposal to rename Old Wedderburn Rd Pt1 (Yeungroon) running west from Yeungroon-Coonooer Rd to a gate at west end of road, to Fanny Price Lane (Yeungroon).

Members of the public can provide feedback on the names or submit name nominations by 2 October 2025, within 30 days of this notice addressed to:

Buloke Shire Council
367 Broadway, Wycheproof VIC 3527
buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au
Contact No: 1300 520 520



Council is seeking comments on a proposal to rename Davies St (Charlton) running East from High St to John Curtin Drive along the Avoca riverbank, to Walklate Lane (Charlton).

Members of the public can provide feedback on the names or submit name nominations by 2 October 2025, within 30 days of this notice addressed to:

Buloke Shire Council
367 Broadway, Wycheproof VIC 3527
buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au
Contact No: 1300 520 520



Notice of an Application for a Planning Permit

The land affected by the application is located at **462 Broadway, Wycheproof VIC 3527**.

The application is for a permit to **construct a building or construct or carry out works (Office, associated with the public land use conducted on behalf of the public land manager)**.

The application reference number is **PA25022**.

You may view the application and supporting documents on the **Buloke Shire Council website** <https://buloke.greenlightopm.com/planning> or by making contact with the office of the Responsible Authority, **Buloke Shire Office, Wycheproof** on 1300 520 520.

This can be done during office hours and is free of charge. Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to the Responsible Authority.

An objection must be made to the Responsible Authority in writing, include the objectors name and contact details, include reasons for the objection, and state how the objector would be affected. An online submission form is available at <https://www.buloke.vic.gov.au/planning-applications-on-exhibition>

The Responsible Authority will not decide on the application before **25 September 2025**.

If you object to the application, the Responsible Authority will tell you it's decision.

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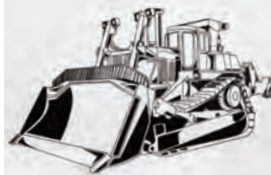
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Notice of an Application for a Planning Permit

The land affected by the application is located at **70 Dempsey Street, Wycheproof VIC 3527**.

The application is for a permit to **construct a building or construct or carry out works (dwelling) in a Commercial 1 Zone and Heritage Overlay**.

The application reference number is **PA25024**.

You may view the application and supporting documents on the **Buloke Shire Council website** <https://buloke.greenlightopm.com/planning> or by making contact with the office of the Responsible Authority, **Buloke Shire Office, Wycheproof** on 1300 520 520.

This can be done during office hours and is free of charge. Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to the Responsible Authority.

An objection must be made to the Responsible Authority in writing, include the objectors name and contact details, include reasons for the objection, and state how the objector would be affected. An online submission form is available at <https://www.buloke.vic.gov.au/planning-applications-on-exhibition>

The Responsible Authority will not decide on the application before **25 September 2025**.

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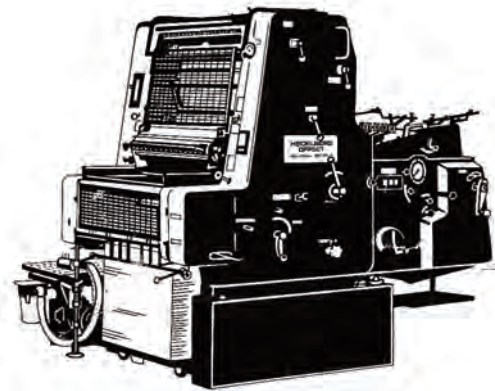
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Fresh New Look for School Quadrangle

Birchip P-12 School is celebrating the completion of major upgrades to its much-loved Quadrangle, which has been transformed into a safe, modern, and inviting space for students and staff.

The Quadrangle, last upgraded more than 30 years ago, had become overdue for repairs. Established trees had caused the old asphalt to crack and lift, creating trip hazards, while root systems began to interfere with underground drains and pipelines.

Local Business
Local business Mallee Landscape was engaged to carry out the works. Despite battling periods of heavy rain, the team successfully removed the old asphalt and replaced it with over 500 wheelbarrows of fresh concrete.

The project also included the installation of a new irrigation system, fresh turf, and native plantings, bringing renewed life to the area.

The school was proud to support a local company in

completing the upgrade, which has been a priority for some time. Over several years, Birchip P-12 carefully saved funds to support the project, while a \$25,000 grant from the School Upgrade Fund provided the finishing touch, new outdoor benches for students to enjoy.

Gathering Place
“The Quadrangle has always been a central gathering

place for our school community, from day-to-day learning to presentation nights under the trees,” Julie Coffey, the school Business Manager, said. “It’s wonderful to see the space refreshed and ready for the next generation of students.”
Now shaded by sails and surrounded by flowering gums, the revitalised Quadrangle offers students an open-air learning space and a



welcoming area to relax and study. With its blend of new facilities and established greenery, it continues to be a favourite heart of the school – and a showcase of community investment in education.



• Birchip P-12’s upgraded Quadrangle.



• Students eating lunch: Ayana Joseph, Hannah Gould, Stephanie Trickey and Angela Aby.

Former Students Share Experiences

Eleven former students returned to Birchip P-12 School on Friday, August 29, to share their career journeys with Year 5-12 students at the school’s biennial Careers Day.

Representing industries from defence and policing to sport, health, business and agriculture, the speakers offered insights to pathways after school, and advice on making the most of opportunities.

Russell Christie, Assistant Principal, said the event highlighted the achievements of past students and the importance of role models.

“There’s a saying in careers that you can’t be what you can’t see,” Mr Christie said.

Opportunity
“This is an opportunity for our students to see that kids who once sat in the same classrooms have gone on to achieve different things.”

Speakers shared stories of resilience and persistence, with many explaining how they overcame rejection to

eventually secure the roles they had worked towards.

Alistair Smith, now a Squadron Leader in the Australian Defence Force, arrived in uniform and gave students a close look at his \$400,000 flight helmet, sparking plenty of interest in aviation.

Sheree Boyle, a Tactical Intelligence Operative with Victoria Police who also works in the health and fitness industry, spoke about the twists in her own career and the importance of finding joy in the journey.

“Don’t make the right decision; make the decision right,” she told students, encouraging them to try new things and reminding them that it’s always possible to change direction.

Grains Purchasing Manager Liam Richmond carried the same message. He

said students should not feel pressured to have their whole lives mapped out.

“Be Willing”
“Be willing to invest in yourself – hard work pays off,” he said.

ByMany Chief Wrangler and Aspect Visuals Producer Jaimie Smith agreed. “It’s okay to not know what you want to do,” she said. “If you want to go somewhere, there are so many ways to get to that place.”

Others spoke about determination. Horsham paramedic Sophie Reid said persistence was key.

“There’s always a way of getting in,” Sophie said. “You’ve got to work hard and make it work for you.”

Bill Lee, now working full time on the farm, and Zoe Turnbull, radiographer across Victoria and South Australia, both reflected on the value of



• Zoe Turnbull, Tim McClelland, Jaimie Smith.

travel and work experience in shaping their career choices.

Hayley O’Callaghan, Business Partner for People & Culture at the Hawthorn Football Club, encouraged students to follow their passions.

“Spend time doing things you enjoy – it will lead you where you want to go,” she said.

At 22, Blair Hogan runs Birchip business Mallee Steel and has been recognised with multiple awards. He urged students to pursue the subjects they enjoy and have confidence in their abilities.

“A Skill for Life”
Zane Hunt shared how his local apprenticeship in 2001 eventually led him to establish Huntz Plumbing, reminding students that completing a trade gives you “a skill for life”.

Tim McClelland, manager of A.W. McClelland and Co, spoke about career opportunities in agriculture. He encouraged students to step outside their comfort zones and develop new skills before considering a future in the industry.

“Do what you love and make sure you end up in ag,” he said.

“Go and volunteer and learn what it’s all about.”

Mr Christie said he hoped students left with the belief that their futures are in their own hands.

“It takes resilience and hard work, and often opportunities will present themselves – but students need to decide whether to take them. Don’t live with regret if you don’t.”

Students said the day offered valuable insights to a range of industries and provided practical advice from people who had once been in their position.



• Left to right: Zane Hunt, Tim McClelland, Liam Richmond, Zoe Turnbull, Sheree Boyle, Alistair Smith, Hayley O’Callaghan, Sophie Reid, Blair Hogan, Jaimie Smith and Bill Lee.

\$16 Million Hotel for Stawell

Northern Grampians Shire Council leaders are thrilled a new hotel projected to inject \$150 million into the region’s economy throughout the next decade has been greenlit following months of collaboration between the organisation and developers.

The \$16 million LOAM Hotel will be built along the Western Highway, Stawell, after developer Barkly Property Ventures secured funding through the State Government’s Regional Tourism Investment Fund 2024.

The four-star, double-storey hotel will be part of Choice Hotels Asia-Pac’s up-scale Ascend Collection and feature 77 rooms.

Work on the development, north of the United service station, is expected to start in coming months and will create an estimated 174 new construction jobs and 53 on-going roles along with more than 100 indirect “flow-on” jobs in the supply chain.

Mayor Karen Hyslop said she was excited to see the hard work of developers Sam and Gerard Ballantyne come to fruition.

“Sam and Gerard came to us about 18 months ago with this proposal, after doing their research and deciding Stawell was the perfect location to bring their vision to life,” she said.

Critical Project

“This is such a critical project given our acute shortage of new higher-end tourism and worker accommodation.

“The LOAM Hotel will not only provide a significant number of new motel units for tourists and travellers between Melbourne and Adelaide, but it will also offer accommodation options for management workers and contractors serving our major industries.

“It is also strategically located near the turn-off to Halls Gap.”

Developer Sam Ballantyne said the development would help strengthen and grow the Grampians’ status as a premium tourist destination in regional Victoria.

Flagship

“LOAM Hotel will be a flagship for the region, and we are firmly focused on collaborating with – and connecting our guests to – local businesses, vendors, producers and artisans to stimulate the economy and be a valuable part of the community,” he said.

“We’re very thankful for the advocacy and support of Northern Grampians Shire Council, Grampians Tourism as well as our project delivery partner Wimmera Southern Mallee Development.”

Cr Hyslop said facilitating economic development was a

key role of council and anyone seeking to invest in the municipality could contact the organisation about available support.

Prospectus

She said the council last year released an Investment Prospectus and accompanying social media campaign showcasing the organisation as supportive and eager to stimulate investment in the region.

“We are committed to seeing our towns prosper and grow, from small business to major investments such as the LOAM Hotel,” she said.

“I’m extremely proud that council’s senior staff and Economic Development team have supported this project as a priority, from the early days of identifying the need in the tourism space right through to overcoming recent challenges.

“Council has been instrumental in making this project happen and I can’t wait to see the finished product delivered.”

Choice Hotels Asia-Pac has released architectural renders of LOAM Hotel, which showcase how the hotel will blend seamlessly with the renowned Grampians’ landscape.



• An architectural render of the Loam hotel taken from the website.

The hotel’s design celebrates the natural wonders of the region and pays homage to the Traditional Owners of Djab Wurrung and Jardwadjali people.

The interior fit-out, colour palette and furnishings will also take inspiration from “The Six Seasons of Gariwerd”

– highlighting the surrounding flora, fauna and cultural connections.

Key Features

Key features of the hotel include studio-style rooms, a wellness studio and hydrothermal room with sauna and ice baths, onsite guest laundry, onsite electric

vehicle chargers and a solar energy system.

The hotel will exceed a five-star energy rating and will have dedicated accessible rooms to ensure an inclusive accommodation experience for all guests.

People can visit loamhotel.com.au for more information.

RIC Certainty Welcome, but More Support Needed

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has welcomed the Albanese Government’s announcement last week of ongoing certainty for the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) beyond 2026, but says farmers urgently need more meaningful support in the face of record drought.

VFF President Brett Hosking said while the move was a positive step, it falls well short of addressing the dire situation many farmers are facing as they approach the critical spring growing season.

“Of course, we support long overdue certainty for the RIC beyond 2026,” Mr Hosking said.

“This was recommended by the independent review more than a year ago, and while we still don’t have a full response to that review, it’s good to at least confirm that the RIC won’t cease to exist next year.

Not a New Initiative

“But we must be honest, this is not a new initiative. It’s simply a decision not to shut down an existing source of drought support, and importantly, one that doesn’t actually cost the Government anything in the short term.

“Approval timeframes for loans are up to 118 days. The government can and must do better to get the support to where it’s needed as fast as possible.”

The VFF is reiterating calls for far stronger measures to help support drought-stricken farmers and regional communities.

“What we’re seeking is meaningful support from these loans, such as interest-free periods or HECS-style repayments. That’s the sort of practical help that will make the difference for farmers who are seriously struggling right now.”

Good First Step

“The RIC needs uplifting and this is a good first step,

but we need to find better and more efficient ways to assist farmers when they need it most,” Mr Hosking said.

The VFF welcomed the Prime Minister and Federal Agriculture Minister’s visit to Ballarat, saying it hoped farmers’ voices would be heard.

“We’re pleased to have both the Prime Minister and Minister Collins on the ground in Victoria today,” Mr Hosking said.

“We urge them to listen to farmers and understand that



• Brett Hosking.

more support is urgently needed if we’re going to get through this drought and safeguard our agricultural future.”



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The Donald Project



Community Information Sessions

DMS is developing the Donald Rare Earth and Mineral Sands Project near Minyip, one of the world’s largest untapped deposits of mineral sands and rare earth elements. Our 42-year project means regional growth, jobs, and infrastructure improvements.

What: Community information sessions

Where: Minyip Senior Citizens Hall, 72 Main Street, Minyip

When: Wednesday 10 September 2025

Two sessions: 2pm to 4pm and 5pm to 7pm

What to expect

- Next steps following Work Plan approval
- New water pipeline along Gun Club Road
- Project displays and information
- Jobs and supplier opportunities
- Ask questions and share feedback
- One-on-one discussions with project team

We'll start each session with a short presentation but please drop in any time.

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*Investing
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R U OK? at St. Arnaud, Saturday

This week R U OK? will visit St Arnaud for the Preliminary Football, Netball and Hockey Finals as part of the 2025 R U OK? Conversation Convoy.

By dropping in, locals can build their conversation skills and gain the confidence to look out for friends, family, and colleagues any day of the year.

- When: Saturday, September 6 at 10:30-13:00 (AEST).
- Where: Lord Nelson Park, 10 Dunstan St, St Arnaud VIC 3478.
- Who: R U OK? staff and

members of the St Arnaud community.

- What: R U OK? will be hosting a free community event, sharing practical tips and tools on how to have meaningful R U OK? Conversations.
- Why: To inspire St Arnaud locals to meaningfully connect and empower them to lend support if they spot the

signs someone might be struggling with life.

- Interview opportunities: Maria, Community Development Manager and St Arnaud locals available on request.
- Vision opportunities: St Arnaud locals talking with the R U OK? team; attendees can enjoy a free cuppa over a meaningful chat; and free resources will be handed out.

Key Regional Telecommunications Report: Government Fails to Meet the Deadline

The Coalition has formally moved yesterday that the Albanese Government be held to account for failing to meet a legislated deadline to table its response to a key regional telecommunications report.

Shadow Minister for Regional Communications Dr Anne Webster, MP, moved a motion in Parliament calling upon Communications Minister Anika Wells to table its response to the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee (RTIRC) report immediately.

“By law, the Commonwealth Government has 6 months to table its response to each report,” Dr Webster said.

“Yet again Labor demonstrates that they simply don’t have a focus on regional Australia. Regional people deserve better.

“It is unacceptable that farmers who work out in the paddocks alone all day have no way of letting a loved one know if they have an accident or a medical event, because they don’t have mobile phone coverage, let alone continuous internet access for modern farm technology.

Lengthy Delays
“It is also unacceptable that regional consumers face lengthy delays without an internet connection when a mobile phone tower is being upgraded, where their only form of broadband is via the

mobile phone system, with no alternate form of reliable redundancy.”

Shadow Minister for Communications, Melissa McIntosh said, “it is incredibly disappointing the Albanese Labor Government is yet again slacking off in the Communications portfolio and putting regional Australians last.”

Lack of Transparency

“The fact that the Albanese Government is yet to respond to the regional telecommunications report demonstrates the on-going lack of transparency by Labor.

“Along with waiting for the government’s late response to the regional telecommunications review, Australians want answers from Labor on when the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation legislation will be introduced to benefit rural and remote areas, gambling advertising reform for live sport, legislation for a digital duty of care and when the consultation paper for the News Bargaining Incentive will land.”

Recommendations
The RTIRC 2024 report made 14 recommendations to



• Anne Webster.
the Albanese Government, including:

- Expediting universal service modernisation, providing voice-capable broadband services with minimum speeds and standards for all premises.
- Phasing out the Copper Continuity Obligation (CCO) where and when there is a proven and effective alternative technology.
- Creating a Universal Service Obligation (USO) that is technology-neutral and flexible enough to readily adapt and be relevant to changing needs.
- System redundancy – namely, that premises without terrestrial mobile coverage can access an affordable secondary broadband service.

Grants to Upgrade Sports Facilities

The Victorian Government is backing better facilities for grassroots sport and local communities.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes encouraged applications for the 2025-26 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSIF), which creates better places to play, train and compete across Victoria.

The fund was extended in the Victorian Budget 2025/26 and has three streams including community facilities, community sports lighting, and planning with councils being able to apply for between \$40,000 and \$500,000 for projects.

Potential projects include new or improved sports courts, lights, change rooms, playgrounds and skate parks, to benefit local clubs and communities.

All Eligible

All Victorian councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria are

eligible to apply in partnership with their local sport and recreation clubs, sport associations and leagues with a focus on projects that will support local communities and groups to increase participation including amongst women and girls.

Previous projects in Northern Victoria to receive grants from the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund include funding towards Wahgunyah Pump Track, Seymour Tennis Complex Lighting Project and the Robinvale Splash Park.

This announcement comes off the back of more than \$24 million invested in regional sports facilities in July through Round 2 of the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund.

The Victorian Budget 2025/26 is also investing \$20



• Jaclyn Symes.

million to continue providing new and improved community sports infrastructure, including through the LSIF. It’s part of more than \$2.4 billion invested in community sport and recreation infrastructure over the past decade.

For more information about the fund and to apply visit sport.vic.gov.au. Applications close on December 2.

Bunnings “Legend of the Tongs”

Bunnings has announced that Shaun Pearse from Donald Football and Netball Club is one of the local footy volunteers to be recognised as part of the “Legend of the Tongs” initiative, in partnership with the AFL.

Bunnings Legend of the Tongs is a nationwide search to reward and celebrate the local legends who fire up the local legends weekly at their local Aussie rules footy clubs.

This recognition highlights Shaun’s unwavering dedication to the club and the positive impact he has on the Donald community.

Former player and recent addition to the Royal Blues committee, Shaun has been volunteering at the club for just over 18 months, but has had an incredible impact in that short time. Dedicating his time religiously, Shaun can be found at the field every Thursday after work, cooking up a storm and serving drinks to the supporters who turn up to watch training. Whether he is flipping burgers and sausages on the barbecue, or heating up his home made sausage rolls, you name it, he has prepared it.

Knowing the importance of a footy club in a regional community like Donald, and with young kids who are beginning to play, Shaun looks forward to his weekly volunteering at the club. He enjoys connecting with his community and plans to volunteer throughout his own kids’ footy careers.

Prize Pack

As part of the prize, Donald Football and Netball Club will receive a barbecue prize pack, including a Jumbuck 6 Burner barbecue and a Bunnings pop-up marquee – with Shaun also in the running to score a trip for two to attend the Toyota AFL Grand Final, as well as the opportunity to be named “Legend of the Golden Tongs” and win \$25,000 in Bunnings products and materials for their club.

The competition, which is part of Bunnings’ 11th year in

partnership with the AFL, honours the incredible contributions of community volunteers across Australia during the 2025 AFL season.

Bunnings Delacombe Complex Manager, Sean Aruliah, is proud the store can give back to local clubs, with the support of the AFL.

Unsung Heroes

“Our Legend of the Tongs campaign celebrates the some of the bests part of our local community. Whether it’s at their local club grounds or as part of our weekly sausage sizzles, unsung heroes like Karen tirelessly show up week in and week out to support their players and raise much needed funds for their clubs.

“We feel privileged to be able to gift the Skipton Football Club with improved equipment to support their volunteers where it matters,” he added.

Newly commissioned national research from Bunnings highlights the essential role of barbecue, canteen and

other food services volunteers when it comes to contributing to their local sporting club’s culture, with almost one in three (29 per cent) Aussies confirming their favourite volunteer role is firing up the barbie.

As part of the campaign:
• Five weekly “legends” and their local club will win a barbecue prize pack, including a Jumbuck 6 Burner barbecue and a Bunnings pop-up marquee

• Eight winners across the season will also score a trip for two to attend the Toyota AFL Grand Final, where one will be crowned the “Legend of the Golden Tongs” – and take away \$25,000 in Bunnings products and materials for their local club

Nominations for Legend of the Tongs remain open until August 24, 2025. Know someone you think is a barbecue legend? Nominate your Australian rules footy club’s Legend of the Tongs at bunnings.com.au/legends.

CHURCH NOTICES

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES “East Wimmera Parish”

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

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779
Parish Co-ordinator
– Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

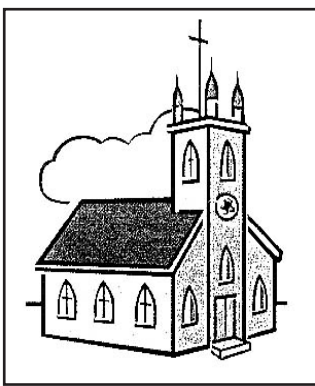
Donald, 10 a.m.
Wycheproof, 10 a.m.
Birchip, 10 a.m.
Contact Number: 5497 1033

ANGLICAN “Parish of Charlton-Donald”

Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
0435 593 395

Friday, September 5
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 7
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.
Baptist Union of Victoria



• Donald Football Club’s Shaun Pearse (right) is one of the local footy volunteers to be recognised as part of the “Legend of the Tongs” initiative, pictured here with his kids.

A Win Each for Tigers and Saints Juniors

The under-14s had a very slow start against a switched-on St Arnaud team, which led 29 to 0 at half-time.

However, a gutsy Tiger team stormed home with five goals to one in the second half, to fall agonisingly short by 3 points. The final score was 5.4 to 5.7. Henry Cox kicked 3 important goals to almost drag the side across the line. Riley Allan played well in all parts of the ground in another strong game. Finn Austerberry looks like he is built for finals footy, whilst Harry Wight was great in the ruck and in defence and was helped by full-back Jack and back flanker Milton. Hamish was lively on the ball and up forward.

Best players: Sea Lake-Nandaly: Daytrap Ag Award, Henry Cox; Canteen Vouchers, Riley Allan and Finn Austerberry; Club Croc Jibbitz,

Harry Wight; Mentions, Hamish Landry and Jack Hodgson.

Best for St. Arnaud: Patrick Zsigmond, Chase Hendy, Jesse James, Duncan Kirk, Arley Reyne.

Under-17s

The under-17s played the windy conditions very smartly and seemingly put the game out of the Saints' reach, dominating the first half to lead by 23 points at half-time. This margin could have been greater with straighter kicking.

The second half was an absolute arm wrestle, with St Arnaud taking ascendancy, kicking 3 goals to the Tigers' 1. This meant the final margin

was cut to eleven points in favour of the Tigers 5.9 to 4.4.

Hugo Warne was a Rolls Royce up forward with 3 goals, including the sealer late in the game. Nate McClelland was best on ground and played his heart out to ensure the Tigers won. Judd Durie was strong across half back and Jacob Cox provided run all around the ground. Brody Kelly put his body on the line.

Best players: Daytrap Ag, Nate McClelland; Hair on Best, Judd Durie, Skymirror, Angus Renney; Club Croc Jibbitz, Hugo Warne; Mentions, Brayden Allan and Jacob Cox.

For St Arnaud: Sean Bridgeman, Austin Lowe, Jack Batters, Aidan Wickham, Finn Wilson, Fraser Burke.



• St. Arnaud's Archer Reyne attempts to get the hands out as he is tackled by Brody Kelly.



• Hugon Warne is under pressure from St Arnaud's Sean Bridgeman.



• St Arnaud's Jesse James and Sea Lake-Nandaly's Hamish Landry compete for the Sherrin.

“Down the Middle”

Five ladies played in a Stableford event on Monday while four opted for nine holes.

Winner of the Clothes Bin Monthly Medal was Kerry Raven with 33 points and the winner of the nine hole event was Jo Bishop on 15 points. Well done to both winners. Nearest the pins were Kerry Raven on Donald Auto Electrical's 3rd and Weir's 7th, Carol Stuchbery on Nu Farm's 14th and Margot Paynter on Donald Community Bank's 16th.

Next week: Monday September 8 – Nine holes. Assemble at 9.45. Wednesday, September – Pink Lady Day twelve holes 11.30 a.m. hit off. Saturday, September 6, – Maurie Tranter Memorial followed by a casserole dinner and presentation of men's and ladies' annual awards.

Saturday, September 13 – patching at the Donald races. If you are available let Jenny Leishman know. Saturday, October 18 – trip to Barham. Please let Debbie Burton know if you can go.

Highlights and Lowlights

The Pink Lady Day is on next Wednesday, so get out your most outrageous pink outfit and come along to help raise money for breast cancer. Please note that only 12 holes will be played, hitting off at 11.30 a.m.. After golf will be afternoon tea at Choose Food, and all current and past members are invited to join in at 3 p.m.. Note the change of date for the Maurie Tranter Memorial from Sunday 7th to Saturday 6th due to the predicted weather. Hit off time is 12.30, assembly at 12 noon. The casserole dinner to follow will commence at 6 p.m., so please bring your casserole hot. Kerry W. and Mary H. are the newest members of the “swish club”, Jo Bishop had 2 gobblers and Leonie Harvey walked on water on third 3rd. It's lucky she didn't hit the

mountain ducks swimming there!

Thanks to all those who have helped with the recent catering.

Player Profile. Kerry Wood

For how long have you been playing golf? 2 years.

What do you enjoy about golf? Challenging myself, the walking and socialising.

What's the best part of your game? Anything but my approach shots!

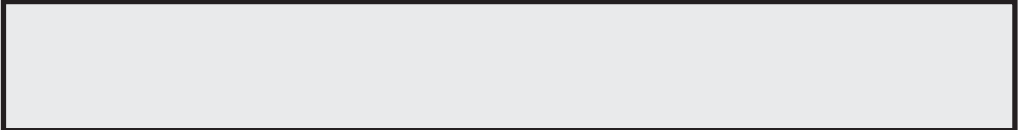
What advice would you give to anyone who is thinking of taking up golf? Don't take it too seriously. Practice and lessons definitely improved my game.

What's your best score? A couple of great days out partnering with Kerry Raven and Peter Kelly last year.

What's the best shot you've ever played? During the Donald tournament last year – a nearest the pin on the third.

Who is your favourite golfer? Brenda Brennan.

What is your current position in the club? Player and social media promo.



(By Course Language)

“Rain, rain go away” – said no farmer ever at this time of year. Golfers? No, I think that even golfers love to see the rain and appreciate the good it does for the whole community, even if it does curtail a few golfing opportunities.

Last week's golfing programme was altered to fit around the weather with the juniors and chicken run on Friday night cancelled. Golfers returned to the course on Sunday for a stableford competition – draw for secret partners. The lucky winners were Luke Kelly and Brad Bath with 59 points.

The “Nearest the Pins” were: Donald Auto Electric 3rd, Colin Cullen; Weirs IGA 7th, Geoff Harvey; Nufarm 14th, Kelvin Clark; Bendigo Bank 16th, Geoff Harvey.

The course is in great condition at the moment, so don't wait too much longer to come along and have a hit. There are only 3 more weeks of golf for this year, so don't regret not getting along for some great exercise, even if the golf is forgettable.

Dad's Army

Three veterans had a hit around a damp course on Thursday, as it was too wet Wednesday, but no comp was recorded.

Junior Golf

Juniors should be right to resume this week, the weather is looking fine. Remember let's try to get hit off before 4 p.m. if possible.

Chicken Run

Three weeks of the chicken run to go, sponsored by Spud's Café. There seems to be a bit more interest this week, as some of the farm jobs that took people away the first week are done and the sticks have been dusted off ready for a bash. Starting at 4.30.

Coming Up

With all the tournaments in the Kara Kara completed and only a few weeks to go, it would be great to get good fields at home. This weekend has been altered slightly, with the Maurie Tranter Memorial Mixed now scheduled for Saturday, as Sunday is forecast to be not as pleasant, weather wise that is; 12 noon assembly for 12.30 hit off. After Saturday's golf there is a casserole tea at 6-6.30 for

both the men and lady golfers this year, with presentations to the trophy winners to follow. Open to all so let's get along and make it a great night.

Dad Jokes

Whoever came up with “A penny for your thoughts and another day, another dollar” really knew how to coin a phrase.

You know that déjà vu means the feeling of already experiencing the current situation even though it's new. Do you know what deja moo is? It's when you've heard that bull before.

If money doesn't grow on trees, how come banks have branches?

I once entered a “weather pun” contest – I beat the raining champion.

E-Mailers!

Contributors sending stories and photos to the “Times” via E-mail are reminded to include identifications of any people in photographs.



Finals Fever in Boort

The North Central Hockey Association's second semi-final was played at Boort on Saturday, and the crowd was treated to a full day of high-intensity hockey as the top two teams of each grade went head to head in hopes of earning that grand final slot.

In the under-12 game Birchip-Watchem stunned Calder with a lightning start, Denley Tyler bursting through and scoring inside the first minute. Calder tried to steady but the Birchip defence was rock solid, and when a short corner was awarded to Birchip at the five-minute mark, Denley Tyler struck again. His low hit skimmed past keeper Riley Beattie's stick to double the lead.

Calder pressed hard before half-time, Levi Hall almost breaking through, only for an infringement to deny the goal. A flurry of corners went unrewarded, leaving Birchip 2-0 up at the break.

The second half started as a mirrored parody of the first. Calder's Ryder Harrison pouncing on a turnover to fire home within a minute and cut the margin down to one goal. Calder then earned a stroke after Bella Pollington's shot hit a defender's foot on the line, but Tyler Harrison's effort was brilliantly saved by Birchip's keeper Zayvier Sagers.

Undeterred, Calder pushed again and Ryder Harrison levelled the scores with a fierce strike that rattled the backboard with five minutes left. With the game seemingly headed for shoot-outs, Calder earned a last-minute short corner right before time was blown. Ryder's powerful shot was deftly deflected by Ollie

White on the post, sending Calder into the grand final with a 3-2 comeback win.

Underage

The underage semi. between Charlton and St. Arnaud was a hard-fought contest from start to finish. Charlton began brightly, pushing into attack and forcing Saints' keeper into early saves. A short corner chance was denied, but minutes later Amali Fitzpatrick drove a ball across the D for Ruby Wright to finish cleanly and put Charlton ahead, going into half-time.

Saints lifted after half-time, Samuel Greenaway carrying strongly up the left wing to test the defence, but Charlton's backline stood tall. Multiple short corners were earned by Charlton, including one where Murphy Fitzpatrick's flick over grounded keeper Forbes Kirk had finally slipped past only to be stopped on the line by Saints' defender Isabella Bigmore, who cleared it brilliantly off the line. Forbes's relentless defence kept Saints dreams alive, but with no goals coming the early damage had been done. Charlton managed to hold its slender lead and book its spot in the grand final with a 1-0 win.

Women

The women's semi-final between St Arnaud and Calder United was an arm-wrestle,

with both teams defending desperately and goalkeepers standing tall. Calder pressed early, Kate Gifford firing at goal from a short, only for keeper Sophie Male to make a remarkable clean save. St Arnaud responded with runs down the sideline and corners of its own, but Calder's defence, led by captain Laura Harrison's tireless work, held them out.

Chances kept coming after half-time but neither side could land the killer blow. With dangerous strikes from Brylea Knight being barely saved by Calder's keeper Sue-Anne Beattie the scores were all locked up at 0-0 at the end of the full-time. This gave the competition's first look at 8 second shoot-outs for the series, where attackers have 8 seconds to go 1v1 with the goal keeper.

With the pressure and intensity high, both teams took it in turns to face down the other's goalie. Brylie Knight and Querida Pearse scored for St Arnaud, while Tanya Goddard was the only successful Calder striker after each team's 5 shots, securing Saints' win and a spot in Wedderburn for the 13th.

Men

The Calder United v. St Arnaud men's semi-final was billed as the game of the day, and it lived up to expectations. From the first whistle the intensity was fierce, with crunching tackles, vocal support from the crowd, and the umpires busy keeping tempers in check.

Calder struck first late in the opening quarter when Marcus Williamson pounced on a rebound from a short corner to make it 1-0. The second quarter was fiery, with multiple green cards and even yellow cards coming out, and both teams were short on players for extended periods. Amid the chaos, St Arnaud equalised through Ben Greenaway, who converted from a short corner to square it up at 1-1 before half-time.

The pace didn't drop in the second half. Calder pressed hard through repeated corners, only to be denied by St Arnaud keeper Sam Cook and defenders throwing them-



• The Saints' Jo Watts gets around Calder United's Will Ison during last Saturday's Men's shootout.



• St Arnaud goalkeeper goalie Sam Cook and Calder United's James Paley during the men's shoot-out.



• Charlton's Toby Bourke looks to block Duncan Kirk (St Arnaud) during the Underage second semi-final. -Photos Tara Lowe.



• Ivy Bourke and Ollie White compete for possession in the Under-12s.-Photo Blake Lee.

selves into the fray. At the other end, Thomas Watts and Ben Greenaway threatened to break the deadlock, but Calder's Jacob Moresi and Nick Rowley held the defensive line repelling attack after attack.

With no further scores coming before full-time, the match was set to go to shoot-outs in a mirror of the women's game before it, with Calder and St Arnaud once again lining up.

Joe Watts opened for St Arnaud with a goal, before Paddy Eccles replied for Calder. Ben Greenaway then

found the net before Calder's Max Rowley brought it back to level after the first round of shoot-outs. With the scores locked at 3-all, sudden death shoot-outs were the only way to resolve a winner. Max Rowley having already scored in the first stage of the shoot-out was selected to step up first in sudden death for Calder United. A calm but powerful flick by Max Rowley past keeper Sam Cook saw hope for the Lions. Saints Ed Parry tried to work his way around keeper Will Ison, but no clean opportunity appeared. As the 8 seconds was

up and no score came from the Saints, Calder players swarmed keeper Will Ison, erupting in celebration with a 4-3 win seeing them chasing a grand final dream.

All hope isn't lost for these defeated teams, as they will take on last week's victors in the preliminary final to earn a spot in the grand final. This will see Birchip-Watchem v. Charlton in the under-12s, St Arnaud v. Donald in the underage, Calder v. Wedderburn in the women's and St Arnaud v. Donald in the men's in what will undoubtedly be some intense matches.



• Johanna Meagher, Emma Green, Jayde Abbott and Querida Pearse rush to celebrate with goalie Sophie Male.

Netball Second Semi-finals

14-&Under “B”
Boort v. St Arnaud: Finals pressure was evident from the outset, with both teams guilty of early turnovers. Once settled midway through the quarter, there was some great ball movement into space. St Arnaud proved more efficient in converting opportunities, taking a 7-2 lead into quarter-time.

Strong midcourt play allowed St Arnaud to continue building momentum throughout the second and third quarters, steadily extending its advantage.

In the final term, Boort’s defenders worked tirelessly to create turnovers and provide their shooters with opportunities. However, St Arnaud maintained its composure and capitalised on its chances to close out the game.

Final score: St Arnaud 21 d. Boort 7.

14-&Under “A”
Boort v. Birchip-Watchem: Both teams started strongly, with each converting their first centre pass. Play was even throughout the opening quarter, with fluent passages of movement and impressive defensive intercepts at both ends. Boort made the most of its height advantage in the goal circle to take a narrow two-goal lead into quarter time.

Birchip-Watchem opened the second quarter positively,

regaining a centre pass early. Precision passing from both sides allowed for flowing netball, while defensive units continued to read the play well and restrict scoring opportunities. At half-time, Boort maintained a two-goal advantage.

In the third quarter, Birchip-Watchem’s defenders provided numerous opportunities, and their shooters capitalised when given the chance. However, Boort’s circle defence was a formidable force, making it difficult for the Bulls to find easy access to the post. At the other end, Boort’s shooters remained consistent, extending the lead to five goals at three-quarter time.

With nothing to lose, Birchip-Watchem made several positional changes entering the final quarter, which proved effective early as it clawed the margin back to three goals. Boort steadied, but the Bulls continued to push, reducing the deficit to just two in the dying minutes. A final goal from Boort in the last minute sealed the game, securing a hard-fought victory.

Final score: Boort 20 d. Birchip-Watchem 17.

17-&Under “A”
Calder United v. Birchip-Watchem: Set to be a high-quality, skilful contest, the game certainly lived up to expectations from the opening whistle. Calder United started

strongly, capitalising on early opportunities and punishing any unforced errors made by the Bulls to establish an early lead.

Birchip-Watchem settled into the game in the second quarter, scoring quickly, but the six-goal margin remained. Both teams displayed outstanding ball movement through the court, with exceptional delivery into the circle, ensuring a fast-paced, high-scoring first half. At the break, the Lions held a 33-27 advantage.

The second half was dictated largely by Calder United, which used its rolling substitutions to inject fresh legs and maintain intensity. The Bulls continued to trial different combinations in an effort to slow the Lions’ momentum, but the opposition proved too strong and consistent across the court.

Calder United secured a convincing victory and, with it, a place in the grand final.

Final score: Calder United 62 d. Birchip-Watchem 44.

“C” Reserve
Boort v. Sea Lake-Nandaly: Sea Lake-Nandaly began the match positively, forcing numerous turnovers and converting accurately in the goal circle. However, Boort gained composure, and through patience with ball movement, was able to work its way back into the contest to trail by just one goal at quarter-time.

Boort continued its disciplined play in the second quarter, capitalising on opportunities and stretching the margin to five goals by the main break.

Midway through the third quarter, positional changes helped the Tigers’ attacking end settle, and their defensive pressure was rewarded with turnovers that were converted to goals. The margin was reduced to only three by three-quarter time, setting up a tight final term.

In the last quarter, Boort regained control, lifting its intensity and applying score-



• 17-&Under “A”: Lana Angel attempts to defend the pass to Jessie Fawcett.

board pressure to extend its lead. Despite Sea Lake-Nandaly’s persistence, Boort steadied to take a well-earned victory.

Final score: Boort 43 d. Sea Lake-Nandaly 34.

“C” Grade
Calder United v. Wedderburn: Wedderburn settled quickly into the match, scoring early and taking a strong 9-2 lead before Calder United found its rhythm. Calder responded well, closing the gap to just two goals by quarter-time.

The second quarter was dominated by the Lions, who connected strongly through the court and capitalised on opportunities to swing the momentum in their favour. By half-time, they had taken control, leading 30-23.

The third quarter proved evenly matched, with both sides working hard to maintain possession and apply pressure.

In the final term, Calder United built on its attacking connections, with its goalers rotating effectively and rewarding the team’s hard work. The Lions steadied and extended their lead, running out comfortable winners.

Final score: Calder United 59 d. Wedderburn 44.

“B” Grade
Wedderburn v Calder United: The Redbacks stamped their authority early, moving the ball fluently in attack and finishing with accuracy. Their defensive unit applied relentless pressure, forcing Calder United to work hard for every score, while also claiming clean intercepts.

The Lions tested a number of combinations throughout the match in search of momentum, but were unable to match Wedderburn’s consistency across the court. The Redbacks claimed every quarter and ran out convincing winners.

Final score: Wedderburn 57 d. Calder United 31.

“A” Grade
Wedderburn v. Boort: The penultimate game of the day lived up to expectations, played at a furious pace that produced plenty of turnovers. At quarter-time, the scores were locked away at 11 apiece, with neither side able to gain an edge.

The second term remained tightly contested. The Redbacks made positional changes in search of momentum, but it was Boort which edged ahead to take a slender one-goal lead into the main break.

As the physicality lifted in the third quarter, Wedderburn made further adjustments that proved effective. The Redbacks capitalised on their opportunities and built the biggest lead of the game, five

goals, heading into three-quarter time.

Boort responded strongly in the final term, with mid-court changes sparking a surge that brought it back within one goal. An injury forced a late reshuffle that initially unsettled the Magpies, but they regained composure to challenge in the dying minutes. In the end, Wedderburn held firm to claim a thrilling one-goal victory.

Final score: Wedderburn 64 d. Boort 45.

Lions Stake Their Claim

• Continued from page 16.
Netball Finals Don’t Come Any Closer

Wedderburn survived a searching challenge from Boort in last Saturday’s second semi-final, the Redbacks winning by just 1 goal to advance to the grand final.

For the Magpies to earn a shot at premiership glory, they will have to overcome a spirited Sea Lake-Nandaly challenge, spearheaded by Grace Farrell and Gabby Munari, while for Boort, Carly Isaac and Georgia Weaver will be the mainstays.

Inspired by their efforts last Saturday, the Magpies should win.

Lions and Saints Hockey Use Second Chance

Calder United fell agonising close to securing a grand final berth when it lost to St. Arnaud in last Saturday’s women’s second semi-final, but has the chance to regroup and secure another shot at premiership glory, provided it can overcome a determined Wedderburn tomorrow.

The Lions should get the chocolates.

In the men’s game, St. Arnaud must recover quickly from the disappointment of a sudden death shootout loss to Calder United if it is to answer a strong challenge from a fired up Donald.

If the Saints bring their “A” grade game, they should prevail, but the determined Royal Blues can never be discounted.

Recognition Richly Deserved

Two long serving St. Arnaud Football Club members

received special and well deserved recognition at the club’s end of season presentation event.

Ricky Summers first represented his club in 1980, was a member of the Saints’ 1988 senior premiership team and in addition to his 101 senior games and 26 at reserves level.

Since retiring, Ricky has been a tireless worker in a variety of fields, to ensure his club functions smoothly.

Local legend, Daniel Needs was elevated into the St. Arnaud Football Club’s Hall of Fame.

Few individual records can compare with Needs’s 325 senior games, 57 reserves games, 1010 goals during his career from 1996 to 2024, 6 senior club “best and fairest” awards, three senior premierships in 1998, 1999 and 2015, being awarded the Des Darcy Memorial Medal for best afield in 1998, and receiving the Keith Chalmers Memorial trophy as runner-up in the 2004 Feeny Medal.

Best Clubman

St. Arnaud’s Brian Lloyd Memorial Best Clubman award for 2025 went to Jason Smith, for his amazing work every Saturday and behind the scenes with his incredible computer skills.

The Saints’ senior “best and fairest” award went to Jay Kirwood.

In the reserves, Jarryd Kell won the “best and fairest” award; and in the under-17s, joint winners were Austin Lowe and Frankie Donald.



• “A” Grade: Eliza Lockhart and Carly Isaac fight for the ball. Photos by Blake Lee.



• 14-&-under “A”: Gemma Tynan competes for the rebound with Boort’s GD.



• Tensions run high in the final quarter of Reserves. (Photo by Blake Lee.)

Calder United Reserves Through to Final

Calder United reserves have progressed to the grand final after a hard fought victory over Boort.

The Lions were boosted by the return of Spencer Allan, after missing several games with a leg injury.

At the centre bounce it was a great battle of the big men with Calder United's Tom Trewin and Boort's Cam Ross facing each other in the ruck, and both made valuable contributions through the course of the game. It was the former who delivered to Cody Green who opened proceedings after receiving a fifty-metre penalty. This was to become the only major score for the quarter as it began as a dour struggle, typical of a final.

Dude Kelly slotted a long goal into a tricky breeze to start the second period. Not to be denied, Boort's Harry Weaver matched this. Harry's team mate Dylan Hatcher held on to a courageous mark and, having received a heavy knock, was awarded a fifty-metre penalty. Mal Coleman then converted this free. The

Nowie Street protein shakes were working for United's Sol Kelly and Billy Forrest, Jack Morrison and Joel Turner were strong at the contests and Hunter Connolly booted a goal on the run before suffering a head cut from friendly fire. The Magpies' Jack Baker, Fraser Millar, Sam Toose and Angus Trethowan were playing well and Pat O'Rourke dopped a goal and the Lions' lead at half-time was a miserly one point.

An upset looked a possibility as goals to Magpies' Jacob Mulquiny and Jack Baker saw them take the ascendancy. United then clicked into gear as Heath Senior, Brent Barker and James Ison, from an infringement in the goal square, banged on three goals to hold a handy eleven-point lead going in to the final period.

Into the last and again it was Calder United's Heath Senior putting his impression on the scoreboard. It was all

Lions as Tiger Vearing, a lively forward all game, goaled to seal the game.

Calder United 8.10 (58) d. Boort 5.3 (33).

Best for Calder United: Jack Morrison, Joel Turner, Sol Kelly, Billy Forrester, Tiger Vearing.

For Boort: Jack Baker, Cam Ross, Fraser Millar, Angus Trethowan, Sam Toose, Dylan Hatcher.

• *Top right: Joel Turner is under pressure from Boort's Beau Herrington as Harry Weaver grabs hold of his feet.* (Photo by Blake Lee.)

• *Middle right: pictured as the ball spills free are Calder United's Tom Trewin and Angus Forrester and Boort's Harry Weaver, Cam Ross and Alex Cockerall.*

• *Bottom right: Calder United's Jack Morrison gets his kick away under pressure from Max Beattie.* (Photo by Blake Lee.)



• Boort's Chris O'Rourke fires off the handball to Sam Toose whilst being tackled by Calder's George Forrester.



Lions Stake Their Claim

(By Shane O'Shea)

A brilliant opening quarter of intense pressure, crisp and rapid ball movement and superb accuracy in front of goal set Calder United on a path to victory against the previously undefeated Birchip-Watchem in last Saturday's second semi-final and secured a berth in North-Central's 2025 grand final.

It also underlined the level of skill and intensity either Birchip-Watchem or Sea Lake-Nandaly will need to match or better if they are to prevent the Lions from raising the Halfhide Premiership Cup high on that one day in September.

Tomorrow, at St. Arnaud, the Bulls, smarting from their first loss of the season, will confront a confidence-boosted Tigers outfit, potentially at full strength with the possible inclusions of Thomas Cox, Andy Collins and Oscar Brownless.

It promises to be an enthralling contest between two of the competition's heavy-weights and last season's grand finalists.

Birchip-Watchem was caught on the back foot by Calder United's ferocious start, something not previously seen this season, but the Bulls' lead in to the finals was hardly ideal, which included three games against the competition's least competitive combinations, followed by a week's rest.

The Lions, in contrast, lost narrowly to fellow finalist, Sea Lake-Nandaly, in a round 16 clash that encouraged

shades of finals-like intensity from start to finish.

And while the Bulls did manage to regain their composure and outscored their opponents over the following three quarters, the impact on their confidence, and the battering and bruising associated with such an intense battle, may play heavily on them tomorrow, and influence their progress.

Birchip-Watchem has won both its clashes with Sea Lake-Nandaly this season, by increasing margins, but finals football is very different to home-and-away games. And the stakes are also raised, with the season over for the loser.

To avoid bowing out of the premiership race with a second successive loss, the Bulls must recapture the hard running game that has been the feature of their football. The loss of Nic Rippon to injury has had a significant impact on their midfield, with Daniel Bell, Marshall Rippon, Meyrick Buchanan, Sam Simmons, Charlie Frank and Jacob Christie now sharing greater responsibility for capitalising on the ruck work of Hamish Hosking.

Hosking has held sway in his duels with Tiger veteran

The Buloke Times



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• It's down to three: Charlton artist Brian Townsend has been busy creating these superb premiership posters. Calder United Lions have cemented their place in next week's Grand Final with the Birchip-Watchem Bulls and Sea Lake-Nandaly Tigers set to slug it out tomorrow for the right to challenge.

Ryan O'Sullivan, but the battle for possession at ground level between Birchip-Watchem's midfielders and Sea Lake-Nandaly's equally powerful brigade led by Trent and Wade Donnan, Bryce Delmenico, Tyson McKenzie and Thomas Cox, will have a significant influence on the game's outcome.

Forwards will also play a crucial role, the Bulls' Ben Edwards, Rhona Conboy and Tom Gibson and the Tigers' Josh Jenkins, Lachy McClelland and Adam Pattison all capable of having a match defining impact on the scoreboard.

And defensively, both combinations are very well served, Birchip-Watchem's featuring the ever-reliable Dale Hinkley, Ben Lakin, Lachlan Ryan and Angus Butterfield, while Sea Lake-Nandaly's Kane Donnan, Luke Martin and Jack Poulton are proven big game performers.

The depth of talent in both line-ups extends much further than those mentioned above, however; suffice to say that this clash has the potential to be one of the best of the season, with the ultimate reward of a grand final berth for the victor ensuring nothing is left in the tank.

Backing up after last weekend's sluggish start, the Bulls will be better prepared, and provided that the potential absence of Nic Rippon can be covered, they should win, but their Tiger opponents enter the contest on a growing wave of their best football.

Magpies Reserves Eye Rematch

A week after its comprehensive second semi-final loss to Calder United, Boort must find a way past Birchip-Watchem if it is to earn



• Lachy Foott and Chase Tait compete for the Sherrin in round 3.

another crack at the Lions on grand final day.

A slow start had the Magpies battling to make up lost ground, and they will need to kick into top gear from the first bounce, led by Cameron Ross, Angus Trethowan, Sam Toose and Fraser Millar, if they are to counter a fired-up Bulls' combination, freshened up after its convincing first semi-final victory.

Brothers Ty and Bodie Colbert, Harry Cook, Stefan Pye and George Addis will again need to perform well if the Bulls are to keep their season alive and progress through to the season decider.

Having both senior and reserves teams playing tomorrow might help any selection headaches, and enable Birchip-Watchem to advance

to the most important game of the season.

Saints Under-17s Need Good Start

It took St. Arnaud until well into last Saturday's semi-final to find its rhythm against Sea Lake-Nandaly, and that slow start inevitably proved the Saints' downfall, a trait that cannot be allowed to occur tomorrow, against Boort, if they are to play off for this season's premiership.

Austin Lowe, Sean Bridgeman, Jack Batters and Aidan Wickham need the full support of all team-mates if they are to outplay and outscore the young Magpies, who rely heavily on Luke Boyd, Brodie McPherson, Cooper Gooding and Ryan Chislett to provide consistent pressure and attacking drive.

If the Saints are at their best, they should win.

Tigers Look to Rebound

Not even a last quarter surge was good enough to enable Sea Lake-Nandaly under-14s to overtake St. Arnaud last Saturday, and tomorrow, the youngest Tigers will need a strong four-quarter effort if they are to win their way into a grand final rematch with the Saints.

Henry Cox, Riley Allan and Finn Austerberry will need to be at their best, along with their team-mates, if they are to answer St. Arnaud's challenge, led by Patrick Zsigmond, Chase Hendy and Jesse James.

If the Tigers start well, they should win.

• Continued on page 14.

PRELIMINARY FINALS

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 6 AT ST ARNAUD

SENIORS | 2:30PM
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V SEA LAKE NANDALY

RESERVES | 12:35PM
BOORT V BIRCHIP-WATCHEM

UNDER 17'S | 10:55AM
ST ARNAUD V BOORT

UNDER 14'S | 9:30AM
SEA LAKE NANDALY V BOORT

BOORT V SEA LAKE NANDALY

CALDER UNITED V BIRCHIP-WATCHEM

WEDDERBURN V BOORT

SEA LAKE NANDALY V CALDER UNITED

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V BOORT

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V DONALD

BOORT V BIRCHIP-WATCHEM

A | 3:00PM

B | 1:45PM

C | 12:30PM

C RES | 11:15AM

17&U | 10:00AM

14&U 'A' | 9:00AM

14&U 'B' | 10:00AM

ST ARNAUD V DONALD

CALDER UNITED V WEDDERBURN

ST ARNAUD V DONALD

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V CHARLTON

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