

DONALD

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admin@buloketimes.com

The Buloke Times

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BIRCHIP

Phone: 5492 2735

Fax: 5492 2863

Email:
birchipblc@
bigpond.com

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



Football History in the Making

Led by captain Rylee Smith, North-Central football's newest senior team takes the field at Donald, for its first-ever game under the title, "Calder United".

Talk about a football pedigree! As a combination of the former Wycheproof-Narraport and Nullawil sides, there was never a doubt that they would be a force to be reckoned with.

Both have been leading lights with their respective leagues for decades, and on Saturday, as a combined unit, they gave notice that they will be there right to — and through — the business end of the season.

Like the highway after which it was named, the merged and masterful brand new side was a clear winner in this neck of the woods, finishing the day with a massive score of 23.26 (164).

Not to be outdone, however, a team from Sunraysia Highway — Calder's parallel neighbour, Birchip-Watchem — booted the score of the day, with a total of 30.12 (192).

• All Saturday's football, netball and hockey details are in today's "Buloke Times" sports pages.

Photo Takes Pride of Place

A special photo of Thomas Campbell Dunstan will once again take pride of place in the library that bears his name after a tireless search by his son, William "John" Dunstan.

The Dunstan Library in St Arnaud was named after Thomas and his wife Enid, née Montague, who were strong supporters of the town's Mechanics Institute and Library.

Northern Grampians Shire mayor, Karen Hyslop, said the photo of Thomas hung proudly in the former library in Market Square until 2006 and was taken down during the construction of the current library.

"John has been on a mission to track it down and bring both the photo and the story behind it back to the Dunstan Library," she said.

"John first started searching seriously three or four years ago, bringing it up with St Arnaud librarian Belinda Huggins and Council customer service.

"In this time, we have had a few maintenance men for the St Arnaud building — all who searched fruitlessly."

Plaque

Cr Hyslop said the search unearthed a plaque about a year ago, but no accompanying photo.

"Belinda recently organised for the current maintenance man, Josh, to meet with John and members of St Arnaud Historical Society to identify and sort a room full of ephemera upstairs in the town hall," she said.

"It turned out the photo was the first thing they saw as they walked into the room."

The plaque that accompanies the photo shows: "This library was named after Thomas Campbell Dunstan who served 21 years as a Kara Kara Shire Councillor, three terms as Shire President, and played an active role in the former Mechanics Institute Library Committee."

Supporters

Cr Hyslop said John recalled both his parents were

excellent readers and supporters of the Mechanics Institute, which included a public library, reading room and meeting place.

"John said his parents would travel to other towns and swap books so that St Arnaud always had an interesting and varied collection," she said.

The current Dunstan Library has about 7000 items for loan, and welcomes about 1000 visitors a month.

Comments

"Our library team receives comments from locals and travellers alike about how lucky we are to have such a beautiful and welcoming facility that caters for so many activities," Cr Hyslop said.

"We have a lot to thank them for and look forward to rehanging this wonderful portrait of Thomas."



• William "John" Dunstan with a photo of his father, Thomas, which will once again take pride of place in St Arnaud's Dunstan Library.

Time to Check Smoke Alarms

As Victorians adjust their clocks for the end of daylight saving, RACV and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) are reminding residents about the critical importance of smoke alarm maintenance.

RACV Head of Policy James Williams said an operational smoke alarm can allow us the precious seconds we need to evacuate safely in the event of a fire emergency.

“With an average of 3,000 house fires in Victoria each year, the importance of functional smoke alarms cannot be overstated,” Mr Williams said.

“RACV is urging everyone to take some time this weekend to ensure you have reliable smoke alarms installed at your home.

“If you’re unsure how your smoke alarm works, or unable to install or change an alarm yourself, seeking a qualified professional to do the job is the best thing you can do.”

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan said it is vital all Victorians have working smoke alarms in their homes to prevent house fires and fatalities.

“The more smoke alarms you have in the home, the more likely you are to wake up and be alerted to a fire. We highly recommend residents install them in all bedrooms, living areas, and hallways for the best protection,” Mr Heffernan said.

RACV reminds tenants that while rental providers are responsible for maintaining smoke alarms, it’s crucial to report any concerns promptly with your property manager.

Smoke Alarm Essential Maintenance

- Test your smoke alarms monthly.
- Recognise warning signs such as yellowing units or continuous chirping.
- Undertake proper installation in every bedroom, living area, and hallway.



- Use 10-year lithium battery powered alarms.

Signs your smoke alarms need attention include the following warning signs:

- Yellowing of the alarm unit.
- Continuous “chirping” sounds.
- Unexplained activations

Last year, RACV and the CFA partnered to provide free smoke alarms and education to more than 750 at-risk individuals across rural and regional Victoria. This program equips homes with life-saving devices and spreads vital knowledge about fire prevention and safety in the home.

Mr Williams emphasised the program’s urgency, with RACV today announcing an extension of funding to help the CFA reach more homes.

“This program aims to increase the understanding and awareness of residential home fire safety,” he said.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan said this program has addressed crucial gaps in smoke alarm presence throughout Victorian homes, particularly for vulnerable residents.

“This is an important program to ensure we’re helping our community members keep themselves and their homes safe, especially those more vulnerable such as elderly Victorians,” Mr Heffernan said.

For more information about smoke alarm installation and safety, visit [/plan-prepare/fires-in-the-home/smoke-alarms/smoke-alarms](#) or [racv.com/trades](#).



• RACV Trades can ensure your smoke alarms are installed to code, to keep homes and families safe.

Energy Documents are to be Released

Key documents relating to the State Government’s impending gas ban, transmission projects and botched energy upgrades scheme are set to be made public for the first time.

In State Parliament, on Wednesday, the Legislative Council passed a Liberals and Nationals documents motion requiring the State Government to make public:

- Submissions to the regulatory impact statement on electrification.
- Submissions to the ongoing Victorian Energy Updates strategic review.
- All documents relied upon by the Essential Services Commission during the recent granting of a transmission licence to the Transmission Company Victoria.
- Documents submitted to

the energy market operator relating to the VNI West and Western Renewables Link projects.

- All formal communications from the Minister for Energy, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and the Australian Energy Market Operator since June 30 last year.

The State Government is required to produce these documents within three weeks.

Shadow Minister for Energy and Resources, David Davis, said: “The passing of this motion is an important

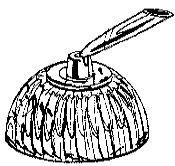
step towards transparency over these significant energy projects.

“The State Government has sought to keep these documents secret and Victorians in the dark over the future of projects that have the potential to dramatically impact regional communities and add further costs to energy bills.

“Furthermore, these documents will reveal the true depth of community and industry concern over Labor’s impending gas ban which will cause enormous damage to our economy.”



Letters to the Editor



Clarification On Planning Matter

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.— At the Buloke Shire Council Special meeting on March 3, 2025, Council received an Officer’s Report recommending Council not to approve a planning permit for the Esoteric Music Festival for a 10-year period. Council ultimately had concerns with the 10 year duration and resolved to grant a 1 year permit with 47 conditions.

Subsequent to this Council decision, at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 4, Council’s independent Municipal Building Surveyor wrote to the event organiser to inform them they would not be granted a building permit for the event.

The letter contained 33 reasons as to why the building permit would not be issued including concerns around public liability, multiple structures without permits and concerns over 12 metre posts which were inadequately embedded and did not have a building permit.

Buloke Shire Council is supportive of any event conducted in the Shire on the basis of it being run in a safe manner for patrons, performers and staff.

Your sincerely,
Wayne O’Toole.
Chief Executive Officer

A.I. and Robots

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.— Re: Robots do not mow lawns, plant and water trees, repair roads etc., YET.

References Buloke Shire Council’s online financials, state and federal white papers, IBM and HP.

There are strong indications of changes imminent to local government management and costs apportionment.

Thirty positions would be disrupted minimally, encouraging movement from low productivity to higher productivity in the private sector by applying intelligent energetic ordered re-structuring.

At approx. nearly average costs of \$110 thousands per employee, the subjects of council activities, ratepayers and recipients of services, would enjoy some relief with continuing increasing services and some rate rise relief.

To understand better the effects on white-collar employment coming to council from current AI systems and the like, reflect on the introduction of tractors and harvesters on the farming workforce within the shire for good example.

Change happens, best to avoid being UNITED in collective error or collective inert acquiescence. The object is not to de-skill the public service in the shire. Was automa-

tion in farming bad for productivity? Moneys re-appropriated could increase the on-the-ground staff and person to person services with some substantive capital savings.

I encourage the understanding of coming change with increased consultations outside the shire. Also read for yourself for DIY preparations. Council can avoid cost by referencing available state and federal centres of expertise, seeking advices and directions, or simply have someone ring IBM for help, to reduce costs and improve productivity. Reportage to the elected councillors would enable deeper community participation in debate, before and during, not after, change.

DIY in the Buloke Shire? Briefly, we have here automated 3D printers using carbon fibres, large computerised routers and metal cutting machines, private sophisticated wireless communications networks, robots in factories, automated solar powered data storage and the farmers have some truly wizard stuff.

Concluding opinion, A.I. alone will cut governing bodies costs, stay ahead of the wave of change. Choose, be first, be smart or cheat, my preference is work to be first.

All the best for a changing more productive future.
William Carr,
Donald, Victoria.

“Black Bag” Spy Thriller at Rex

Settle in for an edge-of-your-seat spy thriller as The Rex presents “Black Bag” as this weekend’s movie.

Cate Blanchett and Michael Fassbender head the cast as British spies “Kathryn and George Woodhouse”.

The action kicks off almost immediately when George receives information that Kathryn – an agent in the same agency – has been identified as a traitor.

A large portion of the film involves two dinner parties, where everyone’s relationship

is laid bare for us all to see and to work out who is telling the truth and who is playing the game. Director Steven Sonderberg keeps the dynamics between the couple tight as George faces the ultimate test – loyalty to his marriage or his country.

Blanchett has been described as “flawless” as the seductive and secretive Kathryn, and together with

Fassbender, the duo become a powerhouse couple.

Sleek, cool, polished, smart and smooth are just some of the praiseworthy adjectives used for this taut, tight and gripping story.

Just the thing for an entertaining outing to the movies!

“Black Bag” screens Saturday, April 12 8 p.m. | Sunday, April 13 2 p.m. | Tuesday, April 15 8 p.m.

Corack East Wind

Renewable Energy from ACEN



ACEN Australia is in the early stages of investigating a large-scale wind energy project in Buloke Shire in Western Victoria, called **Corack East Wind**. The development is proposed to be located on privately owned land between Donald, Birchip and Wycheproof.

Drop-in information Hub
Every Wednesday 1pm-6pm

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex
Boardroom

Commencing 19 March, 2025

Meet the project team, find out more and provide feedback

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex
Calder Hwy, Charlton

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1800 498 550

[info@corackeastwind.com.au](#)

Corack East Wind

At Dimboola Steampunk Festival . . . Multicultural Community to Dazzle

The local multicultural community will honour CFA and SES volunteers with a dazzling performance as part of the grand finale at the 2025 Dimboola's Steampunk Festival on Saturday, April 12.

The "UNITY Parade" – a vibrant showcase of collaboration, respect, and unity – will pay tribute to the selfless dedication of CFA and SES volunteers during the recent Little Desert bushfire and celebrate the resilience of the Dimboola community.

Supported by Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD) Settlement Services the parade will feature 50 performers from the Philippines, Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, India and Timor-Leste; alongside some Australian friends.

Iconic performer "Wander Queen of the Little Desert" will lead the procession, flanked by two giant Steampunk bicycles. There will also be a vintage fire truck. Children will play a key role, carrying "Thank You" banners in

appreciation of emergency service personnel.

Blending

"Blending cultures, music, and a touch of the extraordinary, the parade will be a heartfelt tribute to the real heroes of our communities," said WSMD Migration and Settlement Program Manager Sara Barron.

"Inspired by the vibrancy of Rio de Janeiro, costumes will be themed around fire, symbolising strength, and resilience. This dynamic street dance procession will really bring Dimboola's main street to life."

Head-dresses and costumes were made collectively by the Wimmera Filipino Australian Club (WFAC), Nhill and Horsham Karen Community Club, the Timor-Leste Community in Stawell and WSMD Settlement's Har-

mony Sewing Group. Support was also provided by Nhill Learning Centre and Centre for Participation.

6 p.m. Start

The parade will start at 6 p.m. and end at 6.30 p.m.. It will enter Lloyd Street from the Post Office side and travel towards Lochiel Street and conclude near IGA.

Since the festival's inception in 2022, WSMD Settlement Services has played a key role in ensuring multicultural communities remain at the heart of Dimboola's Steampunk celebrations.

"This involvement reflects WSMD's broader vision of fostering an inclusive, vibrant, and thriving region, contributing to the goal of facilitating population growth of 7,000 people by 2032," said WSMD CEO, Chris Souinness.



• Left to right, Sara Barron (WSMD), Madhu Sharma (Harmony Sewing Group member), Christinedah Gaw (Harmony Sewing Group Co-ordinator). Photo credit: Simone Dalton.

Rural Health Matters

With the Federal Election set for May 3, it is crucial that all Members of Parliament and Senators prioritise the needs of rural Australia and step up to secure a healthier future for all Australians.

The 2025-26 Federal Budget fell disappointingly short of providing a tailored solution for rural health care. However, the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) is hopeful that all parties would recognise the economic contribution of rural populations and address their health needs during election campaigns.

"As the cost of living continues to rise, the disparities in healthcare funding and access for rural people are becoming more pronounced, making it vital for this election to focus on ensuring health equity for all Australians," said NRHA Chief Executive Susi Tegen.

Rural Australians make up 30 per cent of Australia's population, contributing significantly to Australia's economy, and generating 70 per cent of export income through industries, such as agriculture, minerals, tourism, retail, services, and manufacturing. They also account for 50 per cent of the nation's tourism income and provide 90 per cent of the country's food.

Despite these enormous contributions, rural Australians receive \$848 less per person per year – \$6.55 billion in total – in healthcare funding compared to their urban counterparts. This gap

translates to poorer health outcomes and earlier death due to reduced access to healthcare services.

"We urge all Australians and the candidates who seek their votes to recognise and address the healthcare challenges and earlier deaths that persist in rural areas, ultimately impacting all Australians. We ask for their support to implement a National Rural Health Strategy to co-ordinate Commonwealth, State, and Territory policy, investment and service delivery. This will ensure grassroots-led, sustainable solutions for rural communities throughout the patient journey.

"We have heard from individuals who must travel hundreds of kilometres to access basic care, as the services have disappeared, and no one seems to care. Clinicians, no matter which health profession, are working many hours on the ground, are burnt out and feel unsupported. The solutions have been provided for any government to take up the challenge to be more flexible and focus on equity and reflect that we are all Australians," said Ms Tegen.

NRHA is also calling for a \$1 billion National Rural

Health Fund, half of which is to support blended or block healthcare delivery payments for where there is no or little access for populations to healthcare.

The other half would be put towards infrastructure for student, trainee or visiting clinician accommodation, outreach in infrastructure for service delivery, or for childcare. This would help address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in rural regions.

NRHA is a strong advocate of local rural health research, innovation and grassroots-led solutions and seeks funding for a Rural Health Innovation and Evidence Hub where anyone from anywhere can access information from other regions that have implemented great ideas and solutions, to learn, share and adapt the lessons and trials that have improved patient access, health and medical clinician training and research across rural Australia.

"It is time for all political leaders to step up, commit to the 7.3 million rural people that they would implement long-term solutions, and ensure that no Australian, no matter what their postcode, is left behind when it comes to accessing quality health care," said Ms Tegen.

The National Rural Health Alliance (the Alliance) comprises 53 national organisations committed to improving the health and wellbeing of the over 7 million people in rural and remote Australia. Its diverse membership includes representation from health professional organisations, health service providers, health educators, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector and students.

St. Andrew's Celebrates

The Donald Uniting Church congregation gathered on Sunday, March 23, to celebrate the centenary of the present building, opened March 19, 1925.

Visitors came from far and wide to be present at the special service of worship. These included the Re. Ian and Joy Porter, former Methodist minister, then Uniting, who had travelled from Portarlington. Rev. Peter Gador-Whyte and his mother Dr. Mary Grave Whyte, widow of the Reb. Neilson Whyte (1967-1972), had come from Point Lonsdale and Fish Creek.

Congregational chairperson Colin Coats welcomed all present and outlined the day's proceedings. Prior to the service a slideshow of historical photos was viewed. Following a rousing hymn of praise with Bev. Gilmour at the organ, Isabelle Flett traced the story of St. Andrew's from its early days (earlier reported) to the present. Readings for the day, read by Verna Harris, were from Psalm 100 and Matthew 5: 14-16 "Let your light so shine".

The Rev. Margaret Russell, guest preacher, entitled

her message "The Church as a beacon of hope", and John Russell led prayers of the people. Following the blessing, all joined in singing happy birthday to Dr. Mary Grace, who was celebrating her 99th birthday anniversary that day.

Afternoon

There was much chatter and renewing of friendships and browsing of the historical display during the finger food lunch catered by the local Harvest Café.

Harold Flett then chaired the afternoon. Reminiscing was interspersed with items from the Ballarat Neil St. Choir which delighted all.

Amongst those unable to attend were greetings and memories from Jenny Maclachlan, widow of Rev. Robert Maclachlan (1962-1967). Also, Dr. Geoff Stranks, grandson of the Rev. Billinge (1923-1928) who married Grace Green from Litchfield, and Charles Green



sent greeting. Included on the list of apologies were the names of Gwen Westaway, Ian Jenkin, Rev. Stan Fishley, Rev. David Thompson, Jan Hooper (Pope) and Father Gerry Prunty.

Birthday Cake

Finally Betty Wood, whose birthday was on March 19, and Dr. Mary Grace Whyte shared the honours with the Church's 100 birthday cake, made and decorated by Tracey Atkins. Loddon Mallee Presbytery minister the Rev. Gordon Wild, and local shire councillors Charmaine Delaney and Graeme Milne were also able to attend. So ended a day of happy memories.



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RDA committees are vital advocates for their region. They facilitate investment in people, places, services, industries and local economies and work with stakeholders to support delivery of their region's strategic priorities.

Applications are sought from business and community leaders who have a proven track record of achieving meaningful outcomes in a complex environment.

Women, First Nations people, people from diverse cultural backgrounds, and people with a disability are encouraged to apply.

For information about the positions available, and to access an applicant information pack, including the application form, please visit rdv.vic.gov.au/rda-apply

If you would like further information, please phone Leanne Rosewall, Regional Director, Loddon Mallee on **0429 702 928** or email rda.loddonmallee@rdv.vic.gov.au

Applications close 30 April 2025 at 5pm.



"Times" Classifieds

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Deadlines:—

Tuesday's Issue: Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Monday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Friday prior. **Friday's Issue:** Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Thursday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Wednesday prior.

DEATH

CROSSLEY.— Shirley Margaret

21-2-1949 to 3-4-2025

Wife of William (dec), mother to Kim, Adam and Lee, mother-in-law to Brad and Meryl, grandmother to Sye, Larz, Keiko, Shiloh, Ivy, Frankie and Sadie. Great grandmother of Maximus and Jed.

A truly special person who was dearly loved by all she touched. Your generous spirit, caring heart and sense of humor lit up our lives.

We feel so privileged to have known you, to have loved you and be loved by you. May you rest in peace.

FUNERAL CROSSLEY.—

A service to celebrate Shirley's life will be held in the Uniting Church Charlton on Wednesday, April 9, at 1.00 pm. The cortege will then leave for the Charlton Lawn Cemetery.

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DONALD HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

FURTHER INFO: 0427 976 208

Trip to Sheridan Memorial Plaque

(Meeting to follow)

Speaker:

Paul Sheridan

Monday, April 14
1 p.m. meet at Mall for transport

ALL WELCOME

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

FRIENDS OF EAST WIMMERA HEALTH

Donald Campus

Annual General Meeting

THURS., APRIL 24

HOSPITAL

MEETING ROOM

2 p.m.

All welcome



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13 Enterprise Dr, Donald

DoB in a friend
If you know someone celebrating a birthday, or wedding anniversary or some other special occasion, let us know and we'll let the world know!

- April 8, Harry (60)
- April 10, Joyce Hollis
- April 11, Harry Cashin
- April 13, Rory Godkin
- April 13, Rehmi Burke

Darrell Lea
Fine Chocolates

JOHN SANDS

If you know someone celebrating a special anniversary, let us know at
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Sun 13 April 2pm
Tue 15 April 8pm

COMING: **A MINECRAFT MOVIE**
CTC 101 mins | Adventure

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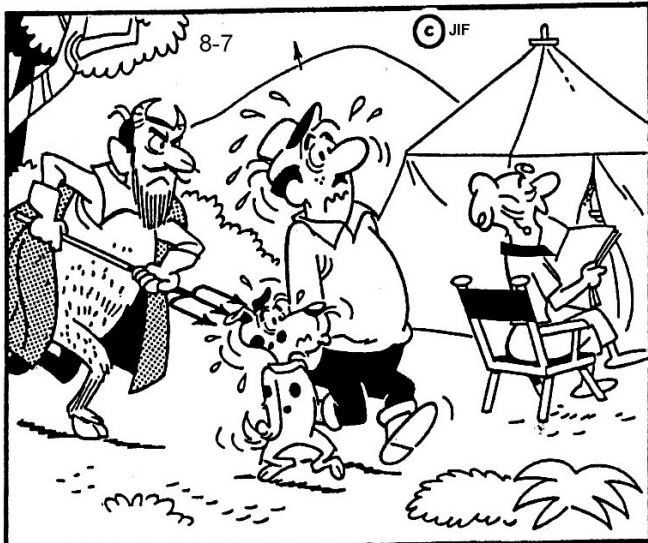
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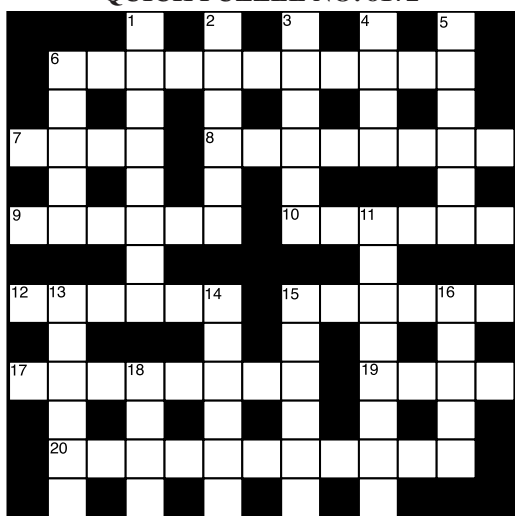
Belvedere By George Crenshaw
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“Hi Boys. How deep down did you get in that cave ?”

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8172



ACROSS

6. Gloomy (11)
7. Pool (4)
8. Game (8)
9. Middle (6)
10. Waylay (6)
12. Frank (6)
15. Uproar (6)
17. Bestride (8)
19. Kind (4)
20. Farming (11)

DOWN

1. Mixed (8)
2. Nonsense (6)
3. Tree (6)
4. Wound (4)
5. Balance (6)
6. First (5)
11. Bragging (8)
13. Starry (6)
14. Subtract (6)
15. Weak (6)
16. Plenty (5)
18. Breezy (4)

• Solution next issue.

Shane Speaks to Probians

Donald Combined Probus Club met for its April meeting, which also happened to be Lorraine Pearse's birthday.

Lorraine spoke on her memories of joining Probus as a Foundation member in 2002, saying how much she had enjoyed the friendships and the trips in that time.

Initial plans were made for the visit in early June of Robyn Howarth, author of “Faraday”, who was one of the children kidnapped from that school. Members of the public will be most welcome to attend.

Guest Speaker

Guest speaker at this meeting was Shane Wall, who spoke on his life.

Shane's ancestors came from Ireland in 1850 and settled in the Glenloth Ninye-unook area, where they owned a shanty.

Shane was the eldest of six children and educated in Wycheproof attending St. Michael's and the High School. His final year at school was spent in Charlton when he travelled by train each morning and returned home by bus each night after a long day. After school while waiting for the bus, he visited the home of Mrs Noonan, where he hopefully did his homework.

Employment

On completing school he travelled to Melbourne for an interview seeking a position as a stock agent. This did not eventuate, but was quickly followed by obtaining a position at the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney in Charlton, with Charlie Nuttall as manager. Shane worked here until the introduction of decimal currency. He then joined

Des Geyle in a stock agency position. While boarding with the Bourke Family he was encouraged by Frank to play football for Charlton, which he did.

He moved to Horsham in 1968, then to Swan Hill, where he became an auctioneer, travelling interstate.

In 1972 with Ken Raven, Raven and Wall commenced. This made 5 agencies in Donald. There were 12 staff members, 9 cars, fortnightly cattle, sheep and pig sales. Then came the 1982 drought and need for change.

Marriage

There was one big change in Shane's life in 1973 when he met a lovely girl named Judy, who he eventually married in January 1976 – a big milestone coming up next year.

Since 1983 Pea Co has become Shane's place of employment as manager, with lots of travel involved, including India. A special place for Shane.

He is very proud of having been involved in the forming of the Foundation for the Local Hospital, raising \$250,000

For those of us who know Shane well as a humble, hard-working man, the time allotted was not long enough for us to hear about his 2 beautiful children, Dean and Claire, let alone skite about his grandchildren, nor was he able to include in this talk his bike riding days, his involvement with Wimmera Racing and his Order of Australia Medal. Maybe we need Part 2 of this story.



• Shane Wall.

The Buloke Times
Est. 1875

Coloured Photographs

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Mallee Roads “Downright Dangerous”

The Nationals Member for Mallee Dr Anne Webster MP says regional Victoria has reached a fork in the road after three years of utter neglect of the road network under the Federal and State Governments, adding that an incoming Coalition government would put Mallee roads back on track.

“Mallee residents all over the length and breadth of the 83,412 km² that I drive, tell me the roads are downright dangerous, carrying heavy trucks with huge potholes and crumbling roadsides. They confirm what I know to be true,” she said.

“The Coalition will back our farming and resources sectors by investing \$600 million nationwide in agricultural and mining roads critical to getting product to domestic and export markets.

“We will establish a new Ag and Mining Roads program to make it easier to transport products from farms and mines to supermarket shelves and exporters.”

Four-Year Program

The Coalition’s program will be delivered over four years and will invest in sealing, widening and strengthening roads, highways and bridges, building flood immunity and resilience upgrades. The Coalition will work with representatives of the trucking, farming and mining industries to identify the priority roads to be upgraded in each state, to remove barriers to the growth of our farming and resources sectors.

In contrast, the Albanese Labor Government has cancelled, cut and delayed more than \$30 billion worth of infrastructure projects across Australia.

“A Dutton-Littleproud government will also reinstate the 80:20 federal funding model for nationally significant road projects in regional and remote Australia, ensuring more regional roads and highways get upgraded,” Dr. Webster said.

Cost Cutting

“Everywhere we look in Mallee we see Labor at federal and state levels making the funding criteria prohibitive, at 50:50 ratios, preventing councils getting their roads repaired.”

In a cost cutting measure after Labor’s “90 day” infrastructure review (which ran for over 200 days), the Prime Minister reduced federal funding commitments for regional road infrastructure to 50:50, to match the urban funding model.

“Labor has abolished infrastructure programs that were established to assist our truckies in their freight task, including Roads of Strategic Importance, the Bridges Renewal Program and the Heavy



• Dr. Anne Webster.

Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program,” Dr. Webster said.

“Only a Coalition Government has the back of the nine million Australians who live outside our capital cities and that is why we will restore the 80 per cent Commonwealth funding rule for all new road projects from the first day we are elected.

“Labor has cut the Federal funding contribution for roads of national significance from \$4 down to \$1 for every dollar a state government invests in these roads. That means for instance that the Western Highway has seen a reduction in federal government funding for improving and maintaining that vital highway under Labor.”

Historic Year for Burras

(By Kieran Butler, “Murtoa and District Advertiser”)

It’s now been 30 years since the formation of the Minyip Murtoa Football Netball Club.

This milestone anniversary season will be historic in more ways than one when the club fields a senior women’s team for the very first time from May, 2025.

“The Advertiser” caught up with club president Chris Delahunty to chat about the journey for the club up to this point.

Expressions of interest for women to join a Burra’s football team went out in late 2024 after the club realised that the representation of girls in the junior ranks of the football club had seen significant growth. The woman’s senior team will be made up of all female players from all over the Wimmera, and Mr Delahunty noted that this has already broadened the base of the club in both influence and sponsorship.

The Burras were the first club in the Wimmera to join the Communities of Respect & Equality (CoRE) program administered by Women’s Health Grampians.

“Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance is a partnership of organisations, businesses, clubs and groups who share a vision for safe, equal and respectful communities in the Grampians region,” she said.

“CoRE Members commit to the CoRE Strategy to Pre-

vent Violence Against Women and their Children.

“This strategy guides individual organisations and collective work fostering communities of respect, equality and preventing violence against women.”

Mr Delahunty is proud of the initiatives the club has taken as a result of joining CoRE, including the formation of a sub-committee specifically focused on the welfare issues that map back to the various courses that CoRE has offered at the club, including active bystander training.

Membership of CoRE is an ongoing process that aims to make incremental improvements across the club and wider community and Mr Delahunty believes that MMFNC has a vital part to play in promoting inclusion, equality and respect.

With these building blocks in place, envisioning a female senior football team as part of the infrastructure at the club was a logical next step to provide the increasing number of young girls participating in Auskick and junior football with a pathway to future involvement at the club.

Paul Kelly once wrote that “from little things big things grow”, and as the Burras embark on this upcoming season Mr Delahunty also reflected on the well worn maxim that “you can’t be what you can’t see”

Elsewhere, excitement and enthusiasm is also building for the Burras’ senior men’s team. With two promising practice matches under their belts, and solid turn outs at training, the prospects for the 2025 season are looking more than promising. There is a genuine buzz of optimism in the air.

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High School Reunion: From Prep 3 to Form 6

Over the weekend of March 14, 15 and 16, past students of class of 1975 gathered in Echuca for a memorable reunion.

Thirteen of them began their school journey in 1963 at Donald Primary School while five joined the class during high school. Also joining the reunion were a number of partners, many who also were past students at Donald High school. The celebration this year marked the 50th anniversary of the group completing year 12 or HSC (Form 6) as it was known.

The weekend was filled with laughter storytelling and revisiting old school memories.

Despite decades passing the group still share strong bonds, with some meeting every couple of years to reconnect.

They enjoyed reconnecting and sharing not only stories from school, but discovering what each other and their families have been doing since they last met.

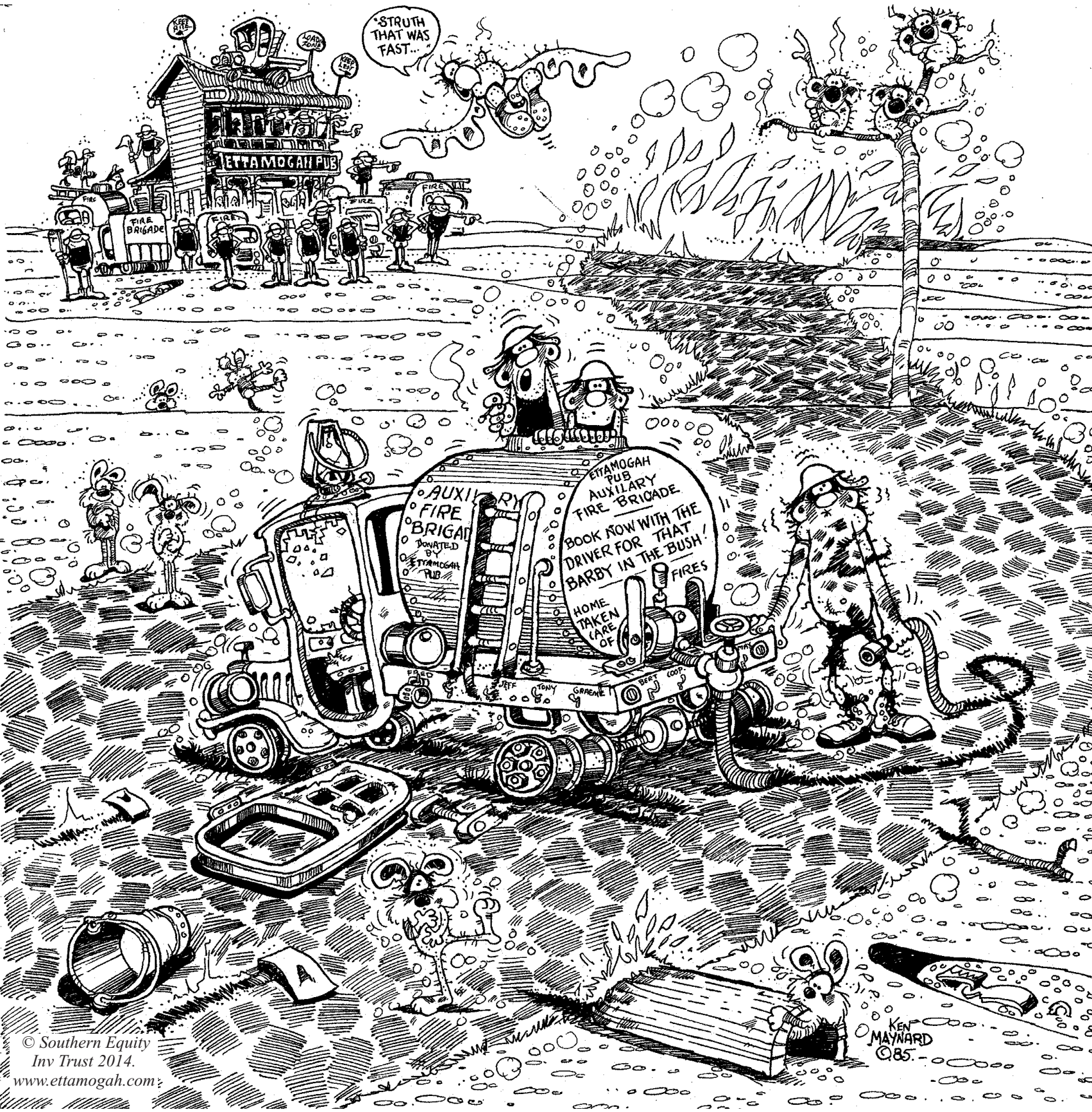
Along with reminiscing, the group explored Echuca's scenic attractions including the Murray River and local wineries and making the most of this beautiful part of Australia.

As the weekend came to a close plans started for the next reunion in Bendigo in 2027, where other members of class of 75, and those who joined on the way, would be most welcome to join.



• Back row: Andrew Bird, Leigh Dennis, Jeanette Pearse (Basset), Julie Mitchell (Dixon), Fiona Elms (Dunstan), Joy Maddox (McClelland), Terrie Hawkes (Cullen), Karen Davidson (Dunstan), Lyn Boyle (Newall), Leonie Harvey (Cossens). Front row: Tim Bloomfield, Susan Pearse, Kelvin Wood, Monica Duncan (Molan), Judy Coulter (Ackland), Kerrie Wood (Russell), Daryl O'Bree, Carol O'Bree (Wood).

The Ettamogah Pub Mob



Costly Desal Order Flushes More Cash

The announcement that the State Government has ordered 50 gigalitres of water from Victorias Desalination plant will cost taxpayers millions of dollars as the idle facility is brought back online.

Having ordered no water for the past two years and receiving only 3.4 gigalitres of the 15GL ordered in 2022/23, it remains to be seen how much Victorians will be slugged for the latest order.

Shadow Minister for Water, Tim McCurdy, said that it was costing Victorians \$700 million a year to keep mothballed, driving up the price of water bills.

"Melbourne Water users have been paying more than they should for their water, and Labor has failed to manage the state's desal plant," Mr. McCurdy said.

"The constant mothballing and bringing the plant back online is costing taxpayers millions with very little benefit.

"Labor's fear of dams means we are more reliant on expensive solutions to secure our water"



"Cripes Fred ... did you notice what that sudden little wind change did to that fire?"

Community Podcasting

A small group of enthusiastic participants from Charlton, Donald, Wycheproof, and Birchip recently came together to trial podcasting and broadcasting equipment in a hands-on, skills-sharing session designed to support future community storytelling and fundraising.

This introductory workshop involved teachers, students, and local leaders—many of whom were involved in the rollout of Buloke Shire's award-winning 2023 vodcasting initiative "The Paddock: The Goals, which delivered important information in the wake of the October 2022 Flood event."

Inspiration

Adding inspiration to the day was a special visit from Brayden Cocks, Director of Rolln Media who was engaged in producing the initiative.

Brayden, who grew up on a farm at Echuca, shared his personal journey from persuading his English teacher to let him submit assignments on video, to launching a career in Melbourne that now sees him operating two studios and producing content for major sporting and entertainment clients across Australia and beyond.

He was eager to give back to the country communities that shaped him, recognising the grit and determination of those who've worked hard for every opportunity, highlighting the contrast between individuals who've earned their place through effort and ingenuity, and those through connections.

Aware of how tough it is

for rural students to break into competitive industries, he's committed to helping level the playing field.

Session

The session focused on the technical operation of professional podcasting equipment—cameras, microphones and switching stations—with the aim of enabling participants to share their learning with others across their communities.

"This initiative reflects our commitment to empowering community voices," said Buloke Shire Council Mayor, Alan Getley.

"By temporarily hiring this equipment for local groups to explore digital communication, we hope it sparks interest in continuing independently.

"It could even play a shared role in community-driven communication during emergencies."

Broader Aim

The broader aim of this pilot is to allow communities to trial the gear and explore its potential, including:

- Capturing oral histories and local stories
- Promoting local events and fundraisers
- Supporting youth engagement through creative media
- Building resilience through shared storytelling



and skill development

This initiative is part of Council's and the Australian and Victorian Government's commitment to supporting inclusive, community-led recovery, funded by the Community Recovery Hubs Program.

"It's great to see communities discover new ways to connect and express themselves through creativity and digital innovation," added Acting Regional Recovery Manager Loddon Mallee Region, Meagan Keating.

"Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) is proud to support the Community Recovery Hubs Program to empower communities to foster resilience, creativity, and a renewed sense of unity as the community rebuilds from emergencies."



• At Donald, Danny Forrest and Jodie Drake jumped straight into their first practice talk-back session. Their ideas for its potential use came thick and fast—from interviewing members of the community in the lead-up to reunions and promoting local events, and even creating short audio broadcasts for aged care residences.



• At Charlton, Brayden Cocks from Rolln Media (standing) stepped participants through the podcasting kit, helping them unpack the technology behind podcast storytelling at a local level. Left to right: President Charlton Neighbourhood House Kayleen Cossar, John Kumm, David Beaty, Poppy Fitzpatrick, and Fletcher Holmes-Brown.



• Students from Wycheproof P-12 College dove into developing big ideas and even bigger enthusiasm from local takes on the Grand Prix to Sports Day broadcasts and creative fundraising campaigns. Left to right: Logan P. and Saeed A. dive into the setup, helping Brayden Cocks assemble the podcast kit piece by piece.



• At Birchip, P-12 College, the participants didn't just watch, they assembled the equipment. Left to right: Alana Woods, Olivia Dalglish, Libby Jennings, and Sasha Salzano took part in an interactive, hands-on learning session with Brayden Cocks (right) that sparked big ideas—from broadcasting on sports days to presenting school assignments as podcasts.

Charlton 100 Years Ago

(Information from “East Charlton Tribune”)

April 8 to 11, 1925.

Notable Structure: A number of pleasing additions to the architecture of Charlton have been made of late; and particularly notable is the new house that is being built for Dr W. E. Wilson, on Clifton Hill, next to his private hospital. It is a 14-roomed edifice of brick throughout, including surgery, 2 waiting rooms, 4 bedrooms, dining room, sitting room, garage for 2 cars, kitchen, store room, cellar, and men’s hut.

The windows will include two of the segmental bay type. All doors and windows are to be fitted with lead lights.

All round there will be a 9-foot verandah, and the structure will be encircled by a 6-foot paling fence, with a cyclone fence in front.

The house, for which the contractor is Mr Foll Gilmore, will be one of the biggest north of Bendigo.

New Garage: On account of Messrs H. J. Jackson and Son, Messrs Challen and Clark are engaged on the erection of a fine new garage. The structure will be on the most up-to-date lines throughout, 120 feet in length, and 30

feet in width. It will be constructed of corrugated iron, with a handsome front, and show window. Full provision has also been made for offices, which will be lined with fibro plaster.

There will be a special department for accessories, likewise a vulcanising room, and a workshop (in which electric lathes and other electrically-driven machinery will be installed).

The floor will be of cement. The building will, of course, be electrically lit throughout.

March Moisture: The rainfall registered on the Post Office gauge during March was 133 points – 238 fewer than the total for the corresponding period last year. The fall was by no means evenly spread, as 122 points descended in 4 days. For the 3 months of the year ending 31st March, 385 points were recorded, these falling in 12 days.

Teddywaddy Way: The opening of the new State School marks an epoch in the history of the district. The new school is situated in Mr Ralph Storey’s paddock, the site having been generously

donated by that gentleman. It is about equidistant from the railway station and the Post Office. During the transition period (9 weeks) Mr and Mrs Storey kindly granted the use of a large room at their home.

The personnel of the School Committee are, Messrs F. W. Judd (chairman), R. Sait (correspondent), L. W. Tobin (treasurer), G. Walsh, J. Prater, S. Thompson and Mrs Ralph Storey. At present there are 22 pupils on the roll.

On behalf of funds for the new shelter shed, and school and sports equipment, a very successful dance was held in Mr Ralph Storey’s barn. The decorations were carried out by the teacher (Miss T. Jepson).

H.E.S. Tennis Feat: For the fifth year in succession the Higher Elementary School girls have won the North-Western Association Shield. In the final they met Inglewood at Charlton and were successful by 7 sets, 47 games, to 1 set, 23 games.

On their arrival by the 4 o’clock train on Friday, the guests were met at the station by the teachers and pupils of the H.E.S.

That night they were entertained at a social evening at the School. The Tennis match was played in heat and strong sunshine.

Charlton players were Alice and Edna Arundell, Gwen and Freda Edwards. Miss Ruse and Mr Smith officiated as umpires.

At the conclusion of the contests, the guests were entertained to dinner in the Science Room.



•1900s Teddywaddy School.



• H.E.S Tennis Team.

A Motor Mishap occurred on the Wooroonook road, about 6 miles out of Charlton, and opposite Cr S. Wood’s property. Accompanied by his brother Frank, and two workmen, Mr Harold Lynas was driving home in the new Studebaker from his farm to Charlton.

From the opposite direction was coming a Ford car driven by Mr F. McLoughlan, who had on board his wife and child. They were proceeding home to Jeffcott. The cars collided and the impact threw the child out – right over the steering wheel, fortunately without causing any injury.

Mr McLoughlan had his shoulder put out, besides suffering from shock and abrasions, and spent the night at a private hospital in Charlton.

Mrs McLoughlan was unhurt and no injury was sustained by the occupants of the Studebaker.



• Dr. Wilson’s House.

With the Owner and Person in Charge... The Buck Stops Here

Owners or persons in charge of livestock have a responsibility for ensuring the health and welfare needs of their livestock and animals are met.

Agriculture Victoria Program Manager of Livestock and Welfare Compliance, Veronica Campbell, said this includes providing animals with proper and sufficient food, ensuring sick or injured animals are provided with appropriate attention or treatment and basic husbandry practices such as shearing are carried out.

Agriculture Victoria officers who are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, have a number of tools available under the act, including legal notices issued to owners or persons in charge of livestock, to direct them to cease committing an offence or to ensure an offence is not committed.

Serious Cases

“In serious cases where the animals are at risk of distress and disablement; and the owner or person in charge has

failed to comply with directives, Agriculture Victoria can undertake a seizure of the affected animals, removing them permanently from the owner or person in charge,” Ms Campbell said.

Agriculture Victoria has recently conducted 3 seizures of livestock in a 3-month period.

“In December 2024, 55 sheep were seized from a Broomfield property due to repeated failure to shear the animals for a number of years.

“In January 2025, 52 cattle were seized from a property in Murrayville due to a failure to provide proper and sufficient feed to the cattle, resulting in a large number dying across the property.

“In February 2025, 441 cattle were seized from a Balmattum property due to an ongoing failure to provide proper and sufficient feed to the cattle.

“Due to their serious nature, the matters relating to the recently seized livestock are not finalised and therefore further detail or comment cannot be provided.

Regulatory Action

“While we know the majority of farmers are doing the right thing, livestock producers who don’t take appropriate action to prevent and address animal welfare issues can face regulatory action, including prosecution for offences under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.”

Anyone wishing to make a specific complaint regarding livestock welfare can contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or aw.complaint@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

For information on dry seasonal and drought support go to: agriculture.vic.gov.au/dry-seasons.

To Grow Wild Numbers... New Homes for Catfish

Victorian populations of freshwater catfish are continuing on their road to recovery with more than 25,000 of the native species to be relocated to new homes in the state’s north.

Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) CEO Travis Dowling said the catfish have been moved from a large private dam near Lancefield and lakes at the Mallee towns of Hopetoun and Woomelang to 10 waterways and the VFA’s Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery.

“This effort follows three relocations of catfish in 2023 and 2024 from the Glenelg River in south-west Victoria to restore four new catfish populations in northern Victoria within the species’ natural range,” Mr Dowling said.

“We were then made aware of other populations of catfish that may be suitable for relocation, so our fisheries managers undertook assessments including genetic testing and found these fish would be well suited to a change of scenery.

Collaboration

“The project is a collaboration between North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Mallee CMA, Goulburn Broken CMA and North East CMA, Ecology Australia, traditional owner

groups, recreational fishers and the VFA.”

Fish from Woomelang and Lancefield ranged in size from three centimetres to 45cm. Fish were moved to the Ovens River (580 catfish), upper Broken Creek (290), Campaspe River near Elmore (163) Phyland Lagoon at Gunbower (181), Beechworth’s Lake Sambell (290), Donyak Moira at Merrigum (171), Harcourt Park Dam in Bendigo (165) and a dam near Upotipotpon (290), while 18 large fish were released into Sandilong Creek near Mildura.

Last week, an additional 23,000 fish were salvaged from Lake Lascelles at Hopetoun and have been taken to the Arcadia hatchery near Shepparton for genetic testing. The majority will be released into suitable waters in coming weeks with around 75 mature fish being retained at the facility for future breeding.

Recovery

“Relocations like these can help fast-track the recovery of

wild populations which means creating more recreational fishing opportunities in year to come,” Mr Dowling said.

“We’ll explore opportunities to produce catfish in years to come at our Arcadia hatchery, which is being tripled in size thanks to a \$15 million Victorian Government investment.

“This complements our work with the Arthur Rylah Institute to recover threatened species at our Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery and we’re also building a Macquarie Perch Recovery Hatchery to return ‘Macca’ and trout cod populations to their former glory.”

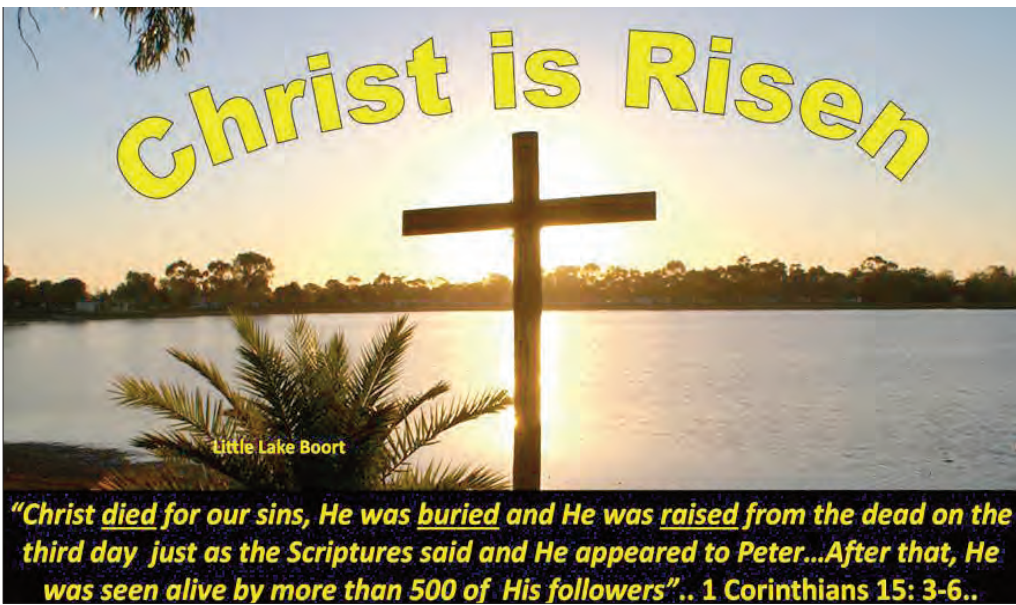
Minimum Size

Freshwater catfish can only be taken by anglers from waters of the Wimmera Basin with a minimum size of 30 centimetres and a bag limit of two. For more information on catch limits pick up a free Recreational Fishing Guide at a tackle store or download the VicFishing app.

Resurrection: Fact or Fiction?



• A number of Australian rivers contain the unique Australian mammal, the platypus. They are very elusive and quiet and difficult to find but finally one day after much waiting while standing motionless I observed and photographed this amazing little creature.



• Sunrise over Lake Boort one Easter Sunday morning.
A number of Australian rivers contain the unique Australian mammal, the platypus. They are very elusive and difficult to find but one day after much waiting while standing motionless I observed and photographed this amazing little creature.

Community Update Buloke.



Employment Opportunities with Buloke

Council is an equal opportunity employer. Our roles are non-gender specific and Council encourages all suitably qualified applicants to apply. For more information on equal opportunity, call Human Resources on 1300 520 520. You can find all current employment opportunities at www.buloke.vic.gov.au/employment

Applications can be lodged by:
Mail - PO Box 1, Wycheproof VIC 3527 or
Email - recruitment@buloke.vic.gov.au

Coordinator Road Services
Permanent (Full Time) - From \$ 100,000.00 pa (+ statutory superannuation)
→ Applications Close: 2 May 2025

We are seeking a dynamic and proactive individual to join the Buloke Shire Council team as the Coordinator Road Services. This role holds the responsibility of overseeing a range of transport and drainage infrastructure assets through coordination of staff and resources, ensuring efficient and effective maintenance and prevention works to Councils' Road service network.

Coordinator Community Development and Facilities - Charlton
Permanent (Fulltime) - \$100,000 - \$111,500 pa (+ statutory superannuation)
→ Applications Close: 17 April 2025

This is an exciting opportunity to lead the coordination of Council's community development projects, grant programs and community facilities and engage with the community on current and emerging community development needs and opportunities.

The successful applicant will manage a range of programs and activities that support our local community groups and organisations, stakeholders and volunteers to create a well-connected, resilient and engaged community.

Coordinator Recreational Places and Spaces - Charlton Permanent (Fulltime) - \$100,000 - \$111,500 (+ statutory superannuation)
→ Applications Close: 17 April 2025

We are looking for an enthusiastic individual to manage and coordinate our recreational places and spaces (incl. aquatic facilities) to ensure the provision of council owned and managed facilities and services continue to meet current and future community needs.

The successful applicant will work in partnership with the community and all stakeholders, including committees of management, in the coordination, development and implementation of recreational policies, masterplans, leases and licenses.

Buloke Library Story Time – School Holiday Fun!

Looking for a fun and engaging activity for the kids these school holidays?
Join us for Buloke Library Story Time!
Enjoy stories, and activities perfect for young families.

Thursday 10 April
Berriwillock – Community Centre at 11:30am
Nandaly – Nandaly Hall at 1:30pm
Friday 11 April
Donald – Donald Library at 10:00am
Wycheproof – Wycheproof Library at 1:30pm
Tuesday 15 April
Charlton – Charlton Library at 10:30am
Bring the little ones along for a wonderful time filled with stories and smiles! See you there!
For more information please call us on 1300 520 520 or email buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au

Notice of an Application for a Planning Permit

The land affected by the application is located at 10 Allen Street, Donald VIC 3480.
The application is for a permit for the Use and development of land for a store (domestic shed).
The application reference number is PA25006.
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 Council, 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 on the Planning page of the Buloke Shire Council website.
The Responsible Authority will not decide on the application before: 24 April 2025.
If you object to the application, the Responsible Authority will tell you it's decision.



BULOKE
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Bruce Stewart.



Snail and Slug Baiting Methods



• Snails and slugs cause substantial crop damage and impose costs on the Australian grains industry estimated at \$43 million annually. Photo: Evan Collis/GRDC.

Wimmera Mallee Season Ahead

Wimmera Mallee farmers are invited to tune into a lunchtime webinar hosted by Agriculture Victoria with support from the Mallee Catchment Management Authority on April 10, to get the latest observations for climate, soil moisture and land use.

Agriculture Victoria Land Management Extension Officer Darryl Pearl said the webinar will provide a timely and comprehensive overview for farmers in the region awaiting the autumn break.

“Pre-sowing is an ideal time to review data from our twice-yearly land use surveys, soil moisture monitoring and climate drivers influencing rainfall and temperature this

season,” Mr Pearl said.

The webinar will run from 12-1.30 p.m. with presentations by Agriculture Victoria’s Wind Erosion and Land Management project team and seasonal risk agronomists Dale Boyd and Dale Grey.

Webinar topics include:

- 2024 season review – key insights for the Wimmera Mallee.
- 2024 wind erosion and

land management observations – findings from the recent Mallee survey.

- Satellite technology – how remote sensing is used to monitor ground cover and obtain crop type estimates.

- Historical break timings – case studies on Berriwillock and Longerenong.

- 2025 seasonal outlook – current soil moisture levels and key insights for the Wimmera Mallee.

Further information and the link to register is at: agriculture.vic.gov.au/events.

Dry seasons support is at: agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or by calling 136 186.



What's On

GRDC National Grower Network

Join leading pathologists for a free AFREN webinar covering the latest fungicide resistance discoveries and best-practice disease management strategies for your farm.

Speakers and topics: Angela Van de Wouw, University of Melbourne – SDHI resistance in blackleg of canola.

Hari Dadu, Agriculture Victoria – Net Form Net Blotch.

Andrea Hills, DPIRD WA – Wheat powdery mildew.

Gain valuable insights into the current resistance status and learn how to manage fungicide applications effectively this season.

Don't miss this chance to stay informed and protect your crops. Secure your spot today.

When: April 16, 2025, 1:00 p.m..

Where: Online.

To register: Visit the GRDC page <https://grdc.com.au/events/list/2025/04/afren-webinar-whats-new-in-fungicide-resistance>

Bushfire Recovery Support

If your business or industry has been impacted by the 2024-25 bushfires in western Victoria, support is available to assist with your immediate and long-term recovery.

Upcoming supports include:

Business Recovery Advisory Service – free business support for impacted businesses, via telephone, online or in-person for impacted businesses, to find the right strategies for long-term recovery.

Business Bushfire Recovery Grant Program – \$5,000 grants to small businesses, including eligible primary producers, that have experienced significant disruptions and revenue losses due to the bushfires.

Visit <https://www.servicessaustralia.gov.au/bushfires-western-vic-dec-2024-disaster-recovery-allowance> for more information.

A research project is under way to aid Australian grain growers to manage snail and slug damage in crops by optimising bait spreading operations.

Snails and slugs cause substantial crop damage and impose costs on the Australian grains industry estimated at \$43 million annually.

GRDC investment together with substantial in-kind contributions from the Aerial Application Association of Australia (AAAA) and research partners will see around \$450,000 invested in better understanding mollusc bait placement from aircraft and smaller ground rigs.

The research team will be co-ordinated by Western Australian agricultural research engineer, Ben White, with technical and practical support from mechanical engineer, Josh Giumelli and Victorian machinery specialist, Mark Saunders.

They will work collaboratively with mollusc researchers and the AAAA to conduct the research, with a focus on aircraft and operating parameter influences.

Mr White said effective molluscicide baiting is crucial

in broadacre cropping systems.

“The project will include testing a range of aircraft types and surveying stakeholders to pinpoint key factors for effective bait distribution,” Mr White said.

“Additionally, we’ll evaluate a range of common 12-volt ground spreaders to provide a guide on suitable equipment and configurations for smaller spinner spreaders delivering consistent mollusc baiting outcomes.

“An established test protocol will be adapted to evaluate bait spread performance distribution uniformity.”

GRDC Manager Crop Protection – West, Georgia Megirian, said the project had arisen from feedback via GRDC’s National Grower Network (NGN).

“At recent NGN forums, growers across the south coast of WA made it clear that current snail baiting strategies aren’t always hitting the

mark,” Ms Megirian said.

“Snails are a persistent challenge, with control often inconsistent due to difficulties in achieving effective bait coverage and timing.

“Application methods and spread accuracy play an important role, and improving these techniques could help reduce crop losses and minimise the need for multiple applications.”

Optimising bait timing, integrating cultural and mechanical control methods, and improving the precision of molluscicide bait spreading can enhance snail control, reduce input costs, and minimise grain contamination – helping growers meet market standards.

The project will produce accessible resources detailing the strengths and limitations of different spreader types, along with practical recommendations to improve bait placement and effectiveness for snails.



• The new GRDC project will explore the efficacy of snail and slug bait placement from aircraft and smaller ground rigs. Photo: Ben White.

Safe On-Farm Disposal of Dead Stock

(By Rachael Campbell, Dairy Industry Development Officer)

Stock deaths occur periodically and farm managers are responsible for carcass disposal. Methods of disposal include knackery, rendering services or suitably licensed landfills.

If these are not available, alternative biosecure options for use on-farm may include composting or burial.

If on-farm disposal is to be used, then forward planning with appropriate siting, infrastructure and management is critical to minimise any biosecurity, environmental or other risks.

Burying carcasses on the farm may be the most appropriate option, depending on the circumstances.

Stringent guidelines apply to appropriate burial sites, so they don’t adversely affect the land, surface or ground waters or the air.

Detailed information on setback distances and other requirements can be found in the Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) document Farm waste management.

The other on-farm option is composting of carcasses. In line with EPA guidance, when the average number of mortalities doesn’t exceed one tonne per month, then a composting pile is appropriate.

When mortalities exceed this threshold, bin composting should be considered. Bin composting requires more dedicated infrastructure.

Detailed information on pile and bin composting can

be found in the EPA’s Composting mortalities on farm guidance.

It’s important to realise composting is an active process, not a set-and-forget method. Failing to monitor and follow established composting techniques will result in an increased risk of harm to the land or the environment and a substandard final product.

Agriculture Victoria can provide guidance to farmers about on-farm disposal options in consultation with the EPA.

In the event of unusual signs or suspected cases of

emergency animal disease, please report them immediately to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888. Early reporting increases the chance of effective control and eradication.

If an emergency animal disease outbreak is declared, Agriculture Victoria is responsible for the destruction and disposal of animal carcasses, including those that can be buried on-farm.

Further information on farm biosecurity and animal disease is available on the Agriculture Victoria website at agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases

Busy Time for Charlton Croquet

Charlton Croquet Club has been a hive of activity over the past few weeks.

On a beautiful autumn day the Charlton Croquet Club hosted the Murray Valley Golf Croquet Championships on Saturday, March 22. Games commenced at 8.30 a.m. and continued until 5 p.m..

Clubs represented were: Boort, Red Cliffs, Swan Hill and Charlton. The winners were: Section 1, Daryl Henderson (Boort); Section 2, Julie Barber (Swan Hill); and Section 3, Alister McDougal (Boort).

These players now will represent Murray Valley at the

Victorian Regional Championships at Cairnlea from April 11 to 13.

On Tuesday, March 25, the staff from St Joseph's School enjoyed playing 2 games of Golf Croquet. The competitive spirit of some members was evident!

The Association Croquet Club Championship was played on Thursday, Marc 27 and Saturday, March 29. Margaret Bowen, Barb Dalrymple, Naomi Patullo and Anne Kenny competed in this round robin event. The final game was the decider with Anne Kenny coming from behind to

defeat Naomi Patullo. Naomi reduced her handicap to 12 during the event.

Association Championships

On Saturday, April 3, the Murray Valley Association Croquet Championships were played in Charlton. Sections 1 and 2 were uncontested. In Section 3 Naomi Patullo was narrowly beaten by Lois Munro, from Swan Hill. In Section 4 Margaret Bowen defeated Julie Barber (Swan Hill) by 1 hoop in the first game and at the end of time in the second game scores were level. In extra time both players had their chances with Margaret finally winning 10 hoops to 9 hoops.

The team to represent Murray Valley at Geelong in the Victorian Country Regional Championships from April 27 to 30, will be: Section 1, Lindsay Patullo; Section 2, Anne Kenny; Section 3, Lois Munro (Swan Hill); and Section 4, Margaret Bowen.

State Team

Congratulations to Lindsay Patullo on being a member of the victorious Victorian team which won the Eire Cup in Adelaide from March 12-16.

The Eire Cup competition officially began in 1950 as an Interstate Tournament.

All six states competed this year and Victoria was undefeated.

The team consists of 4 male and 4 female competitors. The players play 2 singles matches and 1 mixed match (20 in total) against each state.

Before the Eire Cup Lindsay played in the Australian Men's Singles Championship and did very well.

Naomi Patullo played in the Australian Ladies' Singles Championship.

North-Central Netball Season Opens: "Association of the Year!"

[From NCNA]

The North-Central Netball Association is thrilled to start season 2025 off on a high note!

Late last year we were elated to receive the Netball Victoria Community Awards "Association of the Year" – what an achievement!

This is a mighty effort for our association to be judged the best in the state! Thanks and congratulations must go to the original board members who have worked tirelessly over the past two years following the inception of our new Board of Management in 2023.

We would also like to thank and congratulate the following representatives from our eight clubs who will form the NCNA Board of Management in 2025.

Thank you for taking on these roles and ensuring the continued success of our league, in conjunction with the football and hockey codes.

President, Kim Fitzpatrick; secretary, Kathryn Lanyon; treasurer, Amy Smith; score secretary, Teale Mott; sponsorship, Sharyn Lockhart; social media, Kylie Walsh; umpire co-ordinator, Imogen Amos; junior development, Sara Adams.

We would also like to welcome our new AFLCV Administrator Karen Pascoe.

Karen has hit the ground running and will continue to provide invaluable support to all our volunteers, our Board of Management and our clubs. Welcome Karen, we look forward to working with you throughout the season.

Sponsors

The NCNA is incredibly thankful to our loyal and supportive sponsors. Their ongoing commitment to our league is greatly appreciated and we strongly encourage all our members to support our sponsors in return.

We would like to acknowledge our sponsors for season 2025: North West Ag, Bendigo Bank, Betta Electrical, GrainCorp and Gold 'N' Silver Mine Jewellers.

Top Levels

The past couple of months have been busy with several of our players, coaches and administrators proudly representing NCNA and their individual clubs at state and academy levels. Congratulations to the following members for your achievements in making these selections. We wish you good luck, continued development and enjoyment with your netball!

Bendigo Academy of Sport 2025 Squad Members: Lana Angel, Abby Potter, Lana Fawcett, Erin Blair, Milla Adams, Evie Donellan and Prue O'Sullivan.

Victorian State Titles – representing the Wimmera Mallee Team: Keegan Amos, Jenna Angel, Jess White, Milla Adams, Lana Angel and Zali Angel.

Team managers: Chris Amos and Belinda Perryman.

Under 17 Coach: Kylie Walsh.

AFLCV Academy: Victoria Lanyon (13s), Erin Blair and Evie Donnellan (14s).

Strong Numbers

The NCNA is thrilled to see very positive numbers throughout most of our clubs. The seniors will once again field four grades, including the recently added "C" Reserve section for its second year. Junior numbers are strong again for most clubs which is extremely encouraging. The juniors will compete in U17, U14 "A" and "B" plus the "GO" game which will now enjoy a regular allocated time slot of 1 p.m. for most games.

Upgrades

It is also fantastic to see improvements to club facilities over the off-season and upcoming plans in 2025. The Wycheproof court has been resealed and Wedderburn has plans to resurface its main court shortly. Boort will also see the installation of new lighting on their second court.

The NCNA Representative Team try-outs have recently taken place. Thank you to all the volunteers for their selection and coaching skills.

An extra special thanks to Sara Adams, our Junior Development Officer, for the huge effort in co-ordinating and communicating with so many. Good luck to all the participants who attended the trials, we look forward to hearing the team announcements shortly.

We are so looking forward to a terrific year of netball ahead, see you at the courts!



• Congratulations to Lindsay Patullo on being a member of the victorious Victorian team which won the Eire Cup in Adelaide from March 12-16 .

North-Central Hockey

Results of round 1 –
Under-12s: Sea Lake-Nandaly 0 drew with Wedderburn 0; Donald 0 def. by Calder United 4; Charlton 1 d. Birchip-Watchem 0; St Arnaud 4 d. Boort 0.

Underage: Donald 4 d. Calder United 2; Charlton 12 d. Birchip-Watchem 1; St. Arnaud 11 d. Boort 0.

Women: Sea Lake-Nandaly 0 def. by Wedderburn Redbacks 4; Donald 0 def. by Calder United 10; St Arnaud 6 d. Boort 2.

Men: Sea Lake-Nandaly 1 d. Wedderburn 4; Donald 1 def. by Calder United 5; St Arnaud 2 d. Boort 1.

POSITIONS OF TEAMS

Women												
	P	W	D	L	F	For	Agst	SD	Pts	WR		
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	10	0	10	3	100		
St Arnaud	1	1	0	0	0	6	2	4	3	100		
Wedderburn	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	4	3	100		
Charlton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Boort	1	0	0	1	0	2	6	-4	0	0		
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	-4	0	0		
Donald	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	-10	0	0		
Men												
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	5	1	4	3	100		
Wedderburn	1	1	0	0	0	4	1	3	3	100		
St Arnaud	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	3	100		
Charlton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Boort	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	-1	0	0		
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	0	0	1	0	1	4	-3	0	0		
Donald	1	0	0	1	0	1	5	-4	0	0		
Underage												
Charlton	1	1	0	0	0	12	1	11	3	100		
Donald	1	1	0	0	0	4	2	2	3	100		
Sea Lake-Nandaly	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
St Arnaud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Boort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Calder United Lions	1	0	0	1	0	2	4	-2	0	0		
Birchip-Watchem	1	0	0	1	0	1	12	-11	0	0		
Under-12s												
St Arnaud	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	4	3	100		
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	4	3	100		
Charlton	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	100		
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	33		
Wedderburn Redbacks	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	33		
Birchip-Watchem	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	-1	0	0		
Donald	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	-4	0	0		
Boort	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	-4	0	0		



• Club Champion Anne Kenny with runner-up Naomi Patullo.

Keep Abreast with Local Happenings!

Don't forget Your Local Newspaper



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

Tigers Tame Redbacks

Prior to the start of the contest between the Sea Lake-Nandaly Tigers and Wedderburn Redbacks, the Tigers unfurled their Goldacres 2024 senior premiership flag as they started their campaign to defend their title.

The game started in blistering pace with both sides showing their keenness to win the Sherrin.

Wedderburn Redbacks kicked with a slight breeze and in the early stage of the game they were unable to break through the Tigers' defence, until a slight lapse in concentration allowed Redbacks' recruit, Mitch Jensen, to score the first goal of the contest.

From the restart the Redbacks won the ball and sent it wide to a target, and this resulted in another possession for Jensen who brought up his second major score.

When play resumed it was the Tigers who went into attack, but the result from a couple of attempts only produced minor scores.

The Redbacks regrouped and went forward but the same result for them, just two minor scores.

Near the end of the term Tyson McKenzie broke through for the Tigers' first goal to bring the quarter-time margin to just three points.

With the Tigers having the advantage of the wind it did not take long for the reigning premiers to convert for full points from the boot of Lachie McClelland.

Early in this term it was evident that the Redbacks' defence would be under constant pressure as the Tigers retained the ball in their forward half, resulting three further goals to give them a

handy lead heading to the main break.

The Tigers had turned a slight deficit into a four-goal lead at half-time.

The Redbacks' defence was under considerable pressure for the main part of the term, but they were able to turn back many forward moves, otherwise the half time difference would have been greater.

Could the Redbacks rebound in the third term? That was the question being asked and it did not get off to a good start with Tigers' Max Cahoon snapping an early goal.

Wedderburn's Mitch McEwen was awarded a free and from the kick he goaled to give the Redbacks a glimmer of hope.

When play restarted, co-coach of the Tigers, Bryce Delmenico, collected full points with his shot at goals.

The Tigers were starting to kick it up a gear and the Redbacks were having some trouble in trying to limit their scoring opportunities. The Redbacks applied some close checking pressure in the second half of the quarter, which limited the Tigers to five straight points late in the quarter.

With the siren to end the term getting close, Mitch Jensen kicked his third goal to reduce the Tigers' lead back to just over four goals. The job for the Redbacks was gettable but they would need to produce some cleaner football than they had displayed in the

third term.

Tyson McKenzie got the Tigers off to a great start with the opening goal of the final term, to push their lead out beyond thirty points.

It would be the home side that did all the scoring in the final quarter.

The Redbacks gained plenty of the ball in the final quarter, but they continued to turn the ball over and luckily the Tigers did not take full advantage, but managed to add a further two goals to add to their healthy three-quarter time lead.

At the final siren, the Tigers had got their season off to a good start with a near-on eight goals win.

Final scores: Sea Lake-Nandaly 10-16 (76) def. Wedderburn 4-4 (28).

Overall this was a very physical game where the ball was the major focus and when the final siren sounded, you could see the relief on all players, but the Tigers had a win to celebrate and the Redbacks had the long trip home to prepare for the Saints next week.

Better players for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Oscar Brownless, Wade Donnan, Ryan O'Sullivan, Jarvis Keogh, Joel Donnan and Cooper Roberts.

For Wedderburn: Mitch Jensen, Zach Pallpratt, Isacc Holt, Jye Mortlock, Ben Bacon and Danny Benaim.



• Left to right, Pauline Bragg, Carolyn Reid, Ronda Cooper, Fran Haddrick and Jackie Tierney.

Birchip Mid-Week Bowls

Another bowls season has come to an end, and some bowlers now get ready for winter sports.

This is not to say that you cannot try your hand at bowls, as the green is always there for bowlers who wish to improve their skills. All too soon it will be September and bowls season again!

The ladies enjoyed a friendly game of fours, and at times the barracking and the actions urging the bowl to rest near the jack were entertaining. Bowlers are usually not bad losers, but again the trophy at the end is enticing. What a let down when it's only a pen! The winners were Carolyn Reid, Lesley Whitling, Jennifer Blainey and Jackie Tierney.

Following the game of bowls, a delicious lunch was

served. Once again the luncheon discussion was bowls and how to attract new bowlers, and as usual when a group of ladies gets together, the town news.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting was held after lunch and the following ladies have taken on the officer bearers' positions for the season '25/'26. Pauline Bragg remains in the position as director, with new secretary/treasurer, Fran Haddrick. The match committee is Jackie Tierney, Carolyn Reid and Ronda Cooper to assist. Catering remains with Peg Hogan and Moya Connolly; Natasha Hogan has

been appointed as the third on this committee.

The programme for the coming season has been discussed and the secretary Fran, will arrange with match committee.

The annual meeting took place after lunch, and the following ladies will hold officer positions for the '25/'26 season to come along next season and enjoy a day of bowls and fellowship.

Thank you to the "Buloke Times" for allowing us space during the season, past members enjoy reading about happenings on the green.

"Off the Green."

North-Central Netball

Last Saturday's results: "A" Grade Birchip-Watchem (63) def. Charlton (27); Wedderburn (38) def. Sea-Lake Nandaly (30); Calder United (46) def. Donald (43);Boort (67) def. St Arnaud (36).

"B" Grade Birchip-Watchem (64) def. Charlton (23); Wedderburn (56) def. Sea-Lake Nandaly (36); Calder United (57) def. Donald (31); Boort (53) def. St Arnaud (41).

Results of round 1:

"A" GRADE									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Birchip-Wat	1	1	0	0	0	0	63	27	0.233
Wedderburn	1	1	0	0	0	0	38	30	0.127
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	0	46	43	0.107
Donald	1	0	1	0	0	0	43	46	0.093
Sea Lake-Nan	1	0	1	0	0	0	30	38	0.079
Charlton	1	0	1	0	0	0	27	63	0.043
Boort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
St Arnaud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000

"B" GRADE									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Birchip-Wat	1	1	0	0	0	0	64	23	0.278
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	0	57	31	0.184
Wedderburn	1	1	0	0	0	0	56	36	0.156
Boort	1	1	0	0	0	0	53	41	0.129
St Arnaud	1	0	1	0	0	0	41	53	0.077
Sea Lake-Nan	1	0	1	0	0	0	36	56	0.064
Donald	1	0	1	0	0	0	31	57	0.054
Charlton	1	0	1	0	0	0	23	64	0.036

"C" GRADE									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	0	77	19	0.405
Birchip-Wat	1	1	0	0	0	0	44	24	0.183
Sea Lake-Nan	1	1	0	0	0	0	43	30	0.143
Boort	1	1	0	0	0	0	38	34	0.112
St Arnaud	1	0	1	0	0	0	34	38	0.089
Wedderburn	1	0	1	0	0	0	30	43	0.070
Charlton	1	0	1	0	0	0	24	44	0.055
Donald	1	0	1	0	0	0	19	77	0.025

"C" Grade Birchip-Watchem (44) def. Chalton (24); Sea-Lake Nandaly (43) def. Wedderburn (30); Calder United (77) def. Donald (19); Boort (38) def. St Arnaud (34).

"C" Grade Reserves Sea-Lake Nandaly (62) def. Wedderburn (16); Boort (58) def. St Arnaud (12).

Seventeen-and-Under Birchip-Watchem (65) def. Charlton (38); Sea-Lake Nandaly

(47) def. Wedderburn (38); Calder United (102) def. Donald (15); Boort (39) def. St Arnaud (35).

Fourteen-and-Under "A" Birchip-Watchem (31) def. Charlton (1); Sea-Lake Nandaly (23) def. Wedderburn (10); Donald (39) def. Calder United (9); Boort (26) def. St Arnaud (10).

Fourteen-and-Under "B" Sea-Lake Nandaly (6) drew with Wedderburn (6); Donald (8) drew with Calder United (8); St Arnaud (9) def. Boort (4).

"C" GRADE RESERVES									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Boort	1	1	0	0	0	0	58	12	0.483
Sea Lake-Nan	1	1	0	0	0	0	62	16	0.388
Wedderburn	1	0	1	0	0	0	16	62	0.026
St Arnaud	1	0	1	0	0	0	12	58	0.021
Birchip-Wat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
Calder United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000

SEVENTEEN-AND-UNDER									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Calder United	1	1	0	0	0	0	102	15	0.680
Birchip-Wat	1	1	0	0	0	0	65	38	0.171
Sea Lake-Nan	1	1	0	0	0	0	47	38	0.124
Boort	1	1	0	0	0	0	39	35	0.111
St Arnaud	1	0	1	0	0	0	35	39	0.090
Wedderburn	1	0	1	0	0	0	38	47	0.081
Charlton	1	0	1	0	0	0	38	65	0.058
Donald	1	0	1	0	0	0	15	102	0.015

FOURTEEN-AND-UNDER "A"									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Birchip-Wat	1	1	0	0	0	0	31	1	0.310
Donald	1	1	0	0	0	0	39	9	0.433
Sea Lake-Nan	1	1	0	0	0	0	23	10	0.230
Wedderburn	1	0	1	0	0	0	10	23	0.043
Calder United	1	0	1	0	0	0	9	39	0.023
Charlton	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	31	0.003
Boort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
St Arnaud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000

FOURTEEN-AND-UNDER "B"									
	P	W	L	D	B	FWFL	F	A	Pts %
Sea Lake-Nan	1	0	0	1	0	0	6	6	0.100
Wedderburn	1	0	0	1	0	0	6	6	0.100
Birchip-Wat	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.000
Boort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
Calder United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
Donald	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000
St Arnaud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000

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North-Central Football Roundup

Goldacres Seniors

SEA LAKE-NANDALY	1.5	5.8	7.12	10.16	(76)
WEDDERBURN	2.1	2.2	4. 4	4. 4	(28)

Goals for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Lachy McClelland 3, Tyson McKenzie 2, Adam Pattison 2, Oscar Brownless, Max Cahoon, Bryce Delmenico.

For Wedderburn: Mitch Jensen 3, Mitchell McEwen.

Best for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Oscar Brownless, Wade Donnan, Ryan O'Sullivan, Jarvis Keogh, Joel Donnan, Cooper Roberts.

For Wedderburn: Mitch Jensen, Zach Pallpratt, Isaac Holt, Jye Mortlock, Ben Bacon, Danny Benaim.

CALDER UNITED	4.3	11.12	13.20	23.26	(164)
DONALD	2.0	2. 0	2. 1	2. 1	(13)

Goals for Calder United: Jack Exell 8, Mitch Farmer 5, Zachary Caccaviello 2, Zane Keighran 2, Kobe Lloyd 2, Matthew Wade 2, Koby Hommelhoff, Dean Putt.

For Donald: Brent Arho, Harry Forrest.

Best for Calder United: Zane Keighran, Jack Exell, Zachary Caccaviello, Boe Bish, Darcy Munro, Mitch Farmer.

For Donald: Dyson Bell-Warren, Daniel Pearce, Darcy Harrison, Charlie Campbell, Eddie Landwehr, Robert Walker.

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM	4.2	12.6	22.7	30.12	(192)
CHARLTON	0.0	2.1	3.2	3. 3	(21)

Goals for Birchip-Watchem: Ben Edwards 13, Nicholas Rippon 4, Daniel Bell 3, Meyrick Buchanan 2, Joseph Reid 2, Rhona Conboy, Lachy Foott, Riley Hogan, Ben Lakin, William Lee, Marshall Rippon.

For Charlton: Elliott Fitzpatrick, Rhyen Woods, Aaron Schofield.

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Marshall Rippon, Ben Edwards, Hamish Hosking, Daniel Bell, Meyrick Buchanan, Cormacc Wilson.

For Charlton: Ben Xiriha, Patrick Soulsby, Luke Dunne, Mitchell Collins, Sean O'Connor, Ben Lanyon.

BOORT	3.4	7.5	11.14	17.16	(118)
ST ARNAUD	1.1	3.3	4. 5	7. 7	(49)

Goals for Boort: Jhye Baddeley-Kelly 4, Kayne Rutley 3, Carlos Egan 2, James Keeble 2, Peter Barbopoulos, Ethan Coleman, Jarrod Fitzpatrick, Lachlan Hall, Ryan McGhie, James Wilson.

For St Arnaud: Jacob Tillig 3, Max Hungerford 2, Sean Holroyd, Jay Kirwood.

Best for Boort: Tom Potter, Jhye Baddeley-Kelly, Kayne Rutley, Keiren Wilson, James Keeble, Carlos Egan.

For St Arnaud: Torin Petrie, Max Hungerford, Jay Kirwood, Bradley Organ, Owen Lowe, Bailey Nicholas.

Haeusler's Reserves

SEA LAKE-NANDALY	5.3	10.6	19.10	24.15	(159)
WEDDERBURN	0.0	1.0	1. 0	1. 0	(6)

Goals for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Joel Clohesy 8, Brayden Allan 3, Codey Elliott 3, Zachary Wemyss 3, Cooper Allan 2, Jordan Bath 2, Ethan Ellis, Rylee McGarry, Cruz O'Sullivan.

For Wedderburn: Hudson Pidoto.

Best for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Brody Weir, Joel Clohesy, Rylee McGarry, Cooper Allan, Zachary Wemyss, Cruz O'Sullivan.

For Wedderburn: Finn Turnbull, Joshua Hall, Ashley Younghusband, Chris Hargreaves, Dylan Caruana, Hudson Pidoto.

CALDER UNITED	7.2	15.6	19.13	24.17	(161)
DONALD	0.0	0.0	0. 0	0. 0	(0)

Goals for Calder United: Heath Senior 6, George Forrester 4, Brett Barker 2, Angus Forrester 2, Samuel Hogan 2, Zac Kelly 2, Dane McLennan 2, Jed Bish, Sol Kelly, Jack Morrison, Tom Trewin.

For Donald: Nil.

Best for Calder United: Charlie Fawcett, Zac Kelly, Dane McLennan, Sol Kelly, George Forrester, Hunter Connolly.

For Donald: Jye Johnson, Ethan Clapham, Nicholas Atkins, Joe Melino, Joe Sheridan, Dion Hawkes.

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM	4.6	11.9	14.11	18.15	(123)
CHARLTON	0.3	0.5	0. 5	0. 5	(5)

Goals for Birchip-Watchem: Connor Lee 4, Connor Boyle 3, Tom Gibson 3, Alexander Hay 3, Bailey Baxter, Matthew Berry, Callum Goode, Riley Hogan, Jack Lee.

For Charlton: Nil.

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Tom Gibson, Connor Lee, Jack Lee, Riley Hogan, Bodie Colbert.

For Charlton: Benjamin Roberts, Cooper Boyle, Mason Heenan, Travis Salmon, John Leathan, Lachlan Holmes-Brown.

BOORT	5.0	7.0	9.2	13.4	(82)
ST ARNAUD	0.1	2.3	2.3	3.3	(21)

Goals for Boort: Alex Cockerell 4, Chris O'Rourke 2, Max Beattie, Jacob Coleman, Jett Hird, Jacob Mulquiny, Cameron Ross, Riley Wagner, Harry Weaver.

For St Arnaud: Simon Elliott, George Gorrie, James McKenny.

Best for Boort: Jacob Mulquiny, Alex Cockerell, Harry Weaver, Angus Potter, Brendon Hewlett, Angus Trethowan.

For St Arnaud: Luke Jackson, Harrison Meagher, Colin Campbell, Heath McNally, George Gorrie, Simon Elliott.

Community Bank Charlton & District Under-17s

SEA LAKE-NANDALY	7.3	11.6	13.7	17.9	(111)
WEDDERBURN	0.0	0.2	1.4	2.5	(17)

Best for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Cruz O'Sullivan, Brayden Allan, Scott Barbary, Taj Borlase, Ryder Newick, Cruz Dowler.

For Wedderburn: Aaron Smith, Deacon Tansley, Jye Dingfelder, Slater Piazza, Max Dean.

DONALD	1.1	2.2	6.2	9.2	(56)
CALDER UNITED	0.2	2.5	4.7	5.8	(38)

For Donald: Baxter Donnellon, Jam Borden, Jesse Lydom, Noah Michael.

Best for Calder United: Tiger Vearing, Max Fawcett, Locke Coles, Tynan Perry, Angus Cowell.

CHARLTON	2.4	3.7	7.8	8.10	(58)
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM	0.1	0.3	2.3	3. 6	(24)

For Charlton: Leigh Van Boven, Isaac Bourke, Sebastian Zagame, Samuel Olive, Ethan Soulsby, Jordan Chamberlain.

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Oliver Cook, Willow Ryan, Mac Lewis, Bayley Kemp.

ST ARNAUD	1.1	3.3	7.6	10. 7	(67)
BOORT	4.1	5.6	7.6	8.10	(58)

For St Arnaud: Austin Lowe, Archer Reyne, Jack Batters, Bob Donald, Declan Kay, Ethan Hilton.

Best for Boort: Cooper Gooding, Riley Wagner, Luke Boyd, Darby F Perryman, Chaise Hird, Rylan Chislett.

Next Round

Round 2, Saturday April 12 -

Calder United v. Sea Lake-Nandaly
Boort v. Charlton

Birchip-Watchem v. Donald
Wedderburn v. St Arnaud

Uniting Church Under-14s

SEA LAKE-NANDALY 10.7 (67) D. WEDDERBURN 0.1 (1)

Best for Sea Lake-Nandaly: Henry Cox, Aydan Smith, Harry Wight, Hamish Landry, Riley Allan, Max Conlan.

For Wedderburn: Caleb Gault, Jack Dierickx, Blaz Cramp, William Huismann, Nate Turnbull.

DONALD 8.6 (54) D. CALDER UNITED 4.5 (29)

Best for Donald: Noah Michael, Samuel Mortlock, Liam Stopps, Jordan Jones.

For Calder United: Smith Morrison, Desmond Polzin, Van Harrison, Ryder Cavalier.

CHARLTON 5.4 (34) D. BIRCHIP-WATCHEM 2.9 (21)

Best for Charlton: Isaac Roberts, Liam Monaghan, Darcy Olive, Xav Good, Tamsyn McGurk, Sam Cossar.

For Birchip-Watchem: Private Player, Willow Ryan, Liam Spezza, Jed Coffey.

ST ARNAUD 10.4 (64) D. BOORT 3.4 (22)

Best for St Arnaud: Finn Wilson, Jack Wait, Duncan Kirk, Chase Hendy, Jesse James, Oliver Goode.

For Boort: Seth Muller, Noah Howe, Cruz Nuttall, Liam King, Zeb Gould.

Positions of Teams

Goldacres North-Central Seniors

Teams	P	Pts	%	W	L	D	B	For	Ag
Calder United	1	4	1261.54	1	0	0	0	164	13
Birchip-Watchem	1	4	914.29	1	0	0	0	192	21
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	4	271.43	1	0	0	0	76	28
Boort	1	4	240.82	1	0	0	0	118	49
St Arnaud	1	0	41.53	0	1	0	0	49	118
Wedderburn	1	0	36.84	0	1	0	0	28	76
Charlton	1	0	10.94	0	1	0	0	21	192
Donald	1	0	7.93	0	1	0	0	13	164

Haeuslers Reserves

Teams	P	Pts	%	W	L	D	B	For	Ag
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	4	2650.00	1	0	0	0	159	6
Birchip-Watchem	1	4	2460.00	1	0	0	0	123	5
Boort	1	4	390.48	1	0	0	0	82	21
Calder United	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	161	0
St Arnaud	1	0	25.61	0	1	0	0	21	82
Charlton	1	0	4.07	0	1	0	0	5	123
Wedderburn	1	0	3.77	0	1	0	0	6	159
Donald	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	161

Community Bank Charlton and District Under-17s

Teams	P	Pts	W	L	D	B
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	4	1	0	0	0
Charlton	1	4	1	0	0	0
Donald	1	4	1	0	0	0
St Arnaud	1	4	1	0	0	0
Boort	1	0	0	1	0	0
Calder United	1	0	0	1	0	0
Birchip-Watchem	1	0	0	1	0	0
Wedderburn	1	0	0	1	0	0

Uniting Church Under-14s

Teams	P	Pts	W	L	D	B
Sea Lake-Nandaly	1	4	1	0	0	0
St Arnaud	1	4	1	0	0	0
Donald	1	4	1	0	0	0
Charlton	1	4	1	0	0	0
Birchip-Watchem	1	0	0	1	0	0
Calder United	1	0	0	1	0	0
Boort	1	0	0	1	0	0
Wedderburn	1	0	0	1	0	0

Tooleybuc Sporting Club Presidents' Award

Voting for round 1:

Sea Lake-Nandaly: O. Brownless 3, W. Donnan 2, J. Keogh 1.

Wedderburn: M. Jensen 3, Z. Pallpratt 2, I. Holt 1.

Calder United: K. Lloyd 3, D. Putt 2, J. Exell 1.

Donald: D. Bell-Warren 3, D. Pearce 2, D. Harrison 1.

Birchip-Watchem: H. Hosking 3, B. Edwards 2, M. Rippon 1.

Charlton: B. Xirha 3, P. Soulsby 2, M. Collins 1.

Boort: J. Baddeley-Kelly 3, T. Potter 2, K. Rutley 1.

St Arnaud: T. Petrie 3, J. Kirwood 2, M. Hungerford 1.

Saturday's Leading Goal Kickers

Seniors	Reserves
Ben Edwards (B-W) 13	Joel Clohesy (SLNT) 8
Jack Exell (CU) 8	Heath Senior (CU) 6
Mitch Farmer (CU) 5	George Forrester (CU) 4
Nicholas Rippon (B-W) 4	Connor Lee (B-W) 4
Jhye Baddeley-Kelly (Boort) 4	Alex Cockerell (Boort) 4
Lachy McClelland (SLNT) 3	Brayden Allan (SLNT) 3
Jacob Tillig (St A) 3	Alexander Hay (B-W) 3
Kayne Rutley (Boort) 3	Zachary Wemyss (SLNT) 3

CHS Broadbent Club Championship

(Senior win 10 pts., Reserves 6, Under-17s 4, Under-14s 2)

	Snr.	Res.	U-17	U-14	Ttl.
Sea Lake-Nandaly	10	6	4	2	22
Birchip-Watchem	10	6	0	0	16
Boort	10	6	0	0	16
Calder United	10	6	0	0	16
Charlton	0	0	4	2	6
Donald	0	0	4	2	6
St Arnaud	0	0	4	2	6
Wedderburn	0	0	0	0	0

Bulls Open with a Bang, Edwards Bags the Baker's Dozen

Can you believe it? Local football is back already. How the months have rolled on from September, 2024.

It seems only a blink of eye since Sea Lake-Nandaly Tigers vanquished the Bulls, but, roll on they have, and Birchip-Watchem ventured south, down the highway to Charlton Park to kick off season 2025 in glorious autumnal conditions, where it blitzed the home side with a super impressive 28 goal demolition.

The Bulls' hierarchy pulled somewhat of a surprise with a change of leader at season's end, replacing Trev Ryan, landing lauded Bendigo's Sandhurst premiership winning coach, Ash Connick, and he could not have wished for a better start to his campaign.

His players delivered a 4 quarter pulverising of what is a youthful and key position undermanned Charlton, with gun full forward Ben Edwards back in the Bulls' colours for a third year running, shooting the Baker's Dozen, 13 goals, despite some close checking by young Patrick Soulsby, who battled gamely all day, but just was overwhelmed by the huge amount of slick forward ball entry from a plethora of Bulls' ball winners.

Both sides started brightly, the ball pinging around like a pinball machine, the Bulls' monster, Hamish Hosking, delivering silver service ball with some amazing tapwork to a hungry midfield group, but a willing Navies' midfield group was able to push back and crowd the Bulls' forward line, providing plenty of support to an already under-the-pump defensive unit.

The Woods brothers, Rhyen and Ashton, were prominent, dishing out handballs, often to one another, their coach Mitch Collins was in and under, shouldering the workload, Soulsby not giving an inch to Edwards, and newcomer, Ben Xiriha, one of a couple of new trotting identities making Charlton their home and playing football, ran shoulder to shoulder with Joe Reid, who again had Birchip-Watchem's key forward post.

Try as they might with plenty of Navies pushing back into their defensive territory, the Bulls, through livewire Daniel Bell, had their first on

the board within 5 minutes of game time, before steadily using their momentum to slowly push out to a 4-goal margin, holding the Navies goalless, kicking to the river end with an ever-so-slight wind advantage.

A fair start for the Bulls, but not shooting the lights out nor taking full advantage of their huge forward entry advantage, with Charlton defending bravely, a big tackle count reflective of the Navies' determination, and able to work the ball out of their defensive area, with Xiriha and Soulsby noticeable at the contest. But try as they might, Charlton was still unable to push past the midfield area, as its midfielders were down back, helping out. Containment seemed to be the Navies' intent.

Connick clearly has an excellent understanding of the game, rightfully predicting at quarter-time that the Navies' intense efforts would see them tire, as they just don't have the rotation depth currently. And how right he was.

Utilising Hosking dominance, who looks much better prepared starting 2025 off than he did when he first appeared in 2024 with huge wraps, the Bulls' midfield, which again has the Rippon brothers in tow alongside "Mud" Buchanan, along with returning locals Jacob Christie, Bill Lee and Riley Hogan for further support, made full use and continually pumped the ball inwards to the Birchip-Watchem forward arc, where the Bulls started to apply scoreboard pressure, piling on 8 goals, with Edwards gathering momentum as he built toward his huge game tally.

Like the best of full forwards, he just has that innate hunger to slot the big sticks, and it won't surprise if he hits the magical hundred in 2025. And he's got a better midfield group feeding him, which helps his task tremendously.

Despite the overwhelming dominance of the Bulls, the Navies were sticking to their task of trying to wear the opposition down, Collins leading by example and prepared to push back and assist his

under siege back six in and under at the contests, but the Bulls just had too much class.

Clearly a sea-change move from the city to the coast has reinvigorated Marshall Rippon, the man with a "Fat Eddie" look-alike shaved block head, but a little more body ripped. Having shed quite a few kilos, he was back to his form of 2022, winning possessions across the park, using his strength to bust the lines, pushing younger brother Nic out of the lime-light, and didn't he like the repositioning, named as the Bulls' best. Has his mojo back.

Nic's performance was no mug show either, with a more even performance from all the Bulls, he just didn't stand-out like the beacon he often is.

In a nice piece of play, young Elliot Fitzpatrick had pushed forward to be on the end of a missed shot at goal by Jackson Zagame, and duly slotted a major. The future of Charlton was on show with these two lads, but they just badly need some quality support through the spine.

Rhys Thompson is back in Navy colours, but is a little rusty, having not played for a couple of years, and will be better for the run.

The Bulls were up and about, they looked sharp, pushing the lines, hitting targets, the pressure from the Navies starting to wane as the game progressed.

Cormac Wilson across half back was noticeable as he made some good intercepts, newcomer Ben Lakin across half-back was catching the eye as well, covering for their suspended skipper, Dale Hinkley.

It was going to be a tough day at the office for the young Navies, the Bulls up by 10 goals at the long break.

Then came the Benny Edwards show, with 5 goals to half-time, he piled them on in the second half, despite the continued close checking of Soulsby, who just kept at his unenviable task, the Charlton brains trust content to leave him the Herculean task all day.

Edwards dragged the marks in and finished with his



• Charlton forward Billy Sexton leaps from behind Birchip-Watchem's Ben Lakin and James Lindeback, as he attempts to mark. Also pictures from left are the Bulls' Jake Noonan, the Navy Blues' Elliott Fitzpatrick and Birchip-Watchem's Lachlan Ryan

hallmark accurate kicking, a superb way to start his 2025 season.

He had good support across half-forward from another newcomer, Horsham recruit Rhona Conboy, who hasn't played for a season or two, but looked classy as he roamed far and wide, showing good hands overhead, and just knows where the ball is.

With Connick urging his charges to continue the "kill", the Bulls piled on the pressure at the contest and then dished the ball out to players prepared to run and create space. They looked impressive, and are a good side, looking better than 2024, their new inclusions all making solid contributions.

Ten goals in the third quarter was a fine return for their hard working efforts, as they refused to take their foot off the gas, Edwards booting 4 for the term, with Marshall Rippon everywhere.

The Navy Blues' back six were a little like the poor boy in the storied Hans Brinker, with a finger plugging the hole in the dyke until help arrived, which never came.

The last quarter was a repeat of the third, the Bulls relentless at the contest, Hosking dishing out silver platter service, midfielders lapping it up, Edwards on the end of it, chains of handballs breaking the lines, impressive stuff, albeit against a young and undermanned outfit which never gave up.

Luke Dunne, another of the new trotting crew, was prominent across half-back for Charlton.

A final score of 30 goals was a fine result of the output and total dominance, something that doesn't always translate, but this team looks determined at this early stage to make amends for last season's grand final agonising defeat to the Tigers.

The Bulls certainly have more depth in 2025, and their twos also had an impressive win, with quite a number who could easily step up to the ones.

Hosking is better prepared, the two Horsham recruits slotted in beautifully, there's more depth in the all important midfield area.

There's lots to like, but the top end of the league is better

again in 2025, so Birchip-Watchem will have to step up to the plate if it wants to go one better in 2025.

Coach Connick could not have wished for a better start.

Charlton will have to be plucky, but it is simply undermanned up against the big guns. The Navy Blues have got some terrific local kids, and just have to persist with them.

There are still plenty of supporters around the club, and, importantly, they don't drop off as the season progresses.

Whilst winning is still the Holy Grail, no less important is to have a community focus, and football clubs provide that critical gel. So stick fat, Navy supporters.

Final scores: Birchip-Watchem 30.12 (192) d. Charlton 3.3 (21).

Best for Birchip-Watchem; Marshall Rippon, Ben Edwards, Hamish Hosking, Daniel Bell, Meyrick Buchanan, Cormac Wilson.

For Charlton: Ben Xiriha, Patrick Soulsby, Luke Dunne, Mitch Collins, Sean O'Connor, Ben Lanyon.



• Marshall Rippon prepares to drive Birchip-Watchem into attack. At left, providing advice, is his brother Nic, while Charlton's Mitch Collins, looks to give chase.



• Birchip-Watchem speedster Ty Colbert breaks clear from Charlton's Jackson Zagame, as the Bulls' Marshall Rippon provides a block. At right is the Bulls' Cormac Wilson.

Calder Powers Home

The newly formed Calder United has sent out an ominous warning to the league in its inaugural outing on the Goff Letts oval on Saturday.

Looking like anything but a newly formed side, Calder ran like a well oiled machine, beginning in the middle where runners Matt Wade, Steve Kennedy and Zane Keighran continually drove the ball towards goal with forwards enjoying the constant supply.

Jack Exell, son of former Donald primary school student and Geelong footballer Gavin, had a day out with eight goals while Mitch Farmer chimed in with five, being the main beneficiaries.

Donald, on the other hand, can be buoyed by the endeavour displayed with its attack on the ball. Chock full of

locals, hard nuts like captain Ed. Landwehr, Harry Forrest and coach Dan Pearce never shirked an issue and the long sleeved Dyson Bell-Warren played one of his best games in the Royal Blue colours, using his dash out of defence.

As is typical in most first quarters of the season, the football was played at a frenetic pace. The Lions' Zane Keighran and Matt Wade were busy and eventually Jack Exell broke the ice with the game's first goal.

The Donald club welcomes Brent and Ben Arho, with the former marking and converting from a Bell-Warren



• Experience versus youth in a ruck contest between Calder United's Dean Putt and Donald's Brady Griffiths. Ready at ground level to the right are the Lions' Matt Wade and the Royal Blues' Callum Vandendriest. Others pictured, left to right, are the central umpire and Donald's Ryan Bath.



• Two newcomers to the Royal Blues are Rob Walker (6) and Callum Vanderdriest (15). Attempting to spoil is Calder United's Zac Caccaviello.

ren pass. Exell added two more for Calder United, and team-mate Matt Wade drilled one from outside fifty. It's great to see Charlie Campbell, Tom Letts and Darcy Harrison back at the Donald club and their ball skills were still evident. Harry Forrest kicked a goal over the outstretched hands of a pack to make it four goals to two in favour of the visitors.

Donald didn't add to its goal tally after quarter-time while United worked its way into overdrive. Exell snared three more while Kennedy and Keighran kicked one apiece and Dean Putt channelled Tom Hawkins and grabbed the ball from the ruck and snapped truly.

Newcomer to the Blues, Robert Walker, was working his way into the game and using his height to haul in marks, while Ryan Leeder



• A good head for football. Calder United's Matt Wade shows all his tricks and gathers the ball. Donald players are Seth Pearse, Darcy Harrison and Callum Vanderdriest.

and Darcy Harrison were repelling many attacks.

After the long break the match tightened. The Lions' Zac Caccaviello was strong across half-back and difficult to pass. Mitch Farmer eventually kicked a major after seven minutes of play and Exell another, the breeze

having a telling factor which was deceptively stronger than it appeared until you ventured out on to the ground.

Kicking with this breeze in the final period the flood gates began to open as United piled on ten unanswered goals. Sharing in the spoils was Kobe Lloyd with two.

Final scores: Calder United 23.26 (164) to Donald 2.1 (13).

Best for Calder United: Zane Keighran, Jack Exell, Zac Caccaviello, Boe Bish, Darcy Munro, Mitch Farmer.

For Donald: Dyson Bell Warren, Dan Pearce, Darcy Harrison, Charlie Campbell, Ed Landwehr, Robert Walker.



• Calder United defender Spencer Allan bombs the ball forward, chased by Donald's Luca Rice.



• Calder United's Rick Allan, literally has his hands full — in his left is Donald's Daniel Pearce, and in his right is Callum Vandendriest, who is attempting to take off with the Sherrin.