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The Buloke Times

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



• Awarded a Chief Officer's Commendation for Courage, Brad Burke (centre), with Deputy Chief Officer of CFA's North-West region, Bill Johnstone (right). Standing back, left is Assistant Chief Officer of CFA District 18, Gavin Wright.

Brad's Bravery Recognised

At a National Medal presentation held at Donald CFA Fire Station on Saturday, March 15, nine members within Buloke West Group received a significant honour in front of a large gathering of family and friends.

Among them was the captain of Jeffcott Fire Brigade, Bradley Burke, who was honoured for his "courage under hazardous circumstances".

• More on Brad's award, and on those won by his Buloke West Group colleagues, are on pages 8 and 9 of today's "Buloke Times".

Birchip Connection with Regional Photo Finalists

Forty-two entrants from Toogoolawah to Beulah have been chosen as finalists in regional Australia's richest photography prize for regional artists, and two have a strong connection to the Birchip P-12 School.

Naomi McKenzie (nee Ferrier), ex-student of Birchip P-12 and the daughter of Robyn and John Ferrier, of Birchip, and Amelia Scholtz, a current Birchip P-12 School teacher and farmer at Beulah with partner Riley Lehmann, are two of this year's finalists vying for the \$27,000 Galah Regional Photography Prize.

The judging panel selected 42 images made by 37 regional photographers from more than 1100 entries across regional Australia and these works will be presented at the New England Regional Art Museum in Armidale, NSW, in an eight week exhibition from April 11 to June 8, 2025.

The winning works will be

announced at an exhibition party at NERAM on Friday, May 2, 2025.

Galah

The biennial "Galah" Regional Photography Prize was established by Galah Press editor Annabelle Hickson. Annabelle didn't plan to live in regional Australia, but she fell

• Continued on page 2.



• Audio-Eyes – Naomi McKenzie.

Mahjong Anyone?

By "No Jokers Here"

Game playing or mind sports are an important factor in maintaining mental health which becomes even more crucial as we age.

The skills involved, such as problem solving, developing strategies and prolonged concentration, lower the risk of age-related diseases like dementia.

The social aspect of playing face to face wards off depression, facilitates happiness and the laughter that accompanies it releases "feel good" endorphins.

Recreation, enjoyment and entertainment are things we naturally want to do – it isn't and shouldn't be, something we need to be coerced into. The challenge and excitement of competitive play or losing yourself in a pleasurable activity for the sheer fun of it, all count as play. And so it is that we come to Mahjong.

More Beneficial

Learning a new game or activity is much more benefi-

cial than doing the same thing every day like Sudoku or Wordle puzzles. Although it has an ancient "feel" to it, Mahjong only came into being in late 19th century China. Played with tiles (136 of them) the draw and discard mode of play is directed toward forming melds of sequences and identical tiles. It has some parallels with the various rummy games played with either cards or tiles only some million times better (some Trump-like fact and figure checking might be appropriate at this juncture).

At Donald

Mahjong has been successfully and enthusiastically introduced as a new activity at the Donald Senior Citizens Club. For the moment Thursday afternoon from 1:30 p.m. is game day but we hope to

expand on that soon.

We were fortunate to have the lovely Li-Yan Warren guide us and teach us the fundamentals. Mahjong has an immediate feel good impact and we find that people are naturally drawn to it. Shuffling tiles, building walls, 'Chow'ing, 'Pong'ing and ultimately 'Mahjong'ing – it's all movement and exclamation. Loads of fun and highly social.

While most of us are still struggling to differentiate between Pongs and Chows, some of us have yet to correctly identify the Suit symbols for Bamboos, Balls and 10,00s, let alone correctly recognise the four Winds and the three Dragons, the opportunity to laugh at ourselves is never lost. Devising and im-

• Continued on page 2.



• Here we see Li-Yan Warren at the special Mahjong table surrounded by tiles, no doubt ready to declare "Mahjong" at any moment.

Concerns Raised Over Vehicle Identity Validation Process

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has called on the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Melissa Horne, to explain apparent inadequacies within the Vic Roads Vehicle Identity Validation (VIV) process.

Ms Benham has asked the Minister to confirm the number of people in Victoria who are qualified to perform VIV inspections and whether she has considered a training and qualification process that would enable mechanics with the authority to perform road-worthy inspections to also perform VIV inspections.

In Victoria, when someone has restored a repairable write-off motorcycle or car, the vehicle must be transported to Melbourne, Geelong, or Bendigo for a Vehicle Identity Validation inspection before it can be sold. These are the only locations in the state where qualified inspectors are available.

By contrast, in New South Wales, VIV inspections can be carried out at local Trans-

port for NSW offices, providing far greater accessibility for regional residents.

"Regional Victorians are once again being disadvantaged. Training more mechanics to be able to complete the inspections is a cheap and easy fix to this problem and would make the process far more accessible, especially for those in regional areas," Ms Benham said.

Ms Benham further emphasised the financial and logistical burden this places on rural Victorians, many of whom are forced to travel long distances at great expense just to complete an inspection.

"This is another example of the state government failing to consider the needs of



• Jade Benham, MP.

regional communities. It's a simple issue with a simple solution," Ms Benham added.

Ms Benham is urging the Minister to address these concerns promptly and take steps to ensure regional Victorians have fair and reasonable access to the Vehicle Identity Validation process.

"Wrong Decision", Declares Laurie Levy: Duck Season Already Under Way

Coalition Against Duck Shooting Campaign Director, Laurie Levy, said at the weekend: "Despite the scientific reports that show native waterbirds are in serious long-term decline, Premier Jacinta Allan has extended Victoria's duck shooting season this year, even with the serious risk of spreading bird flu that could be present on any wetland."

"Premier Allan seems to be devoid of any feeling or compassion for Australia's magnificent native waterbirds and the unnecessary suffering they will endure in 2025, just so a dwindling number of duck shooters, who make up less than 0.2 per cent of Victoria's population, can get their kicks," Mr Levy said.

"It is extremely disappointing that a Victorian Labor Premier continues to allow a duck shooting season, when former West Australian Labor Premier Carmen Lawrence banned the activity 35 years ago due to the cruelty and illegal shooting of protected and threatened

species. Other Labor states followed with bans in New South Wales in 1995, and Queensland 20 years ago, but not Victoria.

"It is difficult to believe that today's Victorian Labor Premier still has the same duck shooting policy as the 1950s Liberal Premier, Sir Henry Bolte. Yet Victorians today want duck shooting banned. The Victorian Government's own Parliamentary Inquiry called for native bird shooting to be banned from 2024, but Premier Allan ignored the inquiry's recommended ban.

"Premier Allan will always be remembered for her abuse

of Australia's native waterbirds.

"However, in fairness, our rescue team would like to pass on our appreciation to Environment Minister Steve Dimopoulos and members of Cabinet for closing off 19 wetlands to shooting, due to the presence of protected and threatened species. These wetland closures will save the lives of thousands of native waterbirds and many other species that are illegally shot during every season."

Rescue teams were at the Kerang wetlands in northern Victoria for the opening of the duck shooting season on Wednesday.

Mahjong Anyone?

• Continued from page 1.

plementing winning strategies is still dormant on some distant horizon for the majority of us.

Beware

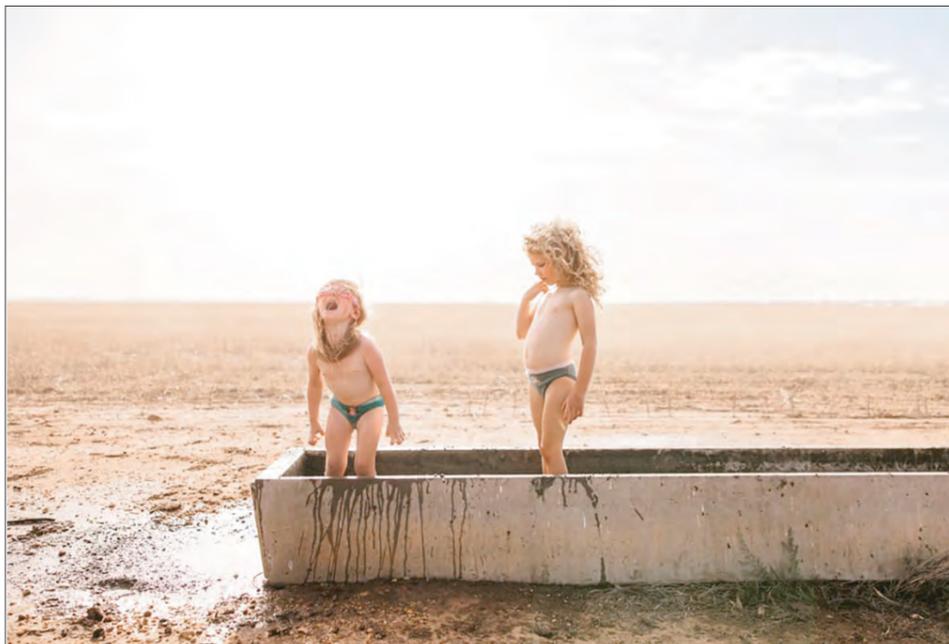
When mentioning Mahjong in conversation I'm amazed that so many people play Mahjong on their phones and tablets, but beware – "real" face-to-face Mahjong is very different to the online versions. Nevertheless, it's undeniable – people in general are genuinely interested in Mahjong for a variety of reasons.

So, if you're keen to learn or wish to play against our relatively inexperienced, experienced players just rock up on any Thursday afternoon and if that doesn't suit, simply register your interest with any Donald Senior Citizens Club member and we'll do our best to accommodate you.

The Donald Senior Citizens Club was able to purchase a specialised Mahjong table complete with drink holders and tile trays as well as a large, premium quality tile set with funds from last year's Victorian Seniors Festival disbursed to various organisations across the shire by the

Buloke Council.

We would also like to point out that there is no age restriction in place for Donald Senior Citizens Club membership and participation. We are an equal opportunity organisation and, as such, in line with current political correctness, there can be no discrimination based on age. Accordingly, we do not discriminate against those who may not yet have had the opportunity to amass, accumulate, and celebrate as many birthdays as we have. So, come along all you kids, adolescents, young adults, middle-agers and join us oldies in some Mahjong fun.



• The nuances of sisterly love – Amelia Scholtz.

Birchip Connection with Regional Photo Finalists

• Continued from page 1.

in love with a farmer from western NSW and thought she'd give it a shot.

She had previously had a journalism career at "The Australian" and twelve years after moving west, as the 2019-2020 drought eased, Annabelle wanted to read stories from regional Australia that weren't about disadvantage.

She wanted a publication that assumed people in regional Australia were a smart and increasingly diverse lot, who cared about community and creativity and the environment, as well as profitability. And she wanted a publication that acted as a bridge between the city and country divide. So, she made "Galah".

In 2023 Annabelle created the photography competition to encourage excellence in contemporary photography from regional Australia. The intention of the prize is to celebrate, support and advance the practice of regional photographers and this is great recognition for Naomi and Amelia.

Amelia

Amelia has her own photography business titled "Rural Haus Photography" (which is a nod to her German heritage) and she specialises in documenting stories of families, farms and small

businesses around rural Australia.

Naomi

Naomi is currently exhibiting "Elemental Reciprocity" at the Condensery Somerset Regional Art Gallery in Queensland.

"Elemental Reciprocity" captures a Scar Tree on Dunggibara Country symbolising the family's sacred connections to Dunggibara Country, as well as their commitment to their multi-generational

agricultural lands. In this composition, Naomi has merged new film photographs and pictures from the family's personal archive. Using a solution derived from the tree's eucalyptus leaves, Naomi has developed the resulting photographs in her Toogoolawah studio, creating a technical process entangled with the tree itself.

Congratulations to Naomi and Amelia and good luck for the final.

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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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info@corackeastwind.com.au | Corack East Wind



• Attending the Show and Shine on March 9 were: Margaret Verbeek, Ken Murdoch (former business owner in Wycheproof – Ken Murdoch Garage) and Corrie Verbeek (former partner of H Verbeek and Sons, Holden dealers Wycheproof).

Show and Shine at Wycheproof

The Wycheproof Lions Club Show and Shine was held at the Mt. Wycheproof and District Racecourse on March 9.

An impressive array of vehicles was on display, enticing many engine enthusiasts to the town for the long weekend, and judges had a difficult task selecting the winners of each section.

Results were as follows:

Cars

Best on Show: HQ Monaro, Rick Lang (Charlton).
 President's Choice: XB Falcon Ute, David Rickard (Warracknabeal).
 Secretary's Choice: 1967 Gold Falcon, Peter Greenwood (Kerang).
 Best 2 Door: 1970 Valiant Mexicana, Wendy Harris (Swan Hill).

Best Ute: 1974 HQ Holden, John Brennan (Donald).

Best Original: Ford XT Falcon, Murray Rogers (Ballarat).

Best pre-1940s: 1934 Chevrolet Roadster (Coo-noor Bridge).

Best 4 Door: 1968 HK Holden, Sharron Sitkei (Bendigo).

Best Ladies Car: VU Holden Ute, Sharelle Dickson (Mt. Edgerton).

GF Kustom's Choice: HX Holden Panel Van, Tom Campbell (Ballarat).

Best Pre-1970s Holden: EH Premier Holden, Keith Eastwood (Swan Hill).

Co-ordinator's Choice: HR Premier Holden, John Turner (Ballarat).

Crowd Puller: 1924 Fiat, Phil Stafford (Charlton).

Best Off Road: Haflinger 4x4, Geoff Pyers (St.Arnaud)

Motorcycles

Best Bike Stock: Triumph Sprint 955 ST, Andrew King (Lah).

Best Bike Modified: Street Glide, Duncan Hay (Dumosa).

Welcome to Bendigo Bank Agribusiness

Bendigo Bank officially welcomed Rural Bank customers to Australia's most trusted bank this week in a transition that provides a seamless and consistent experience for the Bank's Agribusiness customers.

Bendigo Bank Agribusiness offers a bigger, better banking experience, fully backed by Bendigo Bank's digital capability and services, along with an improved lending and product offering.

Bendigo Bank Agribusiness customers will feel even more at home with Australia-wide coverage from agribusiness specialists who truly understand their business, alongside the familiarity and reach of the nation's second largest regional network of branches.

Bendigo Bank Chief Customer Officer, Business Bank and Agribusiness, Adam Rowse said this important alignment means the bank can now better meet evolving customer expectations to power a more adaptable, sustainable and productive future for Australian farmers.

"For almost 25 years, Rural Bank has stood side by side with Australian farmers through every season, helping them stay on top of challenges and cultivate opportunities, while investing in the communities in which they live and work," Mr Rowse said.

"Bendigo Bank too, has a long, proud history of contributing to a better future for farmers and strengthening rural communities by feeding into prosperity – and it is with this unique blend of heart and heritage that we're excited to formally introduce Bendigo Bank Agribusiness."

Bendigo Bank Agribusiness will continue to share insights, industry-leading information, research and analysis, so that farmers can stay up-to-date with the latest developments in agricultural commodity markets, exports, farmland values, business performance and other topical agricultural issues.

"We know farmers want an agribusiness specialist who understands their business

and with the ability and insights needed to meet the evolving needs of modern agriculture," Mr Rowse said.

"With more than 150 specialist bankers positioned to provide the personal service our customers have come to expect, we look forward to partnering with Australian farmers in exciting new era for our Agribusiness division and to cementing our title as Australia's most trusted agribusiness bank."

The transition is part of the concluding stage of the Bank's current six-year transformation program and will, by the end of 2025, see just two primary facing consumer brands, Bendigo Bank and Up, operating on a single, core banking system.



Birchip Students Compete

Birchip P-12 School student, Sienna Richmond, competed in the Loddon Mallee Regional Swimming Finals on Tuesday, March 11.

Sienna is currently in year 7 and she competed in freestyle and backstroke, placing 6th and 4th respectively, and achieved personal bests in both races.

In other sporting news, Birchip P-12 School students competed in the North Central Triathlon last week. Despite the heat, there were some excellent results in all divisions.

The junior mixed team comprising of Sienna Richmond, Archie Tyler and Jed Coffey, placed second. The junior female team, with Gemma Tynan, Frances McClelland and Isla Ferrier, placed fourth. The intermediate female team, comprising of Gracie Ferrier, Beau Haslam and Zara Lowry, placed third. The senior male team, of Les Coffey, Austin Dean and Willow Ryan, placed second. The best result of the day went to the senior female team, Ada Bourke, Zali Angel and Asha Lee, placing first.



• First place winners: Asha Lee, Zali Angel and Ada Bourke. (Senior female team).



• Sienna Richmond.

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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 LINDSAY.— Ashley William

I can shed tears that he's gone,
Or I can smile because he's lived.
My heart can be empty because I can't see or touch him,
Or it can be full of the love we shared.
I will remember Ash and that he's gone
And cherish his memory and let it live on.
My much loved partner of 9 years.
Gone but never forgotten.

—Denice XO

DEATH PEARSE.— Nicholas John

27/07/1955 - 13/03/2025
Treasured husband of Janine. Dearly loved father of Nadia, Marika & Ty. Much loved father-in-law of Nik & Tarli. Adored Grandpa & Bunka of Elora, Loric, Reya, Hadley, Arlo, Banjo & Jagger.

Nick, we all loved you so much & we will forever miss the love & support you gave to us all.

**

Nick, what a fantastic life you gave me!

We have the most beautiful family I could ever wish for & I loved you so much. We had some great holidays around the world & I am so glad we did them when we did.
My life will never be the same, but I have so many memories of the wonderful times we shared together.

—Lots & lots of love,
Janine.

To our dearest Dad & Grandpa, the hole you have left in our hearts and our lives is huge. We will miss your curiosity, welcoming smile, warm hugs and unconditional love.
We hold close our special memories of you and your life that was so well lived.

—All of our love and the biggest of hugs,
Nadia, Nik, Elora,
Loric & Reya

DEATH PEARSE.— Nicholas John

To our darling Dad and Bunka,
Before you left us you told us how very lucky you were, but we know that we are the lucky ones. You brought so much joy and love to our lives.
We will miss your incredible smile and your unwavering love and support. You taught us the true meaning of strength, and courage. We will love and miss you forever.

—Marika and Hadley xxx

Nick/Dad/Grandpa,
To say goodbye doesn't seem fair. To the world you were but one, but to us you were the world.
Your kindness, generosity, and love for family will forever remain in our hearts. You will be loved and remembered every single day. We will miss you so very much, love you to the moon and stars.

—Love Ty, Tarli, Arlo,
Banjo and Jagger xxx

PEARSE.—

Nicholas John "Nick"
27/07/1955 - 13/03/2025
Passed away peacefully at St John of God Ballarat, aged 69 years.

Loved son of Beryl & the late Ivan Pearse. Loved and loving husband of Janine and father to Nadia, Marika and Ty. Loved and respected brother and brother-in-law of Gay; Kim; Jenny & Graham; Michael; Vanessa & Robert; and Uncle to Ryan, Hayley, Matt; David, Benjamin, Ellison; Thomas, Laura; Alana, Matilda and Henry.

**

The bond between siblings is unbreakable. Your love will always be our guide and forever in our hearts. Your skills were inspirational in what you could make and invent.
You did entertain us with your forever searching for "a bargain"!

—Cherished brother of
Kim Merrett, and special uncle to Ryan, Hayley and Matt Merrett.

Nick, we have so many wonderful memories of times spent together enjoying your big smile, positive attitude and sense of humour. You will be forever loved and missed by us all.

—Georgie & Mark, Helen & Gavan, Kathy & Graeme and families.

DEATH PEARSE.— Nick

Our very deepest condolences and sympathy to Janine, Nadia, Marika, Ty and families.

Nick, a great family man and friend, will be sorely missed by us all.

—Love Glenn, Jodie and family x



DEATH PEARSE.— Nick

The Lions Club of Donald is deeply saddened by the death of Lion Nick Pearse, a valued contributor to the club over many years.

Heartfelt thoughts are with Janine, Nadia, Marika, Ty and families.

FUNERAL PEARSE.— Nick

A service to celebrate Nick's life will be held at the Donald Memorial Hall on Wednesday, March 26 at 1 p.m. The cortege will then leave for the Donald Lawn Cemetery.

Livestream & condolences at lifelived.com.au

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BEREAVEMENT THANKS

The family of the late Val Brooks, would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who offered their condolences, sent flowers, cards, food and hugs following Mum's passing.

Heartfelt thank you to Dr. Oleg for your care over the years and to all the staff at Donald Clinic and Hershman Hospital for their care during Mum's visits. To the staff of the Goodwin Village, words cannot express the gratitude we have for each of you for the way you cared and joked around with Mum whilst she was a part of the Goodwin Village family. We greatly appreciate the respect that was shown to her on her final day. It was beyond beautiful.

Thank-you doesn't seem enough, but it is truly from the bottom of our hearts, so please accept this as our personal thank-you.

—Paul & Loretta; Gene & Jacqui; Carmen & Brad and families xxx

BEREAVEMENT THANKS PEARSE.— William Ellis

The family of Bill would like to express their thank-you to all who sent cards, flowers and words of condolence on his passing.

Now at Peace.



"RABBIT BUSTER DAY"

Hosted by Donald Landcare at Litchfield.

Friday, March 28
9.30 a.m.

AT LITCHFIELD HALL
Speaker, Tim Bloomfield (Victorian Rabbit Action Network) will be demonstrating methods on controlling rabbits.

RSVP for catering purposes to Elizabeth Russell Secretary, Donald and District Landcare Group
Mob 0400 543 480



An invitation
**100 Year
Celebration**
of St Andrew's
Uniting Church
Donald

Sunday, March 23
10.30 a.m.
with Rev. Margaret & John Russell

Anyone with current or former connections to St Andrews is cordially invited.

Luncheon, history and entertainment to follow

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

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**Birchip P-12
School**

FETE

Wednesday, March 26
Beginning at 6 p.m.

~ Activities, spinning wheel & drawing of the major raffle.

All welcome to come along and socialise and enjoy a delicious meal.

Goodwin Village invites you to an
Open Morning Tea
Tuesday March 25, 2025
10-11am at Goodwin Village

Come along to a morning of cake, singing (by *The Village Singers*), information on volunteering and conversation.

This is a great opportunity to chat to our lovely residents and come back if you used to visit. If you'd like to sign up to visit residents this is the time to find out more. **No need to RSVP but for more information call Goodwin Village 54971 304.**

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Donald & District Racing Club TRACK MANAGER

A unique and exciting opportunity exists for a successful candidate to join the team at the Donald &

District Racing Club as Track Manager. This role is a full-time position.

The Track Manager will coordinate the preparation and maintenance of the Donald Racecourse grass racing and training surface along with the upkeep of the club's grounds and facilities. The primary objective of the role is to ensure the needs of thoroughbred racing and training are met in compliance with Club and Industry standards.

An understanding of the racing industry is preferred but not essential along with a turf maintenance qualification or demonstrated experience in a turf maintenance role together with strong communication and leadership skills. The successful applicant will be required to operate the fully automated irrigation system, manage some casual labour and be available to communicate with key stakeholders within the club and thoroughbred racing industry as required as well as operate machinery.

A full position description is available upon request by contacting the Club Manager - Ph: 0418 124 289 (during business hours) or via email donald@countryracing.com.au

Applications (including covering letter, resume and references) must reach the club before close of business Friday, April 4, 2025. Attention – Club Manager.

Poultry Shed Erector

Casual Position

We are a successful poultry shed building company looking to find additional strong workers to join our site crew. We are looking for labourers who are hardworking and willing to work as part of a team with the right attitude. The position includes concrete work for piers and slabs, steel framework, erection and roofing. The job location is in Huntly North and is a casual position starting April 7, 2025.

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Brendan: 0427 794 479

Nathan: 0409 525 805

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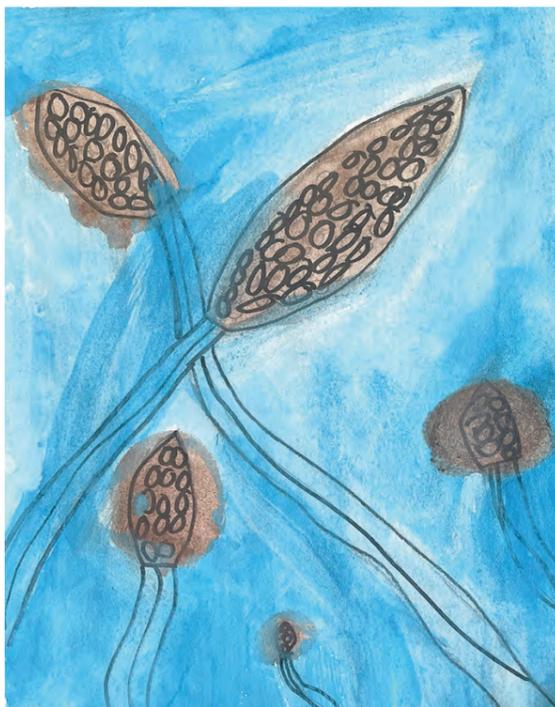
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or Cumming Avenue, Birchip,
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Classes with a Cutting Edge

Over the initial Tuesdays in Term 1, 2025, the Donald High School Year 7 students have commenced Technology Wood classes.

In the first skills test, students were asked to create a tea light holder.

This task requires them to mark and measure accurately using a square rule, cut timber accurately using a tenon saw and bench peg, create a rebate for their box of matches using the saw and a chisel, and mark and drill the hole in the top face for the tea light.

Their timber will be finished by going through the grades of sandpaper as well as ensuring square (not rounded) edges for a crisp final result. Using templates created in CAD, students are quickly able to check their final product to determine the functionality of their final product.



In a Design Brief, an end-user is identified, and a pyrography design is burnt into the product that hopefully appeals to them aesthetically.

The finished products will be on display in the foyer very soon; the school body can't wait to see them completed and used!



• Paul Watson.



• Harley Roberts.



• Max Reily and Caleb Michaels.



• River Stirling.



• Riley Jones.



• Victor Sak.



• Harvey Niero.



Have Your Say: Participate in the VNI West Social Impact Assessment

Landholders and community are invited to participate in the Social Impact Assessment being undertaken as part of the EES process for the VNI West transmission project.

Conducted by independent consultant Dr Jamie Seaton from The Social Aspect, the assessment aims to understand the possible impacts of the project on aspects of community life including health, wellbeing, community services, culture and surroundings.

If you are a landholder or live in the VNI West project area we invite you to participate.

Involvement is simple and respects participants privacy. Interviews can be conducted online or in person. Each conversation should take no longer than 30 minutes and can include family members or friends. Extracts of the interview may be used to form part of the assessment, but personal details will not appear in the report.

This is your opportunity to share insights that could lead to better project outcomes for your community.

For more information, please email jamie@socialaspect.com.au with your name and contact details.



Police Beat

Buloke

Attempted theft of a trailer: At about 3.34 a.m. on Friday, March 14, offenders were seen hanging around a tandem trailer parked off Main Street, Culgoa.

When a neighbour shone a torch in their direction, the offenders fled in a white ute.

Swan Hill

Trespass: Just before 1 a.m. on Sunday the 16th of March, the victim was woken by noises in her Belah Mews home.

She got up to find someone standing inside the front door. After a short conversation the male left without incident. Police arrested a 19-year-old male a short time later.

He was found to have outstanding warrants.

He was interviewed for trespassing and released pending summons and bailed on the outstanding warrants to attend court at a later date.

AMBULANCE
PHONE NO.
000



Kristy Graduates



• Kristy French.

On Wednesday, March 12, 2025, Kristy French, daughter of David and Debbie French, of Donald, graduated from the Warner Institute at a ceremony held in Horsham, which she attended with her mum.

Kristy has completed her Diploma of Leisure and Health over the past 12 months, while working full time at East Wimmera Health Services, Donald Campus, where she is currently employed as a Div. 2 nurse. Congratulations Kristy!



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“Diligent” Service Acknowledged:

As reported on page 1, a National Medal presentation was held at Donald CFA Fire Station on Saturday, March 15, with nine members within Buloke West Group receiving the significant honour in front of a large gathering of family and friends.

Master of ceremonies for the occasion was Assistant Chief Fire officer of CFA District 18, Gavin Wright, ably assisted by Brigade Support Officer, Tanya Decker, and awards were presented by Deputy Chief Officer of the North West Region, Bill Johnstone.

Gavin Wright welcomed distinguished guests, CFA members and the family and friends of the award recipients, and began with a truck handover to Watchem, Cope Cope and Litchfield Brigades, all receiving upgraded vehicles on the day. Cope Cope, with one of the oldest trucks in District 18 received a 1999 3.2D Hino Tanker; Litchfield received a 2001 3.4D Isuzu Tanker 4x4; and Watchem Brigade was lucky enough to gain a brand new 2024 10.2S Ultra Heavy 10,000L tanker.

National Medals

Following the truck handover, the National Medals were awarded. The National Medal recognises those who put themselves at risk in the

service of the community. To qualify a person must have served an eligible organisation for at least 15 years in the primary function, and the Chief Officer of the organisation must assess their service as “diligent”.

Bill Johnstone presented the awards, mentioning the difference compared to service awards, which are handed out by an individual’s brigade. The National Medal is an Australian honour recognising long and diligent service to recognised government and voluntary organisations. It is awarded to those who risk their lives or safety to protect or assist the community in enforcement of the law, or in times of emergency, or natural disaster. This includes service organisations such as ambulance, correctional, emergency, fire and police forces, and voluntary organisations such as lifesaving or search and rescue groups.

In CFA’s Buloke West Group nine members were awarded this honour as follows:

Group Officer David Manifold (Jeffcott), Darren Hogan (Birchip – an apology on the day), Brad Burke (Jeffcott), Michael McLoughlan (Warmur), Graeme Milne (Watchem), Richard Reilly (Corack), Adam Campbell (Corack), Robert Adams (Laen East), and Kelvin Hepworth (Litchfield).

Commendation for Courage

Bill Johnstone had another award to present, this time noting how rare this particular honour was to receive; in his many years with CFA, he had not presented one before, nor did he expect to present another within his lifetime.

The Chief Officer’s Commendation for Courage recognises acts of courage under hazardous circumstances – for service carried out under conditions that demand considerable self-discipline without thought of personal recognition; and/or for an act of bravery at a specific incident in dangerous circumstances where the act is conspicuous



• A Commendation for Courage was awarded to Jeffcott CFA captain Brad Burke (right) whose bravery assisted truck driver Wayne Woods (left) from mortal peril, following a collision in 2023.

and worthy of special recognition.

The specific incident was described in the citation read by Gavin Wright:

“On December 19, 2023, on the Wycheproof-St Arnaud Road at Jeffcott, a semi-trailer carrying grain left the road and collided into roadside trees.

“Captain of Jeffcott Fire Brigade, Bradley Burke, was the sole witness to the collision

and he immediately stopped his vehicle, telephoned for assistance and ran towards the badly damaged truck to assist the driver. As a result of the collision the cabin of the truck caught fire and the load of grain surged forward and engulfed the inside of the cabin.

“The truck doors were unable to open as a result of the damage sustained. Working alone, and without regard

for his own safety, Captain Burke climbed on to the truck’s bonnet and using his hands, removed the windscreen and located the driver amongst the spilled grain, between the driver and passenger seats.

“Captain Burke removed the injured driver by taking him out through the damaged

• Continued on page 9.



• Cope Cope Brigade truck handover: Gavin Wright, Wayne Jones, Peter Leeder, Bruce Leeder, and Bill Johnstone.



• A huge gathering of supporters, including distinguished guests, fellow CFA members, family and friends of award recipients, applauding the presentation of the Courage Award.



• Litchfield Brigade truck handover: Kerrie Hepworth, Jono Robinson, Jim Hepworth, Gavin Wright, Kelvin Hepworth, Kalon Green, Bill Johnstone.



• Watchem Brigade truck handover: Dean Woods, Ty Colbert, Gavin Wright, Chris Colbert, Graeme Milne, Stephen Cummins, Bill Johnstone.

Firefighters Win National Medals

• Continued from page 8.

windscreen, where he sustained numerous cuts to his arms and torso, and then lowered the driver to the ground and carried him to a safe area away from the now fiercely burning truck.

“Without the actions of Captain Burke, the driver of truck would have perished in the fire. His actions on this day were courageous, selfless and in the finest traditions of CFA volunteer firefighting. The CFA is pleased to award Captain Burke the Chief Officer’s Commendation for Courage.”

As an added honour to the proceedings, Wayne Woods, the driver whose life Brad saved was in attendance and able to witness the recognition afforded to this “local hero”.

Upon receiving this much attention, Brad humbly accepted the commendation

saying, “You just got to do what you’ve got to do in the moment.”

His wife, Vikki Burke, praised his considerable achievement with much less modesty, saying, “I guess our kids have a real-life hero, now!”

This kind of award is not just presented on any day, nor just to anyone, and the CFA as a whole celebrated Captain Brad Burke’s honour. It is hoped that his example may inspire the next generation to follow in his considerable footsteps; well done!

The afternoon closed with delicious catered refreshments and a good old chin wag and catch-up between different brigade members, while others braved the heat outside to check out the new trucks that had been delivered. It was truly an afternoon of celebration; all involved are to be congratulated on the ongoing success of District 18 and its members.



• National Award recipients presented by Bill Johnstone (far left): Michael McLoughlan (Warmur), group officer David Manifold (Jeffcott), captain Brad Burke (Jeffcott), Adam Campbell (Corack), Robert Adams (Laen East), Kelvin Hepworth (Litchfield), Graeme Milne (Watchem), Richard Reilly (Corack), with acting MC, Gavin Wright (far right).



• Back row: River, Isabelle, David (presenter), Shanae, Jasmine. Front row: Lexii, Karleisha, Marnie, Erin.

Kindness Matters!

On Friday, March 14, David from Dolly’s Dream presented a Kindness workshop to the school’s Year 7 and Year 10 buddies.

David knew that part of our Transition program is to link Year 7 students with a Year 10 “Buddy”. He had them in discussion circles with their buddies creating conversation.

The Kindness workshop promotes how kindness has a significant positive impact on everyone’s mental health and that kindness helps to break the cycle of negative behaviour and promote positivity.

David’s activities throughout the presentation hope to increase empathetic behaviours of students, and to understand the power of words and actions. He gave space for students to think how they could create moments where kindness and positive behaviours can lead to change. He helped guide students to think of ways that they themselves can practise kindness.



• Buddies working together, sharing ideas.

VCE Creative Arts Day

On Friday, March 14, Donald High School students travelled to the Horsham Art Gallery for “SPARK” – the VCE Creative Arts Day.



The goal of the day was to expose rural VCE students to art practices with the mantra of Visit, Experiment, Play and Discover!

After Welcome and Acknowledgment to Country, the first session that students experienced was a round table discussion focussing on Creative Careers in the Wimmera. Then keynote speaker, Mia Cera Salsjo shared her extensive creative practice, techniques and processes and an insight to how to create a diverse range of artworks and the presentation of these for exhibition.

After lunch, students heard from Brittany King about Creative Practice. She spoke and showed examples of where she incorporates historical and cultural influences that inspire her drawing and paintings. This was a hugely beneficial session, and she was dynamic in showing how she goes about finding inspiration for her finished pieces.

All in all, the students were exposed to the gallery spaces, interacted with fellow Art Making for Exhibition students in our area and developed a new sense of purpose for their folio of work. It was a very valuable experience for the students, and the reports on their day were all positive, finding that this session was important to see, especially at the start of the year of study.



• Artist Mia Salsjo speaking on her use of music in architectural inspired art and installations.



• VCE SPARK round table discussion with students around employment in the Wimmera regions associated to the Arts.

Life in the Blood

A text message came from the Australian Red Cross Blood Service a while ago reminding me that I had an appointment with the blood donor centre.

My blood is highly sought after by the Blood Bank because it is classified as “O Negative” – the “universal blood”. All blood is precious but O Negative especially so, because anyone can receive this type no matter what the blood grouping of the recipient – especially helpful in an emergency situation!

I learnt the value of giving blood 23 years ago when our eldest son was impacted by Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. He received 70 blood transfusions during the

treatment protocol of this deadly illness – every one of those donations was life saving. We are so grateful Tim’s life was preserved and he and his wife and children now serve at the Hope International school in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Tim as a teacher and Kristen as a nurse.

Some people are fearful about donating blood but it is all quite pleasant. On arrival at the donor centre a few necessary preliminaries take place, checking my blood pressure and haemoglobin



• Bruce Stewart

level and then I lie on the comfortable, layback chair. I watch the preparation process with fascination each time.



My O negative blood is highly sought after by the blood bank. The Red Cross Nurse Simone did an excellent job facilitating the removal of 470 ml of my blood which will contribute to the potential saving of three lives.

There is a gentle prick as the Red Cross nurse inserts the needle into my vein and a few minutes later the plastic bag is full, containing 470 ml of my blood. The average adult male has around 5 litres of blood so there is still plenty left for me!

Robert Coleman wrote a story titled, “Written in Blood” describing a young boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same blood type the boy was the ideal donor. “Would you give your blood to Mary?” the doctor asked. Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he smiled and

said, “Sure, for my sister.” Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny’s smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. Johnny’s voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. “Doctor, when do I die?” Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he’d agreed to donate his blood. He thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. Courageous and loving Johnny was prepared to give his life to save his sister!

Easter is soon coming reminding us of the fact that there is, One who did give His life so that others might live. The Bible says, “For Christ died for sins once for all, the

righteous for the unrighteous to bring you to God” (1 Peter 3:18). Jesus’s blood was shed for us, the whole 5 litres of it, on the cross on which He died. We all have terminal disease, a sin problem which destroyed our relationship with our Creator, but if we give our lives back to Jesus in gratitude, repentance and faith, we gain a relationship with Him and thus can live our lives with joy, hope and purpose both now and into eternity.

Giving blood is obviously a good thing to do helping save lives but at Easter and other times, too, we can be reminded that Jesus shedding His blood in His sacrificial death for us completed the greatest rescue mission ever offered to humankind. Believe and receive that your joy maybe full. Life indeed is in His blood.

Bruce Stewart.

M.P. Seeks Action on VPTAS Reimbursements

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has called on the Minister for Health, Mary-Anne Thomas, to provide an explanation for the increasing delays in reimbursements under the Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme (VPTAS).

Ms Benham asked the Minister to explain why it is taking in excess of five months for forms to be settled and when will this time frame improve.

Ms Benham noted that Sunraysia Information and Referral Service (SIRS), which often pays travel costs upfront on behalf of patients, is owed for 241 forms, totalling \$288,255.83, from as far back as October 2024.

Expenses

The VPTAS is designed to reimburse rural Victorians for accommodation and travel expenses incurred when they travel over 100 kilometres one way for specialist medical care. The payments – officially promised within six to eight weeks – are now taking several months.

The Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme is critical for people in the Mildura electorate, but the length of time organisations and individuals are waiting

for their travel costs to be reimbursed is unacceptable and placing a large strain on patients and providers.

Long Waits

“I’m hearing too often from affected residents who are enduring long waits for their travel costs to be reimbursed,” Ms. Benham said.

“This delay is causing additional stress and patients shouldn’t have to choose between putting food on the table and seeking treatment.

“Obtaining a specialist appointment is hard enough as it is, with the increasing costs of living; to then have to pay upfront costs and wait months for reimbursement places an unnecessary burden on regional Victorians.

“Organisations such as SIRS and Sunraysia Cancer Resources are not-for-profit and are not bottomless pits. They need these reimbursements to be able to continue the work they do and be able



• Jade Benham, M.P.

to provide this service to patients.

Disadvantages

“Rural and regional Victorians already face significant disadvantages in accessing healthcare,” Ms. Benham said.

“The Minister for Health must act immediately to allocate the resources necessary to process these claims promptly. People should not have to fight for access to the health services they need and are entitled to.”

† Church Notices †

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES

“East Wimmera Parish”

Birchip 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)

Boort 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)

Banyena No Mass

Charlton 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream out to churches without Mass)

Donald 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)

St. Arnaud 8.30 a.m.
W’proof (Sat.) 7.00 p.m.

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779

Parish Co-ordinator
– Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

Donald, 10 a.m.

Next Birchip and
Wycheproof Services,
10 a.m. Sunday, April 6

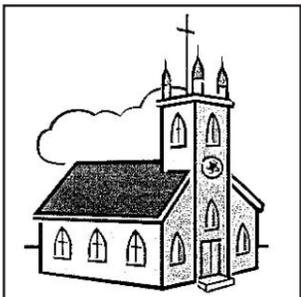
Contact Number: 5497 1033

ANGLICAN “Parish of Charlton-Donald”

Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
0435 593 359

Friday, April 4
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 6
St. Martin’s, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George’s, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W’burn, 3 p.m.



www.granitecommunitychurch.com

At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.



VicGrid is releasing the first draft Victorian Transmission Plan

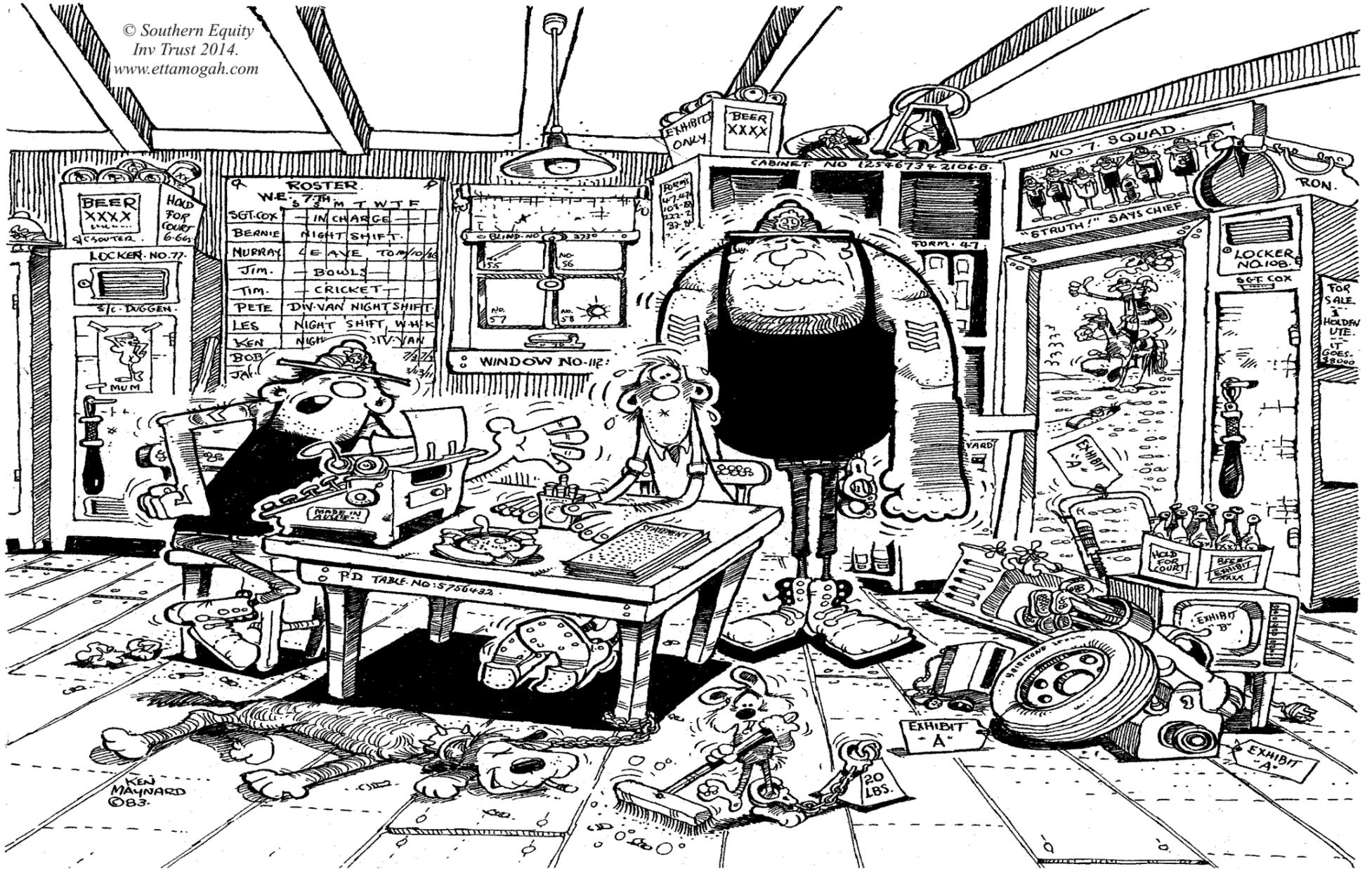
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Camera at Donald Tennis Tournament



• Looking at the full courts from court 1. Great to see all the courts full of enthusiastic players.



• Andrew Donnellon returns serve, and at the ready is partner Jacob Bath who is modelling the new blue tennis polo.



• Macie Mortlock plays her forehand return beside partner Scarlett Funcke. Macie happens to be modelling the new white tennis polo.



• Peter Hayes goes wide to return serve and is watched closely by partner Ross McIntyre.



• Christian Belcher leaps across to cut off a return and Vladimir Gisca is watching behind.



• Courtside support. Ready to watch Jacob Bath and Andrew Donnellon are left to right Geoff Wollermann, Mitch Wollermann, Olivia Wollermann, Georgia Bibby, Ryan Bath, Colby Anderson, Cooper Anderson, Jack Trollope, Will Noble, Josh Talty and Hayden Geddes.



• The crowd on Sunday morning, enjoying the event.

Camera at the Cricket Grand Finals

As already reported in the "Buloke Times", Wimmera-Mallee Cricket Association's 2024-'25 season has been completed.

In "A" grade, Donald-Jeffcott defeated Birchip Swans, while Watchem was victorious against Donald-Jeffcott in "B" grade.

Thanks to a number of photographers for the grand final images featured on this page.



• Jonty Randall puts everything into this delivery to Donald's Dan Atkins.



• Birchip's Riley Doran bowls to opposing captain, Cooper Anderson.



• Birchip's Rylee Smith.



• Cooper Anderson edges the ball over second slips fielder Lachy Randall who gives his all but just misses a catch. Other Birchip fielders watching on are, left to right, Mark Trollope, Hudson McCredden and Riley Doran.



• Nick Atkins claims his second wicket as Birchip is bowled out for 56 runs. (Photo by Blake Lee.)



• Lachlan Jones on his way to 29 runs. (Photo by Blake Lee.)



• Not taking the pressure off, Birchip's Rylee Smith fires the ball at the stumps making sure Donald-Jeffcott's Lachie Jones doesn't run. Other Birchip fielders left to right are, Mark Trollope, Connor Lee, and wicketkeeper Will Marks.



• Birchip's Hudson McCredden gets a close look at the ball as Donald-Jeffcott's Aaron Schofield flicks his shot leg side.



• Jonty Randall struck twice early, but Birchip couldn't stop a dominant performance from Donald Jeffcott. (Photo by Blake Lee.)

Kara Kara and Birchip Into Grand Finals

The Kara Kara and Birchip tennis teams have secured their places in the North Central Lawn Tennis Association grand final after hard-fought semi-final victories over Wirrim and St Arnaud, respectively, on Saturday.

In a day of intense competition, Wirrim fell agonisingly short of a grand final berth by a total of just two games. To escape the forecasted extreme heat, the decision was made earlier in the week to play at St Arnaud and commence at 9 a.m..

Kara Kara v. Wirrim Men's

Kara Kara's men delivered a commanding performance, winning all but one of their matches. Will and Luke Jackson set the tone with a dominant 8-2 victory over Jon Haslam and Russell Christie, while Ned Jackson and John Goode followed suit, defeating Dale Hinkley and Kasper Palmeland 8-2. Jon Haslam and Dale Hinkley secured Wirrim's only win in the men's section with a hard-fought 8-6 triumph. However, Kara Kara's depth shone through in the lower section, as Bruce Hando, Ben Batters, Rogan Hando, Jack McRae, and Austin Lowe proved too strong for Wirrim's James Goldsmith, Denley Tyler, and Des Coffey, with the men claiming the section 54-22 games.

Women's

Wirrim's women responded emphatically, dominating their section with a 53-18 game victory to level the overall points. Fiona Best

and Steph Coffey impressed with an 8-3 win, while Kelly Haslam and Sandie Richmond secured an 8-0 victory. Kara Kara managed only one win in the section, with Trudie Jackson and Alex Baldwin defeating Steph Coffey and Sandie Richmond 8-5. Wirrim's Tylah Haslam, Beau Haslam, and Georgie Warne further extended their team's lead with strong 8-3, 8-0, and 8-1 victories.

Mixed

With everything on the line, the mixed section was a thrilling showdown. Kara Kara's Luke Jackson and Aimee Jones delivered a crushing 8-0 win, while Wirrim's Dale Hinkley and Sandie Richmond countered with an 8-3 victory. Further wins by Kara Kara's Bruce Hando and Kim Nevill (8-2) and Rogan Hando and Chris Goode (8-5) gave their team a slight edge. However, Wirrim fought back with an 8-1 win from the mother-son duo Steph and Des Coffey, and an 8-4 triumph by James Goldsmith and Georgie Warne, setting up a dramatic final match.

The decisive clash saw Kara Kara's Will and Trudie Jackson, battling through injury, triumph over Wirrim's Russell Christie and Fiona Best, 8-4, sealing Kara Kara's

passage to the grand final by just two games in a heart-breaking end to Wirrim's season.

Three-set winners for Kara Kara: Luke Jackson.

For Wirrim: Georgie Warne

St Arnaud v. Birchip

Fourth-placed Birchip caused a stunning upset against ladder-leader St Arnaud, securing a 140-111 game victory.

Men's

The men's section was closely contested, with St Arnaud edging out Birchip by just one game. Sam and Jake Male set the tone with an 8-1 win over Tim McClelland and Josh Hamilton, while Robbie Lee and Dave Ferrier achieved the same score against Jason Rowe and Matt Goode. Sam Male and Jason Rowe secured another 8-1

victory against Tim McClelland and Robbie Lee, while Josh Hamilton and Dave Ferrier claimed an 8-4 win.

In the lower section, Owen Lowe and Ben Greenaway recorded an 8-5 victory against Blake Lee and Sam Noonan, while a further 8-4 win for Owen Lowe and Don Erwin over Blake Lee and Matt Rickard kept St Arnaud ahead. Despite a dominant 8-0 victory from Birchip's Sam Noonan and Matt Rickard, St Arnaud held on to take the two points, 37-36 games.

Women's

Birchip's women stepped up with a clinical performance, winning all of their matches to take control. De Ferrier and Julie Coffey secured a tiebreak win against Sharyn and Katie Erwin, while Jo and Asha Lee defeated Keegan Amos and Wendy Shaw 8-2. An 8-4 win to De Ferrier and Jo Lee, followed by an 8-6 win for Julie Coffey and Asha Lee, gave Birchip a solid lead.

Birchip continued its dominance in the lower section,



• Sandie Richmond serves.

with Stacey Hamilton and Bec Botheras defeating Caitlyn Goode and Sophie Male in a tiebreak. An 8-3 win for Stacey Hamilton and Zoya Rickard, and a strong 8-1 victory for Bec Botheras and Zoya Rickard, saw Birchip claim the section 56-30 games.

Mixed

Holding a 25-game lead heading into the mixed section, Birchip needed only to hold its ground. St Arnaud's Sam Male and Sharyn Erwin, and Jake Male and Katie Erwin, fought back, winning their respective matches against Tim McClelland and Julie Coffey, and De and Dave Ferrier. Another close match saw St Arnaud's Jason Rowe and Wendy Shaw edge

out Josh Hamilton and Jo Lee in a tiebreak. However, Birchip's Robbie and Asha Lee turned the tide with an 8-5 victory.

St Arnaud's Owen Lowe and Keegan Amos defeated Blake Lee and Bec Botheras 8-5, but Birchip sealed its triumph with an 8-4 win from Sam Noonan and Stacey Hamilton, and an 8-3 victory from Matt and Zoya Rickard.

With a final score of 140-111 games, Birchip secured its place in the grand final, where it will now take on Kara Kara at Charlton tomorrow.

Three set winners for Birchip: Asha Lee, Stacey Hamilton, Zoya Rickard.

For St Arnaud: Sam Male, Owen Lowe.



• De Ferrier returns a forehand.



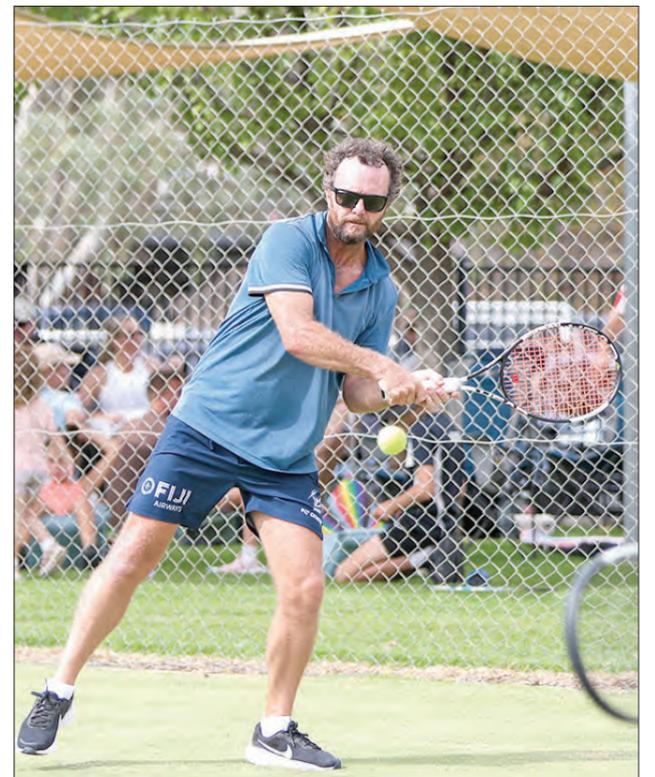
• Julie Coffey serves.



• Alex Baldwin hits a forehand.



• Sam Male hits a volley.



• Jon Haslam returns a serve.



• *Birchip Grey: from left, Roger Bragg, Andrew Lee, Richard Haddrick, Trevor Grogan, Wayne Clark, Brian Hogan, Jennifer Blainey, Kevin Reid, Alf Donnellon, Owen Reid, Caroline Reid, Tony Doran, Pauline Bragg, Mark Bowen (front).*

Birchip Grey Regional Champions

In the small tight-knit town of Birchip the local bowls club has been a source of local pride, not only for its results, but more importantly for the spirit and camaraderie of its members.

The Birchip club fields two Division One teams in the Tyrrell Bowls Association and this year, for the fourth year in

a row, a Birchip team won both pennant divisions.

Whilst Birchip Grey players claimed this year's

Division One title, it was their latest feat, which elevated them and their club to legend status, when Grey became the Murray Mallee Regional champion team, a title won under a blazing 40 degree Mildura sun.

The journey to the championship had been anything but easy.

Their first match pitted them against the formidable Sunraysia champions, Mildura Bowls Club. The air was thick with tension as the two teams traded bowls, each side refusing to yield. When the final tally came in, it was a draw – a result that left both

teams respectful, but unsatisfied, knowing the real test was yet to come.

For Birchip Grey, the next challenge was the Kerang Bowls Club which was the Northern Valley pennant winner. The Greys, however, were undeterred. With steady hands and a sharp focus, they out-manoeuvred Kerang in a match that had spectators on the edge of their seats. As the last bowl rolled to a stop, the score confirmed their victory by four shots, and as it turned out, that win was enough to clinch the Murray Mallee Regions title.

The victory in Mildura

means a trip to Moama late next month, where Birchip Grey will take on other regional winners. The competition will be tougher, but the locals will be there hunting another win.

Mixed Pairs Regional Winners

In other great news for the Birchip Club, Jennifer Blainey and Kevin "Alf" Donnellon are this year's Murray Mallee Region Mixed

Pairs champions. They won 14-13 in a tight semi-final against a strong Sunraysia team and then they backed up that victory in the final by winning 15-12 against their Murray Valley opponents. Jennifer and Alf are formidable opponents to those who come up against them at either club, association or regional level. Well done.

"You Gotta Be Up"

Wycheproof's 72nd Labour Day Tennis Tournament



• *Delicious desserts.*

• **Continued from page 16.** come up beautifully in time for the tournament.

Special thanks for the Charlton Tennis Club helping us out in various capacities over the weekend.

The efficiency of the Monday afternoon pack up was helped along immensely by Boris and the return of Aidy and Nikki, as many of the volunteers were feeling the effects of the busy and hot three days prior.

Thank you to the Wycheproof Op Shop for sponsoring both the men's and women's singles open championships events this year. Without the support of all sponsors, including the major sponsors Bath Bros Transport, Charlton Community Bank, Coatsworth Harvesting, Chris Deutscher, Haeuslers Sea Lake, Marlbro House, Nutrien Ag and Trewins Transport, the tournament would not be able to give away such amazing items for trophies or indeed keep the tournament running!

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• *Murray Mallee Region Mixed Pairs winners, Alf Donnellon and Jennifer Blainey.*

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8169 - SOLUTIONS

Across - 1, Pullover. 6, Fast. 8, Kiln. 9, Capuchin. 10, Snail. 11, Result. 13, Frigid. 15, Enmity. 17, Humble. 19, Snarl. 22, Parakeet. 23, Rail. 24, Oboe. 25, Scrutiny.
Down - 2, Union. 3, Longing. 4, Vice. 5, Reporter. 6, Focus. 7, Skillet. 12, Idleness. 14, Rhubarb. 16, Minaret. 18, Brave. 20, Reign. 21, Stir.

Wycheproof's 72nd Labour Day Tennis Tournament

[From Wycheproof Tennis Club]

Another highly successful and enjoyable tennis tournament was held in Wycheproof over the Labour Day long weekend this year.

With preparations beginning in January the weekend was certainly a busy one!

President and First Lady, Aidy and Nikki, put in many hours leading up to the Tournament as they traveled away for the weekend to visit their children who are away all term in camp. Their hard work definitely had us well prepared and organised.

Throughout the weekly working bees in the weeks preceding this year's tournament, the question in everybody's mind was no doubt "what's the weather going to do?"

With close memories of last year's heatwave conditions, we all hoped the weather would be kind this

year and the outdoor Sunday evening meal and festivities would be able to go ahead as normal.

We had hot weather with a breeze Saturday and humidity Sunday and a still dry heat Monday... even those just watching felt the effects of the warmth, let alone players slogging it out for many sets throughout the day.

We didn't collect any rain Sunday and the night went ahead smoothly.

The highlight for many players and supporters is always the Sunday evening dinner, with some comparing it to a Christmas feast and one player even commenting that she waits all year to enjoy the home-made chocolate ripple

dessert! Thanks to Terry at the Royal Mail for cooking the delicious meat and gravy, Donna at Tuscan on Calder Catering for providing the sumptuous salads; however, without a doubt the most anticipated course was the desserts. Made by a small and dedicated group of women the array of home-made pavlova, cheesecake, trifle, chocolate ripple and fruit salad was simply amazing and much enjoyed and appreciated by many!

Presentation

The presentation for events held on Saturday and Sunday was also held that evening, as well as the hotly contested spinning wheel and the winner of the raffle drawn. MC Kath did a wonderful job hosting the night; congratulating all the winners.

Congratulations to Beth Thompson on winning the Ninja creamy ice cream maker – we can't wait to visit! Entertainment that night was once again provided by Adam "Chicken" Palmer and a good night was had by all!

Second only to the joy and satisfaction of seeing locals win events against the traveling players (who no doubt have a lot more access to coaching and resources) is witnessing the juniors from those travelling clubs progress up the grades from juniors, to some now playing open events. We have so many committed families and players who come each year to support our event – we are so thankful for their ongoing participation which helps keep the tournament going!

Special mention to the early morning breakfast barbecue blokes, Rob, Jake, Ben and Brett; the Clean Kitchen

Queens including Georgina, Julie, Gill, Fiona, Rae, Lauren, Wendy and Jo; the orderly and obliging office workers Kim, Mary Anne, Brian and Troy; as well as the Sunday evening bar tenders Jason and Robert; and the terrific ticket seller Paddy.

However, there could be no tennis without our courts, magnificently maintained by greens-keeper Gary W, Aidy, Gary and Mary Anne. Grass courts always come with challenges and this season was no different, but they managed to

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• Men's "A" grade winners Sam Male and Duncan Jackson.



• Women's "C" grade runners-up Zoe Dixon with mother, Louise.



• Birchip: Pauline Bragg, Caroline Bragg, Moya Connelly, Rhonda Cooper.

Ladies' Invitation Day

Lively chatter marked the beginning of the Donald Bows Ladies Invitation Day on March 3.

The "picture perfect" Matthew, Wedderburn; Skip-green and the ideal sunny day set the tone for an enjoyable day of bowls.

Fourteen teams from Wedderburn, Donald Golf, Boort, St Arnaud, Minyip, Central Wendouree, Charlton, Birchip, St Arnaud Country, Beulah, and Wycheproof lined up for an opening ditch to ditch competition.

The winners were Leaders: Pauline Bragg, Birchip; Seconds: Rhonda Cooper, Birchip; Thirds: Judy

Matthew, Wedderburn; Skip-green and the ideal sunny day set the tone for an enjoyable day of bowls.

Following one game of 12 ends and two games of ten ends, the winners on the day were (with two wins and one draw) Jeanie Grills, Shirley McKenna, Lorraine Milburn, Carol Jones, of Wycheproof Bows Club.

Runners-up were the Birchip team: Pauline Bragg, Caroline Bragg, Moya Connelly, Rhonda Cooper.

Consolation prize went to St Arnaud Country Club

After the first game, lunch was served with a wonderful array of salads, and to finish the day, fruit salad and ice-cream were enjoyed by the bowlers, who had some close challenging games. There were no three game winners.

Many thanks were extended to the caterers led by Beryl Milne, greenkeeper Norn Hollis and overall co-ordinator, Lindy Morgan.

Sponsorship was appreciated from JJ Kells, IGA, SN Stablisng, AJ Baines, Kookas, and Goldie's Patch.



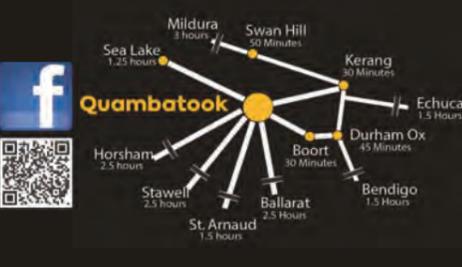
AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Quambatook

TRACTOR PULL

EASTER SATURDAY
April 19, 2025

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VINTAGE: 1pm - 3pm MODIFIED: 3.30pm - 10pm
TRUCK & CAR DISPLAY
NO GLASS • NO PETS • NO BYO ALCOHOL • NO EFTPOS



• Wycheproof, left to right: Jeanie Grills, Shirley McKenna, Lorraine Milburn, Carol Jones.