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The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

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

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

Birchip RSL Shares Local History Funds

Organisations across Victoria will receive funding to help capture, preserve and share the unique stories and histories of Victoria.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes announced historical groups, museums, libraries and not-for-profits were awarded as part of the 2025 Local History Grants Program.

Birchip RSL Sub-Branch will receive \$9,100 to assist in bringing the stories of four war veterans to life on four interpretive panels at the Birchip Cenotaph, so that the community history can be preserved.

"This funding means that Birchip RSL can continue to work as the heartbeat of its community by preserving the stories, people and places that make our region so unique," said Member for Northern Victoria, Jaclyn Symes.

The Local History Grants Program is administered by Public Record Office Victoria, and supports community activities that preserve, record and share the local, social and community history of Victoria and Victorians.

Other recipients this year include the Bonegilla Migrant Experience, to support their work in collecting memories of ex-residents of the Bonegilla Migrant Camp via a digital platform. Memories will be shared with the wider community, highlighting the stories of this significant heritage site.

The Down Syndrome Association of Victoria will receive funding for the archiving of their heritage collection, dating back to the Association's establishment in 1978, establishing a legacy to educate, inspire and inform all Victorians.

Other funded projects include newspaper digitisations, oral histories, historical signage, and preservation equipment.

"We're backing the historians and local heroes bringing Victoria's stories to life and out into the world," said Acting Minister for Government Services Danny Pearson.

"F1 the Movie", This Weekend

Petrol heads take note – "F1 The Movie" will be streaking across the big screen at The Rex this coming weekend, so don't miss the chance to see some thrilling car racing in action!

Brad Pitt stars as "Sonny Hayes" in this sports drama about a racing driver who returns to Formula One (F1) after a 30-year break.

Hayes was Formula 1's most promising phenom of the 1990s until an accident on the track nearly ended his career. Thirty years later, he's a nomadic racer-for-hire when he's approached by his former teammate Ruben Cervantes (Javier Bardem), owner of a struggling Formula 1 team that is on the verge of collapse. Ruben convinces Sonny to come back to Formula 1 for one last shot at saving the team and being the best in the world. He'll drive alongside Joshua Pearce (Damson Idris), the team's hotshot rookie intent on setting his own pace. But as the engines roar, Sonny's past catches up with him and he finds that in Formula 1, your

teammate is your fiercest competition-and the road to redemption is not something you can travel alone.

From flash-backs to the present day, the film is filled with adrenaline – rush scenes and, surprisingly Pitt and Idris did their own driving.

Be ready for some jaw-dropping racing sequences. The movie also moves beyond the speed and spectacle, and dives deep into the personal sacrifices, rivalries, and passion that fuel the sport.

Even if you are not a racing fan you will be captivated by the human drama, the tension, and the heart-pounding excitement.

As one reviewer said, "This is a cinematic thrill ride!"

"F1 The Movie" screens: Saturday 19 July, 8 p.m. | Sunday 20 July 2 p.m. | Tue 22 July 8 p.m.

• Continued on page 2.



• New owners Sam Penfold holding Poppy, Chloe Douglas with Isla Penfold, and Alex with Oscar and Adam Schulz. Missing from photo was Milla Schulz.

Hardingham's Welcomes Midwest

In a move towards modernization and growth, Hardingham's, a name synonymous with plumbing in the Buloke area for decades, has officially rebranded itself as Midwest Plumbing and Appliances Pty Ltd.

Owners Adam and Alex Schulz, Sam Penfold and Chloe Douglas believe this transition marks a significant chapter for the company, promising a fresh approach while holding on to its core values.

Hardingham's was established in the 1950s and carved a niche for itself with quality service, dependability and a commitment to the local community, all solid fundamental values that Midwest will continue to uphold.

Traditional Values

The owners felt a new identity and a fresh outlook is necessary moving forward, aiming to carry forward those traditional values while embracing new opportunities, with the staff and services remaining.

"We will continue to offer our large array of plumbing services including roofing, split systems, evaporative cooling, sewer/stormwater jetting, CCTV pipe locator, wood and gas

heater sales and installation, general plumbing and maintenance and remain agents for BOC and Elgas," they explained.

Wide Range

"The BiRite Electrical side of the business will still operate out of the Woods Street premises where we will continue to stock a wide range of electrical white goods, cooking, cleaning, heating and cooling merchandise. If we don't have what you are looking for, we can generally order it in for you."

The rebranding from Hardingham's to Midwest signals a shift in perspective and identity and will be phased in over the next few weeks.

Directors/Owners: Adam Schulz, Alex Schulz, Sam Penfold, Chloe Douglas.

Plumbers: Adam Schulz, Sam Penfold, Ty Buteux, Steven Atkins, Cian Polzin, Kynan Torney.

Office/Administration: Megan Jardine, Mitzi Black, Alex Schulz.



• The new shop front.

Jazz in July is Back!

Get ready to swing. Charlton Arts are delighted to present to you Jazz in July returning to the Rex Theatre on Sunday afternoon, July 27, at 2 p.m..

Taking centre stage are the ever-popular Hot B'Hines, a seasoned group of jazz lovers who've been bringing us fabulous music for more than 30 years.

Expect toe-tapping traditional jazz and a band whose joy in playing together is as infectious as their rhythm.

Known for their energy, charm, and polished performances, the Hot B'Hines have a loyal fan base in Charlton

and beyond – and for good reason.

“We're delighted to welcome the Hot B'Hines back to Charlton,” says Charlton Arts secretary, Carol Bennett.

“Their enthusiasm is genuine, their music is top-notch, and they always leave the crowd wanting more.”

The music may be hot, but the vibe will be cool – especially with a spot of afternoon tea served during inter-

mission, just across the road at the Charlton Club.

Tickets are \$25 and can be booked through the Charlton Neighbourhood House, online via <https://events.humanitix.com/jazz-in-july-2025>, or at the door.

Don't miss this foot-stomping, heart-warming afternoon of music, memories, and good old-fashioned fun.

• *The Hot B'Hines performing at Rex Theatre.*



Police Beat



Gannawarra

Camper trailer theft: Between 7 and 9 a.m. on Sunday the 13th of July, a 2023 MDC Explorer camper trailer was stolen whilst the owners were away from their Red Rise Track campsite outside Leitchville. The camper had been secured to the vehicle, but offenders appear to have cut the lock.

Robinvale

Damage: Just after midnight on Wednesday the 9th of July, offenders have attended school grounds and smashed one window and attempted to break further.

Swan Hill

Burglary: Between 3 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday the 9th of July, offenders have forced entry to a home in

Chapman Street, Swan Hill. The offenders have stolen various items, including a number of watches, wrist and pocket watches.

Motorcycle recovered:

On Saturday the 12th of July police observed a motorcycle with no registration plates travelling in the Lake Boga area. The rider of the bike appears to have stalled, allowing the police to speak to the 37-year-old man rider from the Geelong area. The bike was found to be stolen from a burglary in Swan Hill, late June. The male was charged with several offences and bailed to attend court at a later date.

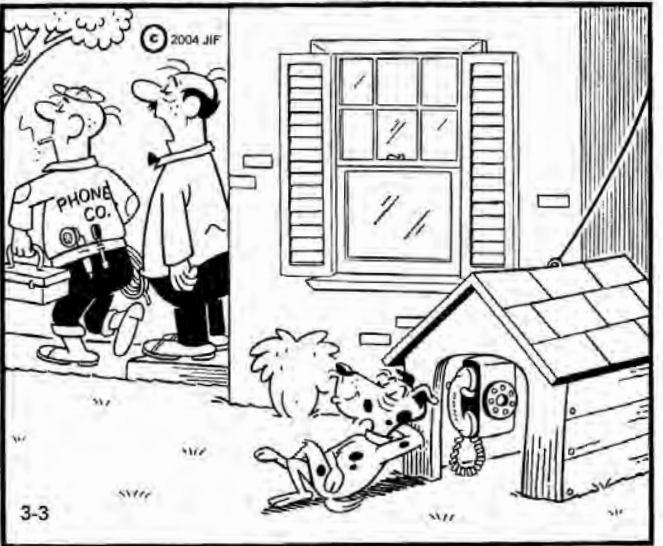
Buloke

Burglary: Between July 4 and 6, offenders have forced entry to a building located off Mackie's Road, Wycheproof. At this stage it appears there has been nothing stolen.

Theft from motor vehicle: Between 3.30 p.m. on Monday the 7th of July and 7 a.m. the following morning, offenders have attended a recreation area off the Charlton Swan Hill Road, Bunguluke. Diesel, radios and a computer tablet were stolen from heavy vehicles at that location.

Trailer theft: Between July 6 and 10, offenders have attended a property in Wescott's Road, Yeungroon, and stolen a blue box trailer and 1300l water tank.

MICHAELS OF DONALD
Belvedere By George Crenshaw
www.belvedere-cartoons.com



"He has told us he needs it to keep in touch with his friends."

Corack East Wind
Renewable Energy from ACEN

ACEN Australia

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 1-6pm

Dates and venues

Venue information

9 July Charlton
16 July Donald
23 July Charlton
30 July Birchip

6 August Charlton
13 August Charlton
20 August Donald
27 August Birchip

Donald – Scout Hall, Racecourse Road, Donald

Birchip – Birchip Community Leisure Centre, Morrison St, Birchip

Charlton Charlton Park Community Bank Complex, Calder Hwy, Charlton

Meet the project team, find out more and provide feedback.

www.corackeastwind.com.au

info@corackeastwind.com.au

1800 498 550

Corack East Wind

Letters to the Editor

Charlton Library

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Editor.– What is happening at our Charlton Library? Owing to asbestos work in the Community Hall, we have now been without a proper library for four weeks. No notice was given that this was going to occur.

The present arrangements to cover the closure are far from adequate. We now have a small van parked in the street with the librarian sitting in there with her knees up around her ears, no adequate toilet facilities and very few books from which to select. It is like going to a car boot sale. I am sure certain aspects of these arrangements contravene O, H and S.

Council needs to be reminded of the importance of libraries in country towns. Much attention is given to mental health, but the council fails to see how a library contributes to the wellbeing of people living within the shire. People in the country see a library as a place of community get together. Somewhere they can get to talk to each other. How can you do this in the back of a van parked in the street?

We have an excellent librarian in Adele, but Council management of the library leaves a lot to be desired. As in all management, the first objective should be communication. Where are the results of the recent survey into the libraries conducted by the Council? Is this straight out of "Yes Minister" where nothing is said and it gets buried? What is the Council doing about rectifying the current unsatisfactory arrangements? At present, the library situation in Charlton is shambolic and needs to be addressed immediately by those bureaucrats responsible.

C. J Binney,
Charlton.

NAIDOC Week

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Editor.– As we celebrate NAIDOC Week, we are reminded that it is not just a time of reflection but also an opportunity to listen, learn, and act with purpose.

This year's theme, "The Next Generation: Strength,

Vision & Legacy", encourages all Australians to honour the resilience, culture and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while supporting the young leaders who will shape the future.

Victoria continues to fall short on closing the gap, with First Nations people significantly over-represented in the justice and child protection systems. Despite comprising just one per cent of the population, Aboriginal children make up 31 per cent of those in out-of-home care.

Educational disadvantage and a mental health crisis among our youth further highlights the urgent need for community-led solutions.

I am firmly committed to improving closing the gap outcomes, fostering genuine community-led partnerships and maintaining connection to Country to drive and achieve lasting change.

Together, we can build a better future where cultural knowledge is not lost, but honoured; and where every young First Nations person thrives and is supported to lead with strength, vision and legacy.

Warm regards,
Jade Benham, MP.

What Kind of Man Do You Want to Be?

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Editor.– I welcome the launch of Respect Victoria's new campaign, "What Kind of Man Do You Want to Be?", which shines a light on the pressures men face and the impact of harmful gender

stereotypes on individuals, families and communities.

The campaign encourages men to reflect on traditional expectations of masculinity, such as always being in control, suppressing vulnerability or asserting dominance, and to consider the kind of man they want to be in their relationships and everyday lives.

It features the voices and stories of real Victorian men, from a range of backgrounds and experiences, including fatherhood and online spaces. Rather than lecturing, the campaign invites honest reflection, with the aim of building healthier relationships and more respectful communities.

This important work is grounded in research and has been developed alongside frontline experts and community organisations including Jesuit Social Services, No to Violence, The Man Cave, and the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation.

Addressing gendered violence must involve the whole community, including men and boys. I thank Respect Victoria for their evidence-based approach and for recognising the vital role of sport, schools and community programs in prevention.

As someone who continues to strongly advocate for safer communities and respectful relationships across the Mildura electorate, I support this campaign and the conversations it is helping to start.

Warm regards,
Jade Benham, MP.

"F1 the Movie", This Weekend

• Continued from page 1.

Elvis and Buddy, Friday, July 25

Don't forget the Elvis and Buddy – Rock & Roll Sensation Show – Live at The Rex (Friday, July 25), 7.30 p.m.

Guaranteed to be a night of memory making music and dynamic energy, this is a show

which will captivate music lovers of all ages!

"Elvis and Buddy Rock & Roll Sensation" – Friday, July 25, 7.30 p.m. (doors open at 6.30 p.m.)

Tickets: \$40 General | \$35 Concession.

Bookings: rextheatre.org.au/live-shows.html boxoffice@rextheatre.org.au or at the door.

Blair Hogan Leads Mallee Steel Into Future: From Apprentice to Owner

Birchip’s long-running steel fabrication business, Mallee Steel, has entered a new chapter, with former apprentice Blair Hogan taking over the business from inaugural and long-serving owner Robert “Cozo” Cozens.

Blair said, “Customers won’t notice any major changes to how Mallee Steel operates. It’s still Mallee Steel, running the same as always; same name, same quality work”.

“Cozo” will continue to work alongside Blair, lending his years of experience to the business, and he said, “I’m still going to be around, I’ll just have more time to go fishing and less time worrying about the administration side of the business.”

Blair’s brother Samuel, who began his full-time apprenticeship in 2023, will also be part of the team, along with Simone Donnellon in the office.

Expansion

Mallee Steel was established by “Cozo” and Bill Donnellon in 2004, after “Cozo” left the Water Commission and it operated from a shed at the back of “Cozo’s” house. In 2011, Robert built the new shed in Abbott Street and the business expanded significantly over the ensuing years.

The business has provided clients across the Mallee with a reliable repair service and innovative and excellent manufacturing, and in addition to this, “Cozo” has nurtured and developed a number of students from across the region, passing on his skills and expertise to the next generation.

Achievements

Blair’s short journey from school-based apprentice to business owner highlights the value of local apprenticeships and the opportunities available in regional trades. Over his training journey, Blair has been recognised for his outstanding achievements in the welding and fabrication industry, winning several major awards.

In 2023 Blair won the Young Trades Person of the Year awards at the Victorian and Tasmanian “Welding excellence awards” and while at

SuniTAFE Blair won Outstanding Third Year student in Engineering – Fabrication Trade in 2022 and Third Year Apprentice of the Year in 2023.

The young trades person award recognised people under the age of 25 who were making a valuable contribution to the Australian welding and fabrication industry. The citation at the presentation ceremony noted that “Blair’s commitment to his craft, evidenced by his rigorous self-imposed standards and his enthusiasm for mentoring the next generation makes him a deserving winner”, and this sentiment is now coming to fruition in his transition to owner of Mallee Steel.

Blair says he doesn’t plan to make big changes, instead continuing to offer the same first-class services local customers have come to rely on.

“We’ll keep things going as they’ve always been, with the same quality service people expect,” he said.

Blair’s journey from school based apprentice to award-winning tradesman and business owner in just seven years is a testament to his hard work and dedication and “Cozo’s” mentorship.

Blair said, “I am grateful for the opportunities I have been afforded through my school, family, community and especially ‘Cozo’, and I am proud to keep Mallee Steel in local hands.”



• Robert “Cozo” Cozens hands over the reins to new owner Blair Hogan.

Wyche Crowd Flocks to Drag Bingo Fundraiser

Wycheproof lit up with colour and cheer as the Wycheproof Community Resource Centre (WCRC) hosted another successful Drag Bingo Fundraiser, which drew a full house of locals for a night of fabulous entertainment and heartfelt community support.

Held on the 28th of June, the event combined high-energy drag performances with classic bingo fun, raising funds to support WCRC’s ongoing programs and services. The room was alive with laughter, glitter and big hair as the fabulous DJ Cliterally was welcomed back to The Royal Mail Hotel to be the hostess for the evening.

Community members turned out in full force –

many dressed to impress – for an evening of crowd-pleasing lip-sync numbers, bingo, and a raffle and exclusive auction of a wonderful poncho made by the WCRC Friday craft group. The night was a huge success!

Funds raised will go directly to supporting the running costs of the WCRC and upcoming programs it has planned, continuing its mission to provide inclusive,

community-driven resources for the Wycheproof district.

The success of the night was made possible by the support of generous volunteers, local businesses, and attendees who made the event unforgettable. All who attended had a wonderful time and were thankful for the continued support of the Centre. Staff look forward to seeing you at their next event.



• DJ Cliterally with Naomi Faye.



• Drag Bingo at Wycheproof attracts quite a crowd.



• Left to right are Eliza MacDonald, Amanda MacDonald and Brett MacDonald.

Church Notices

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES “East Wimmera Parish”

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

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779

Parish Co-ordinator
– Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976

"Times" Classifieds

Phone Donald 5497 1222, Birchip 5492 2735 Email admin@buloketimes.com

Deadlines:—

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

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

BIRTH

O'DONNELL - LI

Sean and Annette happily announce the birth of – Lachlan Li O'Donnell, on July 14, 2025, at Newcastle Private Hospital.

Everyone well.

An already loved cousin to his 8 cousin members of the family.

Welcomed and loved by his aunties, uncles and grandparents.

ORGAN DONATION EVENT

'Let's Share Our Life With Others'

Wednesday, July 30
11 a.m.

Donald Learning Group Inc
(31 Wood St, Donald)

Guest Speaker -
Genette Milburn (EWHS),
Ambulance Victoria & more.

Staff member to assist with
new enrolments.
Morning tea provided.

Tennis Coaching & Cardio Tennis

Monday nights in Birchip

Children's group

tennis lessons,

Adults' Cardio Tennis

EOI required ASAP

to secretary Georgie

Warne 0427 793 879



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and quiz night.

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10.am to 5 p.m.

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



Buloke Neighbourhood Houses encourage people of all ages to connect, learn and be active participants in their local community through social, educational, recreational and support activities.

Houses in Buloke	Web Site
Birchip Neighbourhood House	www.birchip.vic.au/about-neighbourhood-house
Charlton Neighbourhood House	www.charltonnh.org.au
Donald Learning Group	www.donaldlearninggroup.com.au
Sea Lake Neighbourhood House	mthcs.com.au/services/community-services/neighbourhood-house
Wycheproof Community Resource Centre	www.wycheproofcrrc.org.au

Following on from headspace Round hosted by North Central on June 21st, the Buloke Neighbourhood Houses have partnered with EWHS, Buloke Shire & NCLLEN to provide "Need Help?" posters for sports clubrooms and change rooms in Buloke. You can take a photo of the poster to save for later or scan the QR code to be taken direct to the service provider's links.

It's not about being perfect- it's about being present. It's about checking in with your teammates - and encouraging them to get help when they need it.



**It takes courage to speak up.
And it takes courage to be the mate who listens.**

VFF Meeting

Members and Community Welcome

Guests:

VFF President, **Brett Hosking**

VFF C.E.O, **Charlie Thomas**

Dr. Jane Foster - Stress and Resilience

Andrew Weideman - Updates and Events

St Arnaud Sporting Club
Thursday, July 24
6 p.m. start

RSVP Saturday, July 19 for meal
Text to Colin Coates **0427 693 329**
Barry Batters **0418 567 674**



Cultivating Healthy Communities

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Campus Negotiable

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Enrolled Nurse Trainee

Donald

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St Arnaud

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Associate Nurse Unit Manager

Registered Nurse

Food and Domestic Service Assistant

Wycheproof

Food and Domestic Service Assistant

Junior Food and Domestic Service Assistant

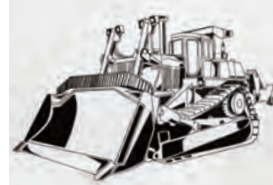
Further information available at
<https://ewhs.org.au/careers>

EWHS is an Equal Opportunity Employer, we welcome applications to all positions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, LGBTQI+ People, and People of All Abilities.

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Trash to Treasure

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Turn your Trash into Cash by advertising it for sale in the "Times" classified pages. Phone the Donald office (5497 1222), or Birchip (5492 2735); email advertising@buloketimes.com



Aiden

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rextheatre.org.au

COMING ATTRACTIONS



F1 THE MOVIE

M 155mins | Drama | Sport

Sat 19 July 8pm

Sun 20 July 2pm

Tue 22 July 8pm

COMING: **JURASSIC WORLD: REBIRTH** M 134mins | Adventure | Drama



ELVIS & BUDDY

Rock & Roll Sensation

Fri 25 July 7:30pm

\$40 General | \$35 Concession
rextheatre.org.au/live-shows.html

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VIETNAM

17 days | Tuesday 23rd September | \$8690

Highlights: Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hue, Hoi An, Danang, Saigon, Cu Chi Tunnels, Long Tan, Nui Dat, Mekong Delta, Bay of Descending Dragon, Floating Village in Halong Bay, English Speaking Guides, Hue Royal Fine Art Museum, Elaborate Khai Dinh Royal Tomb, Cham Museum, Marble Mountains, Thien Hau temple.

NORFOLK ISLAND

(No Passport Required)

10 days | Saturday 25th October | \$6290

Highlights: Wonderland by Night, Norfolk Island tour, Fletchers Mutiny Cyclorama, Bounty Bar & Grill, Barney Duffy BBQ, Island Fish Fry, Over the Cattlestops, Green Fingers Tour, Convict Settlement Tour, South Pacific Resort Hotel, Progressive Dinner, Glass Bottom Boat Cruise, Christian's 4WD Tour, Night as a Convict Dinner, Breakfast Bush Walk.

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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.

Community Food Relief Program Applications Open

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, is encouraging eligible local organisations to apply for the latest round of the Victorian Government's Community Food Relief Fund.

Ms Benham said the program supports community organisations that help people access food, particularly those experiencing hardship.

"Many families across our region are doing it tough with rising costs of living, and access to food relief has never been more important," she said.

Funding is available to eligible groups including neighbourhood houses, community-led organisations, social enterprises, Aboriginal

entities, and local government bodies acting on behalf of community groups.

Grants can be used to improve food storage and distribution, upgrade facilities such as kitchens, purchase equipment, and support the work of volunteers. Funding can also assist with program delivery and staff costs to help meet local demand.

"This is a great opportunity to boost capacity and build long-term solutions to

food insecurity in our region," Ms Benham said.

"I urge local groups to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen their services and continue delivering vital support to our communities."

Applications for the 2025-2026 Community Food Relief Program – Local Grants close on August 19, 2025.

For more information and to apply, visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants>



• Jade Benham.

The Buloke Times
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"Nothing in Town Other Than Us" Rural Pharmacists' Role in Oral Health

[From La Trobe University]

Pharmacists are stepping in as frontline providers of oral healthcare advice in rural Victorian towns without dental practitioners, offering oral hygiene advice, managing dental pain inquiries and promoting preventative care, according to a new study by La Trobe University.

Eleven rural pharmacists shouldering health responsibilities far beyond traditional dispensing roles participated in the study, which calls for targeted training, increased collaboration and clearer guidelines to help them deliver oral health advice safely and effectively.

One pharmacist said there was "nothing in town other than us", highlighting the essential role pharmacies play in areas where the nearest dental clinic is more than 20 minutes away.

Data from a 2021 National Pharmacy Survey revealed Australians on average visit a community pharmacist 18 times a year, while only 48 per cent of the population consulted a dental practitioner in the last 12 months.

Pharmacists reported offering oral health advice up to three times a week, often in response to customer concerns and script presentations. Their support for long-term oral health extended to a

variety of areas, such as encouraging twice-daily brushing with fluoridated tooth paste, using fluoridated mouthwash, smoking cessation and dietary advice.

Dental Pain

"Generally, people come here for dental pain," another pharmacist said.

Professor Joseph Tucci, Pharmacy Discipline Lead at La Trobe's Rural Health School, said while pharmacists were eager to offer oral health advice, time constraints and operating as a single pharmacist limited their ability to do so.

"In regions where dentists are absent, pharmacists are often the first and only line of healthcare," Professor Tucci said.

"With structured support, they can play a more confident and collaborative role in preventing and addressing oral health issues."

Few participants felt confident conducting oral examinations due to inadequate equipment, limited privacy or consult areas and no formal training to deliver such services.

"There's a need for it because dentists are a long way away but, being a small country pharmacy, we don't have the staff to allocate time," one pharmacist explained.

"Pharmacies don't really have that facility and we don't have those tools," another said.

Enhanced Training

Enhanced training and resources were the most

discussed facilitators for pharmacists to be comfortable in performing limited oral examinations. Others suggested online training modules that could count towards continuing professional development requirements.

"Where we are located, there's no point, for instance, in having face-to-face training that's three hours' drive away," one participant said.

The study also highlighted a lack of collaboration with dental professionals, largely due to the absence of dentists in rural towns and no established referral pathways.

"We don't have a dentist in town, so we don't have much of a relationship with any of the dentists in bigger towns," a participant said. "I don't think it's as good as it can be."

Room for Growth

Professor Santosh Tadakamadla, Dentistry and Oral Health Discipline Lead, said there was room for growth within the delivery of a community pharmacist's oral health advice, as study results indicated advice provision was largely perceived as reactive.

"If pharmacists were more proactive in these discussions, some oral health conditions could be largely preventable," Professor Tadakamadla said.

"With many rural areas not having access to fluoridated water, it is important that pharmacists are educated on the benefits of fluoridated products and how to successfully incorporate this as part of their oral health advice delivery."

This study was the result of an Honours research project by Erica Stelfox.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/ajr.70059>

Rural pharmacist case study available on request.

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Mallee Melee No. 5 – “Chess on Steroids”

Battle-ground engagement raged in Charlton last weekend, but it was more bonhomie than bloodshed as the 5th Mallee Melee unfolded at the Charlton RSL Clubrooms.

Minus the roar of cannon-fire or the chaos of mass casualties, the miniature wargaming weekend – likened by one participant to “chess on steroids” – saw visitors from Berwick, Nunawading and the Mornington Peninsula gear up for a weekend of the Napoleonic “General d’Armee 2 Campaign Game”.

Re-tracing the moves of the famous Napoleonic conflicts, combatants throw the dice to begin the engagement of their lilliputian-sized battalions. With tactics determined by the dice numbers, these numbers correspond with detailed guidelines as to how and where participants can then move their charges across the scaled down tabletop landscapes.

While strategy and an appreciation for history are revered by most of the gamers, cosplay isn’t usually a feature of the action. So, it was good to see one participant breaking the mould this year by wearing the emblematic Napoleon “bicorne” hat and drawing plenty of comments in the process!

Saturday

Saturday kicked off with a 9 a.m. start and by mid-morning the 1809 campaign, which covered three large tables, was in full swing and expected to occupy the entire weekend. The focus was deep, but not so intense that there wasn’t room for some good-natured ribbing and jokes. While guide sheets were being consulted and tape measures employed to clarify distances, discussions were animated about the strategies and placements of the figurines. Rows of cavalry and minute battalion pieces were placed in readiness on the

sidelines to be swept into the fray as the engagement progressed.

Event co-ordinator, Markus Phillips was delighted with how the “Melee” is growing in stature.

“From about twelve participants attending our first event, we have around twenty lined up for our 2025 version,” Markus said.

A dedicated gamer since taking up the pastime at high school, Markus said he enjoyed the historical aspect of the activity, along with being able to simulate various conflicts and battles.

“I have an interest in the ancient times right through to the contemporary conflicts such as Afghanistan”, he said.

From the Greek to the Medieval, Dark Ages to the Renaissance, through to the Napoleonic, Georgian, and contemporary conflicts – it’s about gaining knowledge of the eras and the technical accuracy of the weaponry, uniforms, and strategies which appeals.

It’s a sentiment shared by another gamer, named Mark, who also enjoys the research and social connection saying, “It helps to keep the brain working.”

A member of the Nunawading War Game Association, Mark has also played since the mid-seventies and finds the occupation relaxing, although he wasn’t quite so up-beat about painting the tiny figures. With sizes ranging from 2 millimetres to 28 millimetres, good eyesight and a very steady hand are mandatory. Authenticity is the key, with the micro-mannequins needing to be resplendent in full battle-dress regalia.

While the smallest figures (2mm) are mainly used in the Roman battles to represent the thousands of personnel which occupied the Legions, even the 28 mm figurines are a masterwork of compact skill with their petite frames and accurate renditions.

Modern war gaming was initially a military training tool, stretching back to the early 19th century, with the Prussians pioneering its use for strategic and tactical development. As a recreational hobby it is a relatively modern venture having taken off in the UK in the 1960s.

While the strategies and tactics are rated highly by most players, their immersion also carries over into the collection of figurines, books, DVDs, and for some, the development of home gaming rooms to indulge their hobbyist tendencies. There were plenty of opportunities for buy, sell, or swapping over the weekend, as the visitors to added to their already burgeoning collections.

Bonus

A dedicated weekend such as the “Mallee Melee” provides a like-minded social occasion, with the added bonus of sampling country hospitality. This year’s event began with a meet-and-greet dinner on Friday night at the East Charlton Hotel and then dinner and board games at the Vale of Avoca on Saturday night. Sunday saw the conclusion of “hostilities” (and perhaps a “peace treaty”!) before the visitors headed home.

The 2025 Mallee Melee was supported by the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Buloke Shire, with donations collected for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.



• As players move their forces around in the background, the foreground figurines of the 28 millimetre British command are striking when opposed to the Portuguese contingent on the left of the photo.



• Advancement in the “Battle of Vimiero” (1809) was being strategized by some animated participants; pictured left to right: John, Wal, Nick, Steve, Ian, Wayne and Gary.



• The “Mallee Melee” co-ordinator, Markus Phillips is pictured with a box of tiny figurines as participants in the weekend of miniature war-games began their battles last Saturday morning.



• A member of the Western Suburbs War Game Association (Altona Meadows), Brendan adopted the iconic bicorne hat for the weekend of Napoleonic conflicts.

Families Travel Back in Time

The Birchip Public Hall came alive with roars, laughter and excitement during the school holidays as families from Birchip and surrounding towns enjoyed Dinosaur Time Machine, a high-energy theatre production by High Wire.

The event was part of a school holiday activity series funded by Birchip Neighbourhood House through its LDAT (Local Drug Action Team) program, alongside a Creative Victoria grant made available through the Small Regional Presenters program.

The family-friendly dinosaur-themed performance began in a current day “Dinosaur Club,” where hosts Jack and Flick embodied child-like wonder and launched a time-travel adventure in their makeshift time machine.

The performance shifted between dinosaur facts, quirky humour including dinosaur poo jokes, circus larks, simple narrative and imaginative play that showed the pre-historic world in an interactive and entertaining way.

The play did stretch almost 60 minutes, which caused a few squirmy moments toward the end but mostly the children laughed, mimicked dinosaur roars and eagerly joined in the call-and-response segments.

There was audible and visible excitement when a baby T-Rex named “Blue” appeared in the story and later, reappeared as a life-sized T-Rex.

The holiday event also featured fun pre-show activities, including colouring-in, puzzles and a dinosaur piñata, which proved almost as tough as a real dinosaur, refusing to break despite some very determined swings from the enthusiastic kids!

Keeping with the healthy and community-focused theme, Stacey Keller and Maddie Hendy from the East Wimmera Health Service health promotion team provided fresh fruit snacks and smoothies. Mia Sharp and Cassie Tynan helped any younger children who couldn’t reach the pedals to ensure they could taste their fruit choices mixed into a tasty drinkable treat.

Birchip Neighbourhood House and LINK Neighbourhood House Kaniva are



• Stellar, Layla and Nina Wheeler with Jack and Flick.



• Jack and Flick with baby “Blue”.



• Flick getting up close with the grown up T-Rex “Blue”.



• Jack and Flick with the dinosaur time line.

of children being entertained and educated and delighted adults watching the smiles on the children’s faces.

“Garage Girls”

On Friday, August 15, Birchip Neighbourhood House will be hosting its second Arts-funded event with a Three Birds Theatre production of Garage Girls, depicting the story of trailblazing mechanic Alice Anderson founder of Australia’s first all-girl garage in the 1920s.

Garage Girls promises to be a high energy, feisty theatrical production, featuring an all-female chameleon-like cast that morphs between mechanics, mischievous men, and gritty pioneers with infectious energy.

Whether you’re into history, old cars, or live theatre, Garage Girls is your ticket to a night of laughs, culture and vintage charm. Contact the Birchip Neighbourhood House for more information.



• Cassie Tynan making a fruit smoothie under guidance from Stacey Keller (EWS health promotion team).



• Harper, Lucy and Tessa Noonan doing dinosaur impressions with Jack and Flick.



• Indya Rose Atkinson tries to break the dinosaur pinata.

Nostalgia and Fun at Childhood Treasures Day

On Thursday, July 10, Charlton’s Uniting Church Hall came alive with vintage toys and childhood memories.

The Charlton Golden Grains Museum hosted a heartwarming trip down memory lane, with its Childhood Treasures & Collectibles Day.

Held at the Uniting Church Hall, the event drew a steady stream of visitors eager to explore an eclectic display of toys from yesteryear, unique

collectibles, and handcrafted models. Among the crowd favourites were antique dolls, vintage games, swap cards, children’s books, and the ever-popular Thomas the Tank Engine train set — which proved a major hit with younger visitors.

A Lego play area and kids’ activities run by the local

youth group ensured there was something for all ages to enjoy.

The display featured items from both the museum’s own collection and treasured possessions generously loaned by members of the local community. A special highlight was a selection of radio-controlled planes and a stunning collection of handmade ships crafted by the late Laurie Harvie.

Despite the chilly winter weather, the atmosphere inside the hall was warm and welcoming. Guests enjoyed cups of tea, homemade biscuits, and a sausage sizzle, making it a perfect midweek outing for families during the school holidays.

Museum president Diane Wood said the day exceeded expectations. “It was lots of fun putting the displays together,” she said. “The local community has been very generous in lending us treasured possessions for the day — and in some cases, people are even donating them to the museum. This was a great opportunity to take our museum to the people and offer a fun, affordable activity for families during the holidays.”

The success of the day is a testament to the community’s support and the enduring charm of childhood memories, both old and new.

• Left: Rod Heritage and his grandson, Isaac Irwin, loved the Thomas the Tank Engine train set.



• One of Dave Frankum’s radio-controlled planes



• Laurie Harvie’s model ships.



• Ruth Butler and Karen Medlyn from St Arnaud enjoyed the displays.



• Enjoying a cuppa: left to right, Dot McKee, Sue McDonald, Deb Whykes, Bernice Kenny, Diane Wood, and Norma Lang.



• Items on display included Margaret Fradd’s childhood sewing machine.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Adult	Youth	Other resources
Lifeline: 13 11 14 Text 0477 13 11 14 lifeline.org.au Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 suicidecallbackservice.org.au Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 beyondblue.org.au/forums MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978 mensline.org.au StandBy Support After Suicide 1300 727 247	Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 kidshelpline.com.au headspace: 1800 650 890 headspace.org.au ReachOut: ReachOut.com Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au	Head to Health: mental health portal headtohealth.gov.au Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal lifeinmindaustralia.com.au SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm) online forums: saneforums.org

Auchmore House Centenary

Nullawil Historical members are enthusiastically preparing for a Living History Day at the Nullawil Heritage Centre on Sunday, August 17.

The purpose of the day is to celebrate the 100th anniversary the historic Auchmore Home, the centrepiece of the Nullawil Heritage Centre.

Original Settlers

The Auchmore Homestead is situated on the block “Kalpienung 80” which was originally settled by Henry and Henrietta Bennett in 1891. The original block was south (81) and south-east (80) of the Nullawil township and was divided by the Wyche-proof-Sea Lake railway line in 1895.

Henry Bennett and Henrietta VanBerkel were married at Ballarat Methodist Church on 3/8/1891. Their home was built on a rise in the paddock, amongst the peppercorn trees about 200 metres east of where the current Auchmore house sits. They had a family of 5 sons and 5 daughters. Their second son Les is said to be the first “white” baby born in Nullawil.

Auchmore Built

Henry and Henrietta’s oldest son, William Henry Bennett (known as Henry but referred to as “Stumpy”) married Eliza Marguerita Winfield (known as Rita) at Bendigo Presbyterian Church on 17/10/1925. Henry built Auchmore to live in with his new wife in 1925. The charming home is nestled back amongst the Kurrajong and Mallee trees about 1 km east of Nullawil on the Quambatook Road. Henry and Rita had no children and lived in the home until retiring to Bendigo in 1969. Following their departure, others who lived in the home were Annie and Fonce Smith, Bertha and Joan Smith, Doug and Esther Bartram, and Brian and Fay

Notting. Noel and Avril Clarke were the last to reside there in 1984.

The land was purchased in 1969 by William (Bill) and Mavis Watts. Bill was the son of Jim Watts and Ivy Bennett, and was a grandson of original settlers Henry and Henrietta Bennett. Great-grandson David Watts and his son Daniel Watts, who are 4th and 5th generation, continue to work the land.

Historical Society Formed

A discussion on the development of the Heritage Centre and the centrepiece exhibit, the Auchmore Homestead, would not be complete without insight to the origins of the Nullawil Historical Society.

The Nullawil Historical Society was officially formed Nov. 25th, 1985. The aim of the group was to foster historical interest and knowledge, and to compile and keep a historical record of Nullawil and district. A constitution was adopted in 1986. Meetings were originally held at the Nullawil Primary School. In 1988, they decided to purchase a metal trunk to store land files from Robert Morrison’s maps, documents and photos.

Back-To- Nullawil 1991

Over Easter 1991, “Back to Nullawil” Centenary celebrations were held in Nullawil. The Historical Society was involved in creating a photographic display in the Nullawil Uniting Church Hall. Small household items of historical interest were also on display, as well as farm and cropping items on the stage in the hall. The book “Nullawil – A Folk History” was on sale over the weekend.

The “Back-to” display created interest in having a permanent building to display historical items. During 1992, a sub-committee was formed to look at the possibility of erecting a museum on the old hall site in town. During 1993, the Watts family offered the option of using Auchmore as a museum. At a meeting in June 1993, it was moved that the Watts family offer be accepted with the Nullawil Historical Society becoming the caretakers of Auchmore and renting on a “peppercorn” lease.

Later that year, the Nullawil Historical Society became incorporated. From 1994, Historical meetings were held at the museum.

Museum Beginnings

The community was informed of the intention to set up a museum and were invited to donate or lend historical items for display. In August 1993, the first of many working bees was held at the Museum. As well as a general clean-up, repairs were done to verandah boards and doors. Exterior house painting was done by some of the original volunteers – Jack Ryan, Keith Clarke, Bill Watts, Leo Hogan and Donald Cooper. Donald Cooper recalls that the older men painted the lower sections and the “young fellas” climbed the ladders to reach higher sections. Repairs to the leadlight windows were done by Judy Bartram in 1994.

Over the past 32 years, repairs and maintenance have gradually been done, as finances allowed.

A grant received in 2004 allowed further repairs to the verandah and wash house under the supervision of Leo Ross. In 2005, Alan (Pedro) Smith co-ordinated replacement of the weatherboards on the west side and spouting. Louvre windows were replaced with solid glass to keep the dust and rain out.

Professional repainting, has been done by Keith Scriven at Auchmore and other buildings in the centre.

In 2023, a roof leak was discovered, requiring replacement of corrugated iron on the roof and replastering of the kitchen ceiling, which was filled with 100 years of dust! Wheelbarrow loads of dust were taken out of the kitchen at the time.

Auchmore House

The name Auchmore was chosen by Rita and is thought to have Scottish origins. The original Auchmore sign went with Henry and Rita to Bendigo. In 2005, Ian Marquis organised a similar Auchmore brass plaque signage for the home.

The 100-year-old traditional country homestead offers visitors a captivating glimpse into years gone by. The weatherboard home has a distinctive corrugated iron roof with a bull-nosed verandah, supported by decorative wooden porch posts. Three red brick chimneys protrude above the roofline. An expansive



• Auchmore Brass plaque signage



• Auchmore Homestead at Nullawil Heritage Centre.

“wrap around” verandah surrounds the home. The floorplan is simple with a large front entrance porch and central hallway, with dark wooden fretwork characteristic of the time. Leading off the central hallway are 4 main rooms – a kitchen, formal dining/lounge room, main bedroom and second bedroom. Like many federation-style homes, it has stained glass bay windows and leadlight windows incorporating Australian flora and fauna, in this case a kookaburra. The kitchen is typical of a home of that era, with a “Lux woodstove” and kettle on top. The table is set with cutlery and crockery of the time and there’s even homemade sauce and high tin bread on display. The lounge room with decorative bay window and pressed tin roof has a formal dining setting and sideboard displaying Mr and Mrs Reid’s silver teapot setting. An antique fireplace with timber surrounds and fireside bellows adds to the charm of the room.

The bathroom is situated on the south western section of the verandah, with a free-standing turkey foot bathtub. There is an external toilet, washhouse, garage and a working man’s hut on wheels. Janine Payne (Smith) remembers visits to her grandmothers and describes the toilet being “scary, cold, and deep”. Tony Bartram is currently doing repairs to the toilet building.

In 1959, Alan (Pedro) Smith recalls working as a 17-year-old boy for Bob Thompson and doing work on the west side of the verandah, creating a sleepout with louvre windows. Apparently, Henry and Rita would sometimes sleep in the sleepout on hot

summer nights. Tony Smith recalls visiting his Nana when she lived there, and helping her hang Christmas puddings from the rafters in the sleepout on wire hooks to stop the mice getting to them.

Since 1993, the Nullawil Historical Society members have set about adorning the house with antique furniture and decor used by early pioneers and characteristic of the era. The house gives a glimpse into a “simpler” existence, without the modern conveniences enjoyed in the present era.

In the 32 years of caretaking, dedicated Historical Society volunteers have worked to maintain the integrity of the

house with minimal disturbance to the original character of the home.

Heritage Centre Growth

Although the historic Auchmore Home is considered the centrepiece of the Nullawil Heritage Centre, there are now 23 buildings at the centre.

The centre has regular visits from Historical Societies, PAG groups, school children, Probus, family groups, car clubs, support groups, and many more. Prior to COVID, Trade Travel group was visiting regularly, but this has taken time to build back up again.

• Continued on page 11.



• William Henry Bennett married Eliza Marguerita Winfield at Bendigo Presbyterian Church on 17/10/1925. Henry built Auchmore to live in with his new wife in 1925.



• Auchmore Kitchen (Credit: Knox City Photography).

— Preparations at Nullawil

• Continued from page 10.

Over the years there have been some significant “Living History” days where visitors have had the opportunity to step back in time. Historical members and school children dressed in period costumes with an ever-expanding array of displays and demonstrations depicting a century of Mallee life.

The first Living History Day with working exhibits was held in conjunction with the Nullawil Primary School for the Shire of Wycheproof’s Centenary Celebration in 1994. A photo was taken on that day of the early Historical members and is displayed in the Auchmore kitchen.

In 1997 an Open Day was held as part of the Nullawil Primary School 100-year celebrations. A Centenary of Federation Shire gathering was held in 2001. Activities on that day included ironing, scone cooking, wool spinning, washing the old-fashioned way, butter making, use of a separator to separate milk from cream, sewing and darning socks. School children dressed in period costume and did a re-enactment of education. The “Book of Remembrance” was presented to the community at this event.

The Nullawil 125-year Celebration was held in 2016, with increasing machinery exhibits. Stationary engines, chaff cutters, stationary baler,

tractor and ploughs and shearing were on display. There were horse rides, wagon rides, animal farm, fashion parade and “Storytime in Townaninie”.

In 2017, a Remembrance Day ceremony was held with the unveiling of the World War 1 Centenary Soldier.

Next “Living History Day”

The next “Living History Day” to be held on August 17th, will give visitors the opportunity to wander through the beautiful 100-year-old homestead and get a glimpse into the pioneering past of the Nullawil and district. Each room offers inviting displays, with a new exhibit in the children’s and mothers’ room with sewing machines, cots, dolls, and other items of interest.

As well as the Auchmore home, Historical Society volunteers are planning a captivating living history day with working displays for the enjoyment of visitors. More on that in a follow-up article; advertising and further details to follow.

Members have been researching information about the home, but are keen to get more information on the people who built it, those who visited the Bennetts, and those who have lived within its walls. Anyone who may be able to share stories or add to the information in this article would be welcomed. Email to wspry66@gmail.com



• Nullawil Historical Society members at the Living History Day on September 1994 (Credit: Kevin O'Reilly). Standing left to right: Helen Townrow, Ian Marquis, Edna Clarke, Mollie Hogan, Norma Willoughby, Alice Hogan, Mavis Watts, Anna Bennett, Annie Ryan, Donald Cooper, Jack Ryan, Dulcie Bartram, Bill Watts. Seated: Peter Bartram, Edna Townrow, Keith Clarke, Leo Hogan, Lois Bartram, Carmel Sheahan.



• Kookaburra-stained glass window.



• William Henry Bennett and Eliza Margureita Winfield. Henry and Rita in their later years, as some would remember them.



• Auchmore Dining/Lounge Room (Credit: Knox City Photography)

One Hundred Years Ago

From the “Birchip Advertiser”, July 17, 1925.

St Paul’s Church Men’s Rally, Proposed new Diocese: At the invitation of the Rev. T. H. Whitworth, vicar of St Paul’s, Birchip. Over seventy men attended a social evening at the Parish Hall on July 6th. Numbered amongst the visitors were Archdeacon Best, The Revs. Nicholas (Sea Lake) and Gilbert (Wycheproof).

The hall was very tastefully decorated and the tables, which contained many edible delicacies, were nicely arranged by a committee of ladies. The catering was done by Mr. R. F. Trevena.

The Archdeacon acted as chairman and with his able and instructive speeches interspersed with humorous antidotes, when proposing and responding to toasts, sustained a congenial interest in the later hour.

After honouring the loyal toast, the Rev. V. Gilbert proposed the Bishop of the Diocese.

The Archdeacon in response said that in August the Jubilee of the Diocese would be celebrated, and he traced the history of the diocese from 1875 to the present year. To commemorate the jubilee an appeal was being made for sufficient funds to erect a number of churches in the northern Mallee and in the soldier settlements.

The Archdeacon said that there was a proposal on foot to create a new diocese to enhance the northern portion of the present diocese of Ballarat, and in the course of a few weeks the boundaries would be made known.

The next toast, “The Vicar and Parish,” was proposed by the Archdeacon who paid a tribute to Rev. Whitworth for the progress made in church work during the past two years. A large and enthusiastic gathering of men from all of the parish together with the large congregations, he (the speaker) had the pleasure of

addressing were ample evidence. He congratulated church members for the valuable work they were doing in increasing the activities of the Church.

Mr. Whitworth in response said that he was pleased to see such a representative gathering. During his stay at Birchip, he had given of his best, and had done all in his power to help forward the work of the church.

The chairman, in proposing “The Men from Overseas” paid a tribute to new settlers. He said that it may be of interest to know that twenty-five per cent of the Anzacs who took part in the Gallipoli campaign were composed of these men.

Mr. Alex Mansell responded.

“The visitors+ was proposed by the Rev. T. Whitworth and the response was made by the Rev. Nicholas.

The chairman proposed “the Ladies” and Mr. Lester responded on their behalf.

“The Chairman” was proposed by the Vicar.

Musical items were supplied by Mr. Vincent and members of the Union Jack Club.

Obituary, Joseph Watson: One of the earliest pioneers of this district, Mr. Joseph Watson, passed away at Birchip on last Sunday, July 12th.

The deceased gentleman was born at the Isle of Man on December 14th, 1834.

He left England in the sailing ship, Dorset, on August 26th, 1838 and arrived in Adelaide on January 21st, 1839. Prior to settling in this district he was engaged in farming pursuits at Nelson, near Mt. Gambier.

He married Miss Alice Flynn, at Anguston, S. A., on April 9th, 1863.

Mr. Watson selected land here in 1880 and took up his residence a year later, twelve months before the railway

was extended to Donald. The holding was originally held by Mr. W. Jeffreys, upon a portion of which now stands the township of Birchip and the railway station. The house originally built on this block was of mud brick with a thatch roof, and was the first house erected in Birchip, and being situated on the site of the bowling green.

The deceased was one of the oldest members of the Agricultural Society and always took an active interest in its welfare. He was also a patron of the local Rifle Club, of which he was made a life member, and took an active interest in public affairs.

He possessed many sterling qualities and gained the esteem and confidence of all with whom he came into contact.

In 1910 he left Birchip and resided with his daughter, Mrs. W. C. Sanders of Mornington; but returned in June of last year, and since resided with his daughter, Mrs. Fraser, of Duncan St.

The funeral took place at Birchip on Monday afternoon, when the remains were interred at the local cemetery. The Rev. H. Walsh officiated at the graveside and the coffin bearers were the Messrs., J. B. Hillgrove, N. McDonald, F. J. Bolden, W. Jones, W. J. Stevens and C. Arnel.

He leaves two sons, Henry A. of Lascelles, Percival J. of Birchip; and four daughters Lillian, widow of the late John Fraser, Birchip; Elizabeth A. widow of the late A. Hague, of Adelaide; Fanny M. wife of Mr. W. C. Sanders, Mornington; and Alice M. wife of the Hon. G. L. Goudie, Minister of Public Works.

The wife of the late Mr. Watson pre-deceased him on March 15th 1903, at Birchip. She was especially well known throughout the district for her humane and philanthropic actions.



• Fairmark Shirt Factory staff members in the early days. Back: Lynette Bertalli, Leanne Hepworth, Ceri Milne, Andrea Mason, Leonie McConville, Debbie Burton, Alison Bowman, Lois Goddard. Second from the back: Gail Milley, Fiona Drake, Julie Vallance, Jillian Cockfield, UK Hidden, Bev Jardine, Mandy Male. Second from the front: Sue Taylor, Audrey Spencer, Ann McMillan, Jodie Jorgensen, Dot Silva, Marg Kelly. Front row: Nola Hardy, Margaret Quick, Beryl Milne, Nicole Bertalli, Kim Gray. Brenda Sellick.

Beryl's Shirt Factory History

The July Donald History Society meeting was held at 2 p.m. in the Donald Courthouse on 14th July and 14 members and guests attended.

After the meeting, guests watched a short film by a 1980s Melbourne News crew about the Fairmark Shirt factory, located in the former Methodist Church at McCulloch and Houston Streets in Donald.

Beryl Milne only had the film saved on a video tape so John Kumm and Peter Pendlebury copied it and transferred it to a USB so that it could be viewed on the big screen at the courthouse. It was a wonderful trip back in time for everyone, to a Donald just after the meatworks had closed and many people, particularly women, finding it hard to gain employment in the town. It was also the perfect segue for Beryl to then present her own Historical Journey with the shirt factory, with which she was very involved throughout its 25-year existence. This is Beryl's story:

In 1986, The Fairmark factory in Melbourne with 100 employees was sent a flyer to come to Donald to be approached to start a factory here as an offshoot of the Melbourne one.

The Donald Shire had purchased the Methodist church for \$55,000 on April 29, 1986, as a possible site for the factory. Fairmark partners, Angus MacDonald and Reg. Simons agreed and, as we know now, the factory went ahead. Mr. Mac was a bit concerned with the factory being a church and also concerned about security, but was soon informed that neither of these was a problem.

The factory started after a few alterations to the church on the 10/6/1986 with the first seven employees, of which I was one, plus three ladies from Melbourne to teach us. These three ladies often came and stayed at my place in

Watchem. It takes about thirty separate operations to make one shirt and "this is the first shirt made in Donald" (here Beryl held up the shirt, still folded in its plastic bag). Joe and Josie Stuto and their two sons, Vincent and Sebastian, came from Melbourne and moved into 41 Houston St., Joe to be manager and Josie to be a trainer.

In the Beginning

This is how my journey with the factory began. One day I was going to golf and I thought that I would put my name down for drought relief at the Donald Shire Hall as others had done this. I wasn't keen, as I am one of those people who thinks that nothing is free and that you will have to pay it back. As I was going into the Shire Hall, Graeme Harris was at the door and asked me if I was looking for a job. He was recruiting for the factory that day and "the rest is history". Before I departed, I had a job at the factory.

Mr. MacDonald said, "Be here on 10/6/86," so I went home and said, "I will be a working lady next week. My golf days are over." Over a period of time, I did jobs down one side of the factory, then down the other side and finally I was sent out the back to the pocket and fusing machines and the button-hole machine.

Week One

In week one we started with 7 girls and Nick Pearse as the mechanic. By week three we had 14 girls plus Joe and Josie Stuto and Nick Pearse. By the end of 1986 we had 28 workers plus Joe and Josie and Nick. By 1990, the Stutos had returned to Melbourne and we had 36 workers and Nick. We were putting out 2500 shirts weekly. Melbourne would send up "cut

work" in bundles. We would sort it and make it up and it all had to be up to standard. I did a lot of unpicking. To celebrate one year after opening we had an open day on the 10/6/1987. Mr. Mac said, "Are you sure that there are only 1700 people in Donald, as we had most of them through this morning!" He also thanked Kath O'Connell, Tom Bowles, Graeme Harris, and the Shire Council for all of their help.

We made school shirts, Police, Army and Fire shirts, the ones with the epaulettes and flaps etc. We also made Olympic shirts one year for September, 1988. The school shirts were mostly for the big colleges in Melbourne and elsewhere.

Challenge

On April 24, 1987, Joe and Josie Stuto returned to Melbourne. I was asked to step up and take over the administration as well as my regular job. Margaret Feeney was to then be in charge of the sewing and quality control. I was sick all day, worried that I wouldn't be capable of doing the job but we had no choice as we were dropped in it overnight. Joe Stuto had returned to Melbourne, but he did return to Donald regularly to bring work and take back completed shirts. There were a few hiccups in the first couple of weeks, but we survived.

In June 1988, Margaret Feeney left suddenly and I was stuck. I was living in Watchem and getting to the factory to open early was difficult, so Margaret Quick took on the task of opening the factory and turning everything on for a 7.30 - 8 a.m. start. We finished at 4.30 and then Margaret would also help me clean up after work.

Another Factory

In September 1989, Mr. Mac tried to start another factory in Wycheproof and the Wyche girls who worked in Donald went to work in that factory. Ceri Milne, my daughter, went to Wycheproof as well after completing a week's training in Melbourne. The Wycheproof factory didn't work out and the workers came back to Donald in May, 1991. There were also three girls traveling from Horsham after a factory closed there. They didn't stay long, but long enough that I had to go to court in Melbourne over an issue with one of them which had something to do with the Horsham job. This was the worst day of my life! I had to go upstairs to Court 5 and take the stand. I just said that their work ethics weren't the same as ours. I thought that the judge gave a bit of a smirk and then they let me go. I couldn't get out of there quick enough! Ceri had to drive me that time and she also drove another time when I had to go down for a conference. I worked for a couple of hours and then we set off, but as two girls together will do, we decided to run into the shops at Ballarat and then of course, we were late. I felt that this might have caused a black mark against me but I didn't have to go to Melbourne again, and I hate Melbourne.

In 1996, we had ten-year celebrations and in 2000, Mr MacDonald retired after 14 years with Donald, and Frank and Rocky took over. It wasn't quite the same as when Mr. Mac was in charge. (Mr. Mac died on June 17, 2013, aged 77). In June 2001, Margaret Quick went on long service leave and Leonie McConville took over from her.

Closure

In December, 2001, Fairmark went into liquidation and the factory closed. I was

rung up before I left for work and told that the liquidators would be in Donald that day to change the keys.

By January, 2002, the factory girls had all been looking for local jobs without success, so we called a meeting with Graeme Harris and the Donald Shire Councillors plus Kerry Vogel from Work Co. We decided to approach the creditors with the view to buying the machinery and the plant that was here in Donald and setting up our own company. We didn't have much capital but we told them that it would be better for them to sell to us at our price rather than for them to have to transport the equipment back to Melbourne, advertise it and then have an auction. After a bit of haggling, we convinced them to sell to us as they weren't going to get too much more for it anyway. It was a bit daunting for us, as country girls attending board meetings in Melbourne, with not much knowledge of how things worked. Being naïve, might have helped us, I think.

"Aussie Stitches"

So in February, 2002, "Aussie Stitches", a new Donald clothing company was formed by a staff buyout of the operations of Fairmark's Donald Operation. Eight girls formed the company "Aussie Stitches" using their own capital to keep employment in the town. I was the managing director and Leonie McConville was a director. In April, 2002, we started work for the new owners of Fairmark, while they were taking over and getting themselves organised, we were able to pick up a few contracts for ourselves. We had two main companies that kept us in work for nearly all of the years that we existed plus a few smaller companies. We had a staff of 14 on a casual basis. Most of our

work was making school shirts and windcheaters. This time we did the cutting as well. We bought our own second-hand van and later, a brand new one. Our drivers were David James, Ron MacNee and Leonie McConville. We made "Sing Australia" blouses, until the material they sent us had too many flaws in it, making it impossible for it to be cut out successfully, so we cancelled that contract.

We also made school dresses for a firm in Jeparit that sold to schools and we made fashion dresses for Nadia Pearse, Nick's daughter. Mr. Mac took up a position in Brandella Knitwear in August, 2002, and he helped us put our shirts in their stores, so he was still helping us even after he had moved on.

Ten years later, the work was hard to get. The girls were taking part time jobs elsewhere and I wanted "out", but nobody wished to take over the reins. We decided to sell and if no one would buy it, we would close. "Aussie Stitches" closed on 2nd December, 2011. The stupidest thing about this was that the day the power was turned off at the factory, it was switched on at our Donald house. Yes, after 25 years of driving from Watchem to Donald for 5 days a week, I now lived in Donald!

Beryl then answered some questions from the floor and invited everyone to look at her well organised displays of photos and scrap books. She was asked if she was proud of what she had achieved in her working life, and the reply was a definite "yes". The photos and scrapbooks are testament to that. Anne Walsh made a small "book" presentation to Beryl to thank her for a very entertaining and informative history of "The Shirt Factory" in Donald.

Charlton 100 Years Ago



• High Street, showing Soldiers' Monument, Charlton.

(Information from "East Charlton Tribune")

July 11 to 15, 1925.

Jeffcott: The Donald Convent boys visited Jeffcott to meet the North State School pupils. The Convent won by 10.7 to 7.7. The Jeffcott North boys put up a good game, especially in view of the fact that the visitors had the pull in physique. The home team's goals were secured by Jack Donnellon 2, B. Hogan, Brennan, Tonkin, T. Donnellon and R. Donnellon.

Tribute to Teacher: Genuine regret at the departure of one who had truly proved a "guide, philosopher and friend" to the children of the district marked the farewell tendered to Miss Bessie Stewart at the Woosang State School. Miss Stewart had been at Woosang for 4½ years. Every family which had a child or children attending during those 4½ years was represented. The School room had been beautifully decorated. A very valuable gold expanding wristlet watch was presented to Miss Stewart, together with heartiest best wishes. The residents referred to the splendid part Miss Stewart played in getting the Woosang School Tennis Club together; in securing two courts and the able manner in which she carried out the duties of hon. secretary and treasurer.

Glenloth: The new State School was opened by Cr J. W. Milburn. Cr W. Matheson and Rev. J. H. Hewitt also addressed

the gathering. The occasion was celebrated by a sports meeting, followed by a dance and euchre party in the evening.

Pleasing Reports: Concerning the condition of crops, pastures and stock during June, the Central Weather Bureau issued the following summary: Mallee – Crops making good growth, and with plentiful pasture, stock doing well. North-Central – Somewhat similar favourable conditions. Rivers and streams rather low, owing to absence of heavy rains.

Hare Shoot: Under the auspices of the Gun Club, a hare shoot was held on the farms of Messrs K. Kendall and F. Judd. The object was a worthy one indeed. The distress, including absolute lack of food in Melbourne had been noted, and the hares were sent for the relief of the unemployed and other necessitous cases in the city. The organisation, which was excellent, was in the hands of Messrs J. M. Smith and R. H. Klunder. The party numbered 20, including outside shooters, who were cordially invited to assist. Hares were found to be plentiful and 44 were secured by the party.

Lady Golfers: Keen interest was taken in the first medal competition. The winner in "A" division was Miss Ruse, who, on the scratch mark, handed in a card of 60. Mrs S. Dew was successful in B division.

Unavoidable Absence! One of the most regular attenders at the Agricultural Society meetings is Mr A. R. Blackwood, and it takes something out of the ordinary to prevent his presence at the gatherings. That "something" happened. He was driving in from Buckrabanyule to attend the meeting, and was steering carefully round the crab-holes which are so numerous in those parts. The car, however, skidded in one crab-hole, and this slewed the automobile towards the side of the road. Mr Blackwood thought he would be able to clear the gutter, but the wheels entered it side on, and the car was bogged. That was about noon, and it was 3 p.m. ere the automobile was got out. Mr L. Jenkins performed the operation with a pair of horses.

Impressions of Charlton: Approaching by motor from St Arnaud, one is struck by the richness of the soil, the solid appearance of the homesteads, and the general comfortable feeling of prosperity. The roads are good. Wise men all! – don't retire to Melbourne where your identity will be sunk. The river scenery is pretty. A walk along the streets – motor cars show prosperity, and business people exude healthy surroundings. It is nice to feel that warm grip of the hand and the pride of those who have the future destiny of the town in their hands. I am told of the solidity of the place – of the water supply coming along, which will attract many more residents. The golf links are prettily situated. I must refer to the hospitality of mine host and hostess, Mr and Mrs McAuliffe, of the East Charlton Hotel.

COMMUNITY UPDATE Buloke.

FUNDING FOR SENIORS EVENTS

The closing date has been extended for community groups seeking funding for Victorian Seniors Festival Events!

Local seniors groups and Neighbourhood Houses are invited to apply for funding to help deliver new, inclusive events as part of the 2025 Victorian Seniors Festival.

This one-off funding aims to increase participation from priority groups and can't be used for events already planned for the general community.

Funding available:

- Neighbourhood Houses: up to \$2,000
- Seniors Groups: up to \$200

Applications close 31 July 2025.

Apply via Council's SmartyGrants portal: www.buloke.smartygrants.com.au/VicSeniorsFestival2025

For assistance or more information, contact us at grants@buloke.vic.gov.au



FLOOD RECOVERY ROADWORKS UPDATE

Laen-Litchfield Road, Litchfield

- Start Date: Tuesday, 9 July
- Expected Completion: Late September
- Scope of Works: Reconstruction of 2.235 km between McNamara's Road and Borung Highway

Nullawil North, Warne Road & Berriwillock-Birchip Road

- Start Date: Sunday, 11 August
- Expected Completion: Late September

- Scope of Works:
 - Three sections on Warne Road
 - 430m on Berriwillock-Birchip Road (between Warne and McClelland Roads)
 - 380m on Nullawil North Road (near Bart Street)

Traffic management will be in place throughout these works.

Please follow all signage and directions at the sites to help keep workers and road users safe.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we continue to restore and improve our road network following the 2022 flood event.

COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

Buloke Shire Council is calling for Expressions of Interest from residents keen to shape the future of our roads, community facilities, and long-term financial planning.

We're forming the **Buloke Community Reference Group**, which will include 8–10 community members and Council officers to advise on our upcoming Asset and Financial Plans.

Members will attend two in-person meetings in Wycheproof:

When: Sunday 3 August & Sunday 31 August 2025 from 10am-12pm

Council seeks diverse voices from across the shire. If you're passionate about local infrastructure and advocacy, we'd love to hear from you.

Applications close: Wednesday 23 July 2025

For further information call: 1300 520 520, or email buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au.

EOI forms and Terms of Reference are available via Council's website, visit: www.buloke.vic.gov.au



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

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH NURSE – CHARLTON

Permanent (Part Time) – from \$59.79 per hour (+ statutory superannuation)

→ **Applications Close: 27 July 2025**

This is a role for a highly motivated and enthusiastic Maternal and Child Health Nurse to provide high quality services to young families in Buloke Shire.

The position is suitable for an experienced MCH Nurse looking to make an immediate impact in a new team or a graduate nurse who is keen to advance their skills alongside experienced MCH Nurses.

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8185 - SOLUTIONS

Across - 7, Inconclusive. 8, Twinge. 9, Moscow. 10 Prosper. 12, Track. 15, Spurt. 16, Culprit. 18, Advent. 20 Lethal. 22, Constabulary.
Down - 1, Snowdrop. 2, Gown. 3, Schemer. 4, Rummy. 5 Airstrip. 6, Zero. 11, Sergeant. 13, Chivalry. 14, Lullaby. 17, State. 19, Dace. 21, Tilt.



BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL

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367 Broadway, Wycheproof, Victoria, 3527
T: 1300 520 520 E: buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au W: buloke.vic.gov.au



Grampians Set to Glow

A plethora of events focusing on community, culture, art, wellbeing, creativity, gastronomy and adventure will be on offer in Halls Gap and Pomonal this winter, thanks to a new festival designed by volunteers.

“Glow – Bringing light to Halls Gap” started on Saturday and runs for eight weeks until August 31.

The festival is the brainchild of Halls Gap community group The Kitchen Cabinet, and was born out of resilience following 2024-25 bushfire season.

The festival is proudly supported by Northern Grampians Shire Council through a \$20,000 bushfire recovery grant and Regional Arts Victoria.

Mayor Karen Hyslop said she was excited to see the region turn into a vibrant hub of light, fun and connection.

“The Glow festival is a great initiative by volunteers and it’s exciting to see Halls Gap transform into a winter wonderland in the Grampians,” she said.

“I encourage everyone to make the most of the family fun on offer and show your

support for this passionate community.”

Cr Hyslop said, along with boosting tourism, the festival would help restore confidence, community pride and creative expression.

“All the local businesses are participating in the festival, through hosting live performances, guest speakers, wellbeing activities, exhibitions and gatherings,” she said.

Collaborative Effort

“This is a truly collaborative effort, uniting the tourism, hospitality, arts, and wellbeing sectors under a common goal: to bring people back to Halls Gap and restore vitality to our community.”

Cr Hyslop encouraged people to visit for a day, a weekend or longer, particularly with the winter school holidays under way.

“With lots of accommodation available, the clean air,

wildlife, a chance to wear all your winter woollies – it’s a great opportunity to spend some time in our incredible region and support our local businesses, who have been through so much,” she said.

“Glow” activities include trail running through the Grampians; sunset abseiling; freestyle light installations lighting up the night; polar bear dips in the Halls Gap pool; wellness walks; children’s chocolate workshops and movie nights; dancing in the dark; toasting marshmallows around a fire; shadow-puppet making; stargazing, and more.

Highlight

A highlight of the program will be a major interactive art installation by ACT Natimuk.

“The festival opening coincided with the opening of Wama Foundation at the weekend and it will wrap up with the epic Wonderland Run and bustling Pomonal Market at the end of August,” Cr Hyslop said.

“With plenty of free and low-cost events, there’s something for everyone – particularly during the July school holidays, for parents looking to keep their kids entertained.”

People can visit www.glowhallsgap.com.au for more information and a full list of events.

“Garage Girls” Coming to the Rex

The Charlton Neighbourhood House, in conjunction with Regional Arts Victoria, is proud to present a fantastic night of entertainment with the live production of “Garage Girls”: A night of storytelling magic with five actors playing many colourful characters.

Meet Alice Anderson. Mechanic. Trailblazer. Entrepreneur. She’s the girl who knows her way around a Hups, Dodge and Austin better than anyone.

Imagine... it’s the 1920s! Society reels from the aftermath of war and a second wave of Spanish ‘flu wreaks havoc on the streets. Women’s fashion sets startling trends and the city hums with the music of the motorcar. One small woman defies convention and makes her mark.

Inspired by Alice Anderson’s short but eventful life, “Garage Girls” will take you from Melbourne’s mysterious underbelly to the remote deserts of Alice Springs. An energetic and fast-paced 70 minute theatrical romp, showcasing dynamic sound design, Garage Girls is a rollicking ride celebrating an Australian icon. Welcome to Miss Anderson’s All Girl Garage!

Book your tickets now for this amazing show at the Rex Theatre on Friday, August 22,

at 7 p.m.. Tickets available via Charlton Neighbourhood Humanatix or by calling the House on 0473 759 456.



• Darcy Sheahan.

Darcy Graduates

On April 30, Darcy Sheahan graduated from Swinburne University of Technology with dual degrees in engineering and computer science.

He was conferred a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Robotics and Mechatronics and a Bachelor of Computer Science in Software Development, an impressive achievement that was combined with a series of work placements over the past seven years, reflecting his dedication and commitment to his chosen career.

Darcy, son of Jim and Kelli-Ann Sheahan, completed all his schooling in Birchip, graduating Year 12 at Birchip P-12 School in 2018. He then moved to Melbourne to pursue further study in the

fast-evolving fields of robotics, mechatronics and software development.

Since graduating, Darcy has started work as a mechanical engineering consultant at Tiger Spider Engineering, applying his expertise to real-world projects and continuing to develop professionally.

Congratulations to Darcy on his achievements and perseverance. His success is a great example to other young people in the region who are interested in careers in engineering, technology or innovation.



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Victorians Deserve Clarity Over State's Energy Future

[From Mining and Energy Union]

Victoria’s energy workers and wider population deserve a frank and realistic assessment of the future of state’s energy generation, the Mining and Energy Union has said today.

The cancellation of Gippsland Dawn, BlueFloat Energy’s advanced offshore wind project, has raised fresh concerns about Victoria’s energy security against the scheduled closures of coal-fired power stations Yallourn and Loy Yang A.

Secret Agreements

Additionally, revelations about secret agreements between the government and power station operators managed by EY Parthenon have cast doubt on the transparency of the state’s contingency plans, if any are in place.

Mining and Energy Union Victorian District President Andy Smith said it was now time for the state government to come forward with a practical and realistic plan to manage Victoria’s energy mix into the 2030s and beyond.

“On any given day, coal-fired power accounts for 60% of Victoria’s energy mix,” Mr Smith said.

No Plans

“Yallourn is scheduled to close in 2028, and there are now no realistic plans in place to plug the gap that’s going to create in our energy market.

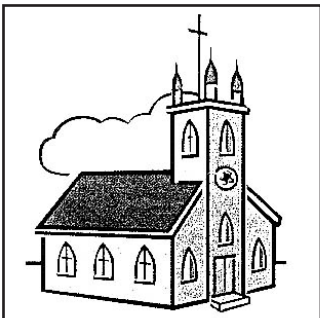
“If the lifespan of Yallourn needs to be extended, as is looking increasingly likely,

it’s time for the Allan government to come clean.

“The Victorian public, and in particular the workers at Yallourn, have a right to know – even if the facts are inconvenient for the government.

“Any agreement struck between the government and power station operators should include significant consultation with affected workers, whose lives are set to be upended in as little as two years.”

CHURCHES



UNITING CHURCH
(North Central Living Waters Cluster)

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

Landcare Network Celebrates Its Volunteers

The Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network is celebrating its volunteers with a series of engagement activities and workshops this winter, thanks to Volunteering Victoria funding.

Members welcomed both a blue sky and 14 participants to a Hanging Baskets Workshop at Amy's Buds and Blooms Nursery in Wyche-proof on Monday, July 7. The workshop was designed with skill sharing and social networking in mind, opening with icebreaker/introductory activities and morning tea, thanks to Bakery on Broadway for the delicious sandwiches and slices.

Participants were then guided to make their own hanging baskets from a selection of complementary plants, provided by Amy's nursery. Members enjoyed a social atmosphere fostered by a beautiful day gardening, as all participants created their own floral masterpiece. Some hanging baskets favoured flowers, whilst others went showcased herbs, and each was gifted with a homemade wire flower by Amy to the enjoyment of everyone involved. Amy concluded the

day with a talk about her journey in creating her nursery, which is brimming with plants, garden ornaments and crafts, and simply beautiful to wander through. The BNGLN relies on the efforts of its volunteers,

whom it is always grateful for and deeply appreciates. With more community engagement workshops upcoming, including nature walks, workshops, and tree planting days, everyone is encouraged to be part of local Landcare.



• Above: Bec, Carol, Joy, and Amanda.
• Left: Marney from Landcare.



• Amy Turnbull talking about her nursery.



• Joy Morrison with her hanging basket.

Scholarships Spark Innovations and Growth in Australian Agriculture

A new report from Nuffield Australia shows that almost 90% of alumni have enhanced their farming systems and boosted production after completing the prestigious scholarship.

The Nuffield Australia Impact Report 2025 highlights the powerful role the Nuffield program plays in driving innovation, leadership, and new business opportunities across the sector.

Outcomes

Nuffield Australia CEO, Jodie Redcliffe, says the report demonstrates Nuffield scholarships deliver strong, tangible outcomes for participants both on- and off-farm. "We heard 87% of scholars saw an improvement in their farming systems and production, while 71% improved their ability to generate more income," Ms Redcliffe said. "Additionally, 70% created new businesses or organisa-

tions, and 68% adopted new brands, products or innovations.

"Behind these figures are people who are creating jobs, investing in regional communities and increasing the productivity of Australian agriculture."

Further Study

The assessment also found that almost half of alumni were more likely to undertake further study following their scholarship, reinforcing the program's role in fostering lifelong learning and leadership.

Further, 95% of scholars reported that their professional networks and access to industry expertise expanded

as a result of the program — an endorsement of its impact on building industry-wide collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Investors and industry leaders interviewed for the report said the program cultivates candidates for leadership positions, introduces new perspectives through cross-sector networking and helps with the dissemination of agtech and new innovations.

"Nuffield is about broadening (scholars') scope, broadening their minds, and exposing them to other ways of thinking and doing things," Fiona Simson, vice-president of the World Farmers' Organi-

sation said, when interviewed for the report.

The research also identified areas where the organisation can improve, which Ms Redcliffe said will help steer Nuffield Australia's future course.

"Our motivation for the research was to understand how we have, and can continue to, provide value for Australian agriculture," she said.

"We look forward to enhancing diversity in our organisation and scholarships, keeping pace with the needs of agriculture through increased extension practices, and strengthening our communication activities."

Youth Network Promotes Wellbeing

The Buloke Youth Network meets quarterly to discuss, advocate for, and address local issues affecting young people aged 12 to 25 living in the Buloke Shire.

The network brings together representatives from organisations and agencies that support young people across Buloke, including schools, Neighbourhood Houses, Amplify (formerly FReeZA), the North Central Local Learning and Employment Network (NCLLEN), East Wimmera Health Service (EWHS) and Buloke Shire Council.

Members share information, foster partnerships, advocate for change, and collaborate on joint initiatives and funding opportunities.

Information Poster

Following the recent Headspace Round in North Central, the Buloke Youth Network designed and launched an information poster to help community members recognise when to seek help if they are feeling anxious, overwhelmed or stressed.

The Headspace Round promoted positive mental health by encouraging players, clubs and communities to check in with one another both on and off the field. It highlighted how strong and supportive connections are just as important in life as they are in sport. Teammates rely on each other during a game and that same support is crucial in tough times.

Where to Seek Help

However, network members recognised that even though many services are available, people are still confused about when to seek help and where to turn.

The new posters aim to change that, with clear and

simple messaging and an easy to follow list of contacts. Engaging infographics provide relatable tips and signs to look out for, helping young people and the wider community understand when and where to seek support.

Each poster also includes a QR code linking directly to service providers' phone numbers and websites.

The posters will be displayed in local sporting clubrooms, change rooms and Neighbourhood Houses across Buloke, serving as a visual reminder that our health and the health of our mates matters.

Rory White, Manager of Children and Youth at Buloke Shire, said, "It is not about being perfect. It is about being present. It is about checking in with your teammates and encouraging them to get help when they need it. It takes courage to speak up and it takes courage to be the mate who listens."

Look out for the new posters and take a photo to have on hand. Even if you do not need it now, you never know when it might help you or help you to support a friend or team mate.

This term the Buloke Youth Network will support the young people on the Buloke Youth Advisory Group to deliver a shire wide youth event in September to celebrate Youth Fest.



Donald Dampness Shifts Races to Warracknabeal

It was a misty morning start for racing at Warracknabeal on Saturday, with the race meeting previously scheduled for Donald being transferred due to wet conditions.

Donald’s track was rated heavy 8 on Thursday when fields were released; however with continued rain on Friday morning, the decision was made later that day to move the meeting.

The running surface at Warracknabeal, though slightly drier than Donald, was still rated a heavy 8, and punters who like long shot odds would have had a fine day with a few roughies performing well in the heavier conditions. The change in race distances at the alternate venue caused a bit of a shuffle in the market also.

Results

Race one: Over 1200 metres, in the Pacific Fuels Maiden, Murmillo, ridden by Will Price for the Busuttin/Young stable had a commanding win of over 3 lengths ahead of French Navy, ridden by Linda Meech for Symon Wilde. Half a length behind in third place was Briseis Eclipse and Kilmer taking fourth position.

Race two: The Russ Studio-sponsored 1200 metre maiden plate was won in a tight photo finish by Dibalta, ridden by Jack Hill for Mad-die Raymond and Patrick Bell, paying over \$15 for the win. In second place was Frosty Night, ridden by Amy Herrmann for trainer Jamie Barry. A length behind in third place was front runner Fox Charm, with favourite, Here Comes Wozza claiming fourth.

Race three: Running at the same distance in the Donald Steel Metaland Maiden, punters’ favourite, Mythic, ridden by Hayley

Spitse for Gwenda Johnstone took the win from along the rail, coming in three quarters of a length ahead of Harbour City, ridden by Melissa Julius for the Dodson stable. In third place, Supido’s Littleone and Stellar Madame in fourth.

Race four: The Donald Motor Lodge distance maiden over 2000 metres was won by the well-supported Bismark, trained by Patrick Kearney and ridden wide by jockey Will Gordon to overtake the pack around the bend and claim the win by a length. In second place was Ocean Syphony, ridden by Linda Meech for Ciaron Maher. A head and neck separated Circa in third place, with Tosen Snowfall in fourth place.

Race five: The Goldacres-sponsored maiden was over the same distance as the last, with Vision Thing taking first place at whopping 81 to 1 odds. Ridden by Jake Duffy for Renee Pola it sat behind the leader, and ridden along the rail down the straight, came in less than a length in front of the leading runner, Obstructionist, ridden by Will Gordon. In third place, Brydan with Quick Quodos claiming fourth place.

Race six: The first of the handicap races was held over 1600 metres as well, with Makusha, ridden by Chelsea Jokic for trainer Rod Symons, going from almost last place to first mid race in a fast rush for the leading position. It came in a half a length ahead of second place getter Shrewsbury Road, ridden by Jack Hill, which challenged along the straight but just didn’t quite get there. In third

place, front runner Cradle Of Jazz and Ready by Design in fourth.

Race seven: The Buloke Plumbing Handicap was raced over the sprint distance of 1000 metres and was won comfortably by the Paul Preusker-trained Struggle Street, ridden by Linda Meech taking a wide run down the straight. Over two lengths separated the front runners, with El Salto, ridden by Sam Kennedy taking second place, Shadow Black 3 lengths behind in third, and First Division in fourth place.

Race eight: The 1200 metre handicap sponsored by Weir’s IGA Donald made it a double for trainer Paul Preusker and jockey Jack Hill when the big grey, Budjik Boy, took the win by over a length, after finding a gap at the 200 metre-mark and pushing through the pack. Silent Thunder took second place, ridden by Sarah Field for Emma Church. In third and fourth places were the favourites Royal Inference and Gusty Way respectively.

Race nine: The Megelec Electrical Contractors 1600 metre handicap was won by the favourite Jandami, trained by Darryl Dodson and ridden by Tom Madden, coming from last place in the field, the challenge was along the straight between second place winner, Tarshin, trained by Charles Cassar and ridden by Neil Farley. Three lengths behind third place, Celtic Knot, with Pulveriser in fourth.

Racing will resume at the Donald and District Race-course on Saturday, September 13. See you there!



• Under very foggy conditions early in the meeting; closest finish of the day. On the outside Dibalta ridden by Jack Hill narrowly defeats Frosty Night ridden by Amy Herman. In third place was Fox Charm ridden by Linda Meech.



• Possibly one of the biggest blowouts on a local track when Vision Thing ridden by Jake Duffy won. Opening at odds of \$201 before starting at \$81. It defeated Obstructionist ridden by Will Gordon and Brydan ridden by Neil Farley. Trained at Pakenham by Renee Pola this was only her second ever win.



• One of the best supported horses to win was Bismark ridden by Will Gordon, it defeated Ocean Symphony ridden by Linda Meech and in third placing was Circa ridden by Chelsea Jokic.

Shaping the Future of Birchip’s Sporting Hub

At its July meeting Buloke Shire Council endorsed the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan for public exhibition and invites the community to share their insights and ideas.

This draft plan builds on the legacy of the 2010-2019 Master Plan as a forward-thinking blueprint of shared community vision for enhancing a living, breathing space that will continue to unite generations through sport, celebration and connection. Birchip boasts some of the highest participation rates in sport across regional Victoria including one of the State’s strongest junior AFL and netball communities.

Commitment

Birchip’s Under-14 Girls AFL team was successfully launched in 2022, reflecting the town’s commitment to nurturing local talent and gender-inclusive sport.

Prepared in close collaboration with the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management, Council staff, local clubs, community members, State Government agencies and peak sporting bodies, the draft plan identifies both current needs and future opportunities,

from upgraded sporting infrastructure to inclusive spaces for broader community use.

The draft plan also aligns with the Council Plan 2026-2029, the Buloke Inclusiveness Plan and guidelines of leading State Sporting Associations such as AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria and Hockey Victoria.

“The Birchip Recreation Reserve is more than just a sporting venue – it’s the beating heart of Birchip,” said Mayor Cr Alan Getley.

“From AFL to netball, cricket to hockey and tennis, this Reserve serves as a vibrant space for all ages to connect, compete and thrive.”

Highlights

Highlights of the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan include:

- Clear priorities for maintaining and upgrading sporting facilities.
- Environmental considerations including water and renewable energy solutions.

- Strategic pathways for investment and staged development.
- Opportunities for co-location and facility sharing.
- Expanded recreational offerings for the whole community.

Whether you’re invested in local sports, a passionate volunteer, or simply love being part of the activities, this is your chance to shape the next chapter of Birchip’s shared community heart. Council is now seeking community feedback.

The Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan will be available to view from Wednesday, July 16, to Tuesday, August 5, 2025, on Council’s website visit: www.buloke.vic.gov.au and at Council’s Wycheproof Customer Service.

Hard copies can also be posted upon request, with feedback to be submitted online or in writing during the exhibition period.



• Apprentice lady jockey Hayley Spitse returns after her win riding Mythic to victory. This was only her second career win, her first win was at Geelong in April. Her first race ride was in March at Bendigo.

Charlton Golf Championships

Charlton Golf Club had 17 players compete in a very closely contested 2025 championship.

At the end of the 3 rounds there was a tie between Wayne Southwell 89-85-90=264 and Chris Mathews 91-88-85=264. The play-off started in the rain, and on the first hole Wayne managed to sink a par putt for the Club Championship. Runner-up in “A” grade was Troy Heenan 87-89-90=266; 3 Best nets John Headon 84-77-78=239.

“B” grade Champion was Chris Mathews, 91-88-85=264; runner-up Mark Hamley 87-90-89=266. Mark also had the 3 best nets 74-77-76=227.

The most closely contested “C” grade was won by Benno Catherine 99-90-91=280, one shot clear of Jamey Soulsby 92-96-93=281. The 3 best nets won by the competition’s most consistent performer was Jeff Cox 73-71-73=217. The Luth Cup award, for the 2 best nets over the whole championship, was won jointly by Jeff Cox 73-71=144 and Peter Sexton 74-70=144. The championship was concluded with a casserole tea with 40 club members and their families coming together to celebrate with all the champions for 2025.



• 2025 Champions, left to right: Chris Mathews, Wayne Southwell, Mark Hamley, Benno Catherine, John Headon, Jeff Cox and Peter Sexton.

Horsham to Host State Masters Squash Titles

Horsham will once again be in the spotlight as it prepares to host the 2025 Victorian Masters Squash Open Championships from July 25 to 27.

Some of the country’s most skilled players will gather in Horsham for the highly anticipated event. While the majority of players will travel from across Victoria, organisers also expect competitors from New South Wales, South Australia, and the ACT.

Horsham Rural City Mayor Cr Ian Ross said hosting the championships was a great opportunity to showcase the town’s hospitality and sporting infrastructure.

“We’re proud to welcome athletes, officials and supporters to our city for what promises to be a fantastic tournament,” Cr Ross said.

“Horsham has built a strong reputation for delivering successful regional sporting events, and I’m confident this one will be no exception. I encourage visitors to explore our outstanding venues, cafes and local attractions while they’re here.”

The tournament is organised by the Victorian Masters Squash Association (VMSA) and is open to men aged over 35 and women over 30.

VMSA Chair Lou Morsch said the organisation was pleased to return to Horsham for the 2025 Winter Championships.

“Horsham has always delivered a high-quality tournament experience. The facilities are excellent, the local support is strong, and the players really enjoy coming here,” Mr Morsch said.

“We’re looking forward to a big weekend of competition, connection and community—and we thank the Horsham Squash Club and Council for their ongoing efforts to support masters squash in Victoria.”

The tournament is expected to attract hundreds of visitors to Horsham, offering a timely boost to the local economy and tourism sector.



• The tournament is expected to attract hundreds of visitors to Horsham, offering a timely boost to the local economy and tourism sector.



• Jenny Leishman gave her best for an Eagle’s nest with her shot landing in an actual nest.

Down the Middle?

Ten players took part in the Clothes Bin Monthly Medal, at Donald.

The day’s winner was captain Kerry Raven (71 nett), with Joan Pearce (81nett). Luke Kelly took home the putting with 23.

Nearest the pins were: Debbie Burton on Donald Auto Electrical’s 3rd, and Bendigo/Community Bank 16th; Margot Paynter “cup edge cliffhanger” Weir’s 7th; and Kerry Raven on the Nu Farm’s 14th.

Well done to all the winners and thanks to the weekly sponsor.

Congratulations and thanks to the Charlton team for taking on the hosting and winning of Kara Kara Shield Day. Unfortunately, Donald’s course was deemed unplayable thanks to the recent rains.

Keep an eye out for upcoming tournaments that are always a good golfing day out. Boort this week, with Wedderburn and Donald’s Maurie Trantor memorial event next Sunday.

The Club has been busy with recent catering opportunities with helpers required Monday.

It is also hosting the “Wimmera Veterans v. Kara Kara Veterans” at Donald Monday, 21st of July. This is an extra Special Inaugural Event as the day is dedicated to honour Peter Kelly. Names to Ev Adams if you are keen to play or entry on the day, 9.30 a.m. for 10 a.m. hit off; \$20 entry.

Next Week

Monday golf : Assemble at 9.45 a.m..

Wednesday play will be a “Captains Surprise – anything but Par”.

Highlights and Lowlights

See attached photos: Jenny Leishman gave her best for an Eagles nest with her shot landing in an actual nest.

Debbie Burton added a touch of AFL having to aim between the Big Sticks.



• Debbie Burton added a touch of AFL having to aim between the Big Sticks.



• Bronze division winner, Julie McLennan.



• Silver division winner, Diane Johnston.



• Veterans winner, Maureen Trollope.

Charlton Hosts Dual Golf Event

A late change of venue due to drainage issues at Donald Golf Course saw the dual event of Champion of Champions and Association Day changed to Charlton Golf course.

A cold damp morning saw the group of ladies from the Kara Kara area gather for a challenging round of golf on a well presented golf course. The sand scrapes played well despite the 17mm of rain the previous day.

After a delicious afternoon tea of soup and a hearty variety of food the awards were announced.

Silver division winner was Diane Johnston from Boort, with Heather Hogan from Birchip runner-up. Bronze division winner was Julie McLennan from Wycheproof with Mary Headon from Charlton runner-up. Maureen Trollope from Birchip was Veterans winner.

The Chick Morgan trio same team event was from

Birchip – Lyn Boyle, Heather Hogan, and Maureen Trollope.

The team winning the Scratch was home team, Charlton, with 486 strokes, runner-up being St Arnaud with 504. Charlton also jagged the handicap cup with 399 strokes; runner-up Birchip 404.



• Charlton Scratch team: Kim Laffin, Mary Headon, Wendy Laffin, Anne Kenny, Janice Boyle.



• Charlton Handicap team: Kim Laffin, Mary Headon, Wendy Laffin, Anne Kenny, Chris Livingston.



(By Course Language)

Golfers last weekend played of the Red (ladies) Markers for something different. If you want to try something different try playing off the alternate markers, as it certainly changes your perspective on the holes.

There were some very good scores for the weekend, even with their reduced handicap, but the one golfer who excelled on the different tees was Richard Gallagher, who had a very solid 39 points. Brad Bath had a birdie on the Matthew “Smiley” Spencer 11th.

The “nearest the pins” were: The Donald Auto Elec 3rd, Geoff Harvey; Weir’s IGA 7th, Brad Bath; Nufarm 14th, Anthony Hogan; Bendigo Bank 16th, Geoff Harvey.

With the course greening up, I would like to thank all those who have been doing a fantastic job cleaning up the course and getting it in great shape for us all to enjoy.

Geoff Harvey has been knocking the grass down this week with the mower, which he does a much better job of than knocking the tops off the sprinkler heads on the tees with his practice swings. “Oops”

Thanks to the catering ladies who have had a big week or two, with events on at the clubhouse. One thing the Golf/Bowls ladies do well is catering.

Dad's Army

Only 4 veterans turned up for Dad's Army on Thursday

last week. Manoeuvres were only held on the back 9 as the very welcome 15mm of rain on the Wednesday night made for a very sticky front 9. Geoff Stopps was the winner with 15 points.

Coming Up

Boort is the next town on the tournament roster this weekend and has on offer a \$10,000 prize for the first hole in one on their 9th hole over the tournament.

At home it is again our Monthly Medal “stroke” sponsored by Donald Pharmacy as well a Pies Putting over the weekend.

Monday sees the inaugural “Wimmera v. Kara Kara Vets” at Donald. Both districts will play for the honour of winning the Peter Kelly Shield, which will hopefully become an annual event played for by the two districts. Peter came up with the idea of getting the two associations together and it's hoped that there will be a big turnout to honour his idea, and Peter himself, who unfortunately didn't see his idea come to fruition.

Dad Jokes

A mate of mine used to work at a Fire Hydrant Factory – He said he couldn't park anywhere near the place.

My neighbour couldn't afford his water bill – so I sent him a get Well soon card.

Another friend of mine is going out with a girl called Rosemary – I don't know what he season her, but give it thyme I suppose.

I said to my friend that I keep seeing camels in my sleep – He said, “have you seen a psychiatrist?” – I said, “No, only camels.”

A man came up to me the other day in the street and asked me for a dollar. I told him that I only carry big bills. He asked for one of those, so I gave him my gas bill.

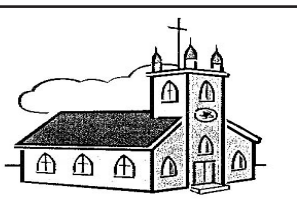
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At Granite Church 10.30 a.m.

Speaker: Ross Barnes
Baptist Union of Victoria



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Friday, July 18
St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, July 20
St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.

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Field & Game Play in Purple

Donald Field & Game, together with 80 shooters, participated in the July #playingpurple shoot.

The Australian Pancreatic Cancer Foundation's mission is to triple the pancreatic cancer survival rate by 2030 and significantly improve the quality of life for those impacted by the disease.

Donald Field & Game has just completed its third #play-inpurple shoot, starting this event in memory of life member David "Silly" Pearce. Cherry Pearce and two of her children Lauren and Jeremy joined the shoot for the day.

The Club, Pearce family, along with passionate shooters, and throw in some volunteers, raised \$1720, on Sunday the 6th, during their July shoot, with this money this being donated to PanKind.

Ways they raised the money: playinpurple stubby holders, donation tin, wood raffle, a local business raffle and \$5 from each entry into the "mates" novelty event. Thank you to all who dug deep into their pockets. Thank you to ALL the local businesses that donated more than 25 items to the club raffle – there were so many that jumped on board this year.

High Gun
High gun trophies and prizes donated by The Pearce Family.

High Gun off the Gun: Kevin Jacobs (Moe), 45.

High Gun Handicap: Katrina Fallon (Minyip), 46.

Massive congratulations to Katrina, first time winning High gun and on a very special day for her.

All Other Categories – Handicap

Prizes were generously donated by the Warracknabeal Home Hardware (Wilken Group). Any draws were sorted on count back.

AA: 1st Tim Lardner (Shepparton), 47; 2nd Colin Clark (Minyip), 46; 3rd Pepe Luciani (Natimuk), 45.

A: 1st Ben Ball (Natimuk), 46; 2nd Mick Purcell (Natimuk), 46; 3rd Shane Odgers (Clunes), 46.

B: 1st Beau Morgan (Donald), 47; 2nd Therese Schram (Grampians), 47; 3rd Andrew Donnellon (Donald), 44.

C: 1st John Gillahan (Donald), 47; 2nd John Poelwyk (Grampians), 43; 3rd Michael Whelan (Donald), 40.

Ladies: 1st Tiffany Johnstone (Ararat-Stawell), 45; 2nd Michaela Shirley (Clunes), 44; 3rd Michelle Parker (Grampians), 43.

Veterans: 1st Kenneth Mikklesen (Natimuk), 47; 2nd Chris Charleson (Swan Hill), 45; 3rd Russell Cook (Clunes), 43.

Targets Only: No Handicap included.

1st Dawson Hollis (Donald), 30; 2nd Michael Donnellon (Donald), 29; and 3rd Ebon Murdock (Bendigo), 24.

Mates Novelty Shoot

Prizes for this event were donated by The Pearce Family, Greg Deutscher and Chris Charleson.

The "mates" novelty shoot, quite relevant to the theme of the whole day – friendship and having fun shooting – is where two shooters stand in separate cages side by side and shoot together, 26 targets each to equate to 52 in total.

There were 54 mates shooting in this event. It's a great way to change things up and have a little fun and it's absolutely hilarious to watch. Results include Handicap of both mates (count back on any draws).

Highgun: Russell Cook (Clunes) and John Poelwyk (Grampians), 50.

1st Phillip Toose (Clunes) and Geordi Aristides (Clunes), 50; 2nd Trent Grant

(Donald) and Jeremy Jardine (Donald), 48; 3rd Murray Holm (Shepparton) and David Brennan (Donald), 48.

The lucky winner of the wood raffle, which was kindly donated by B&G Bulk Haulage on behalf of Donald FG members, was Ash Rolison.

Major credit to all who volunteered their time and energy into running the shoot. A lot of work goes on quietly behind the scenes and the kitchen crew do run a superb ship!

Donald Field and Game's next shoot will be a 75 ASF Handicap shoot held on 3rd August. Donald FG hopes to see you all there for another great shoot with mates.



• Mates Novelty: Michelle Parker and Therese Schram decked in purple.



• Highgun (OTG) winner Kevin Jacobs with Cherry Pearce.



• Mates prizes: Some of David's favourites – Rum and Liquorice.



• Mates Highgun winners: Russell Cook and John Poelwyk.



• Highgun (HCP) winner Katrina Fallon with Cherry Pearce.



• Competition: Sarah O'Brien on the first stand covered from head to toe in purple.



Double Chance at Stake

(By Shane O'Shea)

With five rounds of North-Central's 2025 season to be played, the undefeated Birchip-Watchem is a clear-cut leader, destined to take its place in the second semi-final at the end of August.

But who will be the challenger for direct entry into the grand final, with the additional bonus of a "second chance" for the loser, via the preliminary final?

Currently the two potential candidates, Calder United and Boort, have 8 wins and 32 premiership points apiece, but are separated by almost 60 per cent, making Saturday's showdown at Boort Park, one of the most significant games of the home-and-away series.

Unfortunately for the Lions and Magpies, their lead-up games, against likely fellow finalists, Birchip-Watchem and Sea Lake-Nandaly respectively, did not produce the results they wanted or needed.

The gap separating Calder United from Birchip-Watchem has blown out to more than 3 games (taking percentage into account) and is unlikely to be bridged, given the Bulls' run home. Admittedly the Lions were missing several key personnel last round, which didn't help their chances against a near full-strength opposition

Boort had an ideal opportunity to add to Sea Lake-Nandaly's pain, the Tigers missing up to 15 players and coming off consecutive losses, but the Magpies failed to make any headway after a slow start and an inaccurate third term.

At home tomorrow, Boort needs to make a statement against another of this season's best combinations. Victory would help Dale Cameron and his charges build a full head of steam for the following weekend's equally important clash against Birchip-Watchem, as well as showing that they have what is required to take their season deep into September.

It will be a massive test of Boort's defensive skills against a potent Calder United attack. It will also be the first time the Magpies have encountered recent arrival, Dale Pearce, who has added to an already diverse forward set up that features Jack Excell and Mitch Farmer.

Farmer was one of those missing last round, along with the Lions' most important player, ruckman Dean Putt.

Boort cannot afford to rely too heavily on the goal kicking output of the dynamic Jhye Baddeley-Kelly, with goals likely to be very hard to come by against Calder United's frugal defence.

To maximise their chances, the Magpies will be looking to Jayden Dick, Carlos Egan and Kane Rutley to have a constant influence on the contest, but even with several play makers on the sidelines, the Lions should roar, and strengthen their grip on second place and the finals "double chance".

Daunting Task But Excellent Challenge

Wedderburn's finals hopes may have been extinguished, but the opportunities for coach Tom Metherell and his young charges to grow in confidence and further develop their strong game, continue to present themselves.

Tomorrow, the Redbacks welcome ladder leader Birchip-Watchem to Donaldson Park, and a measure of their progress this season, as a team and individually, can be gauged by their performance against the competition's leader.

In round 5, Wedderburn lost to the Bulls by 8 goals, but went into that game without spearhead Mitch Jensen, who bounced back to his best goalkicking form last round with a haul of 10 against Charlton.

Tomorrow, opportunities might not be as plentiful against Birchip-Watchem's back six, led by Dale Hinkley. And in the highly pressurised atmosphere that will encompass the Redbacks' forward line, Jensen and his fellow forwards will need to make the most of every opportunity, if the hosts are to have any chance.

At the other end of Donaldson Park, Bulls' big gun Ben Edwards is coming off a relatively lean trot in terms of goal output, having added just 4 goals in the past two



• Round 5 clash between Birchip-Watchem and Wedderburn: Bulls' Lachy Foott and Ty Colbert contest for the Sherrin against Redbacks' Darcy Jackson.

outings, in comparison to his previous game average of 8.

Against the likes of Corey Lowry or Adam Postle, Edwards will again be put to the test, but if the usual silver service from midfielders Nic and Marshall Rippon and Meyrick Buchanan can be resumed, Birchip-Watchem's unbroken run of success will continue, and Edwards will move closer to that elusive hundred.

Bunter's Cup on the Line

In addition to the four premiership points, host Charlton and the visiting Donald will be competing for Bunter's Cup, presented by

the Baird family in memory of Bill Baird, a larger-than-life character, who left his mark on both clubs.

As a player, Bill was a prolific goal kicker for Charlton, and wouldn't coach Mitch Collins love to have someone of his calibre sitting in front of goal tomorrow!

As it is, the Navy Blues will be looking to a variety of players, including Rhys Thompson, Liam O'Keefe, Collins and Ben Xiriha to generate a match-winning score against a Donald line-up still looking for its first win of the season.

The Royal Blues will also take the field tomorrow without Robert "George" Walker, one of their most consistent contributors, who has jet-setted overseas.

For Donald, which Bill served as a committeeman and selector, the potential is there to secure a rare win, if the Royal Blues can produce four consistent quarters of their best football.

The development in Tom Reekie, Josh Smulders, George Morgan, Ben Arho and Luca Rice is enabling them to provide greater support to proven performers including Daniel Pearce, Dyson Bell-Warren and Charlie Campbell, but all team members will need to be switched on from the first bounce.

Hope springs eternal, and both teams have an equal opportunity to register a much-needed win, with Charlton's better overall record and home ground advantage suggesting it might have a decisive edge.

Celebrations Short Lived

St. Arnaud had many reasons to celebrate following last round's victory over Donald, the Saints' second for the season, in what was also club stalwart Matt Goode's 250th. game. It was also Matt's 153rd. consecutive game for the Saints, and an amazing 276th. consecutive game of Australian Rules Football.

No doubt the Saints' Ball later that night gave coach Scott Driscoll and his charges every opportunity to let their hair down prior to the bye, in readiness for tomorrow's clash with Sea Lake-Nandaly.

On the down side for St. Arnaud is the extensive list of injured players that includes Driscoll with a damaged Achilles tendon (for the second season in a row), Mitch Egan, Brad Organ, Sean Holroyd, Torin Petrie and Jay Kirwood.

Without this contingent of top end talent, the Saints will be hard pressed to match a Sea Lake-Nandaly line-up, which is expected to welcome back a significant number of its better players, including Jack Poulton, Tom Cox, Cruz O'Sullivan, Brodie Adcock and potentially Josh Jenkins and Oscar Brownless.

Even without this talented list, the team structure built around Ryan O'Sullivan, Trent and Wade Donnan, Tyson McKenzie, Adam Pattison, Billy McInnes and Bryce Delmenico, has the physical strength, youthful enthusiasm and scoring versatility to overpower the home team's determined opposition on the wide open expanses of Lord Nelson Park.

GOLDACRES NORTH CENTRAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

ROUND 12

SATURDAY JULY 19TH, 2025

ST ARNAUD SAINTS	VS	SEA LAKE NANDALY TIGERS
LORD NELSON PARK		
CHARLTON NAVIES	VS	DONALD ROYAL BLUES
CHARLTON PARK		
WEDDERBURN REDBACKS	VS	BIRCHIP-WATCHEM BULLS
DONALDSON PARK		
BOORT MAGPIES	VS	CALDER UNITED LIONS
BOORT PARK		