

# Standard

INCORPORATING THE ALEXANDRA TIMES - THE YARCK, GOBUR, TAGGERTY, THORNTON, AND ACHERON EXPRESS

P.O Box 5, Alexandra, 3714. Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5772 1603; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Wednesday, March 4, 2026 \$2.00 inc. GST

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## INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Darlingford thanked for fire work



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Anna's tribute to local heroes



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Dindi Daze in a damp haze



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Weekend sport



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# Postcards show Hub's importance

SUE Sedelies from the Alexandra Community Hub welcomed supporters to an event at the Alexandra Hub on the morning of Tuesday, February 24, where postcards showing people's support for the Hub were presented to Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish.

At the presentation, Sue played a presentation video created for the Alexandra Community Hub, providing an overview of their services, including providing Adult Council of Further Education services, being an agent for Services Australia, and the L2P program and Chatty Café. In addition, they house the local rain gauge monitors, and have a community garden.

Sue said that there are about 400 Neighbourhood Houses in the state, and that the houses are struggling to survive.

A recent survey found that Neighbourhood Houses result in an 86 per cent improvement people's physical well-being, 97 per cent improve emotional well-being, 94 per cent improve social connections, 65 per cent improve overall well-being outside the neighborhood house, 65 per cent developed stronger networks, and 80 per cent had a stronger sense of belonging to the community.

Sue commented that there are a lot of Neighbourhood Houses in our shire. We have four funded (Yea, Flowerdale, Kinglake and Alexandra) and the shire have a number that are unfunded, informal community houses such as the Embassy of Ideas, U3A is almost



Local supporters gathered at the Alexandra Community Hub on Tuesday, February 24. -AR

a community house in itself, and CH@T in Taggerty.

Sue said, "There's a lot of groups that come together that are achieving a lot and we want to keep our doors open for future visitation and the things that we do, the programs and services."

The postcards of support were spread out on the table. Ms McLeish collected the postcards on the day and will be passing them on to Minister Spence.

Board member Ian Gibb also spoke at the event, saying, "Cindy, the ask is really pretty simple. What we think we need for open neighbourhood houses is a 25 per cent increase

in funding for all existing neighbourhood houses, and to support the 25 neighbourhood houses that don't have any funding at the moment, and to establish a fund that would allow five new neighbourhood houses to be established in growth areas each year."

Continued Page 8

**CLOSED LABOUR DAY - MONDAY, MARCH 9**  
**EARLY DEADLINES APPLY**  
**CLASSIFIEDS - FOR SALE, MEETINGS ETC INC DEATH NOTICES - 2PM FRIDAY, MARCH 6**  
**ALL OTHER DEADLINES REMAIN THE SAME**

## Help end placement poverty

Unpaid placements are pushing allied health and medical students into placement poverty.

Sign the petition calling on the Government to expand the Commonwealth Paid Prac Placement Scheme.




**Helen Haines MP**

Wangaratta: 117 Murphy Street, Wangaratta | 03 5721 7077  
 Wodonga: 79 High Street, Wodonga | 02 6024 6284  
 helen.haines.mp@aph.gov.au | helenhaines.org

Authorised by Helen Haines, 117 Murphy St, Wangaratta VIC 3677.

# Happenings at U3A Murrindindi East

LAST week, the U3A Murrindindi East Walking Group headed to Taggerty and followed the gravel path along Maroondah Highway to delightfully shady picnic area called Little River. They crossed the bridge, wandered along the road, then up Webbs Lane and the back to CH@T where they enjoyed a cuppa under the trees.

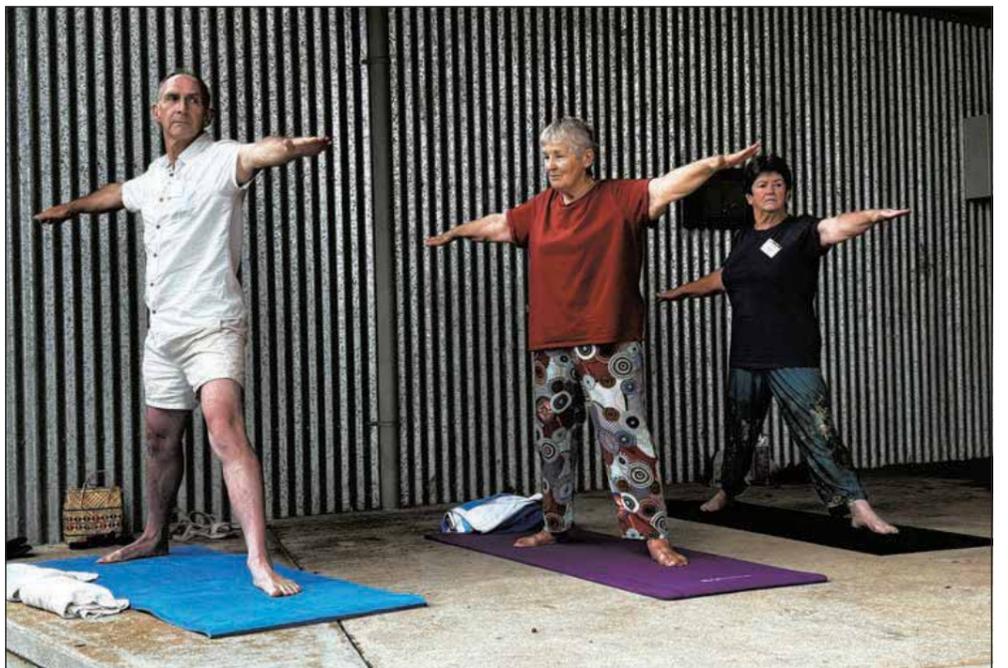
Line dancing, table tennis and Tai Chi are all back in full swing and are held at St John's Church Hall.

Pen to Paper is a small group which meets fortnightly in Alexandra. They write on the same chosen topic then read their stories to group members. Whatever the topic, when it's time to share their writing it is always a delight and surprise to hear so many delightful variations on the same topic.

The Australian Politics Class are looking at political parties and events in the modern era and meet at CH@T in Taggerty on the second and fourth Thursday of the month.

Many members have taken the opportunity to join Tracy Halliburton for Yoga in the Park classes with moves to increase your strength

and flexibility, posture and balance for this short course of four summer Wednesday mornings at Rotary Park.



Yoga in the park. -S

**Alexandra District Health**  
5772 0900

**Yea & District Memorial Hospital**  
5736 0400

**In an emergency dial 000**

**Standard The Yea Chronicle**

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Hours: 9am-5pm Monday-Friday

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

**PUBLISHERS**

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Independently owned and operated with no association with any other media outlet in the Murrindindi Shire.



**THUMBS UP:** To the amazing Rapid Relief Team at Ruffy, who supplied farmers with fencing wire (plus food supplies), to help rebuild our fences after the fires. They also showed us great compassion and kindness. A big thank you from us all.

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down is a reader's contribution section of Alexandra Newspapers. Send your Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down to editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au

Contributions will be edited and/or published at the Editor's discretion. We request that this section not be used as a slander attack on persons, businesses or property

## Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club Report

by honorary secretary  
Mike Jennings

THE bridge players were in action on Wednesday afternoon at the Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club, and there was a social meeting on Friday. The main topic of discussion was the club lunch to be held on Friday 27 March in the

clubroom. Those planning to attend are requested to enter their names on the list on the front desk.

Treasurer Dave had us chuckling with the jokes about marriage relationships before Ron spun the wheel and Mary, Jack and Ron himself won the chocolate bars. The members retired to the tearoom for a cuppa and

delightful refreshments and the usual chat before games of 500 and UNO. This Friday will be the monthly business meeting at 1pm.

The club welcomes new members so please come along to the Bayley Street clubroom on a Friday afternoon. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

## COMMUNITY DIARY

**Alexandra District Health**  
5772 0900

**Non-emergency police assistance**  
131 444

**EMERGENCY 000**

**Local Radio Frequency**  
UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon  
UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

### MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

**WEEKLY**

Tue Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas  
Wed Oasis Church, free coffee connection Ph 0408 123 581  
Fri Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall  
Fri Communitea 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801  
Sun Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611  
Sun AA meeting: 7pm St Johns Hall. Ph 1300 22 22 22.

### MONTHLY

1<sup>st</sup> Wed Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318  
1<sup>st</sup> Thur Murrindindi Men 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801  
1<sup>st</sup> Sun Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas  
Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tue Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Wed Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thu Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thu Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sun Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913  
4<sup>th</sup> Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.  
4<sup>th</sup> Thu Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517  
Last Fri Carers Group 10am Grant Street Grocer. 0418 402 455

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

For a \$10 annual fee for one line, your club or organisation's regular meeting dates will be listed each week. Not only is this a reminder to your regular members but also a good source of what groups are available in the community, when they meet and a contact phone number.

## RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	9.00AM Mon	1.77	LGH	steady
Rubicon River at Rubicon	9.00AM Mon	0.73	LGH	rising
Acheron River at Taggerty	9.00AM Mon	0.55	LGH	steady
Home Creek at Yarck	9.00AM Mon	-0.03	LGH	steady
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	8.26AM Mon	0.45	LGH	steady
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	9.00AM Mon	0.26	LGH	steady
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	9.00AM Mon	0.54	LGH	rising
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	9.00AM Mon	3.73	LGH	steady
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	9.00AM Mon	0.46	LGH	rising
Goulburn River at Trawool	9.00AM Mon	1.39	LGH	steady
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	9.00AM Mon	0.35	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Seymour	9.00AM Mon	1.70	LGH	steady
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	9.00AM Mon	0.79	LGH	steady

\*ISSUED AT 9:24 AM AEDT MONDAY 2 MARCH 2026

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**  
can be submitted via email to  
editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au or  
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au  
or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers  
PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714.

Letters **must be 300 words or less**. We will not publish defamatory letters, or content which is offensive, threatening or containing personal attacks. Submitted letters may be edited before going to print.  
All letters must contain writers name, address and contact number. (not necessarily for publication). Letters without these details supplied cannot not be published. Deadline for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.

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**Standard**  
The Yea Chronicle

**Weekly Weather**  
March 4 - March 10, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

**Alexandra** **Yea**

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	15	25	Wednesday	14	24
Thursday	14	27	Thursday	15	27
Friday	14	25	Friday	14	24
Saturday	12	27	Saturday	12	27
Sunday	15	28	Sunday	14	28
Monday	15	26	Monday	15	26
Tuesday	13	26	Tuesday	13	26

**Standard** **The Yea Chronicle**

**DISTRICT RAINFALL**

Alexandra	56mm
Buxton	91mm
Eildon (AWS)	39mm
Flowerdale	91mm
Jamieson	55mm
Kinglake	75mm
Lake Eildon	47mm
Mansfield	54mm
Taggerty	67mm
Yarck	61mm
Yea	49mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

**LAKE EILDON**

Height above sea level this week	272.00m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	46.3%
Metres below full supply	16.1m
Daily inflow	4000ML
Release	1500ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	50%

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**DEADLINES**

Real Estate	Thursday 5pm
Trades & Services	Thursday noon
Early General News	Thursday 5pm
Classifieds	Monday noon
Editorial	Monday 9am
Sports Editorial	Monday 10am
Letters to the Editor	Monday 9am
Thumbsup/down	Monday 10am

If you have any enquiries please do not hesitate to contact the office on  
5772 1002 or  
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

We thank you for your continued support

## Council to prioritise managed firewood access for fire-affected residents

FIRE-affected households across Murrindindi Shire will continue to be supported with access to firewood this winter through a council-managed supply, following the January 2026 Longwood bushfires.

This year, for safety and environmental reasons, personal roadside firewood collection will not be permitted within fire-affected areas until September 2026.

Each year, council permits residents to collect firewood from designated council-managed roadsides between March 1 to June 30 and September 1 to November 30, with several 'No Collection Roads' identified to protect sensitive environments. This arrangement will continue to apply outside the fire-affected footprint.

This year, however, the scale and severity of roadside impacts within the fire-affected areas mean council must take a different approach.

Council understands that many fire-affected residents traditionally rely on roadside firewood collection. Council's priority is to ensure fire-impacted communities have fair and safe access to firewood while protecting fragile environments that are still recovering.

The pause applies to personal roadside collection in unsafe, recovering areas, not to access to firewood itself.

Currently, some roads in the fire-affected area remain completely closed, while others are restricted to authorised access only to allow essential works and ensure community safety. These closures and restrictions mean roadside

firewood collection cannot safely occur in these locations.

The burnt roadsides across the fire-affected region are also extremely vulnerable. Soil conditions are fragile, natural regeneration of plants and trees has only just begun, and many roadsides are still structurally unsafe.

Unrestricted public access and disturbance in these areas could slow recovery, increase erosion, and damage important habitat.

To support residents during recovery, council is processing fire-affected trees into usable timber and split firewood. Once ready, the split firewood will be available for eligible community members to collect through a managed process.

As a result, council will not permit personal collection of firewood from any roadsides within the fire-affected areas until September 2026.

Existing 'No Collection Roads' will remain in place, and all additional roads within the bushfire footprint will be temporarily added to this list with a review to take place later in 2026.

Council recognises the importance of firewood for many households across the shire and will continue to support impacted residents through a safer, managed supply and clear information as the recovery process continues.

Further details about collection points, timing, and eligibility will be provided in the coming weeks.

To find out more and apply for a permit, visit [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Community/Environment/Firewood-Collection](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Community/Environment/Firewood-Collection)

## Firewood collection opens

VICTORIANS can now collect free firewood for personal use from designated state forest firewood collection areas across the Hume region, with the season starting on March 1. Collectors have been urged to use their chainsaws carefully due to fire risk.

The autumn firewood season ends on June 30, but collectors are reminded individual collection areas may close earlier if there is no more firewood available.

Forest Fire Management Victoria's website has published maps showing available collection areas. Maps are updated throughout the season as collection areas open or close due to availability or access. An interactive map includes details about vehicle access, while pdf maps include safety and other practical information.

Forest Fire Management Victoria Director Forest and Fire Operations Hume region Aaron Kennedy urged collectors to be aware of the fire risk created by chainsaws.

"We understand collectors will use chainsaws but we urge them to do responsibly. One spark from your chainsaw can start a fire, putting yourself and others at risk.

"It is also essential that you bring additional items such as water or a means to extinguish a fire quickly."

Mr Kennedy said this included not using the chainsaw on a Total Fire Ban Day and making sure the chainsaw had an effective exhaust and spark arrester.

"Check weather conditions before you go and make sure you understand forest conditions before you start collecting firewood," he said.

Mr Kennedy encouraged collectors to wear protective gear and to only use equipment they're trained in, including chainsaws.

"Be aware of the environment around you for the safety of yourself and others," he said.

"Trees can fall or drop limbs without warning."

Mr Kennedy said firewood collection areas in fire-affected areas would be opened progressively as crews worked to clear tree hazards.

Mr Kennedy urged Victorians to check road closures before travelling to collection areas, and only to drive on formed roads.

"Within designated collection areas, collectors can collect and cut wood that is on the ground due to natural fall or forest and fire management works. Heavy penalties apply to anyone who cuts down a tree, living or dead.

Mr Kennedy said wood would be of varying sizes and may not be the same quality as the firewood sold by a commercial cutter.

Mr Kennedy said people could only collect a limit of two cubic metres per person per day and a maximum of 16 cubic metres per household per financial year.

"Most people do the right thing, collect wood that is already on the ground, take only what they need, and stick to limits and rules," he said.

Authorised Officers patrol state forests and can issue fines of more than \$814 to those caught breaking the firewood collection rules. If prosecuted in court more serious offending can result in maximum penalties of \$10,175 and/or 12 months in prison. Authorised Officers can also seize chainsaws, trailers, vehicles, and equipment that's used in the commission of offending.

Information and updates, including maps of collection areas, are available on [ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood](http://ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood)

Maps are now available online, except for the Murray Goldfields District whose maps will be published on April 1.

Community members can find out more about collecting firewood by calling 136 186. Suspected illegal firewood collection can be reported to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

## Alpine Resorts plan released for review

ALPINE Resorts Victoria (ARV) has released the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2026-2030 Draft* for public consultation, marking a milestone in shaping the long-term future of Victoria's alpine resorts.

The strategic plan is the sector's key guiding document, outlining the vision, objectives, challenges, opportunities and strategic priorities that will support a resilient, sustainable and thriving alpine sector.

For the first time, the plan has been developed under ARV's unified governance model, enabling a coordinated, sector-wide approach across government, Traditional Owners, industry, private operators and local communities.

ARV Chair, Ali Wastie, said the release of the Draft Plan reflects the strength of collaboration across the sector. "This draft plan has been shaped by the knowledge, passion and commitment of people right across the alpine communities. Their insights have been invaluable in building a shared vision for the future of our resorts. We look forward to continued input as we refine the final plan together."

Ms Wastie encouraged all interested parties to have their say through Engage Victoria.

"As a sector, when our voice is clear and united, we can have great influence. I encourage anyone who would like to make a contribution to review the draft plan and share their thoughts through Engage Victoria," she said.

The draft plan is now available for public review on Engage Victoria until March 26.

The draft plan and feedback portal can be found at [engage.vic.gov.au/alpine-resorts-strategic-plan-2025](http://engage.vic.gov.au/alpine-resorts-strategic-plan-2025)

## Free Funeral Information Pack

Our Free Funeral Information Packs are designed to assist you with planning end-of-life and funeral services.

Included in the pack is:

- Funeral Planning Booklet
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## Business Breakfast Alexandra Thursday 12 March 2026 from 7.30 am at On Point Brewery, 9 Downey Street

Be part of the first Murrindindi Business Network event for 2026 in Alexandra. Free and open to all businesses across the Shire, this networking event supports recovery following the January 2026 fire.

Hear updates from Council and learn about support available through agencies, including Business Victoria, Community Business Connect, Tourism North East and AgBiz Assist.

Gain practical insights from industry professionals, learn about funding and recovery assistance, and access tools to help businesses rebuild, adapt and grow.

**Registrations now open.**

*This event is supported with funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Community Development Fund*



[murrindindi.vic.gov.au/businessbreakfast](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/businessbreakfast)

5772 0333

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# Out & About

THE items in Out and About are sourced from our current advertising. Out and About is not a free community listing diary. Not all items can be included and are placed at the discretion of Alexandra Newspapers.

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## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Look after yourself and others after the fires. Tonight, 6.30pm at the Alexandra Shire Hall. Council are hosting a recovery session to support those affected by the recent bushfires. Dr Rob Gordon will talk about common emotional responses and share practical strategies to support your wellbeing and those around you. A light supper and chat time will follow the session.

\*\*\*\*\*

## SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Caribbean Cruise Murder Mystery at Trawool. Three course dinner, game and entertainment. \$99 per person, bookings essential [trawoolstate.com.au](http://trawoolstate.com.au) or phone 5792 1444.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Murrindindi Shire Council presents Business Breakfast Alexandra from 7.30am at On Point Brewery, Alexandra. Registrations open. Scan the QR code in this edition for full details.

\*\*\*\*\*

## SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Alexandra Race Club Cathedral Golf Club 2026 Alexandra Cup. Music, food, racing, big screen and more. Book the bus. [country.racing.com/alexandra](http://country.racing.com/alexandra)

\*\*\*\*\*



The staff group. -S

# Darlingford thanked for work during fire emergency

ON Tuesday, February 24, Darlingford and Upper Goulburn Nursing Home had the pleasure of hosting a morning tea with Dean Walton and Nicholas Deane from the Department of Health, Disability and Aged Care, Local Network.

Dean is the Assistant Director for the North Regional Team. Darlingford CEO Donna Walsh was in communication with Dean during the Longwood fires via video, and it was great to meet in person. Dean and Nicholas sat and talked to the residents and thanked the staff for their attendance during that difficult time.



Dean talking to the group. -S



Nicholas Deane, Gee Nair, Donna Walsh and Dean Walton. -S

## Church Services

### ANGLICAN

St Johns Alexandra  
9am Eucharist each Sunday  
Children welcome.  
Rev Mario Hendricks -  
Rectory 0435 953 777

### CATHOLIC

Immaculate Conception Parish  
Parish Administrator Fr Jose Mathew.  
Presbytery 0468 810 871  
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm  
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am  
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

### UNITING CHURCH In Australia

St Andrews, Downey Street,  
Alexandra  
Worshipping, Welcoming  
Sharing the transforming love of  
Jesus. Services 10am each Sunday  
Contact 5772 2362

### OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Loving God, Loving People,  
Loving Life  
118 Grant Street, Alexandra  
0408 123 581  
Meeting every Sunday @ 10am

### MOUNT CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY

#### BAPTIST CHURCH

37 Grant Street, Alexandra  
Pastor Daniel Kriss  
Services 10am every Sunday  
Phone 0400 282 536  
[mccbc.com.au](http://mccbc.com.au)

### THE VINE

A Christian community part of the Baptist  
Union of Victoria  
Sunday 4.30pm service  
Kids program during school term  
Meets at St Andrew's, 37 Downey Street,  
Alexandra  
Contact - 0438 642 559

## Council sets expectations on proposed hospital amalgamation

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has considered the proposed amalgamation of Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health and has reaffirmed its clear position, saying that any reform must demonstrably improve health outcomes, service access and equity for the Murrindindi community.

Council is not a decision-maker in the proposed amalgamation, which has been

referred to the Minister for Health. However, council said they have a responsibility to advocate for the health, wellbeing and service access needs of local residents, particularly in a rural and geographically dispersed municipality.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said structural change alone would not address the significant health challenges facing the shire.

"Murrindindi Shire continues to experience poorer health outcomes than the Victorian average. For our community, the measure of any reform is simple, will it deliver better, more accessible and locally responsive healthcare?"

Council has made clear that it does not support any changes that reduce access to local services, weakens local accountability or decision-making, exacerbates workforce shortages, or worsens health outcomes for residents.

"As this proposal is considered by the Minister for Health, council expects clear assurances that local services will be protected and strengthened, not diluted," Cr Gallagher said at the Scheduled Meeting of Council on Wednesday, February 25.

Council also emphasised that rural communities require healthcare models designed for rural realities, including distance, workforce constraints, ageing populations and limited transport options, rather than metropolitan approaches applied by default.

Well before the proposed amalgamation was announced, council had been leading the Victorian Government-funded Murrindindi Health Network Plan project, working with local providers to strengthen workforce capacity, improve service coordination and support preventative, community-based care.

This work reflects council's long-standing position that locally informed, integrated and preventative care is essential to improving long-term health outcomes in rural communities," Cr Gallagher said.

Council will continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for healthcare arrangements that reflect rural needs, values local voices, and delivers tangible improvements in community health and wellbeing.

Council will provide factual updates to the community as information becomes available and ensure local feedback informs its ongoing advocacy.



The new prep students at Marysville Primary School starting out on their learning journey. -S



The banner of the Hume Goulburn CWA group. -BD



Some of the CWA goods on display. -BD

### CWA Hume Goulburn Group half-yearly meeting at Molesworth Hall



A number of different CWA branches from across the group were in attendance, including Alexandra, Euroa, Mansfield and more. The meeting was held in the Molesworth Hall. -BD



Each of the CWA branches had the opportunity to talk about their activities for the later half of 2025 into 2026. -BD



# POWERING VICTORIA



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[secvictoria.com.au](http://secvictoria.com.au)



# February meeting of Murrindindi Shire Council

Cr Adams was an apology, and requested personal leave until June 30.

## Community recognition

Council recognised Geoff Penny, Gordon Simpson and Graeme Robb, who were recognised in the Australia Day honours, receiving OAMs for their services to their communities.

## Public participation

Murray Ross spoke on the matter of Breakaway Bridge, stating that the community does not want a double-lane bridge, as it will encourage more high-speed through traffic, decreasing safety. It will also incur higher costs. He stated council is not thoroughly engaging with community, and not exploring all the potential options for the bridge.

Nigel Lyttle, in his capacity as Principal of Alexandra Secondary College, requested council endorse the final draft report for the Alexandra Community Leisure and Relief Centre, saying that the centre is important for sport and relief efforts in Alexandra.

## Haines launches 2026 Indi Volunteer Grants program

EXPRESSIONS of Interest have been opened for the 2025-26 Indi Volunteer Grants program, Member for Indi Dr Helen Haines has announced.

Grants between \$1000 and \$5000 are available to support the work of local community organisations to increase participation in volunteering and enable the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

“Volunteer organisations do incredible work every day, and there is always strong interest in these grants from a variety of hard-working, community focused organisations,” Dr Haines said.

Two streams of grant funding are available in the 2025-26 Volunteer Grants program.

Stream one funds the purchase of communication or insurance items that will benefit a community organisation’s volunteers.

Stream two funds the items of the running volunteer-led activities that support the development (including volunteering) of groups such as children, First Nations People, veterans, new arrived migrants, people with disability, and women at risk of experiencing gender-based violence or isolation.

“Volunteer grants can help take the pressure off costs such as phone bills, insurance and training, which are becoming increasingly more expensive.” Dr Haines said.

“There is also a strong focus on supporting the development and wellbeing of groups experiencing barriers to participation in the community.

“Every year, I’m inspired by the passion and hard work of volunteer groups that I meet with across Indi and they tell me that grants like this go a long way in supporting volunteers to continue their important work.

“I encourage not-for-profit community organisations across Indi to consider putting in an expression of interest.”

Applications will be assessed by a panel of community members, with successful applicants then invited to apply to the Department of Social Services for a grant.

“Volunteers support our communities in so many and varied ways, and I pay tribute to them for their continued commitment and hard work.”

Details on the eligibility criteria and how to apply can be found at: [helenhaines.org/resources/grants/volunteer-grants-2026/](https://www.murrindindibusiness.com.au/resources/grants/volunteer-grants-2026/)

## Grants and sponsorships quarterly allocations

Applications presented between November 2025 and January 2026 were submitted to council for noting and approval.

These included: \$750 for Strath Creek Progress Association community carols; \$2500 for Yea Primary School celebration and awards; \$1900 for Flowerdale Community Hall’s community christmas; \$2500 to Alexandra Amateur Swimming and Lifeguarding Club for 2025/26 swimming season fee support; \$1950 to Eildon Lions Club for boiling water for rotunda; \$2500 to Yea High School for alcohol and drug education goggles; another \$700 to Yea High School to get St Johns party ready; \$2500 to Yea Men’s Shed for a storage container; \$2500 to the Rotary Club of Alexandra for their 56th Easter Art Show; \$2500 to the Alexandra Community Hub to respond to community needs; and \$2500 to Flowerdale Primary School for their school fair.

Council were also recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel to endorse funding for the following applications, including: \$2000 for the Alexandra Football Netball Club to celebrate service and community (Cr Gallagher was absent for this decision due to his conflict of interest, being a member of the club); \$20,000 for the Liquid Drag Boat Nationals for a Drag Boat Festival Eildon 2026; and \$20,000 to the Triangle Arts Group for a Marysville Music Weekend.

Council noted and approved the grants.

## Alexandra Relief and Leisure Centre Redevelopment Plan

The current Alexandra Relief and Leisure Centre facility is near end-of-life, and is no longer fit for purpose. Therefore a redevelopment plan has been created, and was presented to council for endorsement at this meeting. The plan proposes a new facility be created below the current building, towards the creek, and that once it is complete, the old facility become a carpark. This allows for continuous operations. Part of the recommendation also is that council advocate for this redevelopment during the 2026 state election, seeking both state and Commonwealth funding, due to an estimated total project cost of over \$21 million.

Council endorsed the redevelopment plan.

## Council Priority Action Plan 2025/26 December Quarter Progress Report

The report outlines progress on the 70 actions for the second quarter, ending December 31, 2025. Seven actions were due for completion in the quarter, with three completed and four remaining in progress. As of December 31, 2025, eight actions were completed, three were delayed but in progress, and 59 are on track for completion within the financial year.

Due to required responses to the impacts of the January bushfires, council’s focus has shifted to providing immediate relief and longer-term recovery for affected communities. This means that it may be necessary for them to postpone or defer work on some actions in the Priority Action Plan.

Council noted the progress report for their Priority Action Plan.

## Report on the Exercise of CEO Financial Delegations

On October 22, 2025, council resolved to increase the CEO’s financial delegation to \$500,000 with a requirement to report procurements above \$300,000, to support timely emergency response. On January 21, 2026, council further increased this to \$3 million until May 30, 2026, specifically for bushfire response and recovery expenditure. This is subject to monthly reporting.

Between October 22, 2025, and January 18, 2026, the CEO, Livia Bonazzi, exercised her delegation once within the \$300,000 to \$500,000 range: North Central Construction, Sealed Roads Rehabilitation Program 2025-26 (Break O’Day Road, Glenburn) for \$319,361.

No expenditure above \$500,000 has been incurred under the temporary bushfire response and recovery delegation.

Council noted the report.

## Endorsement of motions for ALGA National General Assembly 2026

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) represents 538 councils around Australia, and will hold its 2026 National General Assembly in Canberra from June 24 to June 27. This provides a national platform for councils to influence federal policy, debate emerging issues and contribute to ALGA’s strategic priorities.

Two motions for submission to the National General Assembly were put forward for council’s endorsement. Motion one calls for meaningful federal reform to address the unsustainable financial pressures facing local governments, informed by the findings of the ongoing national inquiry. Motion two calls for a nationally consistent legislative and data governance framework to create a harmonised, privacy-protected system for sharing disaster impact information across all levels of government.

Council endorsed the motions.

## Audit and Risk Committee confirmation of minutes

Council voted to note the minutes for the December 11, 2025, Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

## Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report July to December 2025

Steve Schinck, Audit and Risk Committee Chair, presented the report. At the final meeting of the year, the committee endorsed a three-year audit plan, with four audits scheduled for 2026. One of those will focus on council’s management of its privacy obligations, one on financial controls, one on tree management compliance, and one on contract management.

Council noted the report.

## Breakaway Bridge Acheron replacement design and construct 2025-2027

A report recommending the appointment of a contractor for the reconstruction of Breakaway Bridge in Acheron was brought before council. Awarding of this contract is conditional on the successful negotiation of funding and scope with the state government under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), given the bridge was damaged in flooding.

For background, Breakaway Bridge is located near the Breakaway Twin Rivers Caravan Park on Breakaway Road, some 1.8 kilometres north of the Maroondah Highway. It provides a cut through for local residents to travel between Acheron and Alexandra. During the October 2022 floods, 30 metres of the embankment north of the bridge was washed away, creating a new channel in the river. Lateral pressure on the bridge caused by a very large amount of timber debris compromised the steel reinforcing elements that had been installed in 2013.

Several options were considered for the reinstatement of the bridge following a detailed review by Murrindindi Shire Council bridge engineers. These were: 1. Demolish the existing bridge and build a new one; 2. build a new bridge on a new alignment and retain the existing bridge (with an extension) for pedestrian use; 3. construct additional spans, repair and extend the existing bridge; 4. fill in the northern approach, build a new wall and reconstruct the northern bank.

Council officers, with the assistance of an independent bridge designer, reviewed all four options. Option four was not supported by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and was therefore rejected. Option three was also rejected as it would not meet modern design standards and would pose an unacceptable community risk during future flood events. Option two was estimated to cost more than \$8 million.

Option one, of demolishing the existing bridge and building a new one, was assessed as the most economical solution with an estimated cost of approximately \$5 million.

Concept plans were developed for two options to span the now 100-metre river width. These include a single lane bridge as recommended by the Department of Transport, incorporating traffic signals to manage traffic conflicts during night-time and foggy conditions, and a dual lane concrete bridge which would not require traffic signals. Both bridges are designed to provide unlimited load capacity.

The DRFA approved funding of \$5,204,229 to replace the existing single lane timber and steel bridge with a longer single lane concrete bridge. The dual lane bridge option is still to be reviewed further by the DRFA on a value for money consideration. The lifetime costs for maintaining and supporting traffic signals are to be considered as part of the value proposition. It should be noted that the signals associated with the single lane option would be the only traffic signals in Murrindindi Shire.

The request for tender was advertised on the e-tendering portal from October 16, 2025. Due to the complex nature of the tender and subsequent requests from tenderers, the closing date for submissions was extended from November 20, 2025 to December 11, 2025 at 3pm.

Councillors posed questions about the report to Peter Bain, Sustainability and Assets Manager, during the meeting.

He stated that in terms of community engagement, there’s been a number of community meetings and surveys conducted, and that in the beginning opinions were split, but that in recent times people are more in favour of replacing the bridge. There will be opportunities for the community to have input into how the bridge is reconstructed, such as placement and river access, etcetera. The Department of Transport has already pre-approved an 80km/h speed limit for the area.

The report brought to council recommended that council: Award Contract CONT25/26 Breakaway Bridge Reconstruction to tender one for a total contract value of \$5,485,350 (ex GST) for a two-lane bridge, which includes provisional sums, subject to funding approval from the Department of Transport and Planning through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFFA); approve the total allocation of \$520,000 as a contingency amount to support the delivery of this contract as outlined in this report; and release the name of the preferred tenderer into the minutes of the February 25, 2026, scheduled meeting of council.

Council voted to accept the report and its recommendations.

## Councillor reports

Cr Carpenter attended the Alexandra Community Hub to see the presentation of letters of support for better funding of neighbourhood and community houses to Cindy McLeish to give to Minister Ros Spence. The Renewable Energy Guidelines are open for consultation until March 8.

Cr Lording reported that major patching works on Break O’Day Road, Glenburn have commenced and are nearing completion. Gravel road resheeting works are anticipated to be completed by the end of March, and include Cathedral Lane and Acacia Lane in Taggerty. He reminded people not to access closed roads.

Cr Gallagher stated that council has considered the proposed amalgamation of Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health, and has reaffirmed their clear position: Any reform must demonstrably improve health outcomes, service access, and equity for the Murrindindi community.

## CEO report

Ms Bonazzi stated that council’s secondary impact assessments are underway, with teams systematically visiting all properties in the bushfire footprint. Council are already issuing permits for temporary dwellings and sheds to support people to remain or return to their properties as quickly as possible.

She stated that council recognises that many residents have lost firewood stacks in the bushfires, adding to the pressure households are facing this winter. Fire-affected households across Murrindindi Shire will be supported with access to firewood through a council-managed supply. While council’s usual roadside firewood collection arrangements will continue to operate outside the fire-affected footprint, personal roadside collection within fire-impacted areas will not be permitted until September 2026 due to road closures, safety risks and the fragile condition of recovering roadsides and vegetation.



# Seatbelts save lives.

Driving unbuckled? If you or your passengers drive without a fastened seatbelt, you could each receive a \$407 fine. The driver will also face 3 demerit points. If you take risks while driving, chances are you will be caught.

**Anywhere. Anytime. Anyone.**



# Proudly supporting Student of the week

Community Bank · Yea &amp; District and Alexandra

 **Bendigo Bank**

## ALEXANDRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Amelia Roche



Amelia has shown her passion and leadership skills since starting grade six. She is showing fantastic enthusiasm and leadership this year. I am looking forward to working with Amelia in the leadership team this year. We are proud to have you in our learning community, Amelia. You are a star.

## EILDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Juniors - Ellie-Mae Jamieson



For demonstrating the school value **ACHIEVEMENT** by always doing the right thing with a positive attitude and being a wonderful role model for our new preps. Ellie-Mae, you are becoming unstoppable.

### Seniors - Shayla Smith

For demonstrating the school value **RESILIENCE** by making a deliberate effort to place adverbs into her sentences to make them more descriptive. Well done, Shayla.



## BUXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Arlo, Ziggy and Vinnie

Arlo, Ziggy and Vinnie for expressing their thoughts, feelings and ideas respectfully.



# Student of the Week

Proudly supported by  
Kinglake branch

 **Bendigo Bank**

## Postcards show Hub's importance

*Continued from Page 1*

Mc McLeish said, "Last week, I think it was Wednesday, on the steps of Parliament, there were a lot of people that got together for this cause to keep our doors open. And you can see the colours. It was such a spectacle, and they had a lot of colour and movement, and some funny songs to try and get their message across. And there were people from so far that had actually gone down to Melbourne because they believed so much in this cause. Paul Ewan came there and there was a crew from Bonnie Doon as well. You know, we had Alexandra, Yea, Flowerdale... I think the ask is annually \$11.7 million, which if you put it in context of \$15 billion wasted or \$48 million on machete bins, I think this gives a little bit better value because, like you, you would have seen the value that they offer. Really what stood out to me is in the last six weeks, probably, since the bushfires, how they've become real hubs and people stood up and worked such long hours and did so much and all of it wasn't paid for, it wasn't funded.

"I have appealed to the Premier's office a couple of times about increasing funding, specifically around the bushfires, and one of the things that I know has helped is there have been some donations which has allowed some stuff to be done, but that's not on an ongoing basis. We've, a number of times, presented cards to Minister Spence. I don't know that she was on the steps of Parliament and I didn't see her when I was there, but I'm very happy to take these back to support you. And it's so good to see so many people here, many of you in the yellow t-shirts."

Since the fires, the Alexandra Community Hub has been operating six days a week, with the two extra days unfunded. Sue commented, "The current four days aren't funded sufficiently either at the moment."

## Kevin and Sirikarn Mortley leave Rounda 3 after 15 years of operation

KEVIN and Sirikarn Mortley are saying goodbye to Rounda 3, having sold the fast-food business after 15 years of operation.

Kevin told the story of moving to Alexandra and buying the garden supply, then making the switch to running fast-food businesses just to do something different.

"I was in Powelltown. Nice little country town, to a bigger country town," Kevin explained.

"There were about 200 people when I was there, and the timber mill was going, but now I think it's stopped.

"I moved here, it would have been about 2007 or 2008, and I bought the garden supply. I think we did five years there.

"One year at the end of it, we ended up buying Rounda 1, which was round the corner,

and that's where my adventure started. That was 2011, two weeks before Easter. That led to 15 years of fun."

Operating three fast-food businesses in Alexandra, Rounda 1, Rounda 2 and Rounda 3, was a definite change of pace to the landscaping business in Powelltown.

"It was spur of the moment stupidity, which worked. I was just keen to do something completely opposite," Kevin said.

"I wanted to get out of the landscaping side of it, I had blokes working for me at the time. Most of our work was down Rowville, Ferntree Gully, all that. So from Powelltown to there everyday was a bit of a hike. I just saw that up for sale and thought let's go for it. Something completely different.

"We had three shops running at the same time. Rounda 1, we had Rounda 2 right

opposite the rotunda, which is now a clothes shop. All the same [food]. We had pies, homemade pies at Rounda 2.

"That went really well and yeah, just came to the stage where staff was the problem. So we downsized, and then we had one and three still going, got rid of number two, and then Karen Stillman bought number one. And this one just boomed."

Kevin said that while he won't miss the massive workload of running Rounda 3 seven days a week, or nine if he pulls a truck show all-nighter, he will miss his customers.

"I'm going to miss the customers. Work wise, no. Customers, yeah. And those stupid nights where I do the truck show all nighters, 40 hour shifts. No sleep, just straight through. It's fun, enjoying the drunks, they're all happy, which is good," Kevin reminisced.

"I'd like to say a big thank you to all them. The town has supported me real big time."

Asked about his plans for the future, Kevin made it clear that he was looking forward to a couple of months off, and that him and his wife Sirikarn would be staying local.

"Two months off, and just see what happens from there," he said.

"Not moving, I love the town. It's a good town."

He has memories associated with Alexandra now, of family.

"I had my boys working here all through their school days. The youngest one, he's gone into the education department now in the accounts, but the older one became a chef. So he's in the defence force, up in Cairns," Kevin said.

Asked about the new owner that will be taking over Rounda 3, Kevin gave a little bit of insight.

"The new owner, he comes from Queensland. He's had a shop up there exactly the same as this. So he knows what he's going to do," Kevin said.

"I think if people will give him a go, he'll do well. I wish him all the best and hope he does as many years as I do."



The former owners of Rounda 3 in Alexandra, Sirikarn and Kevin Mortley. -BD



# Heading to Moomba Festival or the F1 Grand Prix?

Victoria’s Big Build works continue across the state with road disruptions on Clyde Road and the Eastern and Princes freeways. These works could impact your travel into Melbourne to attend the F1 Grand Prix or Moomba Festival.



Avoid delays and check before you travel at [bigbuild.vic.gov.au](http://bigbuild.vic.gov.au)



# Anna's special tribute to local heroes

ANNA, a student at Alexandra Secondary College first learned to weld in her year nine Auto Welding class about a year and a half ago. She began by welding different shapes of steel together, gradually building her skills until she could confidently adjust the machines to achieve the correct settings for each job. Once she was competent, she needed a project to put her skills to the test.

At around the same time, the Alexandra Fire Brigade decided they would install a letterbox for the postie instead of continuing to rent a post office box. During a brigade meeting, the idea of a small fire truck-shaped letterbox was suggested. Not long after, when Anna was ready for a project, the idea was passed on to her.

With some wheelie bin wheels and axles that had belonged to the late Sue Dundas, the project quite literally got 'rolling'. The body was made entirely from 1.6mm black mild steel sheet. An off-cut long enough to form the sides and base was shaped to match the angle of the windscreen and the lower rear section over the 'tank'. Anna carefully cut and folded this piece, then fabricated the front panel, including a mail slot positioned at the top of the windscreen to fit an A4 envelope. This panel was tack welded into place.

Another sheet was prepared to extend from the windscreen sun visor to the back door, requiring 12 precise folds. It was formed from one continuous sheet, each fold completed in sequence, and then tack welded together with three additional small panels beside and at the bottom of the back door. Once satisfied with the fit, Anna welded every seam.

With the main fabrication complete, it was time to create the accessories that would truly bring the fire truck to life. She made detailed features including windscreen wipers, door mirrors, a bullbar, rollbar, light bar, triple extension ladder, side handrails for climbing onto the back, and swinging side steps mounted on bike chain, just like those on full-sized fire trucks, designed to swing out of the way if they clip a stump and then drop back down again.

Anna worked on these details during spare time in her VET Auto class, alongside another major car tray toolbox project she was completing in her Year 10 welding class. As the miniature fire truck began to take shape and sat nearly finished on a shelf in



Alexandra Fire Brigade Captain Chris Lynch with Anna. -S

the sheetmetal room, a junior class stopped to admire it. One student said to another, "That's Anna's Fire Truck."

Finally, a back door was fitted with hinges and lock tabs, and at the end of year 10 the entire project was painted in the correct fire brigade colours. Now in year 11, Anna carefully applied the finishing stickers to her incredibly detailed creation before proudly

presenting the completed fire truck letterbox, and its keys, to the brigade.

The timing of this gift makes it even more special given the recent bushfires.

Anna's own family experienced first hand the impact of the fires in January. While they were fortunate to save their home, they lost their hay shed and cattle yards.

This small fire truck letterbox now stands not only as a testament to Anna's skill,



patience and dedication, but also as a heartfelt thank you. As a community, Alexandra Secondary College are deeply grateful for the courage, commitment and countless volunteer hours given by our local fire brigade. They are there when we need them most, protecting homes, livelihoods and families, and Anna's thoughtful and beautifully crafted gift is a fitting tribute to the work they do for us all.

## 2026 school leaders at Alexandra Secondary College



Josh Crane. -S

### Josh Crane, College Captain

THROUGHOUT this year, my aim is to increase student participation in school sports days and to strengthen school spirit, both during these events and in everyday life around the school. When participation increases, our school becomes a more connected community and a place where students feel confident to get involved and have a go.

As this happens, school spirit naturally grows, fostering a shared sense of pride and belonging. Ultimately, this helps create a happier, more inclusive environment for everyone.



Xanthe Campbell. -S

### Xanthe Campbell, College Captain

My ambition for this year is to increase participation, as our school can sometimes struggle to get everyone involved. You don't have to be the smartest, most popular or most athletic person to participate. All you need is a positive attitude and a willingness to give things a go.

Getting involved isn't just good for you, although it does help you create lasting memories of your time at the college, it also benefits everyone else. Your participation can earn house points, increase competition and help build school spirit.

You don't need to commit to everything or be involved every day. Participation can be as simple as earning your house a single point or taking on the role of 'tree two' in the college production. Every contribution counts.



Stuart Thompson. -S

### Stuart Thompson, College Vice Captain

My goal as a leader is to help create a school where everyone feels a sense of spirit and pride, and where all students feel encouraged to be involved in every aspect of their schooling.

At the same time, I've set a personal goal for myself this year: to truly enjoy my final year of school, to be as authentic as possible, and not put too much pressure on myself when it comes to classes and grades.

I want to have fun, give everything a genuine go, and make the most of the opportunities and experiences that come with this final year.



Billie Bermingham. -S

### Billie Bermingham, College Vice Captain

I hope we can work together to build a stronger school community; one where students feel confident to speak up, try new things and be themselves. These are values that are strongly encouraged throughout our years at the school, and I truly believe that being authentic and embracing who you are will take you much further than you might expect.

I also want to encourage a mindset of no regrets, a mindset where we take opportunities, challenge ourselves, and give things a go without the fear of failure holding us back. My hope is that we can all look back on this year knowing we tried our best, supported one another, and made the most of every opportunity.

I'm really looking forward to a great year ahead.

# Bus rolled immediately into action after launch

THE Murrindindi Mobile Health bus came online on the Wednesday prior to the bushfires, so the timing could not have been better.

Yea and District Memorial Hospital CEO Elizabeth Sinclair said, "It's really been utilised pretty flat out since then, not just by the Yea and District Memorial Hospital but also Alexandra District Health and some community groups."

The bus has been parked in various parts of the shire since the fires, with practitioners operating out of it, giving local people access to healthcare providers, mental health support and advice, at a time when travel and access to care was limited.

Elizabeth said, "It's meant that we can get into those smaller communities where hubs have been set up and just go out there and take a variety of practitioners with us to try to meet those healthcare needs."

She also said that there are many hidden health impacts which emerge after disasters, particularly in the mental health space. She said, "We're just starting to see the mental health impact as people's adrenaline dies down and they begin to assess the damage and what's ahead of them... We need to be out and about and accessing you know those communities and making ourselves available. I think one of the things that really is important is that we actually go out to the communities and are proactive in our engagement of the communities, not sit back and wait for them to come to us because I think particularly the farming community is so busy doing things and trying to keep stock alive and access agistments and access hay and fix fences and organise insurance and all of those sorts of things. They're not really prioritising their own health needs. So if we can be handy to them, then that's really useful, and the bus has been amazing for that."

"We've taken it to a number of events and we've been invited by communities to their hubs for particular events where there's been barbecues and that enables us to take practitioners with us, but it also enables us to have a private space where people can seek assistance from us either regarding their mental health needs or regarding physical health needs."

She added, "I think that also, generally, as a community, people think that their health needs are less important than other people's health needs, and so stress and the anxiety and delayed treatment of coexisting issues often actually come to light when people are really put under pressure. Things that they've been kind of tolerating for a long time suddenly come to the forefront."

She also wanted to strongly acknowledge the contribution of Gerry Ryan in getting the bus up and running. The mobile health clinic means that the practitioners have a clean, airconditioned space where they can wash their hands between patients, and it's also highly accessible to people who may not otherwise prioritise things like skin checks. It's a "quick, accessible, free, private, non-threatening environment," she said. "People say, I wouldn't mind having a look inside and they hop inside and they sit down and then they start talking and it's those incidental conversations that actually often reveal bigger health issues in there."

People are often worried about going to the doctor for something that they think might be nothing. Elizabeth commented that "When you attend a GP clinic, you are in their world... [With the bus] We're going into their space and they choose when they come to see us, and they choose how they engage with that health service."

At the most recent Yea Saleyards event, mental health practitioners on the bus meaningfully connected with 22 locals, and practitioners also conducted 41 skin checks and 21 procedures were performed. Of those 17 basal cell carcinomas and two squamous cell carcinomas were identified.

The bus is collaborating with Rotary, seeking funding to expand the skin clinic program into the hub areas. Elizabeth said,

"It also has the effect of bringing people together as a group, even if they're just coming together as a group to stand and wait for their turn to have the skin check. The spin-off effect is that they actually are standing together and they get chatting. And I think those reasons for coming together are really important at the moment because those incidental conversations are really very important to health and wellbeing." As an added benefit, they can also share sun smart messaging.

She finished by saying that the bus is "an incredible community resource and we are so lucky to have it, and so grateful to the Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Traders Association and also Jayco. Gerry Ryan's generosity has really brought something that has been a dream of a number

of us to fruition and the timing of launch could not have been more perfect."

Gerry Ryan AO OAM Founder of Jayco was asked about what got him across the line when deciding to support the project. He responded, "When you spend time in regional communities, you see first-hand how distance and access can limit something as basic as healthcare. This wasn't about a vehicle, it was about removing barriers. Once we understood the impact it could have, supporting it felt like the right thing to do. Jayco has been in business for 50 years, and one thing I've learned is that you don't go the distance alone. You do it with the support of great teams and the communities that back you. If we're in a position to help, the only real question should be how."

He said of the impact of having the bus on the road in time to support the community

post-fire, "After the fires, communities need more than rebuilding infrastructure. They need support that comes to them. Having the van on the road quickly meant services could reach people when they needed it most, rather than expecting them to travel further during an already difficult time. In regional areas, timing matters. Being able to step in and help when it counts is something we're proud to be part of."

He added, "My hope is that it becomes a trusted and practical part of the region. If it helps people access care earlier, reduces pressure on local services and makes healthcare easier to reach across the region, then it's doing exactly what it was built to do. For us, it's about backing communities in a meaningful way. This is one practical way to do that."

## Did you know?



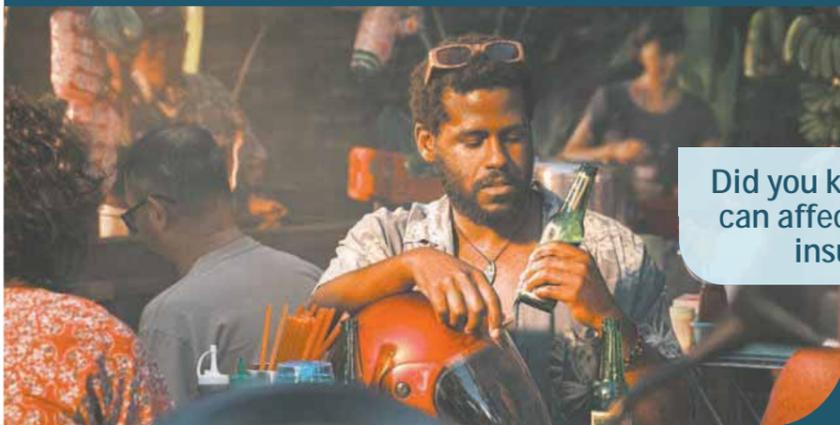
Australian Government



Did you know your medication may be illegal where you're going?



Did you know there are ways to prevent pickpockets?



Did you know drinking can affect your travel insurance?



With official advice, essential warnings and important tips, make your trip memorable for the right reasons.

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.gov.au  
know before you go



# Let's eat, it's our treat



Some of the beautiful food on offer at Sedona Estate. -S

## Sedona's cellar door



Inside the Sedona Estate cellar door. -S

**CELLAR DOOR**      **SATURDAY - SUNDAY**  
 182 SHANNONS RD      11.30AM - 5.00PM  
 MURRINDINDI      M 0432 435 180



## The benefits of biodynamic food and farming

BIODYNAMIC (BD) farming, and by extension, the food produced using this method, has many health benefits. This food is reported to have superior nutrient density, higher antioxidant levels, and is most notably free from pesticide and chemical residues.

An article titled, 'Biodynamic food for optimum health' on *biodynamic.com.au* describes many of the health effects of biodynamic food.

"Sought-after Geelong naturopath/homeopath, osteopath and acupuncturist, Kevin Ryan, recommends that his patients seek organic food to reduce exposure to chemical residues, and whenever they have a choice, to buy Biodynamic produce in preference, for optimum health," the article reads.

"Iridology signs indicate that most patients present with impaired liver function. Kidney and gut function are frequently compromised as well. This is contributed to by pesticide residue in foods.

"Organic food will provide the same freedom from chemical residues, but will not provide the same stimulus to vitality that BD food does.

"BD food is well known for its exceptional keeping quality. This reflects the enhanced vitality of the food. Food with lowered vitality wilts and breaks down more quickly."

For those who do not understand what biodynamic food is, it is a way of farming that aims to remain as natural as possible. Various organisations around the world oversee the practice, and rigorous paperwork and certification has to be completed before a farmer can start farming biodynamically.

The process offers many benefits, including no artificial fertilisers or pesticides, soil that is regenerated and improved, less risk of flooding, drought and fire hazards, food full of vitality and nutrients with no GMOs or chemicals, and relatively low-cost farming.

According to the website *kisstheground.com*, a "biodynamic farmer sees their farm as its own ecosystem, supporting the wellbeing of the whole: soil and shrubs, flowers and meadows, forests and wetlands, cultivated land, animals, and people.

"At its core, biodynamics creates habitats for plants and animals to thrive, which produces food that is full of vitality and nutrients. Biodynamics never uses Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) because it's aimed at preserving our environment and biodiversity.

"Soil fertility is of critical importance on Biodynamic farms. Healthy soil not only improves the content and flavour of biodynamic food, it is also the foundation for healthy ecosystems."

In an article published in *Wellbeing Journal*, Tharlya Crompton writes, "Biodynamics is an all-encompassing approach to farming and uses the sun, moon, stars and planets of Earth to bring about balance and healing, treating the farm as a living organism. One that's self-contained and self-sustainable."

The concepts of biodynamic farming were introduced by Rudolph Steiner all the way back in 1924. The process has come a long way since then, and more and more studies of the health benefits have been conducted over time.

In a paper titled 'A comprehensive analysis of organic food: Evaluating nutritional value and impact on human health', the authors scientifically listed the potential health benefits of eating organic. Biodynamic food is a step up from that.

"The goal of organic farming practices is to maintain soil health, sustain ecological systems, maintain fairness in its relationship with the environment and protect the environment in its entirety," the authors write.

"Various health benefits have been associated with higher consumption of organic foods. This review identified some of these health benefits, including a reduction in obesity and body mass index (BMI), improvements in blood nutrient composition as well as reductions in maternal obesity and pregnancy-associated preeclampsia risks.

"Furthermore, organic food consumption can reduce the development of non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) and colorectal cancers. Upon reviewing the existing literature regarding the nutritional value of organic foods, it was found that organic food contained higher levels of iron, magnesium and vitamin C."



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# Rapid Relief Team visits Ruffy

THE Rapid Relief Team (RRT) has praised the Victorian community of Ruffy for its resilience after a bushfire tore through the township. RRT has donated 215 kilometres of fencing wire to assist rebuilding efforts on Wednesday and Thursday, February 25 and 26.

RRT volunteers loaded up six semi-trailers with 115 tonnes of galvanised fencing wire and travelled up to 700km to Ruffy ahead of last Thursday's Farmers Community Connect event.

RRT General Manager Mick Dunn said more than 230 farmers attended the FCC event at Ruffy Hall, enjoying a free barbecue with their families and friends before heading home with a share of the donated wire.

"It was an emotional journey into Ruffy for our volunteers before this event. The Longwood bushfire in January destroyed so much and there is a long road to recovery ahead," Mick said.

"RRT was here cooking up meals for firefighters and the community during the fire emergency, and we knew we wanted to come back and do what we could to help them rebuild.

"The RRT is in awe of the fighting spirit of Ruffy residents, and the event hopefully helped boost their morale, share a laugh or a smile during a rough time, and remind them they aren't alone."

Farmers were able to connect with rural support services on site, and local state and federal politicians were in attendance.

Volunteers served more than 500 meals, including bacon and egg rolls and Signature Burgers, barista-brewed coffee, and Krispy Kreme donuts, and also handed out RRT Food Boxes for farmers to take home, full of non-perishable food items.

Member for Euroa Annabelle Cleeland MP said it was amazing to see the community come together. "When the chips are down, we've got each other's back which is really nice. Australian farmers are some of the most resilient and they rarely ask for help," she said.

Colleen Furlanetto OAM from the Ruffy Recovery Committee said the Longwood bushfire has had a significant impact around the Tablelands districts.

"Homes, farm infrastructure and significant parts of public infrastructure have been lost. For small communities, the scale of the damage has been deeply felt, and recovery will take quite some time," Colleen said.

Since 2018 RRT has held 35 FCC events supporting around 5800 Aussie farmers impacted by fire, flood or drought.

As the charitable arm of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, RRT supports frontline workers and emergency services by providing food, donations and other resources, as well as hosting events for the community.

Established in 2013 to assist emergency services in times of disaster and crisis by providing meals and other support, it's expanded to more than 16,500 volunteers and provides support to the community through charitable donations and events. For more information on RRT, visit [rrtglobal.org](http://rrtglobal.org)



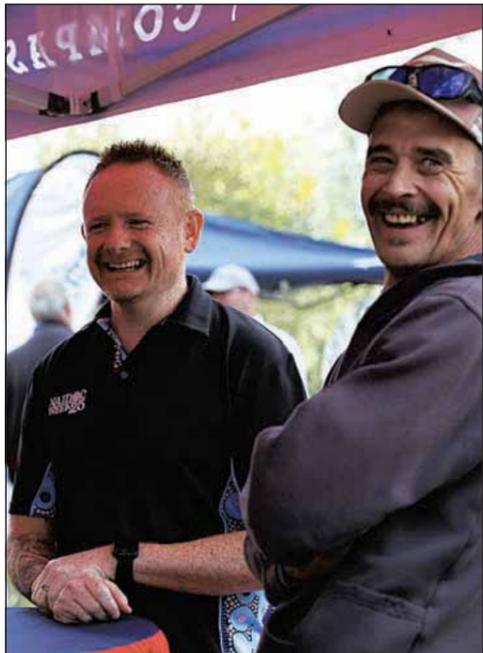
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UGFM were broadcasting on-site, and the musical entertainment was excellent. -BD



The folks from Alexandra Rotary, promoting their Easter Art Show raffle. -BD



Chris and Nathan from Alexandra District Health. -BD

# Dindi Daze in a damp haze

DINDI Daze took place last Saturday, February 28, in Rotary Park in Alexandra, despite the pouring rain.

Stallholders were friendly and welcoming, the musical entertainment was excellent, and there was a variety of different stalls to browse.

Powered by Alexandra Rotary, this was the second Dindi Daze to take place, celebrating all that is good in Murrindindi Shire.



Umbrellas were a must for the event due to rain. -BD



Chris Di Ciero and Lisa Atkinson from Victoria Police. -BD



Amanda Furlong and Rob Mitchell selling Sassy Sister Blueberry Liqueur. -BD



Members of the Eildon and District Woodworkers Association. -BD



Mark from Cordina Customs, selling his custom knives. -BD

# The Farmer's Ag News

## MLA secures grant to strengthen Australia-China cattle and red meat industry cooperation

MEAT and Livestock Australia (MLA) in partnership with industry peak bodies, has secured a grant from the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations to deliver a major new initiative designed to deepen engagement between Australian and Chinese cattle and red meat industry stakeholders.

The funding will support two major exchanges: an inbound delegation of emerging and established Chinese red meat industry leaders to Australia, followed by an outbound visit by Australian peak industry bodies to China.

Activities will culminate in the inaugural Australia China Livestock and Red Meat Industry Cooperation Forum, which will lay the groundwork for a potential industry-to-industry Memorandum of Understanding on issues of mutual benefit.

The project is supported by the National Foundation for Australia China Relations and aligns with the Foundation's mission to strengthen engagement between Australia and China in support of Australia's national interests.

MLA Managing Director Michael Crowley said the grant represents a significant opportunity to build on the long standing and successful trade relationship between Australia and China, and to further strengthen cooperation across the red meat and livestock sectors.

"China remains one of Australia's most important markets for red meat, and this grant enables MLA and our industry partners to strengthen the relationships and technical dialogue that underpin long term market access and commercial opportunity," Mr Crowley said.

"This support from the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations is vital in helping MLA build capability, deepen cooperation and foster a more resilient, trusted and collaborative cattle and red meat industry relationship."

CEO of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations, Gary Cowan, welcomed the project's contribution to strengthening bilateral industry engagement.

"Greater cooperation in the red meat industry will help strengthen the foundations of an important trade market and forge lasting connections. The Foundation is pleased to support high quality programs that bring together emerging and established leaders from Australia and China, which will help build more confident engagement with China and advance Australia's economic resilience," Mr Cowan said.

"The initiative will bring together peak bodies, researchers, producers and government linked technical agencies across both countries, creating structured industry dialogue on areas such as biosecurity, meat standards, genetics, feed systems and supply chain optimisation."

The National Foundation for Australia-China Relations is an Australian Government initiative that promotes and coordinates enhanced cooperation between Australia and China in support of Australia's national interests.

Its work includes strengthening risk informed engagement with China, engaging Chinese Australian communities, and supporting key Australian sectors including agriculture to engage effectively in China.



## First virtual fencing product approved for use

THE Victorian Government is making it easier and safer for farmers to raise cattle with the first approved virtual fencing technology.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence announced that the Halter's P5 electronic collar system is the first to be approved in Victoria for virtual fencing.

"We're making it easier for farmers to care for their herds and to deliver high quality beef and dairy produce to Victorian families," Ms Spence said.

"This approval makes sure Victorian farmers have access to the latest innovative technology."

This technology will help farmers to save on the cost of building and maintaining cattle fencing through smart, real-time technology.

The government have heard from many farmers using various forms of virtual fencing, and it was clear that the technology made a significant difference to the health of their stock, their pastures and their workloads.

Halter's P5 system features a collar connected to an app, allowing farmers to virtually fence, move and monitor wellbeing of their cows while receiving real-time insights into animal health and pasture conditions.

CEO and founder of Halter, Craig Piggott, expressed his excitement about the announcement.

"This is an exciting day for Victorian farmers, who can now access world-leading

virtual fencing and herding technology for dairy and beef," Mr Piggott said.

"We're really grateful to Minister Spence and the Victorian Government. This is obviously an exciting change, and I think this shows their support of agriculture and the sector, so we're excited to get going."

Farmers can virtually fence around waterways and sensitive land or vegetation, while still allowing native animals to access them, promoting faster pasture recovery, healthier riparian zones and reduced reliance on fertiliser.

The technology has been approved following rigorous animal welfare testing at the Ellinbank SmartFarm.

This will create over 70 new jobs, working directly with cattle farmers to install this technology.

Approvals are reliant on accurate record keeping and reporting, use of approved technology, training provided by the manufacturer, maintaining physical boundary fences or barriers and ensuring collars are checked regularly.

This technology is now available for purchase, with other Victorian manufacturers encouraged to apply so that more virtual fencing technology can be approved. A second application is currently being considered.

Electronic collars for livestock species other than cattle can only be used when a scientific licence has been granted under the POCTA Act, and the use is approved by an Animal Ethics Committees.

## New WorkSafe campaign to promote farm safety

EVERY farmer deserves to come home safely at the end of the day, and a safer farm is a stronger business.

A new WorkSafe campaign is encouraging Victorian farmers to see safety as an investment that protects lives, improves productivity and strengthens long-term success.

Deputy Premier Ben Carroll launched the *Safety – it does more than keep you safe* campaign, which highlights how simple safety improvements can make farms safer, more efficient and more sustainable.

"It's tragic to see farmers continuing to be overrepresented in workplace fatalities," Mr Carroll said.

"This campaign is about sharing the tangible benefits of simple safety improvements. I encourage those in the industry to look out for each other and share safety advice, knowledge and learnings, because it can make a difference."

The \$2.8 million campaign runs across television, radio, print, outdoor, digital and social media. It features real Victorian farmers sharing their own experiences.

Fifth-generation farmer Rob Abbott, who runs Mount William Station at Willaura, is one of them.

After upgrading his cattle yards, Mr Abbott found processing cattle became safer, quicker and less stressful for his animals, improving both safety and productivity.

Agriculture workers continue to be over-represented in workplace fatalities, accounting for around 10 per cent of annual workplace deaths despite making up just two per cent of Victoria's workforce.

Farm vehicles such as tractors, quad bikes and trucks account for almost half of those deaths. Livestock incidents remain another leading cause.

WorkSafe provides practical, industry-designed guidance to help farmers identify risks and make meaningful improvements on their properties.

Farmers are encouraged to talk with others in the industry about what works, share lessons learned and take simple steps that can prevent tragedy while improving the way they operate.

For more information visit [worksafe.vic.gov.au/agriculture](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au/agriculture)

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Craig Martin in his fire-damaged biodynamic orchard. -BD

# Fire affected farmers: Craig Martin

CRAIG Martin from Mill Spring Farm in Ruffly lost the farm's main house, sheds and machinery, fencing, and tools in the Longwood bushfires. His biodynamic orchard, which covers 15 acres of the 184-acre property and comprises some 4000 fruit trees, has suffered heavy damage from the fire and the heat.

Craig took time out of his busy recovery process to speak with this paper about the fire and its effects on his farming operations.

He started at the beginning, detailing fighting for the farm as the fire was approaching and then tearing through Ruffly on Thursday, January 8.

"On the day, in the morning, I plugged the fire cart into my sprinkler system and ran two tanks of water through that while I had coffee," Craig said.

"Things started getting more serious. We could see the smoke. I put another few carts of water around, so in total I put five full water carts on, 800 litres each, on the last one, I was down towards my house and I couldn't fit between the fire and my house."

He made the decision to fall back to the shed where he packs his fruit and find his partner Sue, who had gone ahead to get into the market ute with air-conditioning.

"I came up here and the fire was nearly as quick as I was. The red ute was in the shed with my partner in it. And she was meant to move out of that shed when she saw flames," Craig said.

"I basically realized Sue hadn't got out here quick enough. I've dropped the hose with it still running, gone in there, got in the passenger seat. She drove out and I stopped her here. In the relative shelter outside the shed.

"Grabbed the hose, put the flames on the back of the red ute out, ran around, and got in the driver's seat.

"From this position, I had to get past say 10 trees that are on fire and get down through that gap. I just thought to myself, this is it; it's just like going home. I know the timing, I drive from here, and I change gears there. I put the brakes on there. I drive down the paddock," Craig explained.

"And I just did that, with all of that invisible with the smoke. I didn't know if I was going to be able to see anything. But I knew that if I kept looking, I'd have enough landmarks to triangulate and I could see my way through the gate. So I got down there 100 metres, stopped and basically sat and shook."

The asphalt of his driveway had liquidated from the heat, and tyre tread prints where he escaped in the ute can be seen over a month later. The flames from the burning gum trees that line his driveway were higher than the shed.

"It was pretty much on the limit of what you can do, but you have to do it because if you

don't do it, you don't get to survive," Craig said. In the shed that Craig and Sue drove out of there were three freezers running off generators, one of which had 400 kilograms of beef inside, some 22 pallets of boxes ready for the fruit, and other packaging materials.

"I was set up. I had everything ready for the season and I had basically the best season that I could foresee," Craig said.

"This was going to be the one season in seven years that I made it. I got the cherries. The cherries are in the market. And I was about to pick peaches. We've watered peaches on the Wednesday morning, to keep them happy.

"And now it's gone from a potentially good looking year. Everything is dry and crispy. The only thing you see is suckers, green grass, just coming back, you're not seeing leaves on trees that give me any thought that I'll get anything back from this position."

Eleven out of Craig's 13 tractors perished in the fire, and he has lined up for cleanup companies to remove the sheds. He is focused on achievable progress.

"We can see each person who is entering this has their own recovery process. So for me, I've lost a heap of potential and I've got to have somewhere to start to progress forward and I want to be happy about something," Craig said.

"My first choice was to start restoring one tractor, because I restore tractors and clean them up for shows and farm with them and that means that I've now got something that's clean, it's not black, it's not fire damaged."

He took this paper for a walk around his orchard, showing the devastation, but also pointing out the new growth and the trees that he thinks will recover. Some trees look almost completely dead, their leaves withered and branches cracking, but on some trees small green shoots are appearing to give hope for the future.

In his orchard, Craig grows cherries, peaches, plums, apples, boysenberries, figs and quinces.

"I've still got to do the pruning. I've got to do work on trees and I don't know whether they're going to come back," he explained.

Looking at one of his apple trees, there were fresh green shoots on multiple branches. There was no greenery shooting below the graft, almost a foot up from the base of the tree. This growth looks like a tree that will live.

"Now, I've got to come back to Biodynamics here. This here is an apple tree. That apple tree got pretty much trashed. I'm saying I'm going to make something out of that within two years," Craig said.

"The thing is, if they don't start shooting below the graft, it means whatever energy they've got is going into the top of the tree."

Just prior to the interview, Ruffly received around 50ml of rain over the course of three days, bringing a degree of greenery back to the burnt landscape. Craig attributed a lot of the greenery to this weather.

"Have a look how green it is. That's what we're seeing here too. This is only from the rain and the fact that this biodynamic ground really didn't run water off it. Now this has got nothing to stop the water and you can tell, like a miniature river, it's flowed on some tracks. But really, once it gets in the hollow, it hasn't really run hard down there," he explained.

"We've had that rain in not many hours. This ground's ready to take the water in. It's really benefited. The second lot of rain hardly ran, but where there's a little like levee bank (from ash and debris), they all filled up as little pools, but they didn't run. The water stayed there and soaked in."

Looking to the future of Mill Spring Farm, Craig was optimistic. It will take a long time for the farm to return to the state it was in before the fires swept through, or perhaps never, but there is room for growth and change.

"The orchard is not going to be as big as it was if I can get it back. I'm going to have to cull out. I'm very close to deciding on culling out everything that was less than three years old as being too small to survive. But I better give it another couple of months just in case," Craig said.

"I also have a lot of potential with specific varieties where I can put focus, I'll be able to grow that variety and there's orchard stuff that I've got to be able to keep on with.

"What I'm thinking here, in very loose terms, is if you were a cattle person, that's had a fire. You would ship the cattle away, and let the pastures recover. Then bring the cattle back.

"I can't ship the trees away, but for the next while, I've got nothing to feed them on. There's not the grass, so that'll have to grow again. And then when I can, I'll get the trees back into being looked after properly and farm them again.

"And maybe next year or the year after, that will be the amount of stock I'm running. If you think of the trees as the stock, I'll have that much stock to make money with. The thing is you can't move trees out of the way like Animals."

Asked about what percentage of the orchard perished, Craig was able to give a rough overview of what he thinks will recover and what has to be written off.

"If I get 50 per cent harvestable in two years time, I'd say that would be doing a good thing. The thing is, a couple of days I went to the site there was nothing. There were only dead trees," he said.

"That's my plum tree here. I knew this one wasn't bad because next to the track it wasn't as hot. There are green leaves on that one. There's a couple there. There's a potential of trees to come back.

"I've got 900 little trees that I figure are just going to have to go. That's two years of shoveling, digging them in. And all the work that it takes. And then I think these might be the next on the list. It wouldn't surprise me if the peaches, that variety and the next variety growing near the gum trees along the driveway will not be worth saving. But the decisions are a little bit in the future.

"My short date is two years."

Craig has received a lot of bushfire recovery support, as have many in the fire zone, and is extremely grateful for all of it. He's taking note of how important people consider the orchard, when people come and help, I consider them to be some of the most important people in my life," he said.

I've had a lot of people contact me and say they're aware that I'm in trouble here.

"For example the head of Biodynamic Marketing come up himself personally to actually do a day's work and to see that I was okay, to talk to me, to check out what they could do. And then he delegated to his people to look after us as well."

Craig finished by talking about his biodynamic farming, and the fact that he is now a test case for how biodynamic practices compare to traditional farming practices after a fire.

"I'm also a bit of a test case for biodynamics. If you have a fire through a biodynamic farm, how does it go? How does it compare," he said.

"As in, how does it compare to my friend who's got a few fruit trees that have had heat, but they're not biodynamic? So I'm doing a little bit of photo record keeping.

"The biggest thing about biodynamics is what we don't use. We would actually qualify for every organic certification anyway on the way past to getting a biodynamic certification. We use none of the stuff that is even allowable by organic people.

"We have some things we can use, like if I wanted to use straw in this emergency, we can use biodynamic straw and have a paper trail for it. There are a few hoops to jump through."

It was Craig's father that started farming biodynamically, with Craig taking up the mantle later on.

"Basically, Dad was really looking for a way of farming without chemicals because of the danger of the unknown substances that we were told were okay, but didn't seem to be okay in the long run. It was definitely to avoid using chemicals and avoid marketing fruit that had chemical taints in it," he finished.



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**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS** **Standard** **The Sea Chronicle**



Members of the Murrindindi Historic Vehicle Register at lunch. -S

## Murrindindi Historic Vehicle Register club visits Marysville

ON Wednesday, March 18, 26 members of the local Murrindindi Historic Vehicle Register club arrived at The Pavilion, Bar and Grill at Marysville for a lunch.

This restaurant is located at Marysville Golf Course and provides a wonderful view out onto the lush green landscape with their watering systems working, instead of the dry desert everywhere else.

Some people met at Rotary Park in Alexandra, while others who live closer made the choice to meet at Marysville. No morning tea for this run and probably just as well as the meals were plentiful.

There were many choices and everyone seemed to be very happy with their meal, although there were some that had 'meal envy' when the meals started coming out and started to rethink their meal choice.

After lunch, committee member Sandra ran the raffle to replenish the kitty, as money raised through previous member raffles in 2025 had been donated to local charities. One major contribution was \$700 donation for the bushfire relief efforts via Foundation Murrindindi and an annual donation to Alexandra Secondary College of \$250.

Well done to the small team at The Pavilion Bar and Grill for accommodating the group. The meals were great, prompt to the table and the service was fantastic.

Congratulations to committee members Sandra and president Phil for recognising that local businesses are doing it tough due to the devastating fires in the area and organising to support local businesses with the 2026 car run calendar.

**PUZZLES SOLUTIONS**

**CRYPTOGRAM**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
26 3 9 5 24 13 16 4 11 8 17 6 12

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
23 19 7 10 25 22 18 1 21 20 15 14 2

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I	A	D	M	I	R	A	L	
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N	E	R	A	S	E	R	S	

**MATH SQUARES**

6	+	4	x	7	34
-		+		+	
9	-	1	-	8	0
x		-		-	
5	+	2	+	3	10
-39		3		12	

**SUDOKU**

8	7	4	3	6	1	9	2	5
5	2	1	7	4	9	6	8	3
3	9	6	2	8	5	1	7	4
7	4	8	9	1	3	5	6	2
2	6	3	5	7	4	8	9	1
9	1	5	6	2	8	3	4	7
4	8	9	1	5	2	7	3	6
1	3	7	4	9	6	2	5	8
6	5	2	8	3	7	4	1	9

**KIDS - MATH SQUARES**

6	+	4	-	7	3
+		+		-	
8	-	1	-	2	5
-		-		-	
3	+	5	+	9	17
11		0		-4	

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## MEETINGS

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**YEA Saleyards committee of management.**  
 Notice of annual general meeting.  
 Tuesday, March 10, 2026.  
 The Yea Saleyards Community Asset Committee of Management (\$65) will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 5pm at the Yea Saleyards canteen.  
 Enquiries can be directed to Coordinator Saleyard Operations, Lisa Elward 0419 722 570.

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## BIRTHDAYS

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**TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY**

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# Murrindindi Little Athletics finish season on a high

MURRINDINDI Little Athletics wrapped up its final local competition day last Saturday, marking the end of another successful and energetic season. A fantastic turnout of enthusiastic athletes arrived ready to give their best efforts one last time, all eager to improve on their personal performances before the season's close.

Despite steady rain throughout much of the morning, spirits remained high across the track and field. The challenging weather did little to slow competitors, with many athletes achieving impressive personal best results, a testament to their determination, resilience and commitment throughout the season.

The club is now excited to be sending a strong group of athletes to represent Murrindindi at the upcoming State Track and Field Championships in Melbourne. The community looks forward to following their achievements, with stories, results and photos to be shared in the coming weeks.

Murrindindi Little Athletics would like to sincerely thank its dedicated committee members, parents and volunteers whose ongoing support and countless hours of work behind the scenes and particularly on Saturdays make the season possible. Their contribution continues to create a positive and encouraging environment for all young athletes in the club.

The club now looks ahead to celebrating the season at its Presentation Night, to be held on Friday, March 20 at Rotary Park. Members and families are warmly invited to come together to recognise the efforts and achievements of all athletes and volunteers.

A wonderful season has come to a close, highlighting once again the strong community spirit and passion for sport within Murrindindi.



Personal best medallion recipients. -S



PJ Smith focussing while her group looks on. -S



Cate Caswell in the under 16 javelin. -S



Jo and Donna running the all important electronic timing. -S



Club records went to Levi Campbell in 1500m and Clay Hilder in shot put. -S



Logan giving it everything during his shot put on Saturday in preparation for state the following weekend. -S

# Jacki Tossol on her time in the teaching profession

NEWLY retired Alexandra Secondary College teacher Jacki Tossol kindly agreed to answer a series of questions about her time as a teacher.

## *Are you able to outline your background in education?*

I ORIGINALLY studied Environmental Science as part of a four year Bachelor of Education (teaching) degree with Methods in Environmental Science, Science and Geography.

I began my career in education in 1980 teaching Science and Geography at Dimboola Memorial High School in the Wimmera region. Coming from East Gippsland, the flat, hot plains of the Wimmera were a shock. I missed the temperate climate, the varied terrain, the forests and the ocean of the far east.

I stayed at Dimboola for three years and then took leave for 12 months to backpack around the world having planned a geography-rich tour. I travelled through Europe, including behind the Iron Curtain and through Belfast during 'The Troubles', explored the game parks of Central and East Africa and walked all key national parks in the USA. I always loved geography, but this year of continual travel through countries with such varied terrain, history, culture and politics cemented my love for this discipline and ignited a particular interest in geo-politics.

On my return to Australia in 1984, I was unsure whether to return to teaching or not. An alternative career in the travel industry was appealing. However, I was offered a position at Alexandra High School (AHS). At that time, AHS was viewed as the number one school in the state to get a position at, largely because of its Environmental Science program and extensive camps program. Camps were held at all year levels, seven to 12, and excursions were numerous. I visited Alexandra prior to accepting the position. Leaving Alexandra and driving south from Acheron looking out towards the Cathedral Range, I thought this country was equal to the most beautiful I had seen anywhere in Australia. And so, because of its geography, I accepted the position as the leading Geography teacher at AHS. My teaching goal from this time onwards was to ignite a shared passion for geography in my students.

My teaching load changed significantly over the years at Alexandra Secondary College (ASC). In the 1990s, Victoria pursued a policy to promote Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in schools. However, there were very few language teachers in Victoria and even fewer in rural Victoria. Having previously studied three languages, I was interested in retraining and was supported by the Education Department to do so. I studied Japanese as part of a Post Graduate Diploma in Modern Languages with Melbourne University. Together with Steve Mitchell, we introduced Japanese at AHS, leading the first tour to Japan in 1995. Later, computers and the World Wide Web came to AHS. John Taylor was the innovator in establishing computing in our classrooms. He encouraged my own interest in computers, and I subsequently studied a Graduate Diploma in Information and Communications Technology in Education leading to me teaching ICT.

During my time at ASC, I taught five different subjects in three different learning areas. While I enjoyed each of these subjects, Geography was always my passion. Prior to my retirement at the end of 2025, my request to create an annual Humanities Award to be presented at our end-of-year Presentation Night was approved. Students studying Humanities (History and/or Geography) in years seven to 10 are eligible to be considered for this award. The recipient of the award is expected to illustrate a genuine passion for the Humanities and demonstrate the qualities of a positive global citizen. Year 10 student Max Gleeson was the first recipient of this annual award in 2025.

## *How has education changed during your time as an educator? Both negatives and positives?*

I loved the camping programs of the 1980s and 1990s. These camps involved 'real' camping and were very adventurous. AHS was fortunate to have so many experienced teachers on staff during these decades including Roy Clarke, Chris Hume and John Taylor, all of whom had considerable expertise in outdoor



*Hiroshima Peace Park. -S*

education. Looking back, bush camping along the Oodnadatta Track, exploring the underground river at Mt Buffalo and being guided around Hiroshima Peace Park by a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing were particularly memorable moments. Good at any time, these moments were made all the more memorable by being able to share them with so many students.

Today, ASC punches above its weight compared with like schools, but flexibility in being able to take education outside the classroom has been compromised by the many demands and departmental restrictions on school operations, along with high associated expenses.

I have really missed being able to take students out into the community to explore at first-hand what must otherwise be found in the classroom in textbooks or on YouTube videos.

Computers have revolutionised teaching and learning. However, they along with increasing departmental demands, have resulted in unexpected and significantly increased demands of teachers.

## *What will you miss most about the role?*

I will miss the energy and dynamic nature of ASC. Schools are amazing places to work. I love change and you can be guaranteed of change every day in a school. No one lesson is ever the same as another. I will really miss my daily interactions with both students and colleagues, just as I will miss contact with parents and guardians. It has truly been a pleasure working with others to support each student's learning journey.

## *What are you most proud of from your time at ASC?*

I feel most proud when students (current and ex) or their parents tell me that I made a difference; that my actions helped students to become more confident or inspired them in their selection of their future pathway.

I am also proud to have initiated, organised and facilitated programs to provide opportunities for ASC students not routinely offered to students in small rural schools.

In particular, I am proud of the college's biennial international tour to Japan. To date, I have led 14 Japan tours. During these tours we have been actively supported in-country by Kenichi and Miku Uchino, previous residents of Alexandra who at one time were volunteers in our local schools. This contact has supported students on Japan tours to quickly adjust to becoming confident and responsible travellers, resulting in open-



*Humanities Award winner Max Gleeson with Jacki Tossol. -S*

mindedness and tolerance when dealing with language and cultural differences. These skills are important in an increasingly multi-cultural Australia.

Success in applying for and acting as liaison teacher with the Department of Education's year nine School for Student Leadership (SSL) program over the past 14 years is something else I am proud of.

Both the Japan Tour and SSL are two standout programs supporting the development of leadership and teamwork skills in our students, and also in expanding their global perspectives.

## *What do you wish that people knew about the teaching profession?*

It is far more varied than you might think. If you like working with teenagers and enjoy working with others in a team environment, then teaching may well be for you. There are opportunities through further study or professional development offerings to expand your skill set and be involved in a wider range of programs than you may have thought possible.

## *What's next for you?*

I have a lot of projects that have been on hold for a few years, which I am keen to make a

dent in. One of these is writing my family histories. While I have written two already, I have another two to go. Research takes an enormous amount of time, and I am looking forward to being able to devote the required time to tackle these.

I was fortunate to have been selected as Lead Teacher Chaperone for the Premier and Cabinet's Spirit of ANZAC Prize in 2024. This involved escorting 12 students to Türkiye to explore significant sites relating to Australia's involvement in the Gallipoli Campaign. Each year I take my year nine and 10 students to visit the Shrine of Remembrance to explore Australia's involvement in the world wars, yet in the past two years it has become more difficult to schedule these visits as the shrine has halved their education program offerings to schools largely due to a lack of volunteer staff. I am hoping to be able to explore the opportunity to become a volunteer guide in education services at the shrine to help alleviate this issue.

## SPORT

## SDCA cricket reports

*A Grade*

YEA Tigers 6/103 (J Christie 43, B Hardinge 22, L Deeble 3/9, C Crabbe 2/19) defeated Puckapunyal 9/101 (J Baker 17, C Crabbe 15, C Blake 2/6, A Butterworth 2/11).

Puckapunyal batted first at Yea and got off to a solid start before Andrew Butterworth claimed the key wicket of Charles Davies.

Across a tight spell of 2/11 off eight overs Butterworth slowed Puckapunyal down with both Ethan and Craig Blake also taking multiple wickets.

Joel Baker with 17 and Christopher Crabbe with 15 were the pick of Puckapunyal's batters.

In Yea's run chase it was Jack Christie who stole the show, smashing 43 off 33 balls with seven fours and one six.

Biron Hardinge also got the runs ticking over before Lachlan Deeble (3/9) caused some temporary chaos.

Yea was still able to get over the line with four wickets left in the shed in the 18th over.

Alexandra 99 (S Whitehead 21, W Ashton 21, K Winnell 4/12, T Dundon 3/18) defeated Tallarook 8/96 (L Watts 37, J Rudge 23, J Leary 3/14, W Ashton 2/19).

Alexandra batted first after a delayed start with Scott Whitehead commencing the innings with positivity.

Kal Winnell (4/12) and Tarkyn Dundon (3/18) continued their strong seasons with Will Ashton and Matthew Wal putting together a critical lower order partnership to get Alexandra to a score of 99.

Both Josh Rudge (23) and Lachlan Watts (37) put together solid innings for Tallarook but it was not enough as Alexandra caused an upset.

Justin Leary picked up three key wickets while Will Ashton claimed a couple as Tallarook fell three runs short.

Alexandra now sits in the top four and can remain there if they beat Seymour in the final round.

*B Grade*

Tallarook 5/117 (K Minter 44, S Manchester 31, J Ferrier 3/15) defeated Alexandra 115 (L Ronalds 46, F Melville 4/22, B O'Donnell 2/15).

Yea Tigers 45 (P Clue 17, B Kingston 4/15, P Brennan 3/30) defeated by Puckapunyal (P Brennan 33, S Chisholm 15, Z Mills 4/16, R Daniel 2/29).

*Junior Finals*

Under 13s on Saturday, March 7 at 8.30am. Alexandra versus Yea at Alexandra.

Under 16s on Sunday, March 8 at 9.30am. Seymour versus Yea at Seymour.



Some of the ASC students with their medals. -S



The swimming carnival provided fun for students. -S

## A day of colour, competition and records at Alexandra Secondary College

by Ally Crouch, Sports Coordinator Alexandra Secondary College

FRIDAY, February 13, proved to be anything but unlucky as the Alexandra Secondary College (ASC) Swimming Carnival delivered an incredible day of colour, competition and school spirit.

With vibrant house colours filling the poolside and students cheering passionately from the stands, the atmosphere was electric from the first race to the final relay. It was fantastic to see students giving their all in both competitive and novelty events.

Beyond the racing, Cumming House dominated the Water Volleyball competition, taking home the Volleyball trophy in convincing fashion.

The highly anticipated student versus staff relay returned this year. While there were playful questions around participant selections and techniques from both sides, it was fantastic to see the staff take home the trophy, the first time since 2020.

Congratulations to Long House for claiming the overall Swimming Carnival title. The day was a true celebration of participation, resilience and sportsmanship, and a credit to all students and staff involved.

*ASC Swim Carnival 2026 Age Champions*

Twelve to 13 year old Women

RUNNER up, Ashleigh Francis; Age champion, Zoe Coller.

*Twelve to 13 year old Men*

Runner up, Ethan Boulton; Age champion, Clay Hilder.

*Fourteen year old Women*

Runner up, Asher Mullins; Age champion, Koa Parker.

*Fourteen year old Men*

Runner up, Riley Cole; Age champion, Harish Balansag.

*Fifteen year old Women*

Runner up, Mia Heard; Age champion, Charlotte Boulton.

*Fifteen year old Men*

Runner up, Jordan Carr; Age champion, Levi Campbell.

*Sixteen year old Women*

Runner up, Cassie Kidd; Age champion, Zoe Mullins.

*Sixteen year old Men*

Runner up, Logan Conway; Age champion, Charlie Irwin.

*Seventeen year old Women*

Runner up, Phoebe Kidd; Age champion, Marli Coller.

*Seventeen year old Men*

Runner up, Brayden Stewart; Age champion, Max Gleeson.

*Eighteen to 20 year old Women*

Runner up, Ava Virtanen; Age champion, Xanthe Campbell.

*Eighteen to 20 year old Men*

Runner up, Archie Gibson; Age champion, Archie McGahy.

*New records*

Charlotte Boulton set a record of 1.36.89 for 15-year-old women's 100m Breaststroke.

Koa Parker set a record of 38.11 for 14-year-old women's 50m Backstroke.

Koa Parker set a record of 34.21 for 14-year-old women's 50m Butterfly.

Koa Parker set a record of 2.34.62 for 12 to 15-year-old women's 200m Freestyle.

Koa Parker set a record of 31.68 for 14-year-old women's 50m Freestyle.

Koa Parker set a record of 43.32 for 14-year-old women's 50m Breaststroke.

Leah Cole set a record of 36.43 for 16-year-old women's 50m Freestyle.

*House results*

First was Long; second was Cumming; third was Weinberg; fourth was Bainbridge.

## Marysville Golf Club report

by Lesley Rundle

LAST week was a busy one for all the Yea Golf Club members as they prepared to host 91 golfers last Saturday in the final round of the 2025/26 FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters.

Hosting the final round is particularly challenging as the scores from all four rounds have to be calculated and final trophies presented. To encourage golfers to attend the final round a new initiative was established with the names of all those who had played three rounds placed in a box. One name was drawn randomly to win \$100 voucher from FoodWorks and the winner had to be present for the draw.

The lucky inaugural winner was Len Jenkins from Alexandra. Some Marysville players had good scores and received very generous vouchers from FoodWorks. Jody Doran won the ladies A Grade with 33 points followed by Sabrina Stow with 32 points. Naomi Gist won B Grade with 40 points and the Marysville men took out the B Grade prizes with Peter Lilley winning with 36 points followed by Keith Atwell with 35

points. Adam Littlejohn won the nearest the pin on the 18th hole.

Marysville members congratulate all the winners from the other clubs in particular Sandi McClear and Alan Mackwell from Eildon for winning the 2025/6 Masters titles.

A new trophy was presented this year for a team event. After each round the top 10 scores from each club, excluding the home club, were totalled and the top scoring team after three rounds received the appropriately named Normie Trophy-named after Norm Redropp whose idea it was to establish the now very popular Murrindindi Masters event.

The tension in the room was palpable as the team scores were read out and cheers were loud when Yea were declared the winners with 1045 points. Marysville were second with 1026 points followed by Eildon 1015 and then Alexandra with 926. FoodWorks and their representative Cathie Harper were thanked profusely for their continual and growing support of the event and Cathie's presence at each round to present the trophies was noted and appreciated. Cathie is enjoying



Winners at Yea Masters. -S

her golf lessons and maybe next year she will be on the receiving end of some trophies?

Last Thursday, Marysville ladies played in the annual ladies bowl at Alexandra. Congratulations to the Alexandra team for winning their own bowl and to Marysville

member Heather Jenkins for winning A Grade.

Next Saturday Marysville will host Lakeside Golf Club. Lakeside have to vacate their course for the Grand Prix, and they come to Marysville each year to play a stableford round in the annual Lakeside Challenge.

# Alexandra Squash Club: Round four of term one pennant

by Kristelle Leary

## Monday competition Magpies versus Cockatoos

JUSTIN (fill in) versus Jordan: Jordan came late and had Justin fill-in against him, with the request that his opponent does not hold back. Jordan had some good returns to Justin's skill and held out, but Justin had the upper hand throughout. 113 to 31.

Ethan versus Randy (fill in): With his opponent running late Ethan had Randy fill in against him. Ethan had some good shots, but Randy was all over the court to take the match. 56 to 53.

Randy versus Liane: Great game. Liane made some technical adjustments against Randy's serve that made the difference. Liane claimed the win. 74 to 48.

Matt versus Ben F: It was a brilliant match to witness. Matt was running the court like the jackrabbit he is, but Ben was on a hot streak that couldn't be broken, playing some beautiful squash to claim a well earned victory. 55 to 46.

John versus Phil: With time comes experience and John put his to good use. Phil made a good play for each game but only managed to win the final game. John's expertise helped him in his triumph. 63 to 45.

## Pelicans versus Eagles

Tyler versus Eric: There were some great rallies. Tyler opened by nabbing the first game by a single point. From there he only increased his margin from there, taking all four games and the match. 65 to 46.

Ben F (fill in) versus Justin: In a continuation of his brilliant form, Ben was on fire. Justin put in 110 per cent but couldn't best Ben. With a second match under his belt for the night, Ben was the winner. 64 to 50.

Michael H versus Daniel W: Michael started strong. Daniel came home winning three games using shots deep to the back of the court. Daniel was the winner. 59 to 52.

## Wednesday competition

### Freightliners versus Western Stars

Nicole versus Jessica: With strong serves, Jessica shot out of the blocks only to be reeled back as Nicole levelled the first game. Jessica regained her momentum with deeper serves and good use of angles. Nicole doggedly ran the ball down and made the game close again. Jessica took the last game and the win. 51 to 44.

Sam versus Daniel L: With Sam running late, Kristelle filled-in for the first two games which did not go her way. She struggled with Daniel's cracking and powerful serves. Sam turned up and made Daniel adjust his game. With good returns and placement, Sam won the match. 62 to 60.

Michael M versus Ben F: In a high-intensity match, Michael gave away big leads in each of the first three games. Ben was able to play with a few centimetres more accuracy and variety. This was enough to keep his opponents' late attacks at bay and deliver a well-earned victory. 56 to 49

### Kenworths versus Scantias

Kristelle versus Travis: Travis was doing well and took the first two without too many issues from Kristelle. Going into the second half Travis had a 14-point lead. Kristelle started closing the gap, starting with three-point in the third followed by a further 10 points in the last game. Her streak came too late and Travis one by a single point. 68 to 67.

Daniel K versus Justin: Daniel had his shots cracking off the wall. It was closer in the first half with an 11-point difference, but Daniel raised the bar continually to dominate. 75 to 35.



Daniel reaches out to flick up Sam's low shot. -S



Bowl winners Marie Stace, Ruth Worland and Sue Greatorex. -S

## Alexandra Golf Club hosts the Alexandra Ladies Bowl

by Dave Silverman

THE threat of thunderstorms seems to have been enough to put a few people off last Tuesday, but seven die-hards turned up and took the punt. As it turned out, the storms and most of the rain stayed away, and Nigel Waterhouse continued his run of good form, recording a very impressive 43 points to take the win. Leo Dynes was second with 38, and third went to Brad Newton with 37.

Nobody managed to get a tee shot onto the seventh green, but Leo took the nearest the pin on 17, and 18 went to Greg Millard. Welcome back, Shonky.

Greg (a.k.a Shonky) also picked up a rundown voucher, as did Russell Purcell.

Only a handful of ladies played a social nine holes last Wednesday, as most of them were keeping their powder dry for the big day on Thursday, the Alexandra Ladies Bowl.

And so, bright and early Thursday morning, 30 ladies from around the Dalhousie District converged on Alexandra to compete for the coveted bowl. There were some great scores recorded, but, in the end, the locals came out on top, winning the bowl with a combined total of 112 points, with Seymour in second on 108. Congratulations to winning team members Ruth Worland (43 points), Marie Stace (41 points) and Sue Greatorex (28 points).

The grade winners were Heather Jenkins (Marysville) 35 points, Donna Cole (Seymour) 41 points and Penny Britton (Yea) 36 points.

Due to the fact that the Yea round of the FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters was played on Saturday, there was no competition at Alexandra. At the time of writing, no details of how players fared against the Yea course were available to me, but I'm sure all competitors had an enjoyable day.

## Alexandra cricketers struggling at the end of the season

by Michael Mawson

AN under-strength Alexandra team travelled to Tallarook and lost to the ladder leaders. This has been the third consecutive loss in a terrible finish to the regular season. However, the Redbacks were competitive and showed that they can be a threat in the upcoming finals.

With several players unable to play due to injuries or other commitments, Tim Polson and fourteen-year-old Will Donahue re-joined the side. Veteran purveyor of dad-jokes, Brett Christie also answered the call.

On arrival in Tallarook, the captain, Michael Mawson lost the toss and the Redbacks were told to bat by Tallarook's Kieran Minter.

Mawson's miserable batting season has seen more ducks than a sideshow shooting gallery. On Saturday he made it three ducks in a row after lofting an idiotic drive off the bowling of Braedon Dundon and being caught. Tim Polson batted with more sense and accumulated 10 runs before falling to the leg spin of Finn Melville. Harrison Christie lucklessly edged a ball to the wicketkeeper for three.

Levi Ronalds' innings was again the highlight for the Redbacks. He hit eight boundaries and clouted 46 runs off 44 balls.

### Merton cricketers are into the WDCA finals

MERTON cricketers have finished top of the Wangaratta and District Cricket Association (WDCA) b grade ladder with the finals starting next Saturday.

Merton will host sixth placed Yarrowonga after Ovens Valley United forfeited to Merton last Saturday.

The top six going into finals week is. Merton 75 points; City Colts 66; Rovers Bruck United 66; Ovens Valley 66; Greta 63; Yarrowonga 60. Finals are all 36 over one day matches starting at 1.30pm.

Ronalds was aided by the home side dropping regulation catches. After Ronalds gave one chance too many, wickets tumbled in quick succession. Reigan Kuttikadan and Will Ellis were tricked by Melville's leg-breaks. Luke Wal put a high price on his wicket and saw off 45 balls before becoming Melville's fourth wicket.

Brett Christie played an innings that was as absurdly entertaining as his sense of humour. He was given a chance after hitting a ball so vertically high that it caused the Tallarook fielders to become confused and disoriented. They stood inertly like frightened lizards as the ball fell to the ground. Christie departed a few balls later when he smacked a ball back to Sam Manchester who caught it in a state of terrified panic. Dusty Fitzpatrick and Will Donahue provided resistance via sensible strokeplay until a running mix-up saw Donahue out and the innings end on 115.

One hundred and fifteen was going to be a hard target to defend. However, the Redbacks opening bowling pair of Jordan Ferrier and Will Ellis gave the visitors cause for optimism with economical bowling that yielded a wicket each. Matt Whitfield and Braedon Dundon were both sent packing for ducks after being caught behind by Mawson.

Tallarook's next pair of Kieran Minter and Samuel Manchester had more success and were able to eke some runs off the slower bowling of Ronalds and Kuttikadan. Ronalds was very glad to claim the wicket of Minter. Kuttikadan bowled well but could not get a breakthrough this time around.

The re-introduction of Ferrier saw him get two wickets and revive the slightest hope of a win. However, Brendon O'Donnell had the experience and nous to patiently guide Tallarook to victory.

This loss leaves Alexandra on third place in the league ladder and equal on points with Pyalong and Avenel. If the Redbacks defeat Seymour in the final round, then this assures the team of third place and a final. A loss would risk a finish of fifth and missing the finals altogether. Good luck to the home team next round.

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Lauren Gilchrist was the Alexandra club champion for women. -S



Ken Argent was the Alexandra club champion for men. -S

## Alexandra Bowls Club players aim for champion of champions

by Marie Evans

THE Pennant Season may have finished for the Alexandra Bowls Club but there is still plenty of bowls being played by club members.

Club Champions Lauren Gilchrist and Ken Argent played in the Singles Champion of Champions at Tatura and Tatura Hilltop last Sunday. The Club Triples has thrown up some surprises. Mixed pairs, men's triples, mixed triples, 100 up, President's Handicap are all yet to be completed.

The club's inaugural Triathlon will begin soon. This event is played across seven ends of bowls, best of three frames of pool and best of three 501's for darts. Certainly, the format enables those with a number of skill sets to shine. Check the board for the draw.

The FoodWorks Murrindindi Tournament is on again. Fourteen teams of triples will play on March 14 and 15. Top metropolitan players will be competing once again including winners of the Premier League,

Moonee Valley. Spectators are encouraged. Club members are needed for the many jobs that go into making the tournament a success. See Gilly if you can help.

It was a big Sunday for the Club Champions. Lauren Gilchrist played Tallygaroopna's Carla Miles, in the first round of the Goulburn Valley Playing area Champion of Champions Championship. Drawing one of the region's best bowlers could be daunting.

Carla has won this event in the past and would be considered one of the best bowlers in the region. She and Mitch Sidebottom won the GV section of the State Mixed Pairs, she was also part of the Goulburn Murray region side which recently won the State Regions finals. However, Lauren was not daunted and played some superb bowls throughout the game.

Despite being down six shots on end three she drew the game by end nine to be eight all. It was 10 all on end 13, and 11 all on end 15. The winner is the first to 25 shots. Lauren

kept the pressure on with the game going to 25 ends before Carla could claim victory. Lauren played a competitive game and the club congratulates her.

Club Champion Ken Argent received a Bye in round one in his Champion of Champions game. He played Ben Dickins from Dookie in round two and won 25 to 19. After winning the game it was straight back on to the green despite the weather having deteriorated into a persistent drizzle.

His opponent in the quarter finals was Shane Edwards, a Division One Shepparton Park Club Champion. The game was played in poor conditions, but the green held up particularly well. Shane Edwards went on to win the game. Ken was soaking wet by the end and it was a long drive home from Tatura Hilltop. Well done and congratulations to Ken for winning the Club Championship and making it through to the quarters.

Club games are in progress and it was a terrific round of the men's triples that kept spectators closely interested in the 15 ends. Ian Harper, Ken Argent and Graeme Matthews the more experienced bowlers played Doug Cooper, Andy Tobias and Warren Nelson. It was all tied on the final end so an extra end had to be played. Doug, Andy and Warren won the end and will progress to the next round.

At the conclusion of the 14 rounds of pennant the players' ladder was completed. The best for Alexandra's Division Three was the rink with Ian Harper and Ken Argent. This was also the most successful rink for Alexandra.

The top of the club's Division Four Midweek side was the rink skipped by Ken Argent. Many players played across divisions on Saturday and scored well in both. Special mention to new bowlers Craig Parkinson and Steve Kirby who played in Division Three, Division Five and Midweek.

## ALEXANDRA RACE CLUB

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14 MARCH 2026



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Children 15 and under Free but must have a ticket. Patrons must have a ticket to catch the bus.

### Route 1 Eildon Bus

11.15am Eildon Pondage Caravan Park  
11.20am Eildon Town Bus Stop – Main St  
11.25am Big 4 Holiday Park  
11.30am Eildon Waters Holiday Park  
11.35am Rubicon Hotel  
11.45am Alexandra Race Club

### Route 2 Yarck Bus

11.00am Taggery 4 Seasons CP  
11.10am Breakaway Twin Rivers CP (gate)  
11.35am Molesworth Pub  
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