



Search continues for missing kayaker

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Roos shine at Gather Round

SPORT



A BLAST FROM THE PAST: Locals at the Workers Hotel (now Ruook Hotel) in the mid-1970s. Many of the people in the image worked at the Ruook Mill. Pictured left to right: Erwin Parker, Norm Parker, Jimmy Pritchard, publican Jim McNair, Bill Shaw, Raymond Charla, Ronnie O'Brien, Doug Ward, Harold Anderson, Jersey Kilpatrick, Peter Anderson, Andrew Mororm, Perce Rennie, Rod Cowel, Ken Homan, Wally Warne, Lee Homan, 'Gunga' Parker, Len Quigley, Ron Marney and Rex Gesler. PHOTO: Supplied by Lex and Jillian Homan

Wild dogs decimate Rubicon farm

DAVID Hall has been having issues with wild dogs on his farm in Rubicon, losing around three quarters of his sheep flock since moving to a new farm in 2020. He has lived in the area since 1970.

"They've decimated my farm. I've got three sheep left. Before the latest attack I had 14, so they've taken or killed 11. Seven lambs and four ewes. And they were quite big lambs, not the little ones. They'd grown up a bit before they were attacked," he said.

He added that a property down the road lost seven or eight sheep, and then a property on Taggerty Road lost around 21.

When David's farm suffered a wild dog attack around four years ago, he lost one sheep. The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) managed to get three wild dogs, one up Blue Range Road and two up near Park Road. DEECA have been monitoring the Rubicon area this year as well.

David said, "DEECA have shot 28 foxes since January, but they've only seen two wild dogs and they were a long distance away, down near the Rubicon River. But even last Tuesday night, I could hear dogs howling across the other side of Rubicon River. According to DEECA,

the main concentration is down around the Buxton area. A lot of small farmlets, similar to my own, around 10 to 20 acres, with sheep and goats and similar.

"But they're definitely around. The pair that DEECA got four years ago, and then another pair that they got a couple of months ago up near Park Road. They've seen young ones up there as well. DEECA have been very efficient and keep you well informed."

It's theorized that the dogs come down from the Rubicon State Forest to attack the farms along the edges, similar to the wild dogs in Glen-

burn coming down from the Kinglake National Park and state forests.

Some of the wild dogs resemble dingos, either closely or in characteristics such as their fluffy tails. This could be a result of wild dogs breeding with the dingo population.

"DEECA take samples from all they get, but they don't give any indication of what percentage dingo or wild dog. There's some of them that look pure dingo," David said.

His farming property is on the market for other reasons beyond the wild dogs, but said that if he continued farming, "I would have looked at either

an alpaca or a maremma, just to try and ward them off. I have the fox lights out when the ewes are lambing. I've only ever lost one lamb to a fox. But I don't know that the dogs take much notice of the fox lights," he said.

He added, "There's got to be more intensive trapping and shooting of them. We don't know what percentage are dingo, and certainly we wouldn't want to see dingoes wiped out completely. But where they have inbred, they don't seem to have the fear that you often see in a pure-bred dingo.

"Historically a lot of properties around Rubicon had

sheep and there were always problems with dogs. A lot of the farmers got out of sheep, one because the prices went down, but two because of the problems with the dogs. We've always had an active dogger in the area.

"I'd say the numbers are building up. I'd say there's probably more people with sheep and goats, and especially with the number of hobby farm type properties, which has then seen the increase in the number of dogs and the number of dog attacks.

"Equally the fact that the bounty's been removed and there's no incentive for hunters to go after them," he said.

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WEATHER

TEMPERATURES:

Alexandra

Yea

Wednesday

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Saturday

7 - 11

7 - 12

Sunday

7 - 12

6 - 13

Monday

6 - 12

6 - 12

Tuesday

4 - 11

4 - 11

RAINFALL:

7 days from 9am Monday

Alexandra

5mm

Buxton

15mm

Eildon (AWS)

5mm

Flowerdale

16mm

Jamieson

48mm

Kinglake

9mm

Lake Eildon

10mm

Mansfield

18mm

Taggerty

13mm

Yarck

9mm

Yea

6mm

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level

273.70m

Capacity as at 9am Monday

50.5%

Metres below full supply

15.20m

Daily inflow

7,000ML

Release

650ML

Eildon Pondage

71%

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Have your say at the Benalla Neighbourhood Policing Forum

VICTORIA Police is holding a Neighbourhood Policing Forum for the Benalla coverage area (including Murrindindi Shire) online on Thursday, July 23, from 6pm to 8pm.

The forum welcomes local services and community members to talk with police about what issues are important in the community.

Topics explored during the online meeting will include: Current crime trends and crime prevention; young people; family violence; road policing; drugs and drug related crime; and retail crime.

The Benalla Neighbourhood Policing Forum will be run by a Victoria Police panel, including Divisional Area Commander Superintendent Brett Kahan, Benalla Local Area Commander A/Inspector Steve Carden and Murrindindi Cluster Manager Adam Foley.

The audience will be able to ask questions of the panel throughout the event.

Registration for the forum is essential. To register, visit eventbrite.com/e/benalla-psa-online-neighbourhood-policing-forum-tickets-1991516991933?aff=oddtcreator

A Microsoft Teams link will be made available via email to all registered attendees on the day of the event.

Crews battle Taggerty blaze late into the night

CFA from around the district were called to a house fire on Bulls Lane in Taggerty at 7.36pm on Sunday, July 19.

Eight CFA appliances from Taggerty, Buxton, Alexandra and Acheron attended, with others despatched to supply water. These were cancelled en route as the CFA was able to locate a water source on the property.

The fire fight was challenging as the structure was compromised, meaning that no internal attacks could be undertaken. Over 15 cylinders for the breathing apparatus were used during the firefight.

In addition to police and ambulance, the power company attended to detach the lines to the house.

It took a significant amount of time for the firefighters to get the fire under control, with the crew finally leaving at about midnight.

There were two people at the property at the time of the fire, but fortunately they had evacuated the house by the time the CFA arrived and there were no injuries.

Sadly, the house was a total loss. The people were offered accommodation but declined.

The cause is being investigated but is not believed to be suspicious.

The incident controller was Shannon Frith, captain of the Taggerty CFA Brigade.



SEARCH CONTINUES: Police, SES and CFA crews have been scouring the Goulburn River near Ghin Ghin since Saturday, July 18, after a 53-year-old man’s kayak overturned while he was fishing. As of Monday, the search — involving water police, divers, a drone and the Alexandra SES Jet Rescue Boat — was ongoing.

Search continues for kayaker missing on Goulburn

ON Monday, July 20, police were continuing to search the Goulburn River in Ghin Ghin, after a man reportedly overturned in a kayak on Saturday, July 18.

Emergency services were called to the water near Ghin Ghin Road where it's believed a man had been fishing in a kayak, when it overturned about 10.50am.

Another person was on the bank of the river at the time and called for assistance.

Local uniform police, with the assistance of Search and Rescue and SES, have been searching the river and surrounding areas. Water Police, SES, police divers, Search and Rescue and a police drone were active on Sunday.

As of Monday, the 53 year old man was yet to be located.

Ten local SES and five local CFA members also assisted in searching the banks around the river. Around 20 SES members from nearby SES units along with the Alexandra SES Jet Rescue Boat continued assisting police in the search on Monday.

Yea man charged over trespass at Freeman hideout

VICTORIA Police have advised that Wodonga Crime Investigation Unit detectives have charged a 43 year old Yea man with allegedly trespassing at a property on Murray River Road in Thologolong on April 16.

The man was charged on summons with one count of trespass and will appear at Wodonga Magistrates’ Court on October 13.

The trespass charge is believed to be related to filming which took place in April at the shipping container where fugitive Dezi Freeman had previously been hiding.

Dezi Freeman had been killed in a shoot-out with police about three weeks prior to the incident.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Submitted via email to

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or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers

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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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RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT				
Station Name	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	8.00AM Mon	1.00	steady	below flood level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	8.00AM Mon	0.71	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	8.00AM Mon	1.03	steady	below flood level
Home Creek at Yarck	7.28AM Mon	0.43	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	8.39AM Mon	0.70	steady	below flood level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	8.00AM Mon	N/A	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	8.00AM Mon	1.48	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	8.00AM Mon	3.68	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	8.00AM Mon	0.74	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Trawool	8.00AM Mon	1.39	steady	below flood level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	8.00AM Mon	0.39	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	1.78	steady	below flood level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	1.42	steady	

*ISSUED AT 9.09 AM AEDT MONDAY 20 JULY 2026

Little information on the future of the Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre

THE Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre (TFDC), a once beautiful building tucked away in Toolangi, opened in 1994. The building was used as a forest education centre, however funding cuts in 1998 caused the department now known as DEECA to “cease funding the staffing and management of the TFDC,” according to an article in the Toolangi and Castella History website article by Steve Meacher.

Forest education continued to be delivered from the site at times, including by NMIT and Natural Resources Conservation League (NRCL), and a coffee shop was proposed.

The site was shut down in 2012, but due to community advocacy, a management committee was installed in 2016. The site activated for the 20th Anniversary Sculpture Festival, but then again fell silent until a new coffee shop was installed in 2017 to help the committee to cover running costs, along with a gallery and bookshop.

When DEECA (the DELWP) decided to appoint a new committee, none of the former members were reinstated and in 2018, the businesses in the building were closed.

More recently, in the February 2025 meeting of Murrindindi Shire Council, the topic of the centre was discussed.

The amendment proposed to re-zone the land from the Public Park and Conservation Zone (PPCZ) to the Public Park and Recreation



TOOLANGI: The Forest Discovery Centre.

PHOTO: Anne Richey

Zone (PPRZ). By changing the zone, it would allow a schedule to be included in the Murrindindi Planning Scheme to Clause 36.02, Public Park and Recreation Zone. This would enable greater usage by the community.

DEECA was asked to pay the Planning Panel costs but cited budgetary constraints. The indicative cost for referral to the panel was unavailable as it depended on the number of submissions, the number of panel members

and the time to prepare the report for council. The broad estimate was \$10,000 to \$20,000 in costs to DEECA. The rezoning of the land would have permitted greater usage by the community.

Nothing happened, and the building continues to rot in the forest, unused.

DEECA was asked whether there were any plans to rectify the matter.

They provided the following information: “The Toolangi Forest

Discovery Centre has been closed for a number of years and options for its use and management have been explored. DEECA performs inspections and continues to focus on minimising public risk by limiting access to the building. DEECA has worked with the local community and stakeholders to identify and appoint a land manager or business, but no suitable option has been identified to date. Any future changes to the site will be communicated as required.”

Funding boost for Yea’s world-first fossils

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has welcomed the announcement of \$40,000 in Australian Heritage Grants Program funding to support the development of a Heritage Management Plan for the nationally significant Yea Flora Fossil Site.

The funding will enable council to engage specialist heritage expertise to prepare the plan, which will identify risks to the site and provide recommendations to guide its long-term protection, conservation and management.

The Yea Flora Fossil Site contains fossils of some of the world’s earliest land plants and was added to the National Heritage List in 2007 in recognition of its outstanding natural heritage values and international significance. The fossils are around 415 million years old, dating from a period long before dinosaurs appeared on Earth, and are regarded as the oldest known examples of their kind in the world.

The Heritage Management Plan will consider conservation measures, monitoring methods, site access, emergency response protocols and opportunities for future scientific study.

It will also consider risks to the site, including erosion and disturbance.

The grant funding is for the development of the plan and specialist advice and does not include fossil excavation or physical works at the site. The fossils are largely buried beneath existing soil and rock layers and are not generally visible to the public.

As the designated land manager, council has an important stewardship role in protecting this nationally significant site. The Heritage Management Plan will provide a clear, evidence-based framework to guide its ongoing conservation and management.

Council will engage with the Taungurung Land and Water Council, as the Traditional Owner organisation representing the Taungurung people, throughout the development of the plan.

This project was funded by the Australian Government under the Australian Heritage Grants Program which supports on-ground projects at significant Indigenous, natural and historic sites included on Australia’s National Heritage List.

Samsung C&T responds to Rubicon Solar Farm concerns

IN light of the recent interview with some of the people neighbouring the proposed Rubicon Solar Farm, Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia (SREA) was asked a series of questions about the issues raised in the interview.

They were asked about whether fog would be an issue for the proposed solar farm, how the fire risk is being mitigated given the proximity to the Rubicon State Forest, how local waterways will be protected from run-off if a bushfire impacts the solar farm and associated infrastructure, how they will protect local waterways from chemical run-off if a flood impacts the solar farm and associated infrastructure, how the amenity of neighbouring properties will be protected, how will neighbouring property owners be compensated for any reduction in property values due to the solar farm, whether sheep will be used to keep the grass low beneath the solar panels and whether there are any issues around this, whether Samsung planning to sell the enterprise at planning approval stage or early in the active stage, and for assurances that the infrastructure will be removed at end-of-life under all circumstances.

Development Manager with Samsung C&T Renewable Energy

Australia (SREA), Stephan Mitchell, responded, “Rubicon Solar Farm is committed to conducting its development in full respect of relevant laws and regulations, and in strict compliance with all required procedures. Throughout this process, we have listened closely and engaging with a wide range of views from state authorities, local communities, and residents.

“Regarding the key risk factors you raised, fog, fire, bushfire, flood and noise, as well as environmental protection more broadly, these factors are generally tied to the permitting process, including the Planning Permit Assessment, and approval will only be granted where appropriate plans meeting regulatory standards are in place.

“We are leveraging a range of technical specialists to mitigate key risks and as the project is currently in the midst of ongoing investigations, we hope you’ll understand that it’s a bit difficult for us to go into highly detailed written response on each point just yet. We kindly ask that you refer to the attached FAQ which is available on the Rubicon Solar Farm project website. As the project progresses through its next stages, the information on the website will be updated accordingly.”

Council backs locals for fire clean-up

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is aware of comments published in last week’s Thumbs column regarding the use of contractors for bushfire recovery works.

Council recognises the importance of supporting local businesses and ensuring recovery investment benefits the communities impacted by the January bushfires. A number of local businesses and workers from Murrindindi Shire and neighbouring communities are currently undertaking recovery works across the shire.

Companies involved in recovery works include North Central Construction (Alexandra), Murrindindi Tree Services, Unlimbited Trees (Yea), Fineblade (Buxton), Bells Civil (Yarra Valley) and Leaf and Limb (Healesville). Many of the people undertaking these works also live within Murrindindi Shire and surrounding communities.

The scale of recovery work required following the fires is immense, with more than 400 kilometres of roads impacted and approximately 800 kilometres of roadside and hazardous tree works required. Delivering a recovery program of this size requires significant additional capacity and, in some cases, local contractors have also engaged external contractors to help complete the work.

Council appoints contractors in accordance with its Procurement Policy and established procurement processes. Contractors must demonstrate the skills, equipment, experience, safety systems and capacity required to undertake complex recovery works safely and effectively.

Council’s Tree and Weed Services Panel, which has been in place for three years, has been used to appoint contractors undertaking roadside hazardous tree works following the January 2026 bushfires. The panel is currently being reviewed, and council promoted the opportunity to local contractors and provided online tender workshops to support businesses interested in applying.

An important consideration in bushfire recovery works is compliance with the Federal Government’s Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). Contractors must provide detailed documentation, reporting and evidence to enable council to claim eligible recovery costs and reduce the financial burden on Murrindindi ratepayers.

During the 2025–26 financial year, council spent approximately \$10 million on bushfire recovery activities and submitted 25 DRFA claims valued at approximately \$6 million. Of the 15 claims assessed to date, council has achieved a 100 per cent recovery rate on eligible costs.

This result reflects the quality of documentation and evidence provided by council and its contractors and is critical to maximising the recovery funding available to our community.

Council remains committed to supporting local businesses and workers wherever possible, while ensuring recovery works are delivered safely, public funds are managed responsibly and every opportunity is taken to recover eligible costs on behalf of Murrindindi ratepayers.

COMMUNITY DIARY

LOCAL RADIO FREQUENCY

- **UGFM 106.9** Alexandra / Lake Eildon
- **UGFM 98.5** Marysville / Lake Mountain
- **UGFM 88.9** Yea / Highlands
- **UGFM 98.9** Flowerdale / Hazeldene
- **UGFM 94.5** Kinglake Ranges

COMMUNITY GROUPS WEEKLY

- **Tue** Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas
- **Wed** Oasis Church, free coffee connection Ph 0408 123 581
- **Thu** Town Club, RSL Hall, 6-8pm. Ph 5797 2179
- **Fri** Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall
- **Fri** Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas Ph 0422 225 801
- **Sun** Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611
- **Sun** ALANON meeting; 5.30pm St Johns Hall. Ph 0402 428 086
- **Sun** AA meeting; 7pm St Johns Hall. Ph 1300 22 22 22.

MONTHLY

- **1st Mon** St Luke's Seniors, St Lukes Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099
- **1st Wed** Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
- **1st Thu** Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057
- **1st Sun** Crop/Produce swap 10.30am--noon @ Embassy of Ideas
- **2nd Tue** Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
- **2nd Wed** Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
- **2nd Wed** Murrindindi Men 6-8pm@ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
- **2nd Thu** Yea Garden Club Yea RSL Hall 1.30pm Ph 0439 870 315
- **2nd Sat** Alex Repair Café 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
- **3rd Wed** Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
- **3rd Thu** Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252
- **3rd Thu** Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
- **3rd Sun** Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
- **4th Wed** Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
- **4th Thu** Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517
- **4th Thu** Yea CWA Yea RSL Hall, 1.30pm Ph 0400 424 888
- **Last Fri** Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 0409 819 040

Contact Alexandra Standard and Yea Chronicle to add your event on 5772 1002 or email reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au. 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.

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Yarck Hotel and Hotel Care Foundation Donate \$7500 to local CFA

THE Victorian hospitality industry has rallied behind communities affected by this year's devastating bushfires, with regional publicans leading the charge in local fundraising and community support.

Through a coordinated industry effort led by the Hotel Care Foundation, the charitable arm of the Victorian pub and hotel industry, communities across the state raised more than \$73,000 for emergency services and recovery, with \$50,000 having already been donated to various emergency service organisations.

Highlighting this incredible statewide generosity, Fiona Gourlay from the Yarck Hotel in collaboration with the Hotel Care Foundation, has officially presented a cheque for \$7500 to the Yarck Country Fire Authority (CFA).

The significant donation will directly support the volunteer firefighters who stood on the frontline protecting the region during the recent crisis.

Hotel Care Foundation Chairman, Mark Barson, stated that the fundraising results reflect the historic role pubs play as the heartbeat of regional towns, especially during times of crisis.

"Everybody in regional towns



A WONDERFUL DONATION: Members of the Yarck CFA outside the Yarck Hotel after receiving the donation.

knows that the local pub serves as the heart of their community; a safe and welcoming spot for the whole family," Mark said.

"And this is never more apparent than in times of emergency, where publicans throw open their doors and provide badly needed shelter, food and water to locals, and especially to those on the frontlines battling fires and floods.

"This donation from the pub and hotel industry through Hotel Care Foundation is a tes-

tament to the power of local publicans and patrons coming together to look after those who give and risk so much."

For regional venues like the Yarck Hotel, the fundraising effort was deeply personal. The funds raised through the venue, matched and amplified by the Hotel Care Foundation, will ensure the Yarck CFA has access to vital resources for ongoing equipment upgrades and volunteer support.

Yarck Hotel Manager Fiona

Gourlay acknowledged these efforts.

"CFA volunteers are the lifeblood of our community, and it's important that we back those who give so much. The devastating fires near Yarck earlier this year proved exactly why our country pubs are so vital, serving as a frontline refuge, keeping our local crews fuelled, and proving that when crisis hits, your local will always step up to protect the community," Fiona said.



TARGETING ILLEGAL HUNTING: Police and GMA officers worked together to target illegal spotlighting in the Murrindindi west area during Operation DREAMSTATE.

Four caught in illegal spotlighting blitz

VICTORIA Police recently conducted Operation DREAMSTATE to target illegal spotlighting in partnership with the Game Management Authority (GMA).

The operation ran over a three night period between the hours of 5pm and 3am on Thursday, July 9, Friday, July 10 and Saturday, July 11.

There were five details covering a north and south sector of Murrindindi with the implementation of an unmarked surveillance unit. The aim was to target illegal hunting activity in the Murrindindi Police Service Area.

Four offenders in total were caught over the three-night period. A 26-year-old male from Kotta was located in the Tallarook State Forest, a 38-year-old male from Mill Park and two of his associates were located in Flowerdale.

Recorded offences included: Possessing loaded firearms in a public place; carrying unsecured ammunition; possessing a spotlight in a deer habitat. Seven firearms in total were seized, along with spotlights, thermal binoculars, two hunting knives and a hunting bag.

Five police members in total participated in the operation, with two from Yea, one from Kinglake and two from Broadford. There were also six GMA members involved.

The operation utilized two unmarked surveillance units, one Vicpol unmarked and one unmarked GMA vehicle conducting aerial surveillance of state forests and surrounds, utilizing vantage points to sight spotlighting, relaying this information onto the marked units who were utilised as compliance and enforcement units.

GMA also used local civilian intel and engaged with locals prior to the operation to be in contact if they sighted activity in the area. Locals also allowed police to use private property to conduct static patrols for vehicles coming into areas of interest.

Grants to back local bushfire recovery

THE Victorian Government is providing communities affected by January's bushfires with more recovery support.

Minister Ward announced on Monday, July 20 that the Community Recovery Grants program is now open.

Community groups and non-for-profits can apply for grants up to \$75,000 to deliver recovery programs of all sizes.

The program will back locally led projects that help people recover, reconnect and rebuild across bushfire-affected council areas.

It is based on a simple principle: local communities know their recovery needs best.

Local groups will have the flexibility to design and deliver the projects that matter most to them. This can include bushfire-trauma-informed training and psychological first aid. It can also support community wellbeing events and workshops that bring locals together.

Projects may also include practical preparedness resources such as 'Are You Ready?' materials to help households plan for future emergencies.

The press release stated that the grant program builds on more than \$420 million in bushfire recovery support already funded, which the Victorian Government is delivering in partnership with the Commonwealth.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760 to be connected with relevant support.

Minister for Natural Disaster Recovery Vicki Ward said, "No two communities recover in the same way. These grants put communities in the driver's seat, giving them the flexibility to deliver the projects that will matter most.

"We'll continue standing alongside bushfire-affected Victorians, backing them with the support they need every step of the way."

Applications are now open and close on August 31.

For more information and to apply, visit vic.gov.au/community-recovery-grants-2026-bushfires

- ADVERTISEMENT -

Disaster Recovery Grants open to support local communities

COMMUNITY groups are being encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$2500 through Foundation Murrindindi's new Murrindindi Disaster Fund Grant Program, with applications now open.

The grant program has been established to support communities impacted by the January 2026 Longwood Bushfire by funding local projects that help people reconnect, strengthen wellbeing and build resilience as recovery continues.

The grants are funded through Foundation Murrindindi's Murrindindi Disaster Fund, launched immediately following the fires. Since then, generous donations from individuals, businesses and community organisations have enabled the foundation to begin investing back into the communities most affected.

Funding is available to not-for-profit community groups and organisations in fire-impacted areas including Alex-

andra, Acheron, Terip Terip, Yarck, Kanumbra, Fawcett, Highlands, Cathkin, Caveat, Maintongoon and surrounding communities.

Foundation Murrindindi Chair Naomi McNamara said the grants recognise that lasting recovery is driven by local people.

"The Longwood Bushfire affected far more than homes and properties. It disrupted lives, relationships and the sense of connection that makes communities strong," Naomi said.

"Funding can be used for a wide range of grass roots initiatives and practical support including community gatherings, youth programs, wellbeing activities, small improvements to community facilities and emergency preparedness projects. These grants are about supporting local people to lead recovery in ways that matter most to them to deliver meaningful outcomes."

Foundation Murrindindi Executive Officer Robyn Hill



FOUNDATION MURRINDINDI: Executive officer Robyn Hill with board director Michael Heyes.

said the program was designed to keep recovery community led.

"Every community's recovery journey is different. The people who live here know what will make the greatest difference and are best placed to understand their

community's needs, and this program gives them the opportunity to put this knowledge into action," Ms Hill said.

Eligible community organisations must be based in Murrindindi Shire, hold a current ABN and deliver

charitable outcomes that benefit fire-affected communities. Funded projects must be completed by June 30, 2027.

Applications close on August 20, with successful applicants to be announced in late September.

Grant guidelines and application information are available at foundationmurrindindi.org.au

For further information contact Robyn Hill, Executive Officer, on 0488 007 688 or robyn@foundationmurrindindi.org.au

- ADVERTISEMENT -

New mobile vet clinic servicing the Murrindindi east community

DOCTOR Elise Anderson launched her mobile veterinary service, Murrindindi Community Vet, last week, to look after the animal companions of the local area.

Her business provides veterinary healthcare services to people and their pets in their own homes and offers many of the things you would see with a regular vet, such as annual health checks, vaccinations, consultations for pets that might be unwell or have minor injuries, microchipping, nail trimming, etcetera.

Elise works with dogs and cats of all descriptions, from little pets to big pets and a bit of everything in between.

"The way I encourage people to think about it is if you thought about it in human terms, if it was something that you went to your GP for rather than to say, a hospital where you need surgery, then that's

the kind of thing that I can do for pets at their homes," Elise said.

The business is based in Alexandra, which is where Elise will be undertaking most of her work. However, she is happy to see patients around the east side of Murrindindi, in particular the Eildon and Marysville areas.

She will be visiting both of those towns once per fortnight, so people can book their appointments on those days. She will be in the Eildon and Thornton area on the first and third Wednesday's of the month, then the Taggerty, Buxton, Marysville and Narbethong areas on the second and fourth Wednesday's of the month.

Elise also said that there is some flexibility in taking her mobile vet clinic to people.

"People are welcome to give me a call, and if I can fit them

in, then I'm happy to consider it," she said.

Elise has been a vet for over 20 years and has worked in a variety of different places and veterinary fields, including the UK. She started her career in a mixed animal practice in the western districts of Victoria and worked at the Alexandra Vet Clinic until the owner retired a few years ago.

She has special interests in animal welfare and the environment, with keeping the planet a safe and healthy place for pets and people and all animals to live a priority.

"I have a background in animal welfare and have worked for a long time and still work with Animal Aid in Coldstream," Elise said.

"I'm really passionate about animal welfare, the health of community pets and pets being a really vibrant but responsible part of our community."

The mobile vet clinic model allows Elise to meet pets in their own homes, where they are most comfortable and at ease.

"For a lot of pets, they're far more comfortable in their home environment. The clinic can be a stressful and difficult place. For their routine health care needs, they would much prefer to stay at home," Elise said.

"A lot of pets also don't like car travel, whether they get car sick or whether that's just stressful or anxious. It's removing those sources of anxiety for the pets and letting them be comfortable in their home environment.

"And for people it's about quality vet care, but it's also about convenience for them. So those are two things that I'm passionate about and really forming those personal connections with people and their



VET CARE ON THE MOVE: Dr Elise Anderson is providing quality vet care in Murrindindi Shire with her new mobile clinic, Murrindindi Community Vet.

animals over time."

To get in touch or book an appointment with Elise at Murrindindi Community Vet, visit dindivet.com.au or call 0494 661 589.

**MURRINDINDI
DISASTER FUND
GRANT PROGRAM 2026**

Supporting our communities to recover, rebuild and thrive.

In response to the Longwood Bushfire in January 2026, Foundation Murrindindi launched the Murrindindi Disaster Fund.

Funds are now available for disbursement to community groups impacted by the Longwood Bushfires in Murrindindi Shire.

**GRANT OPENS
JULY 20TH 2026**

**GRANT CLOSES
AUGUST 20TH 2026**

For more information visit www.foundationmurrindindi.org.au/grant-programs



**MURRINDINDI
COMMUNITY VET**

Mobile veterinary services for pets and their people in Alexandra and surrounds

Health checks, vaccinations, microchipping, consultations for unwell/injured pets, end of life care and more

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0494 661 589

www.dindivet.com.au

CHURCH SERVICES
- ALEXANDRA

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

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

CHURCH SERVICES
- YEA

ST PETER'S MEMORIAL
ANGLICAN CHURCH

Cnr Bald Spur/Whittlesea Kinglake Rds,
Sunday Services, 8.30am Communion.
Minister: Rev. Ruwan Palapathwala
0458 113 099

ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
OF YEA

Sunday Service time 11am
Prayerful Reflection - held each Tuesday,
10am to 11am - all welcome
Father Mario Hendricks
Ph: 0435 953 777

CATHOLIC PARISHES
OF ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew
0459 402 547
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 4.30pm
Immaculate Conception Parish
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

CATHOLIC PARISH
OF KINGLAKE

Fr Martin Ashe, Parish Priest
Ph 9717 6482
St Mary's Kinglake: Sunday 8.30am

SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
YEA

Station Street Yea
Sunday Service 10.30am
Colin Whiteway
Ph 0457 340 525

UNITING CHURCH

1st and 3rd Sundays 9am, 1050 Main Road,
Kinglake West. 9716 2330

Narbethong's trailblazer to be cast in bronze

ALICE Anderson, a trailblazing woman from Narbethong, is about to get a statue in the City of Boroondara. Boroondara encompasses Kew, where Alice Anderson set up an all-female mechanic workshop in 1918.

Samantha Lovrich, co-founder of The Alice Anderson Memorial Project, and Loretta Smith, author of the book about Alice called Spanner in the Works, spoke with us about the statue and Alice's life in Narbethong and beyond.

Samantha explained that she joined forces with Loretta and another woman called Tina back in 2021. Each had been separately inspired by the story of Alice Anderson.

THE STATUE

Loretta and Samantha initially worked to get an historic marker installed outside Alice's garage, successfully achieved in 2022. They then began the push for a statue. In November 2025, Boroondara Council unanimously voted to partner with their association aimed at commissioning a statue of Alice. When it comes to pass, it will be the first statue of a woman in the council area.

Samantha said, "We think it is extremely apt, given her groundbreaking life in so many respects, a first in so many areas."

Samantha also commented on how Alice's story of struggle and achieving her ambitions is hugely inspirational to young people.

The sculpture will be figurative, life-sized and likely in bronze. There will also be stories to accompany the sculpture. The statue is expected to be launched in mid-2027 and are currently working through the commissioning process as part of a working group with Boroondara Council. \$165,000 was raised for the sculpture, including significant support from the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce and Boroondara Council, as well as the Inner East Community Bank and many individuals.

THE BOOK

Loretta first discovered Alice through reading a book about landscape designer Edna Walling by Sarah Hardy. She was mentioned in a chapter as a young woman turning up in a huge Hupmobile.

Loretta said, "I'm not a petrol head by any means, but my feminist brain said, I've got to find out more about this woman."

Back in 2008 when she started researching, she was told that she would be unable to get enough information to write a biography. She proved them wrong. At the time, she had never written a non-fiction, so the process was also a learning curve for her.

She was able to track down the relatives of some of the 'garage girls', the young women who worked in Alice's mechanic business, in addition to conducting text-based research. At the time, Alice's workshop was the first all-female mechanic business, however, there have since been a couple more, inspired by Alice.

After a huge amount of work, Loretta got an agent and sent her draft to publishers, setting off a bidding war. The book is now available.

She said that as a result of the

push towards getting a statue of Alice, "It feels like Melbourne has Alice Anderson fever. It's getting bigger than Ben Hur."

ALICE'S EARLY LIFE

Loretta explained that Alice's father, Joshua Thomas Noble (JT) Anderson, was an engineer who worked for a time with John Monash, who had at one time been a student of JT's at Melbourne University. Their business involved developing a process to create reinforced concrete for bridges. They built many reinforced concrete bridges in Victoria, the first to use this technology in the southern hemisphere.

Loretta explained that JT didn't "suffer fools gladly, he tended to put people off and he had no idea about budgeting," and JT and Monash eventually parted ways.

Alice was born in 1897 in Malvern, with the young family moving to New Zealand and then Ireland before returning to Australia, struggling financially. They decided to live in the summer cottage that JT had earlier built with his brother and John Monash in Narbethong. It had a soil floor and no running water. The building is no longer in existence as it's currently under a pine plantation along Anderson Lane. The name was later named after the family.

Alice's mother, Ellen Mary, had torn her Achilles tendon, which in those days couldn't be fixed, so she was housebound. Alice on the other hand, in the middle of six children, "had strong mind of her own and she was a real bush girl. She loved it," Loretta said.

"She was always up trees reading books and riding her bicycle through the bush. They eventually got a horse and she was supposed to jump on that. She ended up being as skillful as a pioneering man in those days."

Loretta said that when Alice was a teenager, JT set up a motor co-operative in Healesville called the Black Spur Motor Service. Alice started working there as the office girl, but was far more interested in driving cars. She begged the mechanics and drivers to teach her how to drive, and they eventually agreed, but only after she could pull an engine apart and put it back together. She quickly learnt, and they taught her how to drive.

The motor service had Charabancs, which were large buses, also used to deliver mail, and Alice drove these as well. She was only five foot three, so Loretta suspected that Alice may have had trouble reaching the pedals. Alice was in fact the first woman to drive a vehicle over the Black Spur, unpaved at the time.

MOVING TO MELBOURNE

Loretta said Alice moved to Melbourne when the motoring service started to fail. In 1917 during World War I, she got a job at Caulfield Council, receiving close to a man's wage. She had taken a Hupmobile to Melbourne with her.

JT had originally purchased the vehicle without the cooperative's input, and the board rejected it, so Alice received it for her 18th birthday, along with the associated debt. She started conducting tours of Melbourne using the vehicle as a way of making enough money to cover the payments.

ALICE ANDERSON: Samantha Lovrich, Loretta Smith (seated), Tina Russo (Co-founders of The Alice Anderson Memorial Project) with City of Boroondara Mayor, Wes Gault and Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce CEO, Peter Jones.

HONOURING HER MEMORY: The Alice Anderson Memorial Project team members, Samantha Lovrich, Loretta Smith (seated), Jane Hutchings, Susan Reddrop, Karin Stewart and Tina Russo.

She started building her mechanics garage in 1918 and by 1919, she was ready to open. She had designed the building herself, making sure that there were windows in the high ceiling so it was light and bright.

"It was the cut above," Loretta said. "And she had a lot of trouble with the male garage owners around, even though she was the first in her area, because they tried to undermine her."

As she had an all-female staff and few women had mechanical knowledge, much of the training was carried out during their employment. By now, Alice had completed her mechanical apprenticeship.

Loretta said, "There were a lot of young women that particularly came from the country, and their mothers were very happy that Alice took tours to go shopping in Melbourne or go to dances or whatever because they were being driven by a woman. That could help them stay out of mischief."

"But they didn't know Alice very well because she wasn't much older than them and she loved mischief. So a lot of those young girls were very keen to be apprenticed to her. It was a real dream for a lot of young women and particularly women that were very quietly lesbian and that were really drawn to that sort of work that wasn't traditionally a female job."

Loretta said, "Officially, it's unknown [whether Alice was a lesbian], but more than likely she was. It's just that I couldn't find absolute proof that she was. But she was very boyish, she had very short haircuts that wasn't just a bob, it was more like a man's haircut, the crop, and she could get away with wearing jodhpurs and shirts and ties and things because that was the uniform of a chauffeur and that's how

she chose to dress most of the time, which was still very unconventional. She turned a lot of heads but for the wrong reason."

ALICE'S DEATH

Not only was Alice the first woman to drive across the Black Spur, she was also the first woman to drive to Alice Springs, on unmade roads, this time in a 1926 Baby Austin, the tiniest car to come off the production line at the time. She had been running the garage for 10 years at the time, sleeping at the premises and receiving callouts at all times of the day and night.

Less than a week after coming back from the incredible tour to Alice Springs, she was found mortally wounded in the back of her garage with a gunshot wound to the head.

Loretta said, "There were all sorts of rumours around that before I came along and did a lot of research. I think I've pretty much got it right, 99 per cent, but I couldn't say for sure because forensics were not what they are now."

She strongly suspects that it was an accident, but to find out more, you'll have to read her book.

Loretta added, "It was so sad and because she was well known in Australia at the time, she was front-page all-over Australia and the whole country mourned because she travelled interstate as well. She was quite a novelty in the day. She did have people that didn't agree with what she was doing being a young woman, but equally there were people that really admired her pluck as they said back in the day."

To follow the progress of the creation of the statue, follow @alice_statue on Instagram or search for 'Alice Anderson Statue' on Facebook. Loretta also has a Facebook page on the subject which can be found by searching for 'Alice Anderson Garage Girl'.



BUILDING BACK BETTER: Walls Road Bridge in Glenburn after the restoration works were completed.

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

By HONORARY SECRETARY MIKE JENNINGS

THE Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club Annual General Meeting was held this week in the Bayley Street clubroom with a good attendance. The retiring president reported another successful year for the club with excursions, lunches and presentations as well as the usual weekly meetings. Membership has remained about the same despite the passing of two members and folk moving away.

The president thanked the retiring committee and the ladies who each week provide the refreshments. The treasurer advised that the club has sufficient money for another year.

The election of club officials gave us a new president, Jeanette Halit, with Yvonne Lieveense assuming vice president duties. The treasurer and secretary remain the same, as does the committee with the addition of Joan Stern joining the group.

The new president thanked the retiring committee for their efforts and said she was truly honoured to be elected to the role of president of this friendly seniors group and looked forward to working with the committee and members to keep the group active connected and to take full advantage of the opportunities to enjoy life together.

Following the formalities, the members enjoyed refreshments and the usual games of 500, UNO and chess. The bridge players enjoyed two tables of cards on Wednesday as usual. This Friday members will be celebrating Christmas in July at the Rubicon Hotel. If you would like to join the activities, you will be most welcome. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

Building back better delivers stronger infrastructure

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has completed critical restoration works at Walls Road Bridge in Glenburn and the South Cathedral Lane culvert in Buxton, improving the safety and resilience of key community infrastructure impacted by flooding.

The projects were delivered through the Australian Government's Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), following the October 2022 floods. While the program supports the restoration of essential infrastructure, securing funding for resilience improvements required further assessment and approval to deliver stronger outcomes for the community.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said, "These projects are about more than repairing what was damaged, they are about making sure our infrastructure is stronger and more resilient into the future. Our communities rely on these connections every day, and it's critical that when we rebuild, we reduce the risk of the same damage occurring again."

Walls Road Bridge sustained significant damage during the October 2022 floods, including loss of protective rock around the bridge foundations and impacts to the waterway. Restoration works included the installation of large rock protection along the bridge approaches to improve stability and durability.

The South Cathedral Lane culvert was also heavily damaged

during the October 2022 floods, with deterioration continuing over time.

Flooding caused the structure to fail, with culverts shifting out of place and water escaping the channel. Reconstruction included replacing the damaged culvert with a larger structure, increasing waterway capacity and improving how floodwater is carried through the site. The crossing was also widened to improve safety.

Following assessment and approval by the funding agency, works at both locations incorporated improvements designed to enhance durability and performance in future extreme weather conditions.

The completion of the works marks an important step in council's broader flood recovery program, delivered over an extended period as funding approvals were finalised.

Cr Gallagher said, "Rebuilding like-for-like after every event is not sustainable for communities like ours. Betterment funding gives us the opportunity to meet contemporary standards and future-proof our infrastructure, improving reliability, reducing future impacts and delivering better value for public investment."

Murrindindi Shire Council continues to advocate for improved access to betterment funding to support more resilient infrastructure outcomes in disaster-affected communities.

Monday 27 July
2:00 PM
National Test

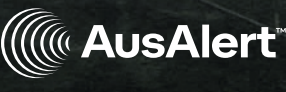
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Concerns for local post offices

SCOTT Etherington, chair of the Licensed Post Office (LPO) Group, an organisation established as the peak franchise association for licensees of community post offices, spoke about concerns around regional post offices in light of the announcement of a Senate Inquiry into Australia Post's retail network.

Scott said, "The concerns that most of our retail network has is the pivot by the [Australia Post] to become a parcel-first carrier, so a parcel carrier, rather than a community service organisation, which we've been for most of our history."

"Since about 2022 or 2023, the leadership team decided to transition the organisation to become a parcel carrier, and in that time has started to, in their words, simplify the organisation, and in simplifying, it meant reducing or removing products and services that we offer in our retail outlets, giving you less reasons to walk into the post office."

He said that Australia Post are also finding ways to avoid having parcels go into post offices at all. When a post office handles a parcel, there is a cost involved and thereby making the post offices more sustainable.

As a result of parcels being

diverted to parcel lockers, post offices are seeing fewer customers enter their business. Scott said, "Like any small business, if we don't have customers, we don't have a business."

He added, "Parcel lockers are Australia Post's newest toy, and they're very popular around the world, and we think they are an excellent service for our customers. Unfortunately, Australia Post is placing them in competition to post offices. They'll set up a parcel locker bank within reach of a post office."

"Instead of diverting parcels to the post office, they're diverting parcels to parcel lockers and then requiring the customers to navigate the digital minefield that is necessary to extract their parcel from the parcel locker."

"There is talk of moving some banks of PO boxes away from post offices, but this is all part of a bigger picture of closing down full service post offices and replace them with limited services parcel agents and co-locating in those parcel agent spots the PO boxes that were historically located in the post office."

"They're finding ways to try and service post office boxes without having to pay a post office operator the cost

of servicing. They're looking for every which way to reduce the revenue, and the profits that post offices could make and therefore the viability of these outlets."

Postal services have undergone significant changes in recent years, particularly due to bills and other correspondence being emailed rather than posted, impacting Australia Post's bottom line.

Scott responded, "There's absolutely no doubt that regular letters are in significant decline and have been for many years...Australia Post has a statutory monopoly on the delivery of letters and it's obligated to continue to provide that service."

He added, "LPO Group and our members have recognised that there is a real value to our community in having a face-to-face counter. We think that the Australia Post Retail Network should be Australia's front counter. Nearly all communities have lost lots of face-to-face service businesses, whether it be banks, insurers, government agencies... They've shut down for very obvious and very real commercial reasons..."

"Most people don't need to go to a face-to-face service at the moment. They

can operate on their phones quite well or over the phone if they need to talk to someone. That works for a lot of people, but there are still instances where people want a face-to-face service, whether it's because they don't have the ability to do it, or they don't have the resources, or they're not confident that the digital solution suits them, or they're afraid about the concerns of risks and scams."

He said that as post offices are commercially neutral, "We can support many different service businesses for those few times that their customer wants to have access to a face-to-face service. We currently represent 60 banks in our Bank@Post service. We think that should be expanded."

"We should also be able to offer telco services and government agency services and insurance services for those people who need or want to have a face-to-face interaction for that business, and those organisations would pay Australia Post for that."

He added that it may also include a small fee for consumers. Adding services could benefit both consumers and help make post office businesses more viable.

Scott said that members also have concern around

the short-term three-year contracts being offered to licensees.

He said, "Australia Post has had a strategy for quite some time that in communities where the local post office has gone out of business, for all the reasons I've described, they have either gone down the road and found either a chemist or an IGA and offered them a fixed amount of money a year to just be a parcel agent..."

"There is an alternative they've been doing at a number of communities for some years now where they'll go to an organisation, another business and say, 'look, we will give you a fixed term agreement to be the post office for three years, and then in three years we might decide to move on or we will let you buy the licence at whatever value they put on the licence at that time.'"

In addition, Australia Post are 'reimagining' licensed post offices. Scott said that one element of this is the possibility that licensees may be required to give up the perpetual license and sign on to a fixed term license. This would provide less certainty to licensees and potentially undermine the value of the business if sold. It's understood that Australia Post are

also providing no compensation for this change.

Scott said, "They're not forcing, to be clear, Australia Post is not forcing anyone to do this, but the discussion is that there's been a new payment model being discussed and that if licensees want access to this new model, they must give up their perpetual license and sign on to a fixed term agreement, which we think is completely unacceptable and unreasonable and not appropriate given that we have retail outlets in places that are not commercially viable for lots of good reasons, because Australia Post has an obligation to have a post office in certain locations based on the geography and the location of communities."

He added, "There is a community service obligation that Australia Post has that it must locate a post office within a certain distance of a certain population... And in that situation, it makes sense to have a perpetual licence, not some sort of fixed term agreement."

A local post office in Murrindindi Shire has posted publicly on Facebook with similar concerns.

To find out more about the LPO Group's concerns, visit lpogroup.com.au/senate-inquiry

Issues around letterbox placement in the Buxton area

A CLASH in procedure has created confusion for Buxton residents regarding letterbox positioning, with Australia Post and Murrindindi Shire Council potentially requiring different actions.

Australia Post announced that a new mail delivery service will be introduced across Buxton from July 20, 2026, following the closure of the local Licensed Post Office.

They advised residents in Buxton that they would need to install letterboxes at their residence which could be reached by the postal delivery person without exiting their vehicle. In most cases, this would be directly next to the curb on the nature strip.

This could potentially require a permit from council as the letterbox would not be on the residents' property but on the nature strip.

Where Australia Post delivers to the home, residents would not be able to collect their mail directly from the post office shop and it would be returned to sender, meaning that having an Australia Post-viable letterbox is vital for residents.

Council responded, saying that permits are not



DRAMA OVER LETTERBOXES: Residents have been told to install letterboxes on their nature strips to appease Australia Post but this clashes with council legislation.

PHOTO: Eva Rinaldi.

required but residents will need to consult council about changes to letterbox positioning.

"Permits are not required, however residents may need consent from council where a new or relocated letterbox is proposed within the council-managed road reserve, including the nature strip," council said.

"Residents should con-

tact council before installing or relocating a letterbox in these areas so the proposed location can be assessed."

"While council is not involved in determining Australia Post delivery arrangements, council needs to ensure structures placed within the road reserve do not create road safety issues, obstruct pedestrian access,

conflict with existing infrastructure or impact ongoing maintenance activities."

"Council will work with residents to provide site-specific advice or help identify an appropriate location where required."

Residents can contact Murrindindi Shire Council via murrindindi.vic.gov.au/contact or by calling 5772 0333.

Postal delivery confusion in Buxton

THE Buxton post office closed unexpectedly some time ago, and it's understood Australia Post is in discussions with another business in Buxton to offer postal services, however this is not yet in place.

Concerns have been raised by community members in the town about upcoming changes to the postal services, which started on July 20.

QUESTIONS

Australia Post were asked the following questions.

Are you able to advise why the new post service will not have post office (PO) boxes available?

Given that no PO Boxes will be available in the town, street delivery of smaller items such as letters appears to be the only option. Is this correct? Can people choose to collect their mail from the Buxton post office (once established) if they want to? Some residents are keen to do so.

It's also understood that people living or working within a certain radius of the postal service shop are unable to receive deliveries into their letterbox. Is this true? If so, what workarounds are in place? And is this radius based on the former post shop location or the proposed new shop location?

Regarding letterboxes, I believe that Australia Post has requested that letterboxes be placed to allow delivery without the postie exiting the vehicle. This would generally be on the

nature strip of the property, and may be impeded by steep driveways. Also, some residents are concerned about postal safety given that some residences are set well back from the roadside.

Are you able to let me know which streets will be receiving roadside delivery? Are locations such as Retreat Road, Eagles Nest Road, Mount Margaret Road, Passings Road and South Cathedral Lane included? Will it include all properties within the 3711 postcode area? If they are not included, will the residents be able to collect their mail from the Buxton post shop, once it is in place?

How have the community been consulted over these changes?

RESPONSE

An Australia Post spokesperson responded, "Australia Post is pleased to share that mail and small parcel delivery will be introduced in the Buxton area from Monday, July 20. A small number of residents outside the core delivery area will receive roadside delivery or can access discounted PO box rates at the Marysville LPO."

"Following the unexpected closure of the Buxton Licensed Post Office earlier this year we thank locals for their patience as we continue to explore options for postal services in the community. We will keep the community updated as this progresses."

Former Alexandra firefighter joins rappel program

KOBEI Holmes, who grew up on the Mornington Peninsula, began his career as a Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) seasonal firefighter with the Alexandra team, spending two fire seasons in the local area from 2023 before moving to the FFMVic rappel program.

"Like a lot of kids, growing up I always wanted to be a firefighter," Kobei said.

"I got to work with the rappel team a few times while I was at Alexandra, and it quickly became a goal of mine to join the program."

He went through intensive training as part of the program, before his first rappel into an active fireground on December 31, 2025, when his crew was dispatched to a small fire in the Mt Buffalo National Park.

"The adrenaline was certainly pumping, but at the same time I felt prepared," Kobei said.

"In the moment you just fall back on all the training, and trust the process and your crew."

Applications are currently open for seasonal and ongoing forest firefighter roles across



FIGHTING FIRE FROM THE SKIES: Former Alexandra-based seasonal firefighter Kobei Holmes (left) is part of FFMVic's rappel program.

Victoria with FFMVic ahead of the upcoming bushfire season.

FFMVic Chief Fire Officer, Chris Hardman, said seasonal firefighters boost Victoria's fire-fighting capacity in the lead-up to summer and during the peak fire season.

"New recruits train and work alongside our permanent firefighters, responding to bushfires to keep communities safer this summer," Mr Hardman said.

"They will be part of a team of close to 1800 frontline personnel and 1200 accredited in-

cident management staff this bushfire season.

"These are fantastic jobs doing practical work, right at the frontline of protecting communities and the environment."

Some roles are designated for First Nations employment. Applications close July 26. Seasonal employment occurs between October and May, with some variations on start and end dates depending on seasonal requirements.

For information and to apply, visit jobs.careers.vic.gov.au/sffoo or call 136 186.

Applications open for 2027 Rabobank graduate program

APPLICATIONS are now open for Rabobank's 2027 graduate program, offering university graduates with an interest in agriculture and agribusiness the opportunity to start a purposeful career with the specialist agribusiness bank.

Rabobank is offering places for graduates from around Australia to join the bank early next year, beginning with a formal 18-month graduate program, which kicks off in February 2027.

The world's leading specialist food and agribusiness bank, Rabobank is one of Australia's largest agricultural lenders and a major provider of business and corporate banking services to the country's food and agribusiness sector.

Rabobank Australia CEO Caroline Oosterbaan said the program gives graduates the opportunity to begin meaningful careers with a major global food and agribusiness bank.

"Since launching our formal graduate program in 2023, Rabobank has helped university graduates from across Australia who have a passion for agriculture start their careers while at the same time building a strong pipeline of talent for the bank," she said.

The Rabo Graduate Pro-

gram was recently ranked sixth in the Australian Association of Graduate Employers list of Top 75 Graduate Employers - Small Program category. This accolade recognises organisations that provide the most positive experience for new graduates based on the opinions of the graduates themselves.

The Rabo Graduate Program was also recently named in the Top 10 Most Popular Banking, Finance and Insurance Employer list and ranked 52 on the Top 100 Most Popular Graduate Employers list, published by the Australian Financial Review and SEEK Grad. These awards, published annually, celebrate the most popular graduate employers in Australia, with employer's rank based on actual measured student applications from SEEK Grad.

Ms Oosterbaan said the Rabobank program would see each graduate rotate through a range of teams across the bank, within their chosen function.

"The program offers strong career development opportunities, supporting graduates to progress in their chosen fields while experiencing Rabobank's inclusive and flexible work environment," she said.

"All graduates spend time

at a rural or regional branch in Australia, including locations such as Townsville, Kadina, Geraldton, Wagga Wagga and Port Lincoln.

"Through this important customer-facing experience, individuals gain a better understanding of Rabobank's unique approach to supporting clients."

To help accelerate career development, each graduate will be matched with a senior leader within the bank to act as their mentor throughout the program.

Rabobank state manager for NSW Toby Mendl said within 18 months, graduates gain exposure to a wide range of agricultural industries, environments and regions across the country.

"The opportunity to work across different commodities and geographies gives participants a genuinely broad understanding of Australian agriculture," he said.

Applications for the Rabobank Australian Graduate Program will close on August 18 with successful candidates commencing in February 2027.

Further information about Rabobank's Australian Graduate Program is available at rabobank.com.au/about-rabobank/careers/graduate-program

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Open day creates new interest in Alexandra's indoor heated pool

THE Alexandra Indoor Heated Pool recently opened its doors to the community, welcoming a small number of interested local residents who came to see the facility, meet the team and learn more about the programs available.

While attendance was modest, the open day created valuable conversations and was supported by several enquiries through the pool's website and social media channels.

For some visitors, it was their first opportunity to step inside the pool and discover the Learn to Swim (LTS), self-paced exercise and warm-water programs available locally.

The new term has now commenced, with LTS and existing programs underway.

In response to feedback received through the recent community survey, the committee and staff are also exploring new Saturday sessions, including warmer-water self-paced exercise and hydro-style programs. There is still time to do this. The pool's website and socials have the details.

Details are still being developed and will be confirmed once staffing, class structure and minimum participant numbers have been finalised.



INDOOR POOL: Back: Committee members Marg, Sam and Jaq, with Learn to Swim (LTS) teacher Kate and administrator Leanne. Front: Aquatic Manger Elly and LTS teacher Bron.

PHOTO: Matt

They are also keen to seek out swim teachers who have aqua exercise qualifications or Cert III in fitness. Please contact them to find out more.

The pool, located at 53 Nihill Street in Alexandra, will hold another open day in approximately four weeks, this time on a Saturday from 10am to noon to make it easier for

working families and community members to attend.

The open day will provide another opportunity to see the pool and facilities, meet the team, learn about Learn to Swim, ask about adult warm-water and self-paced exercise programs, and register interest in proposed Saturday sessions.

Alexandra Indoor Heated Pool President Sam Hicks said the first open day provided useful feedback and highlighted the need to continue building awareness of the pool.

"Although only a small number of people attended on the day, the conversations were worthwhile and we also

received enquiries through our website enquiries and social media," Sam said.

"We know many people still aren't familiar with what happens inside our little pool, so we'll hold another open day on a Saturday and continue creating opportunities for the community to come in, ask questions and see the facility

for themselves."

Further details about the next open day and proposed Saturday warmer-water sessions will be announced shortly.

For enquiries, visit the Alexandra Indoor Heated Pool website at alexindoorheated-pool.org.au or follow the pool on social media.

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Open Community Meeting in Toolangi

Wednesday 29 July 2026 from 5.00 - 7.00 pm
C.J. Dennis Memorial Hall
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Would you like to speak to Council about topics or issues that affect you and your community?

You will have five minutes to talk directly with Councillors about issues or ideas that are important to you and your community, and you may be speaking in front of members of the public, as well as Council officers.

If you, or your community group, would like to speak to Council, you are invited to attend the meeting. Prior registration is not required, we'll greet you and collect your details on the evening.

For more information
call Council on 5772 0333 or
email governance@murrindindi.vic.gov.au



BUZZBY MCBEE: Michelle reading ‘A Day in the Life of Buzzby McBee’, the National Tree Day 2026 activity book, in front of the Love your Pollinators display at Alexandra Library.



NATIONAL TREE DAY: Tony, Lee, Craig, Cr Sue Carpenter and Ron Litjens at the Yea Library event.



PLANT MATTERS: Peter, Sanduni, Carlos and Pam networking and collecting their free plants after the Kinglake Library event.

Pollinators take centre stage for Tree Day

RESIDENTS from across Murrindindi came together on Wednesday, July 15 to learn how native pollinators help protect biodiversity, as part of Murrindindi Shire Council’s National Tree Day celebrations.

Hosted by council, in partnership with Zoos Australia, the free community event was held across Alexandra, Kinglake and Yea, as well as online, attracting 25 participants from across the shire. The event reflects council’s ongoing commitment to protecting biodiversity, supporting environmental education and encouraging community participation in caring for Murrindindi’s unique natural environment.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher, Cr Sue Carpenter and 2025 Murrindindi Shire Volunteer of the Year Ron Litjens attended the Yea Library session, and all participants also received a free native plant to take home.

The evening featured an engaging presentation by Estelle Van Hoeydonck from Zoos Victoria, who explored how native plants and pollinators depend on one another to keep local ecosystems healthy.

Participants learned about local species including the golden sun moth and the Bogong moth and discovered the important role moths play in pollinating native vegetation.

Attendees were also introduced to Moth Tracker, a citizen science project that encourages people to contribute to conservation by recording moth sightings. Find out more at zoo.org.au/moth-tracker

Participants also heard about other National Tree Day activities, including council’s Read, Learn and Win draw program through local libraries, where children can collect two free activity books; A Day in the Life of Buzzby McBee and Flutter McButter, and go into the draw to win a mystery prize.

Council’s Cheviot Ward Councillor Sue Carpenter said the event highlighted how small actions by individuals could make a meaningful contribution to protecting the environment.

“Looking after biodiversity starts with understanding it, and this event gave people practical ways they can make a difference in their own gardens and communities,” Cr Carpenter said.

“National Tree Day is about more than planting trees. It’s about protecting the ecosystems that support them, including the incredible native pollinators that help our natural environment thrive.”

“I encourage everyone to get involved by joining a local tree planting event, visiting their library or simply taking the opportunity to learn more about the unique environment we share.”

National Tree Day activities continue throughout July. Residents can take part in the Read, Learn and Win program at their local library until Friday, July 31 or join a community tree planting event on Sunday, July 26.

To find your nearest planting event or learn about National Tree Day, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/NTD26

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2:00 PM

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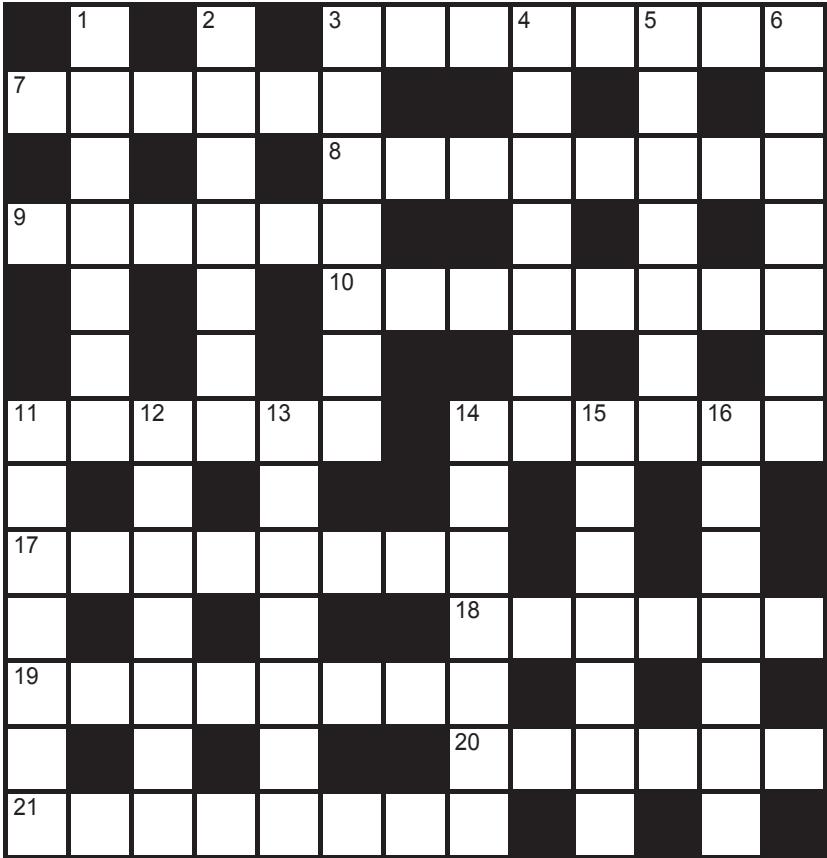


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

1142

- ACROSS**
- 3 Which gas, when combined with oxygen, forms water (8)
- 7 What is a dead body known as (6)
- 8 Which term describes impetus, as of a moving body (8)
- 9 Which volatile liquid is used extensively as a fuel (6)
- 10 Name those in the armed forces who hold a commission (8)
- 11 What is a long, narrow mark or the like (6)
- 14 When one pastures livestock for payment, one does what (6)
- 17 To have expressed sorrow, is to have done what (8)
- 18 To tell, is to do what (6)
- 19 To contemplate, one might do what (8)
- 20 Which planet is sixth in order from the sun (6)
- 21 What are rows of adjoining, identical houses (8)



- 5 Which channels lie at the roadsides (7)
- 6 Name an agent of retribution (7)
- 11 To be able to pay all just debts, is to be what (7)
- 12 What, perhaps, might we call a rubber (7)
- 13 What is loss of memory known as (7)
- 14 Name the place where a person lives (7)
- 15 To expand currency unduly, is to do what (7)
- 16 Name the characteristic disposition of the constituent parts of any body (7)

- DOWN**
- 1 Name a European mammal of the weasel family (7)
- 2 To confirm or sanction, is to do what (7)
- 3 Which poison did Socrates take (7)
- 4 To be swaying about, is to be doing what (7)

MINI WORD FIND

442



Find the following words in the grid. They may be read in any direction, even diagonally. Some letters are used more than once.

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| Cyst | Out | Sit | What |
| Dim | Own | Sum | Wit |
| His | Row | They | Wood |
| Hut | Sect | Tow | |
| Oboe | Show | Wear | |

WHICH WORDS

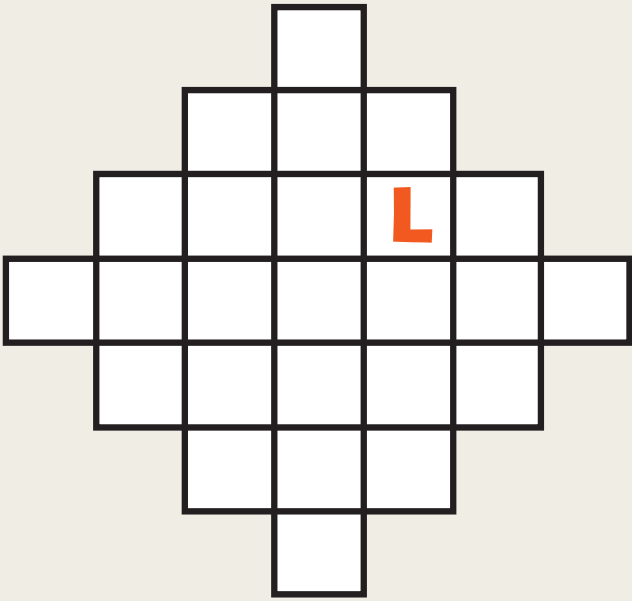
- 1 ACRONYM**
- (a) The citadel of Athens
- (b) An altar screen
- (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words
- 2 GUMPTION**
- (a) A resinous exudation
- (b) Initiative
- (c) Ill-humour

E-QUATIONS

452

Letters A to Z have a number value. Some are shown in the right-hand cells. Create remaining values using clues in centre cells.

H	J÷H	
J	Y-K	9
K	J-H	
O	H×K	
P	Q-H	
Q	K+O	
Y	P-K	



BIYWORD

182

Build it yourself using the clues and each of the twenty-four letters once only to form ten words: five across and five down. A key word (bold clue) builds on the letter set in the grid.

- CLUES:**
- Coin's reverse side (5)
- Fantasy support: ... hook (3)
- Feline (3-4)
- Most desirable (coll) (1-4)
- Paralysis (5)
- Quieted (7)
- S-E asian peanut sauce (5)
- Spigot (3)
- Still (3)
- Subject to approval (3)

A	E	L	T
A	E	P	T
A	I	S	T
A	I	S	T
C	K	S	Y
D	L	S	Y

SUDOKU

142

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

QUICK THINK

452

Solve the crossword.
Each answer has four letters.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Portico | 1 Switch |
| 5 Chicken | 2 Mosaic piece |
| 6 Nautical direction | 3 Foreboding |
| 7 Remain unsettled | 4 Mimicked |

1	2	3	4
5			
6			
7			

SOLUTIONS

QUICK THINK

1 (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words 2 (b) Initiative

WHICH WORDS:

1 (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words 2 (b) Initiative

SUDOKU

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

BIYWORD

1 (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words 2 (b) Initiative

E-QUATIONS

1 (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words 2 (b) Initiative

MINI WORD FIND

1 (c) A word formed from the initial letters of other words 2 (b) Initiative

UGLN tree planting for fire recovery

A TREE planting day was recently held by Upper Goulburn Landcare Network (UGLN) in Gobur, with volunteers helping plant 320 trees and shrubs on a property in Gobur that was burnt in the Longwood fires.

The plantings will help rehabilitate the property and provide food and habitat for koalas and woodland birds.

UGLN are also holding planting days in Koriella and surrounds. They provide lunch to the volunteers who participate.

This project has been funded by BirdLife Australia and the Victorian State Government Landcare grants.



SPRIT OF VOLUNTEERING: The UGLN volunteers who participated in the tree planting day in Gobur.

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New research to target varroa mite

NEW research being undertaken by the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland is studying whether spider venom or gene disruptors could be a more effective way of eliminating the threat of varroa mites, given they are developing resistance to current chemical and organic treatments.

Varroa mites (Latin varroa destructor) are a parasite that target honeybees, killing colonies and transmitting viruses. Honeybees are an important part of Australia's agricultural industry.

Varroa mites were detected in New South Wales in June 2022, with a national eradication response being conducted immediately. National eradication was determined unfeasible after, with the response transitioning to ongoing management of the pest.

The research from the University of the Sunshine Coast (Unisc) identified components in the venoms of the Tasmanian cave spider and the Giant Japanese funnel-web spider that killed the parasitic mites without harming the honeybees.

Lead author of the study, Unisc Associate Professor Volker Herzig, said that spider venom could potentially be a more environmentally friendly way to combat varroa mites not just in Australia, but around the globe.

"We screened 50 venoms, mostly from spiders and scorpions, by

applying them externally to the mites. We found more than 75 per cent killed the mites within 24 hours. We selected two of the most potent spider venoms for further analysis," Dr Herzig said.

"We isolated a specific component, called a peptide, from each of these two venoms and applied them to the bodies of varroa mites. The peptides killed only the mites, while the bees survived.

"These peptides, which we named Ht1a and Gg1a, are fully biodegradable and our findings suggest they could be developed into a commercial, sustainable treatment for varroa mite infestations in honeybee hives."

According to the research, spider venom peptides don't harm any other organisms, such as farmers, beekeepers, or pets. If the peptides work, then a sprayable treatment could be designed. However, this could take several years.

Associate Dean of Research at the Unisc School of Health, Professor Rob Harvey, is researching whether RNA interference (RNAi) could be used to kill the mites as an alternative to chemicals. He spoke to ABC News about his research.

"RNA interference uses the mite's genes against itself. We introduce a small copy of an RNA corresponding to a certain varroa mite gene,



HONEYBEES: New research being undertaken in Queensland to target varroa mite threat. PHOTO: Charles J Sharp.

and the idea is that we silence that gene. We interfere with the functions of the brain or the muscles of the mite," Dr Harvey said.

"As soon as the end of July, we could have a product that we could commercialise, which is quite exciting."

The Queensland Government are providing \$100,000 in grant funding for the two projects being conducted at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

The full report on the spider venom peptide study can be found at nature.com/articles/s44386-026-00050-9

For more information about the impact of varroa mite and using RNA interference visit: unisc.edu.au/about/unisc-news/news-archive/2026/june/australia-has-already-spent-over-100-million-dealing-with-varroa-mite-here-s-what-we-can-do-next

Intersection review and speed limit changes

THE Department of Transport has announced a review of the intersection of Grant Street and Downey Street in Alexandra.

They will be looking at how drivers, pedestrians and cyclists use the intersection, including traffic speed and movements.

The intersection review will help them better understand how people use the intersection and identify any issues and possible improvements.

The intersection is an important connector for through traffic, including freight, while also passing through the town centre where people walk, ride and access local businesses.

As a result of the speed review, the following speed changes will be made. The speed on the Maroon-dah Highway (Grant Street) from Vickery Street to the Goulburn Valley Highway (Downey Street) will be reduced from 50km/h to 40km/h.

The speed on the Goulburn Valley Highway (Downey Street) from Myrtle Street to the Maroon-dah Highway (Grant Street) will be reduced from 60km/h to 40km/h.

The speed on the Maroon-dah Highway (Downey Street) to Bayley Street be reduced from 50km/h to 40km/h.

They have engaged with Murrindindi Shire Council on the speed zone recommendations

and expect the changes to be implemented in the coming months.

In July 2026, they will be installing cameras on each leg of the Maroon-dah Highway (Grant Street) and Goulburn Valley Highway (Downey Street) intersection in Alexandra. The cameras will be in place for about a week.

The cameras will track the movement of cars, trucks, pedestrians and cyclists using the intersection.

The cameras will help them understand how people use the intersection, how they move through it and whether there are any safety issues.

The cameras will not be used for enforcement. They will not record identifying details such as number plates. The information will only be used to help assess how the intersection is working.

Through previous engagement with the community and working closely with Murrindindi Shire Council, they know there are concerns around the use and safety of the Grant and Downey Street intersection. They also know this intersection is an important route for freight and heavy vehicles.

Transport Victoria will review the speed limit changes, camera data and feedback from Murrindindi Shire Council before deciding what further improvements may be needed.

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Standard

DEATH NOTICES

SMITH, Geoffrey Robert.

Family and friends are warmly invited to celebrate the life of Geoffrey Robert Smith.

A Thanksgiving Service will be held at St Andrew's Anglican Church, Brighton, Victoria, on Tuesday, 28 July 2026, commencing at 2pm.

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Gail hard to beat as golden run continues at Marysville

By LESLEY RUNDLE

LAST week the Thursday nine holers played stableford on the back nine holes at Marysville Golf Club and the winner was Gail Leigh with 18 points followed by Lloyd Flaherty with 16 points on a countback from Geoff Ferguson. The nearest the pins were won by Mark Alexander on the 11th and Glen Rattay on the 18th.

The Saturday golfers arrived to a frosty course which the sun soon melted and conditions were perfect for the 18 holes played. Gail Leigh is hard to beat at the moment and she won the ladies section with 31 stableford points on a countback from Lesley Rundle.

The men's winner was another very consistent player, Richy Clark who finished with 32 points followed by Keith Atwell with 27 points. Two of the four nearest the pins were not achieved but Paul Martin was closest on the 18th and Richy Clark continued to claim his usual ninth hole and also won the Golden Shot. Next Saturday all golfers will play a stableford round.

While this is a quiet time at the club with no upcoming events there are some returning in the warmer months. The Dalhousie Veterans Presidents Cup will be held on Thursday, August 16 with a 9am arrival for 9.30am shotgun start.

On Saturday, September 12 the club's AGM will be held in the clubrooms from 8.45am. Members are encouraged to attend this meeting and nominations for Committee membership are now open. The daily competition will start after the AGM and, as per the syllabus, the men will be playing the final of the Barton Cup and the Captain's trophies will be presented. Also, on that busy day the Future Golf event will be played on the Marysville course.

Newton pins it as Taylor wins at Eildon

By PUTTAMATIC

HELLO everyone and welcome to the weekly Eildon Golf Club report. Last Saturday's competition was stableford and the club had 10 players compete on what was a very nice day for golf. With cloud over head for most of the first nine, the day did show golfers some sun before the round was finished.

Winners last week were Rod Taylor with 32 points, coming in second Allison Southwell with 31 points. Ball run winners, Brad Newton 29 points, Leigh Munro 29 points and Colin Long also with 29 points.

Nearest the pin winners last week, Brad Newton was the best on the third with his second shot. No winners on the fifth or 11th, Rod Taylor on the 12th and Brad Newton again on the 14th, Rod Taylor also took out the super six.

The club had one birdie on the birdie drink hole eighth but no winner on the 15th last week. Entry draw winner Leith Munro and the Swindle winner was Col Long.

Next week's competition will be a stroke round and the club's July monthly medal, hope to see you all at the club next Saturday. Congratulation to all winners and look forward to seeing you at the club soon.

Equipment upgrades at Alexandra Junior Soccer Club

FOR over 20 years, borne from the passion of its founder, Larry Kelly, Alexandra Junior Soccer Club (AJSC) operated with the vision of soccer being accessible to every child. With Larry stepping back from his role of President in 2025, AJSC is pleased to announce that this vision continues with the new Committee of 2026.

Barb McKimmie is AJSC's President, supported by existing Treasurer, Laura Johnston and new Secretary, Kathryn Nicholson. Larry remains an integral general Committee Member and the club appreciate Larry's wealth of knowledge not being far away. As too, previous Secretary, Michael Mawson.

The new Committee has been busy upgrading equipment for the 2026 soccer season and beyond, ensuring that all equipment is fit-for-purpose, integral to the safety and confidence of junior players. AJSC gives a huge thanks to the Murrindindi Shire Council for their Quick Response Grant which has supported equipment upgrades and expansion.

The grant has allowed AJSC to upgrade their portable soccer goals and soccer bibs, which are lightweight and fit a range of players from five years to 15 years. The grant has also allowed the club to obtain more sizings of their custom AJSC soccer jerseys, which all registered players receive for the season, and build their shin guard stock.

This upgrade and expansion enables AJSC to welcome more young players to the club, encouraging greater participation and inclusion among juniors and



EQUIPMENT UPGRADES: Some of the Alexandra Junior Soccer Club players in the jerseys and boots from the boot library.

their families within the Murrindindi community, and placing safety at the forefront.

Receiving the grant has allowed AJSC to maintain their low fees of \$60 per player for the 2026 season, which runs from May to September. A reminder that registrations close July 31.

To register, visit www.play-football.com.au, click to register with Alexandra Junior Soccer Club and follow the prompts. The final game of the season will be Saturday, September 12.

AJSC would also like to give a huge thanks to the Rotary Club of Alexandra for their donation of

funds towards the club's boot library. The right boots with cleats support players to build confidence, provide comfort and prevent injuries.

With this donation, AJSC has built up a boot library with a selection of boot sizes for players to borrow boots for the season or to swap as players grow out of their boots through each subsequent season. The boot library is available each week for young players in need of their first pair of boots or for when young people just keep growing so quickly. The club don't want any child to miss out on playing soccer and thanks

to Rotary, no one needs to.

AJSC's vision has also been embraced by players and their families, with donations of outgrown soccer boots to the boot library, oranges from backyard gardens for hydration breaks and the donation of a Foodworks voucher by a family to ensure the club always have oranges in stock.

The ASJC Committee continues to come up with new ideas for the club and the soccer seasons ahead and they look forward to implementing these with the continued support and passion of local community.

Alexandra Golf Club report

By DAVE SILVERMAN

THE six members who teed off at noon last Tuesday at Alexandra Golf Club had naively assumed that the weather forecast was right, and that the threat of rain had passed.

However, this proved not to be the case, and at about 1pm, brollies were being opened, and covers thrown over clubs. After the rain had moved away, the sun actually made an appearance, and the rest of the afternoon was quite pleasant.

The winner, to everyone's surprise, was none other than your humble scribe, with a fairly average 28 points, which was one point less than average that of Brad Newton and Billy Wind, who were second and third respectively.

Brad also claimed nearest the pin on 17, while both seven and 18 went to Nigel Waterhouse.

The ladies had the best of the weather for last Wednesday's Monthly Medal round, although the damp conditions made decent scores a bit of a challenge. Judy Pearson made a welcome return from her trip to Denmark and played well in spite of a bit of jet-lag, including a nearest the pin on 18.

Ruth Worland was the winner on the day, and took home



SUNSHINE FOR GOLF: Rosemary tees off on 14 with Judy watching on.

the medal, after a fierce contest with Sharyn Pterzela, who missed a putt on 18 which would have forced a play-off. Ruth carded an 88 nett 74, and Sharyn a 94 nett 75, with Rosemary Parker in third with a nett 85.

Ruth also took off nearest the pin on both two and seven on her way to the win.

Last Saturday's round was a four ball stableford event, which was sponsored by On Point Brewery, and which attracted a field of 16. Fine and cloudy the forecast said, but once again the promise and the reality were somewhat at odds with each other, as the northern end of the town remained steadfastly fog-bound for the entire day.

The winners, with a score of

Team events at Yea Golf Club last week

By ALAN PELL

LAST Wednesday saw 16 players play in eight teams in a four ball best ball event at Yea Golf Club. Cold and damp conditions made scoring difficult.

Winners on countback were Jim Redmond (23) and Anthony La Grutta (13) with 37 points from second Nicola Rule (54) and Brian Simmons (13) 37 and third Tony Rule (17) and Martin Lowe (16) also on 37.

There was no nearest the pin on the 14th and Alan Pell/Peter Johnston took out the Club Award. Tony Rule had 33 points from Luke Gregory 32 in the individual scores.

Last Saturday saw another team event with a three-person six ball best ball. Five teams saw Anthony LaGrutta (13), Paul Heyen (22) and Jim Redmond post 45 points to win from Phil Armstrong (16), John Tanner (27) and Peter Johnston (15) with 40 points. Phil Armstrong was nearest the pin on the 14th and Alan Pell, John Phillips and Sharon Grogan collected the lucky \$10 Club Award.

Next Saturday sees the first of three rounds in the 54-hole event with a stableford round.

Undefeated women the highlight in tough Yea round



KEEPING IT MOVING: A Yea senior footballer moving the ball down the field with a Pakenham player close behind.

THE Yea senior football sides and netball teams travelled to Pakenham Football Netball Club grounds to take on Pakenham. The senior women footballers took on Woori Yallock in Officer.

- FOOTBALL**
Seniors
Pakenham 120 defeated Yea 12
Reserves
Pakenham 164 defeated Yea 7
Senior women
Woori Yallock 0 defeated by Yea 74

- NETBALL**
A Grade
Pakenham 76 defeated Yea 16
B Grade
Pakenham 72 defeated Yea 37
C Grade
Pakenham 54 defeated Yea 28
D Grade
Pakenham 65 defeated Yea 16

This week, the senior football and netball teams will travel to Yarra Junction to take on the Yarra Junction Eagles, while the women footballers will play Officer in Officer.



NETBALL DEFENSE: Yea players stretching to try and block Pakenham's shot on goal.



SHOOTING UNDER PRESSURE: Yea netballer shooting for a goal while Pakenham's defenders try and intercept.



GROUPED UP: The Yea players applying pressure to Pakenham in the senior football game, while teammates watch on.

PHOTOS BY: Savannah Gregory Photography.

Alexandra junior football and netball results

- UNDER 16**
Alexandra 53 defeated by Broadford 109
AWARDS: Reddrops Foodworks Award, Max Kaiser; Essence Coffee Lounge Award, Jaidyn Dimech; Kazza's Diner, Aiden Campbell; Gilligan Plumbing Award, Naz Edmund; Coaches Award, Sam Wiese.
- UNDER 14**
Alexandra 6 defeated by Shepparton Bears 119
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks Award, Jake Tennyson; Essence Coffee Lounge Award, Mitch Kidd; Kazza's Diner, Lucas Creed; Coaches Award, Charlie Broadway.
- UNDER 12**
Alexandra 88 defeated Nagambie 7
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks Award, Bodhi McKenzie; Essence Coffee Lounge Award, Kaidyn King; Kazza's Diner Award, Spencer Simpson; Coaches Award, Zander Williamson; Phil Savage Award, Jace O'Sullivan.
- UNDER 10**
Awards: Kazza's Diner Award, Ryan Kirley; Canteen Voucher, Corbyn Hayes-Moynihan; Footy Cards, Oscar Backx and Leo Jager.
- UNDER NINE**
Awards: Essence Coffee Lounge Award, Lachlan Wood; Sherrin Bounce Footy, Elias Wright; Phil Savage Award, Han-

- nah Carter; Footy Cards, Byron Pitts and Fletcher Lynch.
- NETBALL RESULTS**
UNDER 11 RED
Alexandra 8 defeated by Nagambie Red 12
Awards: AFNC Canteen Voucher, Isla Hutt; Kazza's Diner Award, Reegan Martyn.
- UNDER 11 BLACK**
Alexandra 15 defeated Yea 2
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks Award, Alisah Fitri; Kazza's Diner Award, Josie Blakeney.
- UNDER 13 RED**
Alexandra 4 defeated by St Marys Yellow 48
Awards: AFNC Canteen Voucher, Charli Stephens; Kazza's Diner Award, Kaliya Stewart.
- UNDER 13 BLACK**
Alexandra 7 defeated by Broadford Blue 38
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks, Liesse Hogan; Kazza's Diner, Ruby Birmingham.
- UNDER 15 RED**
Alexandra 33 defeated by St Marys 48
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks, Holly Williamson; Kazza's Diner Award, Madison Birch.
- UNDER 15 BLACK**
Alexandra 35 defeated by Yea 38
Awards: Reddrops Foodworks Award, Indi Hoornweg; Kazza's Diner Award, Tayha Vine; Alexandra Automotive Award, Asha Vine.



THE CHASE: Alexandra junior footballers played in teams, moving the ball and competing against each other.



GOING FOR A KICK: An Alexandra junior footballer preparing to kick while the players on the other team chase him down.

More images from Alexandra Rebels football and netball



TAKING ON THE JUNCTION: Alexandra Reserves player Luke James moving the ball down the field.



ON ITS WAY: Alexandra Reserves player Brendan Musgrove kicking the ball.



KICK PREPARATION: Seniors player Will Stewart positioning himself for a solid kick.



CONTACT: Seniors player Mitch Parker fending off Yarra Junction's efforts.



LOOKING FOR OPTIONS: Under 17s player Bella Twitchett working out where she can send the ball next.



SOLID DEFENSE: B Grade player Kirby Welch moving the ball away from Alexandra's goal.



UNDER PRESSURE: B Grade player Cassie Kidd choosing where to pass the ball while the opposition closes in.



PASSING: A Grade player Ava Krijt about to pass the ball to a teammate.

Yea junior football reports

By KATE ADAMS AND JESS ROBINSON

UNDER NINE

THE Under Nines played a strong and fast game from start to finish, showing great teamwork, effort, and determination. Their pressure around the ball was outstanding, with everyone chasing, tackling, and supporting their teammates.

The quick ball movement created plenty of exciting passages of play, and the players showed increasing confidence in their skills throughout the match.

It was fantastic to see every player contribute, whether it was winning the ball, laying a great tackle, taking a strong mark, kicking exciting goals or encouraging a teammate.

The team's positive attitude and never-give-up spirit were on display all game, making it an enjoyable match to watch. A great team performance, well done to everyone.

A huge congratulations to last

week's award winners: Mason, Just Great Coffee Encouragement Award; Teddy, Yarra Valley Gas Ignite Award; Charlie, Progression Physiotherapy and Performance Best Player.

The club says thank you to Seymour Lions for hosting and to the coach, volunteers, umpires and families for their support.

UNDER 10

Yea Under 10s celebrated Josh and Logan S playing 50 games of football last week.

The kids' spirits were high celebrating their teammates big day and brought plenty of energy to the field to put down a strong match right to the final siren.

So many kids putting goals and/or points on the board last week, well done Jake, Hamish, Tanner, Josh, Logan S, Ava, Archie and Charlie.

Awards: Yarra Valley Gas Improvement, Tanner; Delux Rods Tiger Spirit, Ashton; Cathkin Coach's Award, Xander.



AWARD WINNERS: The Under 10 award winners Xander, Tanner and Ashton with their prizes.

Alexandra Squash Club: Round one of term three pennant

By ANDREW BROWN

Monday competition

Team One versus Team Two
ERIC versus Lachie: Great game. Lachie playing his first match got the jump on his opponent, but Eric drew on his experience to claw back the lead and on to victory.

Randy versus Sally: A close match to begin with but Sally extended the lead each game and ran away in the final game to win 71 to 47.

Simon versus Stuart: Simon is a new addition to Alexandra Squash and brings a well-rounded skill set that proved too strong for Stuart in Stuart's return match after a long break.

Phil versus Andrew: Phil has moved up to level one and rose to the occasion to overcome Andrew. Phil took his opportunities in the second game and to take control and then held firm to win by 13 points.

Team Three versus Team Four

Tyler versus Holly: Holly, playing her first game, had a tough time against Tyler, who was in complete control from start to finish 26-108.

Will versus Laura: Will, playing his first match, was given a tough welcome by Laura in the first game but adjusted his game, playing high and deep and eventually fought his way back to prevail by one point 60-59.

Sam versus Chris: Although Sam won the third game, a number of errors let him down. Chris's consistency won him the match 70-60.

Jim versus Daniel: The last match of the night and the condensation had the ball slid-

ing off the walls. Daniel was able to use his racquet speed to have the ball sliding off the wet wall, leaving Jim with little time to adapt. 43-68.

Wednesday competition

Team One versus Team Two
Nicole versus Ethan: Nicole worked hard on covering the court and placing the ball to advantage. Although Ethan narrowly took the third game, Nicole took the 11-point win 53-42.

Jess versus Liane: Jess and Liane played an even contest, winning alternating games. A larger margin in the third game enabled Jess to win 57 to 53.

Michael versus Sam (fill in): Mawso got off to a strong start, but Sam was able to lift his game and close the gap. However, Mawso was on his A-game in the final game and took the win 68-53.

Team Three versus Team Four

Marty versus Beth: Some great rallies between these two players but Beth's consistency won her the day 72-56.

Travis versus Nathan: Nathan was in his first ever game and learning quickly but Travis had little difficulty chalking up a win 78 to 44.

Ben versus Daniel: Possibly inspired by July 4, this match had plenty of fireworks. Both players slaughtered the ball with power strokes that frequently hit their targets. Daniel was able to get a lead with an edge with deep strokes. The third game was even as points went with serve. Daniel closed out the fourth game comfortably as both spent the last of their fuel.

Roos shine at league's 'Gather Round' despite tough loss to Gembrook

By SOPHIA WEAVER

THE local footy community turned out in full force last weekend for the Outer East Football Netball League's Gather Round. It was a massive celebration of women in sport, bringing together senior women's players, coaches, and supporters for a stellar day of football, connection, and great vibes.

All the league's women's teams from division one and two played their game at the same place: Rob Porter Recreation Ground in Officer. The action was split across two ovals.

The sun was out, the crowd was buzzing, and the Thornton-Eildon Roos spent the early part of the day soaking up the atmosphere and cheering on other teams before taking the field for Round 14.

Before the bounce, Development Coach Jamee set the perfect tone for the day. She reminded the squad that the round was all about recognizing how much women's football has grown and the fantastic opportunities it creates. Her message was simple but powerful: we are stronger together and backing each other up happens both on and off the field.

When it came time to face a tough Gembrook side, Coach Tash Hay wanted her team firing from the absolute start.

"My coach's message to the team was to play with the intensity and determination we usually show in our fourth quarters from the very first bounce," Coach Tash Hay shared.

"We wanted to move the ball with purpose and play as a united team."

The Roos looked sharp and energized during the warm-up, but Gembrook came out with a bit more early drive, quickly hitting the scoreboard. True to their fighting spirit, the Roos didn't back down.

They locked the ball in their forward half multiple times, putting on immense pressure, though they just couldn't quite convert those promising moments into goals.

While Gembrook ultimately walked away with a well-deserved victory, the scoreboard didn't dampen the Roos' spirits. Once the final siren sounded, the teams joined together as one massive football community, sharing



UNITY THROUGH WOMEN'S SPORT: The two teams, Gembrook and Thornton Eildon, celebrating after the match. PHOTO: Teddy Photography.



AWARD WINNERS: Gameday award winners Kylie, Alice and Cheeks.

laughs, stories, and smiles.

Reflecting on the milestone round, Coach Tash Hay noted how special it is to watch the sport evolve.

"Having been involved since the beginning of the women's competition in our league, it has been incredible to witness the growth of the game and the opportunities it has created for young girls, women, clubs, and the wider community," Hay said.

Win or lose, the future of local women's footy is looking brighter than ever.

Gameday awards: Kylie Welsh,

Club Voucher; Alice Fitzgerald, Dindi Kids Cash Gift; Magenta Connolly, VADHSS Cash Gift.

On Sunday, July 26, Thornton Eildon District Football Netball Club is hosting a tree planting activity at the oval. Starting with a free barbecue lunch at 1pm followed by tree planting at 2.30pm, all members, sponsors, supporters, everyone is welcome to head along and help them plant for the future.

Next week the Roos face Woori Yallock at home, 1.30pm on July 25 at Thornton Recreation Reserve. Head down and cheer them on.



Equipment
upgrades at
Alexandra
Junior Soccer
Club

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100 GAMES OF NETBALL: Brodie Williamson and Ash Creighton celebrate their milestone 100th games of netball.



FAMILY SPORT: Ash Peers and her daughters celebrate her 100th netball game.

Rebels rampant as trio reach 100 games

BOTH senior Alexandra Rebels football sides recorded percentage boosting wins against bottom of the ladder Yarra Junction as they continue their march towards the finals.

RESERVES

Alexandra 23.15-153 defeated Yarra Junction 2.2-14. The Reserves awaiting the return of a number of key players were able to record an impressive 139-point win over the Eagles.

One player returning from injury Luke James dominated with a best on ground performance finishing with 10 goals. Justin Coventry also made a welcome return from injury with five goals.

Midfielder Cooper Phillips continued his fine form providing the forward line with his creativity and delivery. Young Rebels Shannon Galloway, Dylan Jack, Will Clark and Josh Crane were also

impressive.

Goal kickers: James 10, Coventry five, Phillips two, Jack, Andrews, Clarke one each.

Awards: Shannon Group Award, Luke James; Future Fit Finance Award, Shannon Galloway; RUOAK Hotel Award, Cooper Phillips; Buxton Hotel Award, Will Clark.

SENIORS

Alexandra 33.24-222 defeated Yarra Junction 3.2-20.

The Senior team welcomed the return of key players Mitch Parker, Will Stewart, Josh Edwards and Bart Wallace all having an immediate impact against Yarra Junction. In a one-sided encounter the Rebels improve with their commitment and teamwork over four quarters which could not be questioned.

The forward line one of the Rebels greatest strengths delivered with Will Stewart

(12 goals) Sam Critchley (nine goals) Josh Edwards (five goals) dominating.

Captain Tom Boots was impassable at half back with his marking a feature, on baller Ryan Lucas played his best game of the season. Peter Cairns and Harry Aikman continue their excellent form; ruckman Lachlan Nankervis gave Rebels first use of the ball.

Reigning best and fairest Mitch Parker back after missing seven weeks through injury improved the further the game progressed, Ben Jack as well as Scott Heveren were other impressive performers in a team with no passengers.

Goal kickers: Stewart 12, Critchley nine, Edwards five, Cairns two, Jack, Boots, Lucas, Johnson, Goyder with one each.

Awards: Kervale Award, Ryan Lucas; O'Briens Real

Estate, Will Stewart; RUOAK Hotel Award, Harry Aikman; Buxton Hotel Award, Sam Critchley.

The Rebels are again at home this week hosting another bottom of the ladder team in Powelltown and will be hoping to continue their form from recent weeks.

NETBALL RESULTS

Last Saturday was a special day for the Alexandra Football Netball Club as Ash Peers, Brodie Williamson and Ash Creighton each celebrated their 100th senior netball game for the Rebels.

Brodie Williamson and Ash Creighton marked the milestone together in C Grade, where the Rebels were involved in a thrilling contest featuring several lead changes before Yarra Junction held on for a narrow two-goal win. Ash Peers celebrated her

milestone in B Grade with plenty of support from her family cheer squad, while the Rebels fought hard but were unable to match a strong Yarra Junction outfit.

C GRADE

Alexandra 34 defeated Yarra Junction 36.

Awards: RUOAK Hotel Award, Brodie Williamson; Corner Hotel Award, Ash Creighton.

B GRADE

Alexandra 31 defeated Yarra Junction 27.

Awards: Incentive Award, Ash Peers; Corner Hotel Award, Kirby Welch.

A GRADE

Alexandra 56 drew Yarra Junction 56.

The A Grade clash was one of the games of the day. After being well beaten by Yarra Junction when the two sides last met, the Rebels were determined to turn the

tables, taking a four-goal lead into half-time.

Yarra Junction fought back to level the scores in the third quarter before an exciting final term saw neither side able to break the deadlock, with the match finishing in a well-earned draw.

Awards: Incentive, Ellie Hedger; Corner Hotel Award, Danielle Nadj.

UNDER 17

Alexandra 51 defeated Yarra Junction 11.

The Under 17 girls continued their impressive form, taking control from the opening whistle with a dominant all-round team performance. Their relentless pressure and teamwork proved too much for Yarra Junction as the Rebels ran out comfortable winners to strengthen their position in the top four.

Awards: Koala Cherries Award, Koa Parker; Corner Hotel Award, Phoebe Kidd.