

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

Standard

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

P.O Box 5, Alexandra, 3714. Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5772 1603; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Wednesday, March 26, 2025 \$2.00 inc. GST

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Alexandra Primary students blast off



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The story of Robert Gibb



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U3A celebrates St Patrick's Day



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Weekend sport



Pages 17-20



Menzies Support Services staff Jo and Bec with participants from the Ability Me program. They were having a barbecue birthday lunch in Rotary Park on Wednesday, March 19. -BD

Drains struggle to cope with deluge in Alexandra

HEAVY rain from the storm last Thursday night caused flash flooding from Alexandra to Eildon and Rubicon, with 80mm being recorded at one location in Alexandra.

Alexandra SES and the Murrindindi Shire Council were called to a number of jobs during the night, where blocked drains caused flooding from the heavy continuous rain that fell over two short periods around 9pm and 1am.

Water coming through ceilings from spouting that was blocked and overflowed also caused power circuits to trip. There was flooding in William, Bon, Shamrock and Peterkin Streets in Alexandra. A ceiling partially collapsed at Rubicon.

Water came right up to the vehicle doors at the Alexandra SES and CFA facility, water was over many roads around Alexandra, SES and Murrindindi Shire Council crews cleaned out gutters and drains blocked by debris being washed by the rain.

A large tree also came down on Whanregarwen Road blocking the entire road near Molesworth early Friday morning.

VICESSES Alexandra Unit Controller Peter Weeks spoke about the rainfall, saying that it affected Alexandra and surrounds more because it was continuous and not just a passing shower.

"Between us [Alexandra SES] and council, we were fairly busy during the night. It wasn't a band of rain moving across, the rain was moving diagonally from the northwest and moved through the area in a continuous line, so it wasn't just a passing shower. That was why it caused so many problems, because the rain was continuous," Peter said.

"There were blocked drains, the drains couldn't cope and a lot of the streets in Alexandra were completely flooded. There was lots of flooding during the night at Kellock, as the main drainage into the street had been blocked. I don't know where the problem was but the water couldn't get away and ended up flooding part of the building."

Kellock Lodge Alexandra CEO Tania Hunter explained how minor the flooding was last Thursday night.

"It was just minor flooding that happens every 10 years or so. The drainage outside

couldn't cope with the amount of rain," Tania said.

"Just the staff room and a hallway were affected. Staff intervened, so it trickled into the main dining room a little bit, but not significantly. There was no impact on the kitchen.

"We're very thankful to the SES because they were able to help get the water out."

It is understood that the flooding in Alexandra also affected a number of shops.

The Eildon Fire Tower recorded 71mm of rain with 80mm of rain recorded in Alexandra. Mount Hotham recorded 76.8mm of rain.

The SES reminds people to regularly check and keep clear spouting, downpipes, gutters and drains from debris.

"We haven't had much rain at all, so a lot of spouting probably has leaf matter inside. As we get more into autumn it's going to become worse, so people need to be wary of keeping their drains, gutters and spouting clear," Peter said.

"People need to check their drains and make sure they are flowing properly."

Speeding vehicle reveals further crimes

ON March 9, police from the Mansfield Highway Patrol intercepted a speeding Holden Commodore Sedan towing two jet skis on the Maroondah Highway at Merton.

The 39 year old male driver returned a positive result for both methamphetamine and alcohol and was found to be disqualified from driving.

Further inquiries revealed he was not the owner of the vehicle, raising suspicions.

A vehicle inspection uncovered that the vehicle identification number (VIN) under the windscreen had been obscured, the VIN plate in the engine bay had been removed, and the plates on the car were handmade and cloned. A further check of the stamped VIN under the driver's seat confirmed the vehicle was an outstanding stolen car.

To top things off, the driver also had three outstanding warrants and was subsequently arrested and charged with multiple offences.

This incident highlights the importance of proactive road policing in detecting and preventing serious criminal activity.

Alexandra District Health

5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital

5736 0400

In an emergency dial 000

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

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Letters to the Editor

Welcome to Country

I NOTE by way of phone text, our Murrindindi councillors' have fully endorsed the much criticised 'Welcome to Country' address, everywhere we go. Despite, in my opinion, the vast majority of people I have spoken to, are opposed to it.

I ask our councillors, where do they get the endorsement from for such a policy from their ratepayers? Not once have I seen any councilors campaign for this policy in council elections, or speak publicly about supporting this boring subject.

I was born in this country 88 years ago and I am sick of being welcomed to my country over and over. I will always support what the people vote for, democratically. So, to determine or seek the endorsement of the rate payers of this policy.

Will the councilors hold a vote on this issue in the next council elections?

I suggest the council support more important matters, like seeing Breakaway Bridge reinstated.

Ray Donkin, Buxton

[Council adopted its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) on December 14, 2022. A reflect RAP is implemented over 12 to 18 months. Council is still delivering actions outlined in the Reflect RAP. There are different types of RAPs designed to suit an organisation at different stages of their reconciliation journey. One of the actions in council's Reflect RAP is to "Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of all council events, functions and larger meetings." An Acknowledgement of Country is different to a Welcome to Country. An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and their continued connection to Country. A Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been given permission from Traditional Owners, to welcome visitors to Country. -Ed]

Emergency accommodation

I WAS pleased to read in last week's Standard that Alexandra Rotary per Geoff Proctor supports the former Alexandra District Hospital being used for emergency accommodation in Alexandra. The need was voiced at a meeting regarding the lack of

emergency accommodation and homelessness in the town, in 2023 at The Hub.

Let's hope the idea blossoms and finally a practical solution can be found to meet the needs of those who require the help.

Jan Forrest, Alexandra

Aitken Street

THE part of Aitken St between the car wash and police station has become something of a no man's land with neither the council nor VicRoads prepared to do anything about totally blocked drains and potholes in this area. Pleas to both entities by myself, neighbours, landlords and owners have been met with ignore, excuses or broken promises made by desperate receptionists that just want to end the call.

The pothole outside my rental complex is nicknamed Tycho after the crater on the Moon. The main landlord had phoned, written and begged the council and vicroads to do something. He passed away last year, he never saw any work done.

Things bubbled over in the neighbourhood this morning after last night's storm. Two elderly female neighbours were trying to clear the drain and colvets that have been blocked for two years. I heard a loud voice as I walked to my letterbox, a passing neighbour saw the women struggling and had gone down to the council office and raised Cain as at the same time she saw two council workers drive by laughing at them. At the same time another neighbour told them to stop as it was slippery and dangerous, something I can attest to having fallen over trying to unblock it last year.

Now this has become public knowledge there's a deep pothole in Aitken St. we'll find out whose responsibility it is when a pedestrian breaks their ankle or a car flips passing by.

Tom Collins, Alexandra



The gutter at Aitken Street. -S

COMMUNITY DIARY

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon

UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands

UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale / Hazeldene

WEEKLY

Tues Art Group (Alex Tennis Rooms) 10am-3pm Ph 5773 2306

Tue Seniors Carpet Bowls 1.15pm

Tue Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas

Wed Social Bowls 11am Alexandra Bowls Club Ph 5772 1150

Thu Take off weight naturally 5.45pm 5773 2427

Fri Seniors Social Club 1pm

Sun AA 7pm Anglican Church, Alexandra Ph 0402 428 086

Sun Alanon Recovery 5.30pm. Ph Sheila 0402 428 086

Sun Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611

Thu SES, SES/CFA complex 7-10pm Ph 0418 576 666

Fri Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall

Fri Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

MONTHLY

1st Wed Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318

1st Sat Alexandra Quilters RSL Hall 10am-3pm Ph 0437 005 465

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 Thur Murrindindi Men 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

2nd Sat Alexandra Market - at Station Street Ph 0427 509 988

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 Probud 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 Tue Yarck CWA Meeting, 10.30am Yarck Hall.

4th Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

4th Thu Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517

Last Fri Carers Group 10am Grant Street Grocer. 0418 402 455

ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

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

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT				
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon D/S	10.00am Mon	2.27	steady	below minor
Rubicon River at Rubicon	10.00am Mon	0.39	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	7.25am Mon	0.44	steady	below minor
Home Creek at Yarck	8.47am Mon	0.11	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	8.20am Mon	0.40	steady	below minor
Yea River at Yea GV Water PS	9.48am Mon	0.29	steady	below minor
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	10.00am Mon	4.17	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	10.00am Mon	0.31	steady	below minor
King Parrot Ck at Kerrisdale	4.15pm Sun	0.18	rising	
Goulburn River at Trawool	10.00am Mon	1.97	steady	below minor
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	10.00am Mon	-0.08	steady	below minor
Goulburn River at Seymour	10.00am Mon	2.18	steady	below minor
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	9.58am Mon	0.79	steady	
**ISSUED AT 10.16AM ON MONDAY, 24 MARCH 2025				

ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

can be submitted via email to

editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au or

reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers

PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714.

Letters **must be 300 words or less.** We will not publish defamatory letters, or content which is offensive, threatening or containing personal attacks. Submitted letters may be edited before going to print.

All letters must contain writers name, address and contact number. (not necessarily for publication). Letters without these details supplied cannot not be published. Deadline for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.

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Standard

The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather

March 26 - April 1, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY LOW HIGH DAY LOW HIGH

Wednesday 12 27 Wednesday 11 25

Thursday 15 28 Thursday 14 28

Friday 16 28 Friday 15 28

Saturday 14 26 Saturday 13 26

Sunday 12 23 Sunday 12 23

Monday 12 23 Monday 12 23

Tuesday 13 23 Tuesday 13 23

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra 73mm

Buxton..... 19mm

Eildon (AWS)..... 71mm

Flowerdale..... 22mm

Jamieson..... 55mm

Kinglake 15mm

Lake Eildon 78mm

Mansfield..... 16mm

Taggerty 16mm

Yarck 44mm

Yea..... 7mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week.....279.62m

Capacity as at 9am Monday.....67%

Metres below full supply.....9.28m

Daily inflow600ML

Release..... 6000ML

Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....93%

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DEADLINES

Real Estate Thursday 5pm

Trades & Services Thursday noon

Early General News Thursday 5pm

Classifieds Monday noon

Editorial Monday 9am

Sports Editorial Monday 10am

Letters to the Editor Monday 9am

Thumbsup/down Monday 10am

If you have any enquiries please do not hesitate to contact the office on

5772 1002 or

reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

We thank you for your continued support

Community invited to provide input on Alexandra East Development Plan

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is calling on the Alexandra community to provide feedback on the proposed options for the Alexandra East Development Plan (AEDP).

This follows the formation of a Community Reference Group late last year, where 12 local residents, representing the diverse aspects of the Alexandra community, were appointed to help shape the direction of the plan.

Council is now seeking feedback from the broader community to identify the best options to guide future development of

71 hectares of land in Alexandra's major residential growth area.

The focus of this stage is to gather input on various elements of the development plan, including how to achieve a diversity of housing that meets both current and future needs, foster community connectedness, improve access through roads and foot/cycle paths, and manage risks such as flooding and bushfire hazards.

Community members are encouraged to participate in the process through several opportunities. On Monday, March 31, a drop-

in session will be held at the Alexandra Shire Hall from 3 to 5pm. This will give attendees the chance to review the proposed options, ask questions of council staff and consultants, and provide feedback on the options.

Additionally, a facilitated workshop will be held on Tuesday, April 1 from 6.30 to 8pm. The workshop will feature presentations and table discussions to help gather more in-depth feedback on the development options. Participants are encouraged to register for the workshop at theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/aedp or by calling 5772 0333.

For those unable to attend in person, an online feedback opportunity will be available from April 2 to April 21. Documents, frequently asked questions, and a feedback survey will be available at theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/aedp.

The feedback gathered in this stage will be used to refine the development options into a single draft Development Plan. The draft AEDP will be made available for community feedback in May and June, with the final version expected to be presented to council for adoption at the July Council Meeting.

Council's Mayor and Red Gate Ward Councillor Damien Gallagher encouraged Alexandra residents and businesses to learn more about the AEDP and get involved by attending one of two upcoming community events.

"The Alexandra East Development Plan will help facilitate roughly 700 new housing lots over time on land east of Wattle Street, as well as areas around the Alexandra Hospital and the Menzies Services' land north of the Goulburn Valley Highway," Cr Gallagher said.

"This will support our existing community with more housing options, including for those who want to downsize or young families who want to purchase their first home. It will also attract young families to our shire, while making sure growth is sustainable and appropriate for Alexandra. Population growth, supported by additional housing, will also help us attract and retain essential services for our community.

"Initial feedback from the Community Reference Group indicated that they were very keen to see a plan that will support coordinated, sustainable growth that integrates well with the existing township. They would expect the plan to facilitate not only diverse housing but to also address issues like connectivity through footpaths and cycle paths and attractive open spaces that preserve large old red gum trees.

"Community members are encouraged to come along to two community events to learn more about this important project and to have your voice heard. Local knowledge is key to ensuring the AEDP meets the needs of Alexandra well into the future and that it protects and enhances Alexandra's unique character."



Letters to the Editor

Kangaroo

ON Friday night, March 21, between 11pm and 12.30am, there was a person who mounted the gutter in Cooper Street, Alexandra, to hit a kangaroo deliberately. The animal was put down by wildlife rescuers as it had its leg snapped.

This needs to be dealt with and if it is not, I will be going to our local member about the way people on P plates drive around this town. It is unacceptable as far as I am concerned. He should have his licence cancelled and a hefty fine to go with killing local flora and fauna.

This is not the first animal to be killed by morons. There have been ducks deliberately killed and a few blue tongue lizards, and we see people lining them up. How many pet owners have been losing their pets? I have seen people lining up cats. These are people's pets.

As I have said, I will be following up with our local member as well. The kids around this town love to see the kangaroos out and about. I also enjoy seeing them around this town. I have made complaints to our local police in regards to this issue and as per usual nothing gets done. I will also be going to the council about this issue and I will not back down from a fight over this. I want to see justice done about it and won't stop until things get done in this town, and it is about time the locals start to stand up to these issues as well.

I have had a few letters printed in your paper a few times over different issues so people in this town know who I am and I will not stand to see our native wildlife being killed deliberately by these inconsiderate morons who think they have a licence to kill. This is totally unacceptable. If I was the magistrate I would cancel his licence for at least two years and enforce a very hefty fine but as per usual nothing will get done if I know the local police.

My next port of call will be the local council with an email and a follow up as to what they are going to do about it, as per usual possibly nothing, and also Cindy McLeish, our local politician. I am determined to get this stopped here and now. It is only a matter of time before someone is going to get killed around this town. I bet they do some thing then but because if it is just an animal they do nothing. They have a right to live the same as the rest of us do. I look forward to your reply. I will stand up for what I believe in regardless of whose toes I step on.

Ian Perry, Alexandra



On Sunday afternoon Alexandra SES, police and paramedics responded to a call for assistance in Rubicon after a female hiker in her 70s fell and injured her ankle. First aid was rendered before helping the hiker to safety for further assessment with paramedics. Wishing the hiker a speedy recovery. -S

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by John Wainright

Regular contributor Mike Jennings was unavailable this week.

Mike along with David Tanner should both be mentioned in dispatches for all the work they put in behind the scene. As the saying goes, "They are good lads. There are not many of us left."

There were only one or two apologies at Friday's meeting owing to the rumour that smoked salmon sandwiches were on the menu for afternoon tea. The meeting got off to a businesslike manner with Yvonne running the meeting. It was standing room only. The new vice president suggested that at Easter, the members wear Easter bonnets. I don't know what the ladies will be wearing. To give her her due, she is trying to inject some fresh ideas and enthusiasm within the club, trying to overcome the inbuilt inertia.

The bus trip to Healesville has been finalised and approved by the shire for the bus hire. There are still a couple of seats available, so hurry up and get your name on the list. The club has gained another new lady member who happens to play 500. Come on fellas, they are outnumbered.

After the meeting finished, the members took refreshments put on by the ladies. There was some disappointment because the smoked salmon had not arrived, so we had to make do

with the lobster. The ladies as usual excelled, as they do every week.

The bridge contingent was reduced to just four both on Monday and Wednesday. They are always looking for new members. For anybody thinking of playing or learning bridge I cannot recommend Margo highly enough. She would be more than happy to provide guidance.

The Friday's 500 card game, seems to go from strength to strength where there were eight, with the new lady member making the eighth member. The two teams of four ended up one a piece. The members are taking bets when Ron will actually make a bid. They reckon if he had 10 jokers he would still pass.

Some of the ladies play Uno once afternoon tea has finished, while David again serenades on the piano, which is appreciated by all.

As a side issue I notice some of the senior members of Alexandra using the public transport system. This is to be commended. If we don't, once it is gone it's too late and very difficult to reinstate, if at all.

The vice president is looking into new activities that might interest the group in the future, as they say outside the box. Horse riding was mentioned I don't see many taking that up.

Hopefully, Mike will be back on-board next week.

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Alexandra Museum

& Steam Train Rides

Open Saturday March 29

10am to 3.30pm

7 Station Street, Alexandra

All information can be found at:

alexandratramway.org.au

[/alexandramuseum](https://www.facebook.com/alexandramuseum)

or by contacting 0427 509 988

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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
Contact: Ps Steven Turner
Ph: 0413 127 283
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

Out & About

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

Sacred Heart Yea are conducting a number of school tours. Today at 2.30pm. For more information contact Amy Leahy, principal on 5797 2723 or email principal@shyea.catholic.edu.au. More dates below.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28

Murrindindi Little Aths AGM and presentation night will be held at 5.30pm at Rotary Park in the barbecue area.

Chat with Solahart Eastern Ranges at Eildon Golf Club from 2pm. Find out how to reduce your energy bills, receive a current promo of \$750 off solar and battery, earn Eildon Golf Club \$200 when you install qualifying products. Light refreshments available. Phone 9131 8677 or email admin@victoriansolar.com for more information.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

Alexandra Museum and steam train rides open 10am-3.30pm. For further information visit alexantratramway.org.au or call 0427 509 988.

MONDAY, MARCH 31

Alexandra Community Hub AGM will be held at 6pm at the Historic Court House at 38A Downey Street Alexandra.

You are invited to join Murrindindi Shire in developing a township structure plan to guide Yea's growth and preserve its unique character. Workshop will be held between 6.30-8pm at Yea Council Chamber. Register at theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/yea-structure-plan. For more information or to get involved phone 5772 0333 or visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/yea-structure-plan.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1

You are invited to join Murrindindi Shire in developing a township structure plan to guide Yea's growth and preserve its unique character. A drop in session will held between 3-5pm at Yea Library. For more information or to get involved phone 5772 0333 or visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/yea-structure-plan

Sacred Heart Yea are conducting a number of school tours, at 9am. For more information contact Amy Leahy, principal on 5797 2723 or email principal@shyea.catholic.edu.au. Final date see below.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

Sacred Heart Yea are conducting their final school tour, at 9am. For more information contact Amy Leahy, principal on 5797 2723 or email principal@shyea.catholic.edu.au

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

Alexandra Events and Murrindindi Shire are hosting a free breakfast and seminar for local farmers affected by current dry conditions. 8-10am at Alexandra Showgrounds Cattle Pavillion. You will have access to valuable information and resources designed to help you navigate current dry weather. Enjoy a free breakfast, tea or coffee and hear from a range of guest speakers. For more information contact council on 5772 0333.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

Alexandra Race Club Country and Western meeting. Punting and ponies, Fashions in the Field, music, magic, and much more. Gates open at noon. First race 1.15pm. Children under 16 free. Bus available from Eildon and Marysville, book online at country.racing.com/alexandra

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Petition pushes for driving reform

APARLIAMENTARY petition has highlighted concerns over the lack of standardisation in Australia's driving system, addressing issues regarding varying regulations on the minimum driving age and licensing requirements.

Spearheaded by Member for Northern Victoria Gaelle Broad, the petition has called upon the State Government to lower Victoria's minimum probationary drivers' age from 18 to 17, citing young drivers' struggle in accessing education and employment in rural and regional Victoria as a barrier many face due to the age limit.

Ms Broad additionally highlighted the importance of incentivising and providing learner drivers with driver training programs, such as those that are currently used in New South Wales, and called for a similar system to be implemented in Victoria.

Under the neighbouring state's laws, if a learner driver completes a one-day safer driving course, they can earn 20 hours of credit on their logbooks, while undertaking 10 hours of professional driving lessons will entitle them to receive a further 20 hours of credit.

Ms Gaelle said that she had been contacted by many residents, including young drivers, their parents, and grandparents, who were in support of lowering the age.

"I raised the issue in parliament last year but was told the minister had safety concerns with the idea," she said.

"As a parent of two P-platers and one L-plater, I agree that safety is crucial, and training is vitally important to ensure our young people are ready for the responsibility of driving solo. Any road accident statistic is a bad one, regardless of your age.

"I have been contacted by people across the state keen to see the law changed in Victoria, particularly in regional areas where there is limited or no public transport available, and not everyone has a parent or carer available to ferry them around.

"For young people who have done the hours of training and are ready to drive safely on their own, a driver's licence opens doors to educational and employment opportunities, access to health services, to

engage in community events and sports and to help others."

Despite the benefits highlighted by Ms Broad, the petition had only garnered 1687 signatures as of Wednesday, March 12.

Addressing Ms Broad's call, a Victorian Government spokesperson stated that the government was not considering lowering the minimum age requirement.

"While we're not currently considering lowering the driving age, we're always looking at ways we can improve the settings in Victoria," they said.

Transport Accident Commission Chief Executive Tracey Slatter shared a similar sentiment, emphasising that age is directly linked to road fatalities.

"Young drivers continue to be overrepresented in crashes resulting in death and serious injury compared with every other age group of drivers on the road," she said.

"That's why there is a driving age of 18 in place in Victoria."

Victoria currently enforces the strictest regulations when it comes to obtaining a probationary licence, requiring drivers to be at least 18 years old and having recorded 120 hours of driving.

In stark contrast, the Northern Territory enforces the most lenient regulations, with learner drivers only required to hold their licence for six months before becoming eligible to apply for their 'Ps'. There are no minimum driving hour requirements, and with the learner licence available from the age of 16, drivers could be as young as 16 and a half when they first begin driving independently.

While the minimum age for every other state and territory is 17 years of age, the required driving hours varies significantly, with Western Australia requiring 50 hours, South Australia requiring 75, Tasmania requiring 80, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland requiring 100 each, and New South Wales requiring 120.

Ms Broad's petition can be found at parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/petitions/reduce-probationary-driving-age, and will close April 30.

POLICE REPORT



AS a result of an investigation conducted by Alexandra Crime Investigation Unit detectives in relation to a series of theft related incidents in the Eildon, Thornton and Caveat areas, a 26 year old Cranbourne North man was arrested and charged with six counts of theft on April 1, 2024. At the Dandenong Magistrates' Court on March 18, he was sentenced to a 16 month term of imprisonment. Further investigations conducted by detectives resulted in a 32 year old Narre Warren man being arrested and charged with six counts of theft in October 2024. On Wednesday, March 5, at the Dandenong Magistrates' Court, he was sentenced to a 12 month term of imprisonment.

DRIVERS in Alexandra may have noticed an increased police presence on the evening of Saturday, March 22. Four police units took part in a crackdown on drink driving on Grant Street in Alexandra. No drink drivers were caught, however a young non-local man was spoken to after he was found to be carrying a drug of dependence. Police are investigating and he is expected to face court at a later date. Police will continue to be out and about, with a focus on drink driving and erratic driving.

POLICE have received reports regarding a kangaroo deliberately injured by a vehicle on Cooper Street in Alexandra on the evening of Friday, March 21. They have been following leads and are asking eyewitnesses to come forward.

DRIVERS are asked to be mindful of conditions when driving, particularly on Marysville-Woods Point Road, where there has been an increase in vehicle collisions. There is more moisture on the roads now than at the height of summer.

Tough Bail Bill is coming soon

THE first *Tough Bail Bill* was introduced to Parliament on Tuesday, March 18 with its first measures due to start immediately. Premier Jacinta Allan joined Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenny at Parliament to announce that key parts of the *Tough Bail Laws* package will be fast-tracked, so they will start immediately. The government will launch a bigger recruitment campaign for corrections and youth justice staff to get ready for an expected jump in the number of offenders on remand.

The first *Tough Bail Bill* will activate all but two of the major changes in the government's *Tough Bail Laws* package.

The bill will put community safety above all by making community safety the overarching principle for bail decision-making (for offenders of all ages), through an amendment to the guiding principles of the *Bail Act*.

The bill will also amend section 3B of the *Bail Act* to remove the principle of 'remand as last resort' for youths.

These changes are about reducing the risk of reoffending, but they will also ensure the justice system meets the expectations of the broader community.

The bill will also introduce bail offences to further reduce the risk of reoffending and establish real consequences for breaking the rules, because these are obligations that must be respected.

The offence to 'commit an indictable offence while on bail for an indictable offence' will be included in the *Bail Act*.

The offence to 'breach of condition of bail' will be a summary offence and, like previous

offences of its kind, will apply to adults only. This also delivers consequences for bail breaches which are more administrative in nature, like failing to report or meet curfew, and can be considered by bail decision-makers as a reason to refuse bail.

Both offences will be punishable by up to three months imprisonment on top of any other sentence imposed for any crime committed.

Additionally, if someone on bail has been arrested for breach of bail, the Bill will also allow police officers to bring that person to court directly, rather than wait for a bail justice.

The above changes to elevate the principle of community safety, remove remand as a last resort and introduce bail offences will take effect the moment the first *Tough Bail Bill* is passed and proclaimed.

When this happens, the government anticipates a marked increase in the number of adult and youth offenders on remand, which will impact existing system capacity.

The bill makes further significant changes. Currently, many offences that most Victorians would consider serious and high-risk do not face tougher bail tests and retain the presumption to bail, making bail more likely.

The bill will toughen bail tests for a number of serious offences, which makes the granting of bail far less likely.

The following offences will now always be subject to the toughest bail test available on a first offence, these are armed robbery, aggravated burglary, home invasion, and carjacking.

These crimes are all extremely serious and life endangering, and highly susceptible to repeat offending. Aggravated burglary is of particular concern. More offences are occurring, because more people are home. Males in their mid-to-late teens, adults and youths, make up the most alleged aggravated burglary offenders by far.

Also under the bill, the following indictable offences will face a tougher bail test, with no presumption of bail: Serious firearms offences, serious arson, knife and other weapon offences; committing an offence involving a controlled weapon (including machete violence), prohibited weapon, or offensive weapon (including use of every day implements fashioned into or used as weapons such as baseball bats, kitchen knives and shivs); car theft related offences: theft of a motor vehicle when co-charged with conduct endangering life, conduct endangering persons, failure to stop, or possession of a prohibited weapon or controlled weapon.

Most Victorians would rightly consider these offences serious and high-risk. They will move to the *Bail Act* schedules where they belong.

Each of the above changes to bail tests are also on an accelerated timeline. Under the *Tough Bail Bill*, they will take effect at least three months following the bill's proclamation.

Because the changes to the bail tests are expected to result in another increase in the number of adult and youth offenders on remand, their commencement will be linked to system workforce capacity.

An expanded recruitment campaign is being prepared for corrections and youth justice workers, and further planning is underway to prepare the adult and youth systems for the increased demand.

The second *Tough Bail Bill* will be introduced in the middle of the year.

The second bill will create the proposed tough new bail test for serious, repeat offenders. It will also uplift the new offence of 'committing an indictable offence while on bail' to face a tougher bail test, triggering

the second-strike rule. Safeguards will be developed so the uplift is proportionate.

The second bill is expected to result in a further increase in the number of adult and youth offenders on remand, for which the system must be ready.

Marysville's nbn progress

WITH the extremely slow internet connectivity during peak times, Marysville residents have been waiting for the news the nbn is coming to town.

An NBN Co spokesperson gave Alexandra Newspapers the following update.

"NBN full fibre connectivity is currently in progress for Marysville residents, with plans to make this available in later 2025. We suggest community members register their interest through the nbn website.

"By doing so, they will get notified when they are able to make the switch to faster broadband speeds on nbn full fibre, which will enable more people and devices to be online at the same time with minimal disruptions. This means smoother streaming, faster downloads and uploads, and stronger connections.

"The construction work that's taken place in the region has involved the rollout of nbn full fibre, otherwise known as Fibre to the Premises (FTTP). Now that the physical construction has been completed, we need to perform extensive testing and related activities before customers can connect and take advantage.

"Once residents and businesses are able to connect, our nbn Local team will visit the local area to take questions and help customers in Marysville ensure they can get the full benefit out of the completed full fibre upgrades."

Koala Cherries signs enforceable undertaking

KOALA Cherries has signed an enforceable undertaking with the Victorian Workcover Authority. The commitments have been offered to WorkSafe under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. The enforceable undertaking will be in place for 18 months, with WorkSafe monitoring and receiving updates on the progress of the undertakings.

The undertakings are the result of four charges being bought by WorkSafe, alleging that Koala Cherries contravened the OHS Act.

An incident occurred in December 2021 where a labour hire employee's hand became entangled in a cherry grading network of conveyor belts. An emergency stop cable ran across all 23 lanes and was intended to cut the power to the machine if pulled. This did not function as intended at the time of the incident.

Despite the incident, and following successful medical treatments, the injured employee returned to work temporarily in April 2022. While the injured employee was unable to gain the same type of employment, she did secure employment to perform laundry work and able to pick/pack at a warehouse.

Following further medical treatments in December 2022, the injured employee

returned to Malaysia in February 2023 and continues to live there. While the injured employee gained functionality of the injury, she has scarring on her hand and cannot fully stretch or bend her thumbs and forefinger.

It was alleged that Koala Cherries failed to reduce the risk to health and safety by installing a physical barrier between the machine and packing lanes, failed to maintain the plant which was as far as reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health, failing to provide information, instruction and training to enable employees to perform their work in a way that was safe and without risks to health, and that they failed to provide or maintain plant and systems of work that were, so far as reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

Koala Cherries regretted the incident and acknowledged the injury and WorkSafe allegations. The charges were withdrawn after the enforceable undertaking was signed.

Following the incident, Koala isolated the affected area of machinery and installed steel guards in response to the WorkSafe prohibition notices. In December 2021, WorkSafe found that they had complied with the four prohibition notices.



Council is seeking your feedback on the proposed options for the Alexandra East Development Plan (AEDP) to shape the future of 71 hectares in Alexandra's major growth area.

GET INVOLVED:

Drop-in session at Alexandra Shire Hall
Monday 31 March between 3.00 - 5.00 pm
Review the options and provide feedback.

Facilitated Workshop at Alexandra Shire Hall
Tuesday 1 April from 6.30 - 8.00 pm
Register: theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/aedp or call 5772 0333.
In-depth discussions on development options.

If you're unable to attend in person, but would like to learn more or provide feedback, visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/aedp or call 5772 0333.

Help shape the Alexandra East Development Plan!



'Where the Farck is Yarck'

HERE at the First Annual
Yarck Custom Car & Bike Show

**SATURDAY
29TH MARCH**
from 10am
Behind the Yarck Hotel

ENTRY is by
gold coin donation

PIZZA
will be available
to purchase
at the event

LIVE MUSIC



Y
H

Proudly sponsored by the **YARCK HOTEL**

Proudly supporting
Student of the week

Community Bank · Yea & District and Alexandra

Bendigo Bank

ALEXANDRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charli F

Charli shows the school values every day. She has a growth mindset in the classroom, always trying her best. She is kind and friendly in the playground. She also has a cracking sense of humour and a smile that is contagious. Charli, we are proud to have you in our learning community. You are a star.

ST MARYS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Bella Lamaro

Bella has started this term with a new found confidence. She makes the most of all learning opportunities by asking questions, clarifying her learning when unsure and applying effort to all her tasks. She seeks feedback and takes it on board to improve and demonstrates her thinking to help others in our class.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch

Bendigo Bank



Alexandra Primary School space students ready for space. -S

Alexandra Primary Students blast off

by Mrs Victoria Draper

ALEXANDRA Primary School is proud to have been selected to take part in the Andy Thomas Space Foundation and Makers Empire the Kids in Space program, 2025. This program is a sponsored space education program designed to encourage primary school students to engage with the nation's growing space ecosystem, introduce them to space technology and different jobs within the space industry and spark their interest in a space career. Mrs Fraser and Mrs Draper attended a two day 'space camp' to equip them in leading the program.

The Alexandra Primary Space team are currently completing a series of workshops, led by Mrs Pru Fraser, designed to support them in developing

the skills required to develop design thinking strategies and understand the importance of prototyping and theory testing. Collaboration, communication and creativity are important skills in this project, skills that will assist students in thriving in any endeavour.

The program culminates in a design competition that solves a space related problem. The team, made up of grade five and six students, will then present their project at a showcase in Wangaratta. The winning school will then travel on to Adelaide for the national showcase at the Australian Space Discovery Centre.

The school received a subscription to Makers Empire Learning By Design Program and a Flashforge 3D printer to assist in the completion of their projects.

Increased demand for water across the summer season

GOULBURN-Murray Water (GMW) has delivered more than a million megalitres of water to irrigators in the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District during the 2024/25 irrigation season.

This is more than 200,000ML more than the amount the water corporation had delivered to these irrigators at the same stage during any of the previous 10 irrigation seasons and is well above the 10 year average of 628,000ML for the same stage in the season.

GMW Water Delivery Services general manager Warren Blyth said the water kept in GMW's lakes, dams and reservoirs had helped GMW meet this demand.

"This season has highlighted the importance of our water storages," he said.

"The water held in them has been a vital safety net for many irrigators during an incredibly dry period."

This dryness is highlighted by how little inflows GMW storages have received so far during the 2024/25 water year (July 1 to June 30).

So far, Lake Eildon has received less than half the inflows it usually would have at this stage in the year.

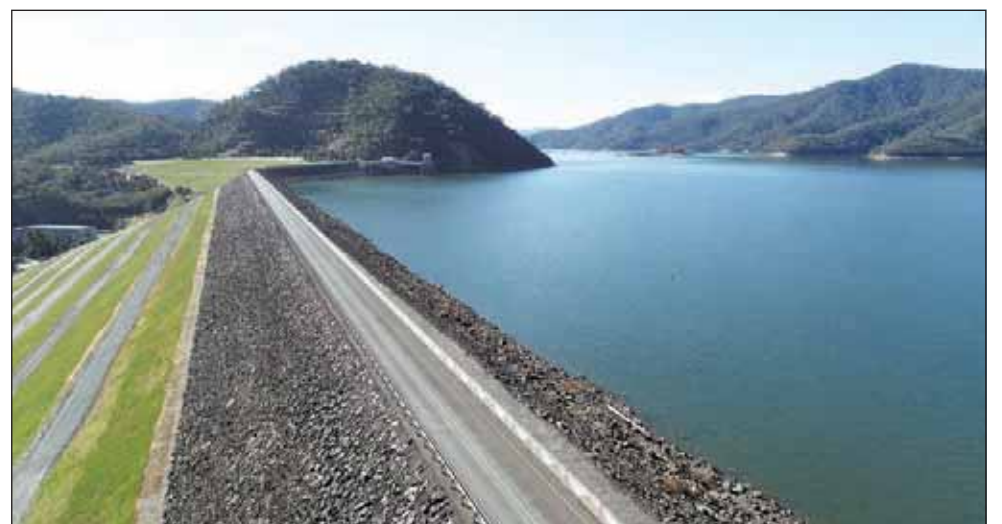
Lake Eppalock has received 14,500 megalitres during the 2024-25 water year so far. This is not only 12 per cent of the average inflows it usually receives by this stage of the water year but is less than a 10th of the inflows it received in one day during the 2022 floods.

The Cairn Curran, Laanecoorie, and Tullaroop storages have only received four to six per cent of their usual inflows.

However, Mr Blyth said water supply is still relatively healthy. "Some of our larger storages are designed to be 'multi-year' storages, meaning that once they are full, they have enough water to supply customers for multiple years, regardless of inflows," he said.

"The likes of Lake Eildon, Lake Eppalock and Dartmouth Dam are still between 60 to 85 per cent full, so despite the dry weather, this will support water availability in the following irrigation season."

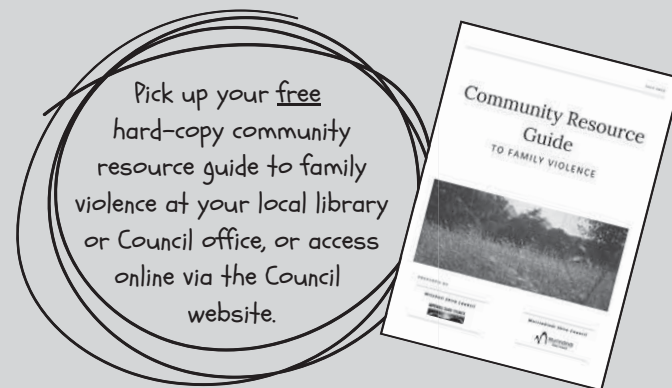
Lake Eildon was at 68 per cent capacity on March 19.



Lake Eildon. -S

A Little Respect

Creating space for conversations in our community about important topics related to relationships, gender equality and family violence prevention.



Nicola is the Community Development Project Officer at Murrindindi Shire Council and our guest author this month. With Lee as her mentor, Nicola is passionate about promoting mental wellbeing and supporting young people and their families to enjoy healthy relationships free from violence. Nicola has led various Council campaigns including R U OK? Day and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and facilitates the Youth Hangout in Yea. She believes we all have a part to play in improving the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing of Murrindindi Shire residents.

Topic of the month: Have you heard of ARC Justice?

We caught up with a Managing Lawyer, Duty Lawyer and the Education and Research Lead from ARC Justice to learn more about who they are, what they do and how our community can benefit from their services.

Who is ARC Justice and what do you do?

ARC Justice began as a tenancy rights and advocacy service in Bendigo but has since established two community legal centres covering the Loddon Campaspe and Goulburn Valley regions. Amongst other services, the Goulburn Valley community legal centre, based in Shepparton, provides free legal information, advice and representation for people experiencing family violence, applying for an intervention order or responding to an intervention order. The purpose of their work is to ensure that some of our most vulnerable community members understand their rights and receive accessible, confidential and equitable legal support.

In your experience, how can family violence present itself in the community?

The definition of family violence is very broad, and while it's never acceptable, anyone can experience it. Family violence can affect people of all ages, genders, identities and cultures. While society traditionally understands family violence to present itself as physical or sexual abuse, the reality is, family violence is any behaviour that threatens someone, within a family or intimate relationship. It can be obvious or invisible, constant or occasional. Family violence is so varied and perplexing in nature it is often hard to pinpoint exactly if or when someone is experiencing family violence however, lawyers at ARC Justice frequently tell people that family violence is any sort of behaviour that makes you fear for your safety or wellbeing. While ARC Justice's work involves asking upfront if someone is experiencing family violence, the initial answer is usually 'no', but what often happens is that later in the process, people will disclose incidents that they themselves would not have classified as family violence but are actually against Australian Law. While this can be difficult for people to accept, ARC Justice is equipped to guide people through the subsequent legal options available to them.

What is a family violence intervention order?

Often applied for by the affected family member or a police officer (the applicant), a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) is a court order that protects family members, children and property from violence. Intervention orders have rules called 'conditions' that must be followed by the person accused of violence (the respondent). For example, the order may say the respondent cannot hurt or threaten family members or damage property. Intervention order conditions cannot be broken by agreement so regardless of your understanding or confidence of the conditions, it is always recommended that you speak to a lawyer. You are entitled to have an input into the order and its conditions.

How can people access your services?

There are a few ways people who are experiencing family violence can access ARC Justice's free and confidential services.

- Self-referral: You do not need a referral to contact ARC Justice. To see if they can help you at court or

provide legal advice before your court date, you can contact the Goulburn Valley community legal centre via phone (03) 5831 0900 or 1800 310 900. You can also visit the Shepparton Office at suite 1/1 High St, Shepparton. When you reach out to ARC Justice, they will ask you some questions about your legal case and confirm your personal details. This information will help identify if there is a lawyer available to assist. If not, they will provide information about legal services that might be able to assist.

- Support Services: Services such as Maternal and Child Health Nurses, The Orange Door, the Centre for Non-Violence or 1800 RESPECT may refer you to ARC Justice. If you are comfortable going through the legal system, that's when duty lawyers would step in and help guide you through the process.
- Police: The police have a duty to protect family members, children and property from family violence and, upon receiving a family violence report, they must see if everyone is safe. Police will act if they believe someone is in danger, even if those involved don't want them to. One way they may act is by giving the respondent a family violence safety notice or applying for a FVIO on behalf of the applicant. ARC Justice strongly encourage applicants to see a duty lawyer before their court hearing, as duty lawyers can advocate for what the applicant would like to see, experience or aim for come court day.

If people are anxious or afraid of going to court, what can they do?

The safety and wellbeing of family violence victims is paramount, including in court. At specialist family violence courts, such as Shepparton and Bendigo, there are designated safe waiting areas with separate entrances and exists. These venues also have quiet activities available for children to engage in if they are present. Alternatively, applicants can apply to appear in court via Webex (an online platform) rather than attending in person. They can also invite a support person to be present. If the police are acting on the applicant's behalf, the applicant does not have to attend court at all however, it is important they are connected with the right people and access the right support beforehand.

We would like to thank ARC Justice for their time and expertise in educating our community on the legal support options available for those experiencing family violence.

Getting support

Call 000 in an emergency or if you are/someone else is in immediate danger.

- 1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 7 32
- NTV men's referral service: 1800 766 491
- Orange Door Goulburn: 1800 634 245
- Nexus Primary Health: 1300 773 352
- Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre: 1800 015 188
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Rainbow Door: 1800 729 367 or visit rainbowdoor.org.au - A free specialist helpline for LGBTQIA+ Victorians
- Djirra Aboriginal Women Support Service: 1800 959 563
- Mensline Australia: 1300 789 978
- 'Are You Safe at Home?': areyousafeathome.org.au
- ARC Justice's Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre: (03) 5831 0900 or 1800 310 900 - free legal information, advice and representation services

Would you like your own deck of Free From Violence Activity Cards?

Scan the QR code below to register your interest and we will get in touch make sure you don't miss out on this great conversational and icebreaker tool!



When the pager goes off: A day in the life of a CFA volunteer

Jude McGill, Volunteer Sustainability
Northeast Region, CFA

YOUR local community relies on local community people to protect you from fires, assist with rescues and attend motor vehicle accidents as well as providing non-operational support to your brigades.

The role of a volunteer with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) can be very rewarding and the time commitment can be as little or as much as you would like to contribute, as long as you meet the minimum requirements of CFA and your brigade.

Let's have a look at a day in the life of a CFA member.

Operational Firefighters

A day in the life of a CFA volunteer responding to a fire is fast paced, demanding, and filled with moments of intense teamwork and focus. Here's an overview of what such a day might look like.

Many CFA volunteers have regular jobs, so they might be at work. In the event of a fire, volunteers will receive a pager alert or message via the Supplementary Alerting Service (SAS). This could be anything from a grass fire to a large-scale bushfire, motor vehicle accident, house fire or rescue and the team must be ready to move at a moment's notice. The fire station will quickly fill with the sounds of sirens and voices as volunteers quickly gear up.

Responding to a Call: Once they arrive at the scene, there's little time to waste. Volunteers assess the fire or incident and surrounding area, determine if there are any immediate threats to life or property, and begin executing a coordinated response. This might involve setting up hoses, fighting the fire directly, or protecting nearby properties, while also providing information back to Firecom (000). This information allows Firecom and CFA to understand the size of the fire and the resources required. CFA will often work in partnership with Victoria

Police, Ambulance Victoria, DEECA and the SES.

Team Coordination: Communication is key. Volunteers work closely with each other, other firefighting teams, and emergency services. They might operate in shifts, rotating duties like manning hoses, providing support to those on the front lines, preparing additional equipment, traffic control and clean up.

Ongoing Operations: As the sun sets, the firefight may continue, especially if the conditions are difficult (ie. high winds or large areas affected). CFA volunteers might need to clear out trees (this is done by specialist trained tree assessors and fellers, often from Forest Fire Management Victoria) or other obstacles that are obstructing their efforts, while others continue to put out hot spots to prevent the fire from reigniting.

Cleanup and Reporting: After the fire is contained, the crew might assist in mopping up residual embers or checking for hidden flames. They also prepare reports to ensure that all actions are documented, which

is essential for safety audits and future operational planning.

Returning to Station: If the fire is under control, volunteers head back to the station. They ensure the equipment is cleaned, refuelled, and checked before storing it away. Volunteers return to their regular lives, but some may stay at the fire for the night, or another crew will come in to relieve them. They may come from within the same area or from further afield.

Reflection and Bonding: After a long day, some might take time to debrief with the team. Whether it's sharing what went well or discussing what could be improved, this is a crucial part of the process. Volunteers also rely on each other for emotional support, as firefighting can sometimes be overwhelming, especially after large or tragic fires. Firefighters also rely on the support from their District Office and the Wellbeing Team of peers and counsellors. District 12 headquarters covers both Mitchell and Murrindindi shires.

Dealing with Fatigue: Firefighting can be physically and mentally exhausting, so volunteers rely on one another for support. Hydration and rest breaks are essential to avoid burnout. District 12 CFA have a Rehabilitation Unit with trained staff who attend fires to monitor and ensure firefighters are rested and fit to be on the fire ground.

Routine Maintenance: When there isn't an emergency call, volunteers might perform routine checks on equipment or clean and restock the trucks. Volunteers regularly check their gear and make sure their firefighting equipment is ready to go. This could include protective clothing, boots, breathing apparatus, and ensuring the fire truck is well-maintained with enough water and supplies.

Training days: These sessions keep everyone up-to-date and ensure that volunteers know exactly what to do in emergencies. Busier brigades will train weekly and quieter brigades will train less often, but always ensure their operational members are up to date with the annual training requirements required to be operational.

Standby Mode: Even during the night, volunteers may need to respond to fires or emergencies. As the community sleeps, CFA volunteers remain vigilant, always prepared to leap into action should another call come in.

Throughout the day, volunteers may face long hours, unpredictable conditions, and intense pressure. Yet, their commitment to protecting their communities and supporting each other through the challenges is what makes them such a vital part of the firefighting effort and members develop strong bonds with their fellow members.

Operational members can also be called upon to be deployed to other parts of the state or interstate to support firefighters further at events afield.

Non-Operational members

Non-operational members are vital to the success of a brigade. There are many roles within a brigade that non-operational members can take on. These range from secretary, treasurer, station maintenance, community engagement, social media, wellbeing coordinator, social coordinator, fundraising, equipment checks, supporting re-stocking of appliances and cleaning appliances, preparing or providing meals for the crews on return to the station, cleaning the station, lawn mowing and the list goes on, depending on the needs of each brigade.



Fighting a grass fire at Whanregarwen. -S

Come Chat With
Solahart
Eastern Ranges
at Eildon Golf Club
52 Eildon-Jamieson Rd, Eildon VIC 3713

**28th Mar
2 pm
Solar Talk!**

WE GOT SMART WITH SOLAHART
FUTURE-PROOFING OUR HOME CUTTING OUR ENERGY BILLS

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At the Talk:

- Chat with experts to reduce your energy and gas bills
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- Earn \$200 for Eildon Golf Club when you install qualifying Solahart products
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(03) 9131 8677
admin@victoriansolar.com
victoriansolar.com

Solahart
Eastern Ranges



Fundraising for the Good Friday Appeal. -S



Fighting a fire at the Alexandra Resource Recovery Centre. -S



Cleaning, drying and rolling hoses. -S

The story of Robert Gibb

by Elvie Thompson

ROBERT Gibb lived from 1904 to 1988, and was known as Bob.

Bob came from Jack Street in Motherwell, Scotland.

At 12 years old, his father died after lifting a large engine alone. He was a very strong man. As a result, Bob had to look after his mother, as well as two sisters and three brothers, all younger than himself.

Later in 1928, after a big farewell party, his mates (all drunk) helped to get him on the ship, but it wasn't actually going to Canada so Dad could go gold mining. It was the wrong ship. He found out when the ship was on its way that it was the 'Hobsons Bay' going to Melbourne so Bob ended up in Melbourne and he did go gold mining at Ballarat. He also worked at a Boys Home where he gave swimming lessons.

Bob also helped build the Palais Theatre in St Kilda.

Bob loved fishing, which brought him to the Thornton area a few times. To get from Melbourne he walked, taking a week, so he sang and played the piano in hotels to earn a meal along the way. He also went gold mining around Alexandra and Thornton. He was living off the land, fishing, rabbiting for

food, also a little gold to buy flour, tea, etcetera.

Bob met my mother, Muriel and married in 1936. Then, Bob was working on a timber mill near Buxton (out in the bush). A house was provided. The first night it rained unfortunately. The roof leaked on the marital bed during the night.

In November 1938 I was born in Alexandra when Black Friday happened (1938-39 fire). The fire was approaching the mill. Bob got us out, left us at the Buxton Hotel and went fire fighting.

He loved fishing around Thornton and Eildon so we moved to Thornton about 1943-44. It was a farm owned by people who wanted someone to look after the house and milk a cow, so my mother did. Then another daughter was born and I went to school. Dad was given a block of land next door by Mr Sparkes. Dad started to build our house. He finished the kitchen with a wood stove and we had to move in. We had a tent too. Life wasn't easy, no water, electricity, unmade road but at least we had milk from next door and a short walk to the Thornton grocer, butcher, café, school, post office, service station, church and hotel. During the war we couldn't get nails or roofing iron. We had lots of fish, trout, redfin, etcetera.

Dad had several jobs, Eildon first wall, the new town that had to be constructed as Eildon was going to be under water. Prefab houses came on trucks. Bob did lots of work at Eildon. He also worked at the Eildon fish hatchery. Later he was with the CRB (Country Roads Board) building bridges, Gilmores

Bridge, Thornton Bridge, Bonnie Doon Bridge plus others in the Goulburn Valley. Bob also worked at Luna Park. We have no idea what he did there.

Dad had a stroke when daughter number three was about five years old (he was 55 approximately).

Bob fished for year, met up with Rex Hunt who came up to Thornton some Sundays and took Dad out fishing. Bob was also a good vege grower (we watered). Most people in Thornton had tomatoes, beans and fish too.

The Gibb brothers sang together on Radio 3SR, Bob, Tom, Bill and Jack Gibb. They all ended up deaf in later years. The two sisters sang also but didn't settle in Australia. They went to America but did visit us a couple of times with a big family get together.

Bob passed away on October 31, 1988, a stroke.

I came back to this area from Brisbane in 1981, a widow with two children. I took my parents to do shopping once a fortnight and mowed their lawn as Dad's arthritis was bad and he wasn't allowed to drive any more. I was told that Dad was seen driving around the wrong side of our roundabout in Alex. That was after he lost his licence to drive.

The siblings included: Bill Gibb from Eildon; Jean from Chicago; Bob Gibb from Thornton; Mary from Chicago; Jack Gibb from Alexandra; and Tom Gibb from Mansfield.



Siblings Bill, Jean, Bob, Mary, Tom and Jack. -S

KINDER YOU CAN COUNT ON

The Victorian Government is making it easier for families to find a three and four-year old kinder learning program they can count on.

1

LED BY A QUALIFIED TEACHER

The Kinder Tick recognises kinder programs that are led by a qualified teacher.

2

PLAY-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

It highlights kindergartens and long day care centres that offer play-based programs to help children learn and grow, before they start school.

3

FUNDED AND APPROVED BY THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

It also identifies services that are approved for Victorian Government funding.

LOOK
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TICK

KINDERGARTEN
Victorian Government Approved

Find out more at vic.gov.au/kindertick

VICTORIA
State Government

ON THE LAND

Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture, Aquaculture and Silviculture

Planned burning to start soon

FOREST Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) will take advantage of favourable weather and forest conditions across the state to reduce the risk of bushfires on the community and environment.

FFMVic Deputy Chief Fire Officer Aaron Kennedy said planned burning is one of the key tools firefighters use to reduce the size, intensity, and impact of bushfires.

“Reducing fuels such as grass, leaves, bark, shrubs and small fallen branches means fires are less intense, slower to spread and safer for firefighters to control,” Mr Kennedy said.

“Autumn is generally the best time of the year to undertake planned burns as the weather is more stable and fire behaviour is manageable and predictable.”

“Given the limited opportunities to undertake planned burning, it is important that we commence this work as soon as weather and forest conditions are suitable.”

This year more than 100 planned burns across an area of 46,300 hectares are prepared and ready for ignition in north east Victoria.

Priority burns are planned in state forest, parks and reserves including Marysville, Toolangi, Kinglake, Glenburn, Woods Point and Howqua.

“While planned burning is our most effective tool to reduce bushfire risk, in locations where planned burning isn’t suitable, we mulch, mow, slash and spray, build fuel breaks and upgrade and maintain the public land road network to keep Victoria safer,” Mr Kennedy said.

“We work with the Bureau of Meteorology to assess weather conditions, such as humidity, temperature and wind speed and will only carry out burns when the conditions are suitable, and it is safe to do so.

“FFMVic is made up of skilled and experienced staff from Victorian fire and land management agencies. Our partners under the FFMVic banner include the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water.”

FFMVic works with emergency sector partners including the Country Fire Authority, Fire Rescue Victoria and Emergency Management Victoria to manage bushfire risk, prepare communities and respond to bushfires and other emergencies.

Register for the latest updates about where and when FFMVic deliver planned burning at plannedburns.ffm.vic.gov.au



The Trap

By Jed Dunstan

www.jmdcartoons.com.au ©JD

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4 - 6 April 2025

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Photocopied or emailed entries will not be accepted.

ONE ENTRY PER HOUSEHOLD

To go in the draw, this voucher must be received by
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Alexandra Newspapers, 43 Grant Street, Alexandra, 3714

Staff or associated family members of Alexandra Newspapers are ineligible to enter. Children under 5 free entry. Winners will be notified by phone. Tickets will be emailed to winners.

Tickets can only be emailed to winners. Please ensure you provide an email address.

Name

Address

Email

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MARCH PHOTO COMPETITION

Submit your photo competition entry for February, for your chance to win a \$50 voucher from Dindi Country Clothing in Alexandra. The March theme is 'sunset's'.

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Email your photo and contact details to manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au by noon March 28, 2025

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T&C: Professional photographers are ineligible to enter. Staff or associated family members of Alexandra Newspapers are ineligible to enter. Photos must be taken within the Murrindindi Shire

ON THE LAND

Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture, Aquaculture and Silviculture



Cattle come in all different forms. Pictured are Charolais (white) and Angus (black) cattle. -BD

The basics of understanding cattle

by Bailey Dixon

WITH the Yea Saleyards hosting at least one cattle sale every month, there is a large amount of cattle moving through the area.

For some people who aren't farmers or don't own a lot of land, or perhaps have simply chosen to run chickens, sheep or goats, identifying and understanding cattle is a challenge.

To begin with, all cows are cattle, but not all cattle are cows.

A calf is a baby cattle of either sex, male or female. Cattle remain calves until they are 11 months old, when they are reclassified.

For female cattle, they are reclassified from a calf to a heifer at 11 months of age, with heifers being young female cattle that have not yet given birth. Heifers become cows when they have given birth to at least one calf.

Male cattle are classed based on their ability to reproduce. If they are castrated, they are called a steer, but an intact male cattle that can still reproduce is a bull.

Cattle are primarily farmed for their meat, milk or leather. With these goals in mind, there are different cattle breeds that farmers can choose from that are more productive for each type. For instance, Angus steers provide good quality meat, while Holstein Friesian cows are good for dairy production.

Cattle bred without horns are known as 'polled cattle', such as poll Herefords. They can be easier to manage, as they don't have to be dehorned, and safer.

In terms of cattle breeds, there are a number of breeds currently very popular in Australia.

Angus cattle is popular for beef, and you will often see the Yea Saleyards full of Angus. These cattle are solid black or red in colouring.

Holstein Friesian cows are popular for dairy products, and very distinct with their patchy hide of black and white or red and white. Brown Swiss cows are also good for milk production.

Herefords are another beef cattle, with an easy-going disposition that makes them easy to farm. They commonly have white faces and a red coat.

Charolais are a French breed with versatility. They are a good beef producer, but Charolais cows can also be great for milking. They commonly have a fully white hide.

Galloway cattle tick all three boxes, with most people farming them for beef, but they can also be milked and their hides used. They are often black in colour, though can be found in red. Belted Galloway can have a white band that wraps around their midsection.

There are many more breeds of cattle than these select few, but these ones are popular and common and can be seen on many farms.

Other random bits of information about cattle include that they have a visual field of 330 degrees, which is almost all-around, they sleep only around 30 minutes in deep sleep per day, and they constantly move during grazing, meaning they can cover large distances each day.

Victorian Landcare Grants now open

THE Victorian Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos recently announced the opening of the 2025 *Victorian Landcare Grants*, with \$3.55 million available to support volunteers in caring for the state's landscapes and biodiversity. This means volunteer groups and networks protecting and restoring the environment in the Goulburn Broken region can now apply for funding.

The grants are open to environmental volunteer groups and networks, including Landcare groups and networks, Friends groups, Conservation Management Networks, Committees of Management and Aboriginal groups.

Project grants of up to \$20,000 are available for on-ground works and community education projects focused on enhancing the natural environment, including native vegetation and wildlife, waterways and soils. Support grants of up to \$500 are available to assist with administrative and operational expenses of groups and networks.

Goulburn Broken CMA Regional Landcare Coordinator, Kerstie Lee, said last year the Victorian Landcare Grants funded 19 projects in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

"This included a project in Merton, where the Victorian Landcare Grants supported raising awareness about Koalas and restoring their habitat to help create connectivity through the landscape for Koalas to move safely.

"I encourage our local environmental volunteer groups and networks to put in an application for this year's funding and look forward to a wide range of projects being considered," Ms Lee said.

Since 2000, the Victorian Government has invested \$80.7 million through the Victorian Landcare Grants program to support conservation efforts and empower Victorians to help protect the state's landscapes, waterways and wildlife.

The grants will help achieve targets set in Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037, the Victorian Government's 20-year plan to protect the environment and native species.

Visit gbcma.vic.gov.au/projects/funding-opportunities/funding_landholder-grants/victorian-landcare-grants for more information and application links. Grants close on Wednesday, April 16.



FARMING IN DRY CONDITIONS

Free seminar and breakfast

Are you a farmer feeling the heat? Join us for a morning of support, advice and great food!

In partnership with Alexandra Events, Murrindindi Shire Council is hosting a free breakfast and seminar for local farmers affected by these conditions.

Join us:

When: Thursday 3 April from 8.00 to 10.00 am

Where: Alexandra Showgrounds Cattle Pavilion on William Street, Alexandra

Here, you'll have access to valuable information and resources designed to help you navigate the current dry weather. Enjoy a free breakfast of bacon and egg sandwiches, served with a warm cup of tea or coffee and hear from a range of specialist guest speakers offering insights on managing livestock, maintaining animal health and improving farm sustainability during dry conditions.

This event also provides a great opportunity to connect with fellow farmers in the Shire, share experiences, and learn practical tips for coping with extreme weather.

For more information, please call Council on **5772 0333**.

Murrindindi Shire Council is pleased to advise that funding for this event is made possible by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



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Dr Anna Manning



From Glasgow to Australia with a secret shortbread recipe

ALEXANDRA resident Helen Hill is famous for her secret shortbread recipe, but there’s also a lot more to her experiences on the planet.

Helen was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and moved to Australia aged 10. She has since taken on an Australian accent, but can slip easily back into a thick Scottish brogue.

Now aged 84, she was just three years old when her father returned from the war. He was with the Royal Engineers and had been in Italy rebuilding bombed bridges. When her father walked through the door, Helen went screaming to her mother saying, “There’s a man and he’s got a key.” Fortunately though, he brought Helen chocolates and a bottle of Chianti for his wife.

When her father was called up again, the family decided to move to Australia, although America was also an option as her father’s mother (Ney/Helen) and sister (Mona) were there. Helen was named after her grandmother.

Helen explained that her mother had married “below her station” by marrying a plumber. This caused a long-lasting rift with her mother’s family and caused significant emotional challenges for her mother, Aina. Helen became a Lifeline counsellor later in life, so in a way, she was able to help her mother through others.

Helen’s father had a great aunt, Jean, who lived in Warrnambool, so the family moved there. They weren’t ‘10 pound poms’ but instead paid their own passage as they wanted

to escape the tenements, and the family’s memory of the bombs falling on Glasgow and the privations.

Helen grew up in Warrnambool, where she went to school “and almost drowned. The little guy that used to deliver telegrams back in those days, he shoved me in a 24 foot dam, off the wall.”

Helen has also nearly drowned once in Scotland, but fortunately her experiences didn’t make her afraid of water. It instead encouraged her to learn how to swim when she was 35, and more recently she’s been a regular attendee at the Seymour aqua pool for about 12 years, as well as the gym in the last 12 months.

After finishing high school, she got a job at the local Coles supermarket on the proviso that Coles pay for her to do a typing and shorthand night course and get a job in the office after two years. Unfortunately, plans changed when a new manager came in.

Her typing and stenography teacher found the 15 year old Helen a new job at Western District Food Supply. She was very organised in the new job and was appreciated by the managers.

She left home aged 15, sharing a small unit overlooking the sea with a friend. There was a young man from Mildura living downstairs and he had his family coming to visit. The two girls offered to host a dinner with them, helping him out.

As it turned out, the young man’s parents owned Pine Lodge in Mildura, and they offered Helen a job until she found an office job. Helen jumped at the opportunity, and soon ended up working at Shillidays. There was a young man doing servicing for the company, and Helen ended up marrying him. She said, “He was an Outback Queenslander. Very outback Queenslander. A very, very, very outback Queenslander. Never wore underpants. Lived in a bus and travelled. Had no home. I felt sorry for nothing more than anything else I think. We were together for 16 years, but he used to get very violent because he couldn’t handle life... He broke horses. He was a great horseman and he had so many other good qualities, but he didn’t believe in himself.”

They did some market gardening work in Mildura before Helen ended up managing the deli at Safeways. It was initially a temporary job while the manager was overseas, but the whole staff took a vote one day and asked her to stay on as the deli manager. Helen said, “I worked hard and I looked after them. I just

like people. You know, I’d rather be happy than miserable.”

In Mildura, her husband met another man and his wife. The man’s wife used to talk to Helen about her problems. Helen’s husband ended up running away with her. Helen suspected that it wouldn’t last two months. She was wrong. It was six weeks.

Helen and her husband had three children together but she shut the door on him, and let him know in no uncertain terms that he wouldn’t be coming back.

Despite this, Helen said, “I’ve prayed for him, said a little prayer and said look after him because he’s a bit of a lost soul, you know. It’s really sad.”

She remarried a gentleman in her hometown. He was a lot older than Helen and highly intelligent, an inventor. They met at the surf lifesavers club in Warrnambool. Unfortunately, the marriage was short-lived.

The mother and boyfriend of one of her daughters-in-law, Jane, were travelling and stayed at the caravan park at Thornton. They loved it so much that they came back another time and bought a place, the same place that son Wayne and daughter-in-law Jane have owned for the last 12 or 14 years. The family all brought up tents and camped around them, having a great time.

“Now, I think we own half the caravan park. Jane’s brother’s got one. Adam’s Jenny’s got one next door, and Steve and Julia take their motorhome up. Wayne’s and Jane’s two daughters have got one next door to each other round the corner. My granddaughter’s mother in law got one next door to her. Because we all love it. At Easter, it’s like the Last Supper. There’s 38 of us, and on New Year’s Eve, everyone dresses up and it goes until 5am. A lot of happy, a lot of joy.”

Helen moved to Alexandra about 19 years ago. She’s been in her unit for 14 years, and was living in her own caravan at the caravan park prior to that.

Helen also commented, “My dad was psychic. They went to the Presbyterian Church in the morning and the Spiritualist Church of Scotland at night. So I grew up with the spiritualists and my dad was a healer.

“Dad’s with me often. My eldest son had heart attack just recently and dad was walking around the park with me. I knew it was him,” Helen said.

“I grew up with it. I’ve done more good with mine than bad, and I think that’s something that’s blessing more than anything else... There are hundreds of stories.”

Helen’s become famous in the area for her shortbread, just like her mother. Her parents were big lawn bowlers and at tournaments, “The minute that they walked through the door, all you heard was, have you made the shortbread, Aina? Because everybody got addicted to it.”

The recipe was Helen’s great grandmother’s and Aina told Helen the secret when she was a young teen. Helen was warned, ““And if this goes outside the family, we’ll all come back and haunt you. This is. That’s what my mother told me, and that’s what I’m telling you’. And I believed that.”

When Helen got older, her sons showed little interest in the recipe, but Elizabeth, her oldest granddaughter said that she wanted to know, so the recipe has now been passed on within the family. Elizabeth’s friends are now all addicted to it.

One day, Helen needed a haircut and her hairdresser was unavailable. Fortunately, Kirby was able to fit her in, and Helen gave her some shortbread in thanks. The next time she went in, Helen asked how the shortbread went. Kirby said that her mother came in and she almost had one but Kirby said she needed to eat a biscuit instead, because it was hers. A lady who was getting her haircut said if you are fighting over shortbread, it’s got to be Helen Hills, yeah?

Goodies have been sourcing tins for her to use for the shortbread. She lines them with foil and fills them with the beautiful shortbread. Lucky locals then get to try them, including Graham and Jenny at the newsagent and the staff at FoodWorks.

She said, “It’s just become a special thing.”

It’s not her only interest however. She said, “I learned to build computers when I was 51. I just loved the technology.” When she was younger, she read all of the science fiction books at the local library and was amazed by how prescient they were.

She’s also fascinated by Australian history, eventually becoming a tutor at U3A due to her excitement and enthusiasm for the subject.

She’s also not adverse to some adrenalin. “I raced cars,” she said. “Hot rods. I’ve taught my three sons how to drive and all their wives complain they drive like their mother. I’ll take anybody on going down the highway. Oh dear, I just love driving. I just want to be doing it still more. So I got into a bit of trouble, you know, with my racing intentions and everything.”

She commented, “You know, I think I’ve walked where angels fear to tread occasionally, but I’ve had a great life.”



Helen Hill. -AR

No more dust for Buxton Rise

BUXTON will shortly have one less dust bowl with Buxton Rise set to be fully sealed by the end of March.

As part of a contract recently awarded by Murrindindi Shire Council, drainage in Buxton Rise will be improved, the unsealed section will be asphalted, and Cathedral Close will be reconstructed. Following successful lobbying by the Buxton Progress Association (BPA), with support from Buxton Primary School, the area behind the Buxton Memorial Hall will be formed into a temporary carpark.

Works on beaching the table drains are scheduled to started on Monday, March 24, followed quickly by the asphaltting of Buxton Rise. In relation to the area behind the hall, which will provide additional parking for hall patrons and serve as a drop-off and pick-up for the school, council’s Manager Sustainability and Assets said, “The area beside the school will be done during the next school holidays to avoid the need for traffic management”.

From March 31, grading of roadways in preparation for sealing will commence, and the sealing of both Cathedral Close and Buxton Rise. Tonstruction of hardstand adjacent to the hall during the school holidays will take place from April 7 to 14.

These works form part of a larger scheme dealing with drainage along Maroondah

Highway that will ultimately see the open drain below the Buxton-Marysville Road intersection relocated off private land. BPA has been advocating for this, on behalf of affected property owners, for a number of years. In relation to those works, council also said, “The Country Roads Board drain at 2177 Maroondah Highway Buxton is being enlarged and concreted starting soon as Phase One. This will provide more capacity and will alleviate issues around the buildings. Waiting on an exact start date from the contractor but expected very soon. The major diversion drain proposed across the roundabout hasn’t got Department of Transport support yet so will be Phase Two”.

Drainage and sealing of gravel roads in the township are two of the key pillars of the BPA strategy directions developed following a very successful community consultation held in 2022. These works and the need to address other gravel roads were discussed with Mayor Damien Gallagher and Councillor Sandice McAulay who attended the recent BPA Committee meeting.

The BPA have expressed the community’s gratitude to council and their staff, who successfully lobbied for government grant funding so residents didn’t have to contribute towards these works.

Fun facts about giant insects

DID you think the insects were bad this year? Were you bitten by one too many mosquitoes? Well frankly, you should be grateful, because the situation used to be worse. Much worse.

In the days before the dinosaurs, in the Paleozoic Era (541 to 252 million years ago), insects were far bigger than they are now.

For starters, there were griffinflies, closely resembling the dragonflies of today. They had a wing span of up to 71 centimetres. Nothing much has changed about them. They’ve just become smaller.

It’s possible that they became large due to the higher oxygen levels in the atmosphere at the time. There were also fewer aerial predators. They were relatively safe until some dinosaurs developed into birds. The smaller the griffinfly, the better the chance of escape.

There were also giant millipedes, with one variety growing up to two and half

metres in length. It’s believed to be the largest invertebrate in the history of the earth, and some were also poisonous.

And in news to make you shudder, one of the early scorpions grew to around 70 centimetres in length.

Cockroaches were the size of a house cat and they had the ability to fly.

Mosquitoes appeared during the Cretaceous period, co-existing with dinosaurs, but have not changed much.

Termites have been on the planet for about 130,000,000 years. Recent studies have found that they evolved from cockroaches.

If the giant insects don’t worry you, how about a giant rodent? The Josephoartigasia monesi was five feet high, 10 feet long and had foot-long incisors. Certainly a rodent of unusual size.

Sweet dreams.

SOLUTIONS
Page 15

ACROSS

1. Beat the other team by a mile.
8. Prepared to go.
9. A sweetheart chosen on February 14th.
10. Keep under observation.
13. Common chemical used in fertiliser.
15. Challenge someone to take a risk.
17. Fish with a hook and line.
19. Very slowly crept closer.
20. The first man.
22. Excuses from a required duty.
25. All monies that are owed.
28. A long standing custom.
29. Take care of the sick.
30. Things that give enjoyment.

DOWN

- [illegible]

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
							8					
9												
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Cryptogram

P Y A Y E L L O W E I W V M B
M U Q T C G O F S W H D Q A L
U H R F T H R I D I R K Y G A
M S I P K O O E T J Z T X E C
P O P C L U C E E H S B J N K
F V S K Q E F A T N U F G T M
C A E R J P G D R R P N O A Q
P O U A E G K N G R V Q D O B
U T J N V M V U Y D E I A Y P
O R A N G E N K D X L T N M G
N X X E Q D G F N C A N C D T
K U R I Y H Q C Q C Y Y X P P
B G W S U W K B K A Y G K R B
C K W C Y J L P T H R A B S B
E N I R A M A R T L U O W Q H

Colours

BLACK	SIENNA
BURGUNDY	TERRACOTTA
GREEN	TURQUOISE
MAGENTA	ULTRAMARINE
ORANGE	WHITE
PURPLE	YELLOW

Sudoku

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

Difficulty: Easy

Fill in the boxes using the numbers 1 to 9.
Every row and column and every group
of 9 boxes inside the thicker lines must
contain each number and letter only once.

AFL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
				5				

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
23	15						

S			E			E		E
23	24	11	5	12	4	5	9	5

24	1	E	9		T	4	E
24	1	5	9		15	4	5

9 19 6 22 17 24 12

Math Square

	+		-		3
-		+		-	
7	+		×		39
×		+		×	
2	-		+		-1
-13		18		-45	

Fill in the missing numbers.

The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9.

Each number is only used once.

Each row is a math equation.

Each column is a math equation.

Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.



Singing on St Patrick's Day. -S



The winning team from the trivia afternoon. -S

U3A celebrates St Patrick's Day

MURRINDINDI East U3A runs a program of classes throughout the year and they have one-off events. The courses are organised by members who are willing to share their knowledge with the group. Last week four members were able to host two social events purely for the fun of getting together.

Last Sunday week a sea of happy people dressed in green, joined in community dancing to celebrate St Patrick's Day. Live music, generously presented by Jack and Phil, kept feet tapping and laughter loud. Jigs, reels, promenades clockwise then anti-clockwise. Spontaneous singing of familiar Irish songs, renditions of *Danny Boy* was only one. Green drinks and shamrock decorated cakes capped off an enjoyable and energetic afternoon.

Last Friday week the U3A members went to the Rubicon Hotel for Simon's Trivia Day. The questions were grouped in batches of 10. There was History, Movies, Books, and old advertising jingles to name just a few. Some members were surprised to find out how many things from the past that they actually did know. Ultimately, it was the new team, *Oz Tonga*, who stole the trophy. After the questions were done, everyone stayed on and enjoyed a pub meal together. The food was great and the Senior's Meals were very popular.

Earlier in the month U3A members went to *Take it Outside: Marysville Music in the Park*. The weather was perfect and for this evening event, everyone purchased fish and chips from the local takeaway.

Next month, U3A is offering another outing, this time at The Embassy of Ideas in Alexandra. gemmologist, Gwyn Green, here from the United Kingdom will speak about pearls. The class will learn about the history and the creation of using pearls in jewellery design. After this, one of their very own members, Louise, is partnering up with her grandson to take the group outside and show us all how to have fun geocaching. For the inexperienced, geocaching is an enjoyable way of meeting new people as you look to find hidden treasure.

U3A, a non-profit organisation, is proud to have been able to offer these classes to members. U3A encourages people over 50 to stay mentally, physically and socially active in their retirement years. Maintaining a strong social network and doing things that are varied and interesting will help with this. If you are curious about joining any of these groups for fun or for learning then you can enrol online at murrindindieastu3a.org.au or if you have any questions about courses, please phone Libby Longham on 0408 896 730.



Deirdre dancing on St Patrick's Day. -S

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Safety on Public Land Act 2004

NOTIFICATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY ZONE DECLARATION

I, Chris Hardman, Chief Fire Officer, as delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action, give notice pursuant to section 7(1)(a) of the Safety on Public Land Act 2004, that I have made a public safety zone declaration published in the Victoria Government Gazette.

The declaration made on 20/03/2025 takes effect 21/03/2025 to 31/08/2025 inclusive.

They specify areas of State forest which have been declared public safety zones for;

- conducting fire operations and the maintenance of public safety.

The declaration specifies the period for which the areas have been declared public safety zones; the times or periods during which access to the public safety zones is restricted or prohibited; activities permitted, prohibited, or restricted in the public safety zones; restrictions or conditions (if any) applying to the public safety zones; and persons or classes of persons exempt from their operation.

A copy of the declaration, and maps showing the location of public safety zones, may be inspected at the Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002 (by appointment with the Joint Fuel Management Program Coordinator, telephone 136 186).

A copy of the declaration is available at Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action web site at: <https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/permits-and-regulations/closures-of-parks-and-forests>

A copy of the maps showing the location of fire operations is available at Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action web site at: www.ffm.vic.gov.au/JFMP, or by appointment with the Joint Fuel Management Program Coordinator, telephone 136 186.

Active planned burns are listed on the Planned Burns Victoria Website (plannedburns.ffm.vic.gov.au) as either 'Within 10 Days', 'Next 24 hours', 'Now' or 'Patrol'.

Chris Hardman,
Chief Fire Officer,
as delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Energy,
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The starting line at the first-ever Eildon Pondage parkrun. -S

Eildon Pondage parkrun up and running

AFTER months of planning, the inaugural Eildon Pondage parkrun event was held on Saturday March 22.

Seventy-four locals and visitors, aged from under 10 to over 70 years, met at the Ted Lech Drive barbecue area to walk, jog or run through the morning mist. This included plenty of locals who were completely new to parkrun and only signed up on the day.

parkrun is a free weekly timed event that is organised entirely by volunteers. Participants can walk, jog, run or volunteer, and spectators are also warmly welcomed. There are around 500 parkruns across Australia, with Eildon Pondage being the newest. parkruns are also held

every week in many countries all over the world.

Murrindindi's very own parkrun will now be happening every Saturday. Welcome briefing starts at 7.45am. The local team encourages anyone and everyone to come along and see for themselves. You can also contact the team to find out more via email eildonpondage@parkrun.com or call Anna on 0406 320 323.

Eildon Pondage parkrun was launched with support from the Eildon Opportunity Shop, Murrindindi Shire Council, Goulburn-Murray Water, AGL, Eildon Events Inc., and helpful community members.

For free one-off registration, visit parkrun.com.au/register



Some of the parkrun volunteers. -S



One of the participants receiving a place token at the finish line. -S



Happy parkrunners posing for a picture. -S



Ladies' Standard Saloon Champion Jaimi Barber in car number 8. -Steve Mitchell

Jaimi Barber claims her second state title in Alexandra

by Dean Thompson

JAIMI Barber has claimed her second state Ladies Standard Saloon Victorian title crown with victory at Alexandra Speedway Club on March 22 ahead of a class field leading to the finish line the four-time former champion Sarah Meakins and Zoe Young.

Barber came through after the unfortunate end to majority race leader's defending champion Ally Morrison and then first title hopeful Courtney Meakins, claiming the win in front of family and friends.

Other winners on the night include Alexandra born and raised Will Fallon in Top Star Junior Sedans, Australian champion Justin Paull in Compact Speedcars, his nephew Jai Hallett in New Star Junior Sedans, Daryl Hickson in Dirt Modifieds, Victorian champion Brad Warren in Wingless Sprints, and Josh Service in Sports Sedans.

Almost 20 competitors lined up for the ladies' Standard Saloon title night proceedings where Katie Meyer after working her way through the field from the back, Courtney Meakins twice, Ella Sheedy, and Ally Morrison twice won qualifying races for the 20-lap title race.

Both Morrison and Meakins while leading the race suffered mechanical issues ending their quest for victory. Morrison's was as a result from damage after hitting the concrete as she weaved through traffic. Other drivers exiting the title race included Meyer whose engine bay went boom and up in smoke, Maddi Bransgrove who slammed the wall, and then Courtney Meakins while leading when her car started to run hot leaving a cloud of steam from the under the bonnet.

This allowed Barber to assume control of the race for the final six laps as she led to the finish Sarah Meakins, Zoe Young, Ella Sheedy and Caroline Allen.

After the race Barber was thrilled while acknowledging the early race leaders.

"Ally and Courtney were the strongest tonight. They won the most qualifiers and led the race. I feel their heartache at not finishing. I had a good car though and I thank those that help me, and the result is deserving of their efforts and support. Well done to the other podium ladies and let's do this again next year right?" Barber said.

In Junior Sedans racing, the Top Stars and New Stars competed together through the evening. Will Fallon and Jai Hallett won two qualifiers for their respective sub-categories while Axel Robinson and Cruz Abela claimed victory in the other. Fallon the current South Australian champion then stamped his class on the final with a huge win ahead of Robinson and Luke Morrison, while Hallett was too good for Abela and Chaz Fallon.



The car owned by Steve Garlick with driver Brad Warren from Longwarry. -Steve Mitchell

In Dirt Modified action, a class that has not competed at Alexandra since the conversion from the former Hot Rod class it used to be, provided high speed action many local motorsport fans had not seen before. The open wheel 360ci engine powered class thundered around the track most of the time on three wheels through the turns, with Mornington Peninsula racer Daryl Hickson proving to be the class driver.

Hickson won both qualifiers before defeating son and father competitors Marcus and Steve Reddecliffe. The latter returning to racing after around 20 years away from racing.

Australian Compact Speedcar champion Justin Paull from Millgrove then won the final after both he and AJ Wiles shared wins in qualifying. Duane Cordina and Wiles both led the final with Paull snatching the lead with two laps to go before crossing the line with the win from Wiles, Cordina, Bowen Donkers and Aaron Stubbs.

Victorian champion in Wingless Brad Warren was racing for his Lilydale based car owner Steve Garlick in front of Steve's home crowd and friends for the first and only time this season since winning the state title together in Horsham.

However, the Warren/Garlick combination could not taste victory in qualifying as Ricky Mills, Michael Graham, Esther Thomson and Nathan Orton shared those wins. Michael Conlan from the Mallee then led the first 11 of 20 laps in the feature event before Warren picked him off to go and record the feature win from Conlan. A rollover during the race involving Daryl Coon and Jordyn Sinni put those two out of the race early, Ben Hodge, Mills and Ricky McCubbin.

Josh Service from Eastern Suburbs area then shared qualifying wins with Rhys Meakins in the Sports Sedans before leading all 15 laps in the final to win ahead of Bree Simpson, Lachlan Pottage, Kimberley Smith and Cobie McGraw. The three ladies sure to be among the title chances in the upcoming Ladies Sports Sedans Victorian title. Service picking up another victory at his favoured home track.

Alexandra provides more race action on April 5 with the Ladies Sports Sedans Victorian title plus all club classes.

Marysville golfers relax after many competitions

by Lesley Rundle

WITH the golfers having recently hosted the Murrindindi Masters, the Liesfield Trophy, the Lakeside Challenge and the Community Golf Day, last Saturday it was back to playing the regular club competition.

Both the men and the ladies played stroke for the first round of the summer aggregate. The ladies winner was Sabrina Stow (18) with nett 71 and the runner up was Lesley Rundle (32) with nett 74. Paul Martin (28) with nett 69 won the men's event followed by Ken Whittingham (29) with nett 72.

The nearest the pins were won by Sabrina Stow, Steve Berry, Adam Littlejohn and Richy Clark who also won the Golden Shot. Peter Lilley had the least number of putts with 29. Next Saturday the second round of the Summer Aggregate will be played.

Last Thursday the Inaugural Marysville Community Golf Day, a four-ball best ball Ambrose team event, was a great success. The events major sponsors were the Marysville Lions Club members who played a big part in the organization of the day.

The golfers enjoyed extra novelty challenges on the course and the lunch, raffles, auctions and presentations in the club dining room after play. The club gives special thanks to Steve Coker President of the Golf Club and Jim Lee and Daniel from the Lions club for coordinating the day.

This week the ladies travelled around the district to play in two bowls. On Monday four ladies played in the Mansfield Bowl and while they didn't win the bowl, they enjoyed the day and Margaret Blair won a raffle prize.

It was a very similar story when three ladies played in the Seymour Bowl with the only Marysville winner being Heather Jenkins with a raffle prize. The club thanks the Mansfield and Seymour ladies for their hospitality. On Thursday Marysville will host the Sandy Wilson Memorial Bowl and members are looking forward to welcoming ladies from Dalhousie clubs and further afield.

On Sunday the first round of the Dalhousie men's or mixed Sunday Pennant was played with Marysville travelling to Whittlesea to play Strathbogie. Congratulations to the Marysville team playing in Handicap Division Two for winning three games to two. They next play Yea at Alexandra.

Low numbers on soft and damp course

by Puttomatic

LAST Saturday Eildon Golf Club had 13 players contest the March monthly medal in near perfect conditions. With the recent rain the course received 85 mm of great rain which helped soften the course just a bit and fill the dams.

The winner last week was Ken Collier with net 68, coming in second Adam Kupke with a net 70, ball rundown winners Colin Long also net 70, John Beale with net 72 as and Dennis seamer with net 72.

The nearest the pin winners went to Rod Taylor with the second shot on the third, no winner this week on the fifth, Phil Dally was the closest on the 11th, John Monteath was the best on the 12th and Ken Collier was closest on the 14th. There were no birdies recorded on the allocated birdie holes this week.

Other winners, Adam Kupke took out the entry draw and John Beale was our swindle winner this week.

Congratulations to Adam Kukpe bagging an Eagle on the par four-10th. A huge congratulations to Wayne Kupke taking out C grade in this year's Great Alpine classic played over three days at Wangaratta, Bright, and Myrtleford.

The pennant team travelled to Whittlesea last Sunday taking on Yea Golf Club, unfortunately they were not able to get over the line but the guys fought it out and were in no way disgraced, Yea were too good on the day winner defeating Eildon 3/2. The next round will be held at the Alexandra Golf Club on March 30 and we will be taking on Whittlesea. Good luck to the guys.

Don't forget Eildon Golf Club is hosting an information session presented by Solahart for all your Solar needs in the clubrooms starting at 2pm.

Next Saturday is a Stableford four ball best ball, bring your own partner, the club hopes to see you there next Saturday.

Merton cricketers just miss playing in the grand final

MERTON cricketers travelled to Mulwala for a chance to play the Wangaratta and District Cricket Association (WDCA) B Grade grand final versus the season's top side of the Yarrawonga Lakers.

Both sides arrived to the ground under blue skies and perfect conditions however over 40mm of rain on Thursday greeted both sides with a rain affected turf wicket which was quite damp in parts.

The toss was crucial as bowling first to make use of the conditions was key to the outcome of the match. Yarrawonga won the toss and sent Merton in with instant success with Mackinnon removed in the second over for zero. Berriman and

King weathered the storm somewhat but really struggled to get going with the visitors failing to build any partnerships eventually being bowled out in the 28th over for 73.

L Berriman 20 and Jarrod Mahoney 19 the top scorers with Jyda House 3/23 the top wicket taker for the home side. The Merton bowlers struggled to take wickets with a few chances not quite going Merton's way.

In a late twist with Yarrawonga at 2/67 the combination of Henry Berriman 3/10 and James Benton 1/7 saw the home side lose 3/6 in two overs, however Yarrawonga passed Merton's total in the

27th over finishing 5/74. Hudson Gillies 29 and Geoff Montgomery 31 really won the game for their side in challenging conditions. Harry Craddock 1/13 was the other wicket taker.

Yarrawonga will play Benalla at Stan Hargreaves Oval Yarrawonga in the grand final next Saturday. A disappointing season end for the Merton side although a great experience for the young players in the side against experienced cricketers. The Merton players wish to thank their sponsors, supporters and parents for a successful season and are hoping to build on this next season.

SPORT

ASC students attend Hume Secondary Regional Level Swimming Meet

ON March 14, the Hume Secondary Regional Level Swimming Meet took place in Wodonga, bringing together 33 schools from the Northeast region of Victoria.

Sixteen talented swimmers from Alexandra Secondary College (ASC) qualified and proudly represented the school at this highly competitive event. The top swimmer in each event earned a spot at the School Sport Victoria Championships (State), held at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre (MSAC) on May 1, 2025.

ASC congratulates their students for their outstanding performances.

Koa Parker had a fantastic day, securing first place in the 12 to 13 50-metre breaststroke, fourth place in the 12 to 20 100-metre butterfly, first place in the 50-metre butterfly, first place in the 50-metre freestyle, and second place in the 12 to 13 50-metre backstroke.

Charlotte Boulton placed third in the 14 50-metre backstroke.

Levi Campbell earned sixth place in the 14 50-metre butterfly and fifth place in the 14 50-metre freestyle.

Archie Gibson placed fifth in the 16 50-metre butterfly.

In the relay events, the following teams performed exceptionally: Koa Parker, Mia Heard, Sienna Heard, and Charlotte Boulton secured second place in the 12 to 14 Medley Relay; Jordan Carr, Levi Campbell, Chase Stevenson, and Tyler Ward placed third in the 12 to 14 Medley Relay; Koa Parker, Asher Mullins, Zoe Collier, and Tilly Miljkovic finished third in the 12 to 13 Freestyle Relay; Charlotte Boulton, Mia Heard, Sienna Heard, and Xahlia Sutton-Stevenson took sixth place in the 14 Freestyle Relay; Levi Campbell, Chase Stevenson, Jordan Carr, and Tyler Ward earned second place in the 14 Freestyle

Relay; Leah Cole, Cassie Kidd, Zoe Mullins, and Hannah Weeks placed fifth in the 15 Freestyle Relay.

ASC also offers congratulations to Koa Parker who was awarded Age Champion for 12 to 13-Year-Old Females. This is an unbelievable achievement.

ASC would also like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Shane and Phoebe Parker for their generous donation of swimming

caps to the secondary college. Your support is truly appreciated. It was great to see the school colours in the pool.

Finally, a big thank you from ASC to Lee, Renee, Shane, and Phoebe for attending and cheering on the swimmers. Your encouragement made a significant impact and motivated everyone to do their best.



Charlotte Boulton finished third in the 14 50-metre backstroke and was proud to represent Alexandra Secondary College. -S



The Alexandra Secondary College students who attended the Hume Secondary Level Regional Swimming Meet in Wodonga. -S

Big wins for some squash players

by Kristelle Leary

Affogato versus Espresso

ERIC versus Tyler: Quickly taking the lead, Eric claimed the first game. Tyler switched the script to win the next three games and the match. 60 to 49.

Matt J (fill in) versus James G: Starting off strong James held a solid lead after game one.

Matt lifted his game to keep it close but still lost the match in the end. 62 to 48.

Jared versus Justin: A competitive game played in good spirits. The third game being the deciding game with Justin pulling ahead in points. 63 to 58.

Derrick versus John: A killer first game for John with his finesse shining. Derrick gradually improved as with each progressing game to eventually win the match. 56 to 50.

Cappuccino versus Mocha

LOCHLAN versus Ethan: A close game. Both players had some brilliant serves, returns and rallies between them it was entertaining to watch and Ethan won taking three games and the match. 55 to 47.

Jack versus Michael H: Jumping to a quick lead, Jack had a sixteen-point lead at the halfway mark. Michael tightened up his game to take the last two games, but he couldn't overthrow Jack. With a respectable lead, Jack took home the trophy. 57 to 46.

Chai versus Earl Grey

RANDY versus Chris: Randy didn't stand a chance on the night. Chris came out and stayed on the ball consistently throughout each game to win the match. 88 to 47.

Sam versus Travis: A close match. Travis had some good shots and won the second game. But Sam had the upper hand on the night, winning the match. 57 to 49.

Jim versus Daniel W: Amazing quickness and strength. There was plenty of ducking and strokes called in this match. Daniels hard hitting, was no match for Jim's precision. Jim claimed the win. 66 to 46.

Darjeeling versus Rooibos

BETH versus James S: A convincing win for our new player. James didn't waste any time, collecting points at an impressive rate. Beth had no comeback for her opponent, allowing James to win with a solid lead. 72 to 44.

Rob versus Blake: Having gone up a level Blake is still finding his footing. Rob's intensity was too much for his opponent and saw him take home a devastating win. 89 to 30.

Phil versus Daniel: Phil has the amazing ability to keep the ball alive. Unfortunately, this doesn't necessarily translate into gaining points. Per usual Daniel left the court looking very unphased and with a massive win. 74 to 30.



Michael sits back and waits as Jack returns his shot. -S



The full video of Chris Simms showing off his big cod can be found on the Alexandra Newspapers Facebook page. -S

That's not a fish. This is a fish

LOCAL man, Chris Simms, landed a giant 1.3m cod out of Lake Eildon.

Since January 15, he's caught six cod measuring over a metre, including 1.06m, 1.08m and up from there, including a 1.2m.

The 1.3m cod was the largest he's ever caught. It was "just on dark, about 8.30pm" and it was caught on a spinner bait, as has been the case with his other fish.

Chris said, "They're fairly heavy. I've just got a big net and it's a lot of back pain for the next couple of days."

Most of his fishing is done solo, and he was on the boat by himself for the big catch as well. He said that although it's a challenge, "It's all worth it."

He releases the fish straight away, sitting them in the water for a little while, holding their mouth. Once they start swimming freely, he lets them go.

"I don't eat fish, and you're not allowed to keep them at that size anyway. I only do it for the thrill," he said.

He's been a fisherman for his whole life. His father started him off and it "went from there."

SPORT



Helen Findlay lines up her putt on nine. -S



Helen Findlay was the c grade winner on last Thursday's game. -S



Helen Findlay from Alexandra and Leanne Jeffrey from Lancefield at Thursday's district ladies golfers event at Seymour Bowl. -S



Marg, Barb, Sandra, and Helen on the green. -S

Alexandra Golfers make the most of the great weather

by Dave Silverman

TUESDAY dawned fine, warm and sunny, and eighteen blokes decided that it would be a good idea to have a game of golf, so they turned up and off they went. After about four hours, it was Bruce Colville who came out on top with 38 points. Second placed Len Jenkins was a distant second with 34, and Paul Martin came in third on 33.

Nigel Waterhouse was accurate on at least two holes, taking home the nearest the pins on both seven and 17. Rundown vouchers went to Leo Dynes, Greg Millard, Russell Purcell, and Dan Burns.

The Ladies played the first round of their Foursomes Championship, and a small, but

high quality field of eight teed off early in the morning. The winners for the day were Deb Richardson and Sue Greatorrex with a 91 net 73.5. Marg Fahey and Barb Doyle came in second on 96 net 78.

Marg and Barb also claimed nearest the pin on five, with two going to Donna Meggitt and Rita Mitchell.

On Thursday, the district's lady golfers converged at Seymour for the Seymour Bowl, and our very own lady captain, Helen Findlay was the C Grade winner.

With the Chook Run winding down for the year, there were 12 players on Thursday night. Dylan and Corey Jack shared the honours with 26 net each, Matt Jager was second with

a 27, and third on 29s came Ally Strahan, Simon Rouget and Dan Burns.

FoodWorks was the sponsor for Saturday's Stroke round, which incorporated round three of both the Summer Cup and the Bob Dodge Golden Putter. Eighteen players teed off in fine, warm conditions, on a course which was a little worse for wear after Thursday night's rain, but which still played well. Well enough, in fact, for Luke Heard to shoot a 69 net 67 to claim the top spot. Well done, Luke, and congratulations for the eagle on eight.

Jarrold Williamson came in with a net 70 to take second place, including nearest the pins on two, five, and 12. Third, fourth and fifth, Mick Holohan, John Steer and Todd

Galloway respectively, all carded net 71s. The two nearest the pins that Woolly didn't take went to Corey Jack on seven and Sam Kidd on 18. And, just to complete his day, Luke had the fewest putts with 27.

The 2025 Pennant season kicked off this weekend, with Alexandra fielding a team in both the Scratch and the Handicap Divisions. Unfortunately, both teams lost this week, with the Scratch team going down to Woodend at Mt. Macedon, James Kidd and Ryley McDonald the only two to win their matches. In the Handicap Division, Alexandra lost to Whittlesea at Whittlesea, with Mick Holohan being the only winner.

Bec Clark selected for She Can Coach program

by Michelle Jack

THIS coming Saturday, March 29 the Rebels will play Hawthorn Amateurs in their final practice match before round one. There will be two games with the Reserves kicking off at 12pm, canteen and bar facilities will be open. In addition, the netballers will be hosting an intra-club match in the morning starting at 10am. The club encourage all members and supporters to come along and show their support.

Congratulations to Under 14 Coach Bec Clark who was selected to be part of the 2025 National She Can Coach Program presented by BHP. The program was run over two days

(Saturday, March 22 and Sunday, March 23) and was run out of The Hangar, Essendon Football Club headquarters.

This program shines a light on women in coaching and the two days of workshops is designed to help improve the capacity of the individuals coaching and to connect them with a network of female coaches from around the country.

The club is still seeking volunteers for several important roles ahead of the 2025 season:

Junior Canteen Manager: The club is looking for a Canteen Manager to oversee operations during Junior home games. This

role could potentially be shared, and full training and assistance will be provided. If interested, please contact Kath Hedger at 0438 520 382 or Melissa Crane on 0412 794 022.

Senior Trainer: The club is also in need of a Senior Trainer. Trainers play a vital role in ensuring the well-being of players during games and training sessions. If you are interested in this role, please contact President Kylie Cairns at 0409 932 761 for more information.

Netball Umpires: Each year the club is required to provide umpires for the Senior Netball Competition (Under 17, D and C

grades) for all home and away matches. If anyone is interested in umpiring, please reach out to Brodie Wheelhouse on 0400 154 458.

Thursday night dinners have started back up at the club and everyone is welcome to join us. There are two dinner sittings with the first at 6pm and then second around 7.30pm. This week on the menu is chicken schnitzel rolls with coleslaw and chips.

Memberships and sponsorships are available, and anyone looking to purchase a membership ticket or sponsor the club please contact the club at their new email address alexandrafnc@outereastfn.com.au

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Grand final match for Alexandra Cricket Club

by Michael Mawson

THE Alexandra B-Grade team travelled to Avenel to play in the Seymour District Cricket Association (SDCA) B-Grade Grand Final. The team hoped to steal an upset win. Instead, the Redbacks were soundly beaten by a good cricket team performing at their best.

The club captain, Michael Mawson, won the toss and elected to field first. This choice was made in the basis of the team often winning when chasing down a total and also that last Thursday's wet weather had put some moisture in the pitch and this would give an advantage to the pace bowlers.

Will Ellis got an early breakthrough when he bowled the big-hitting Aaron "Wicksy" Kent for eight. Kent said that it was the best ball that he had faced all season. The other opener, Warren Dowley and then Travis Stefanos scored slowly and methodically against the bowling of Ellis and Ben Geldart.

Levi Ronalds also kept the run rate down but was unable to cash-in with a wicket. The Avenel team appeared to have planned to play defensively against Ronalds' bowling. Jordan Ferrier came into the bowling attack and finally made the second breakthrough with Mawson catching out Dowley at mid-off.

Ben Broadway came on and had an immediate impact with Stefanos being caught by Lucas Crane for 26 and Gus Leunig being trapped leg before wicket.

Avenel's captain, Harrison Wall and Jamison Black put on 42 runs for the fifth wicket. They were able to take advantage of fielding errors and dropped catches as the Redbacks' concentration levels started to drop.

The reintroduction of Ellis and Ronalds into the attack caused wickets to fall in quick succession. Ellis was the pick of the bowlers with four scalps, his last wicket came when Oliver Valladares hit a high ball that threatened the stratosphere and Mawson juggled a catch when it eventually came down.

The umpire declared Avenel's batting innings closed at 9/160 after 43 overs because of slow over rates. This was two overs short of the goal of 45 overs.

In a change to the batting order, Will Ellis was the only one to put his hand up to join Mawson to open Alexandra's batting innings. Mawson had to contend with tricky inswingers from Christian Papi but was able to use the edge of his bat to score 10 runs off nine balls until he edged one too many and was caught. Ellis performed his job and absorbed several overs before making the mistake of actually attempting to score runs and was caught for two.

Levi Ronalds was unable to continue his recent batting heroics and was caught for five. Ben Geldart and Jaidon Snyman also were caught for low scores.

Ben Broadway came on to bat and clouted 23 runs from 20 balls. His batting partners came and went. Robert "Yobbo" Andrews defended his wicket stoutly until Travis Stefanos got through his defences



The 2024-25 Alexandra Cricket Club B-Grade team. -S

for four. Harrison Christie and Jordan Ferrier fell for six and zero respectively.

The boundary line at Avenel was marked by cones and umpires must frequently rely on fielders declaring if the ball had crossed for a four. It was quite interesting to note how often the Avenel players and Alexandra spectators disagreed about the position of a ball crossing the line.

There was controversy when Harrison Christie drove a ball straight into the ground and the bump-ball was caught by Oliver Valladares at cover. Avenel players all celebrated as if the catch was legitimate. Christie knew that he was not out and stood his ground. The umpires agreed with Christie and were not hoodwinked by Avenel's hustling.

When Broadway was caught and bowled by Stefanos the Redbacks' score was a paltry and alarming 9/64. The final wicket pair of Banjo Fitzpatrick and Lucas Crane showed composure and batted in a way that that earlier batsmen should have.

On his 15th birthday, Crane may have been the youngest Redback but made the second highest score of 19 off 22 balls. Banjo was more defensive, but he forgot about his earlier catching disasters and scored nine runs to remain not out at the end of the innings when Crane was caught out by Jamison Black off the bowling of Jamie Kanter.

After 28 overs, Alexandra was all-out for 94 and this was well short of the target. Despite the heavy defeat, the Redbacks should be proud of their fine season and, for a team with such a young age profile, getting this far was a major achievement and well ahead of expectations.

It was also pleasing to see a large contingent of Redbacks supporters travel to watch the game and the club thanks them for their support and for all the work that many of them do in keeping the club running.



Ben B batting. -S



Ben G bowling at the Avenel batsmen. -S