

# The Yea Chronicle

PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

With which is incorporated The Yea Telegraph, The Yea Telephone and Upper Goulburn Advocate

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## Varroa mite detected in shire

THE varroa mite, which has decimated beehives around Australia since it arrived on our shores in June 2022, has been detected in Murrindindi Shire. Two locations in the Whanregarwen Road area, and a locations in the Killingworth Road area and Marysville area have been impacted. Treatments are available, but people with hives will need to act fast.

As many commercial beekeepers move their bees around to provide pollination services, they may have inadvertently brought varroa mites back with them.

Charlie Nancarrow, owner of Dindi Bee Supplies in Yea, said, "With warmer days coming up, it will be a good time for anyone in the area who keeps bees to do an inspection and a check for varroa."

He explained that to test, a cup of nurse bees (around 300 bees) needs to be collected and put into a varroa wash. The wash is in a container filled with 50 to 100ml of methylated spirits or isopropyl alcohol. These bees are sacrificed to detect varroa mite in the hive. The varroa mite on the bees are dislodged during the process and can then be counted.

Varroa mite detections need to be reported to the Victorian Department of Agriculture, either directly or on the VMAX system.

Charlie said, "With more modern systems we could have possibly tracked things better and reduced the amount of movements that were made by commercial beekeepers, but that's not where we're at, where what the reality is of the industry."

He said that the detection of the mite will affect everyone that has bees.

"The bigger effect that doesn't necessarily get talked about very frequently is the effect on wild bees, I'm not talking native bees but I'm talking wild honey bees that have spread rapidly in this country because our country's just perfect for honey bees, with our large gum trees producing a lot of nectar and a lot of honey. There's a lot of beehives out there that will get decimated and we rely on those bees, although we don't measure how much we rely on those wild bees to pollinate crops and gardens and flowers and trees.

"The managed hives from backyard beekeepers and commercial assets we can treat them for varroa to keep the numbers down and to ensure that the bees survive in those colonies, but we don't do that for wild hives, so there's going to be a lot of hives in trees and so on that will disappear



Varroa mite has been detected in two areas of Murrindindi Shire. -John Severns

over the next five or 10 years," Charlie said.

The varroa mite weakens hives over time. "The varroa mite is an incredibly effective insect that reproduces very rapidly and can quickly overwhelm a hive," Charlie said.

He explained that initially, the mite only impacted Asian honeybees but it evolved over time and crossed over to the European honey bee.

Charlie said that in the lead-up to winter, "We normally we do a pack down of hives, which means we take off all the honey that is excess to the bees needs over winter and pack them down into one or two boxes each colony. It's important over the next few weeks when we do have some warmer days for anyone that has bees to do that check and inspection on the hives, and to put

a treatment in if they detect it at any significant level."

Treatments are available, and hives are no longer being destroyed. "That was a technique that was implemented when it was first detected in the country to try and completely eliminate the spread. Unfortunately, that wasn't successful for various reasons, and some of those reasons are that some beekeepers didn't take it on board that it was very important. And then there was backlash from people not understanding the process of us eliminating some bees to save the rest of the bees."

Charlie is planning to have a bee club meeting in about two weeks to discuss the issue with members.

There are different treatments available. Charlie recommends Aluen Cap Oxalic Acid strips or Apibioxyl Dribble and Powder.

He said, "Synthetic treatments have been shown to be not so effective anymore. The mite has developed resistance to some of those synthetics."

He emphasised that PPE will be needed to administer the treatment, and that the dosage instructions need to be carefully followed. The treatments do no harm the bees.

He added, "The way to support happy and healthy bees is to try and reduce the need to use pesticides and to use those sorts of things, and herbicides, which also affect the bees down the track. Use those spays which happens in farms in regional areas as a course of business doing farming and so on, but use those things in accordance with the labels. If they don't need to use it, they shouldn't use it. All those sort of things just help support a thriving pollinating insect population, the bees and beyond the bees."

## Terip Terip CFA break-in: A shocking act

THE shire's fire brigades were extraordinary during the January fires, fighting for people's lives, homes and businesses. It is therefore incredibly disappointing that during the Easter long weekend, the Terip Terip CFA Station was broken into and various items stolen.

These are items needed to keep people safe, and the person who committed the theft should be deeply ashamed of themselves.

Terip Terip CFA Captain Shannon Roach, whose own home was lost during the January firefight, spoke about the discovery of the theft.

She said, "On Sunday morning I got to the shed and found the side door open that we normally enter through. I had a look around and noticed that there were quite a number of items missing and the side window was open, which we always keep closed.

"We could tell that someone had been there and taken all that stuff."

The door's lock was a key code entry system, but opens from the inside very easily.

She explained that while some of the equipment is insured through CFA, there were many items which hadn't yet been included on the asset register as they have only recently received them. They will therefore not be covered by insurance, and the brigade will have to cover the cost of re-purchasing the equipment.

A Go Fund Me page has been set up on behalf of the brigade, with \$900 raised, aiming for \$4000. It can be found at [gofundme.com/f/terip-terip-cfa-theft](http://gofundme.com/f/terip-terip-cfa-theft)

Shannon added, "It's been really hard for the brigade as you could imagine. Going through everything that we've gone through, and everybody's lost so much. It's terrible."

Given that we're only part way through autumn, there are still likely to be more warm days, increasing the fire risk. House fires are also a risk too. The theft of the equipment could have long-lasting consequences.

The Alexandra Crime Investigation Unit is investigating. If you are able to provide any information on the theft, they can be contacted on 5772 1040, or you can provide the information via Crime Stoppers.

# Collision at Cottons Pinch

IN the early evening on Tuesday, April 7, a collision occurred at Cottons Pinch on the Goulburn Valley Highway, between Yea and Molesworth.

A ute was travelling in a south westerly direction and merging after overtaking. They didn't see that they hadn't cleared a heavy rigid tip truck and clipped the front

aluminium bumper. This caused the ute to lose control.

The ute spun and hit the wire rope barrier before rolling onto its roof and sliding for some distance.

The driver of the ute, a 76 year old male, and the passenger in the ute, an 86 year old

female, sustained some cuts and grazes but fortunately no other injuries.

They were airlifted to the Royal Melbourne Hospital. The man was released from hospital on Wednesday, April 8 and the woman was released on Thursday, April 9. Both are doing well.

There were no issues with the driver of the tip truck, and they helped to direct traffic while emergency services were on the way.

The emergency services in attendance included multiple ambulances and MICA vehicles, CFA units from Yea, Molesworth and Whanregarwen, and police from Yea and Marysville.

**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

### Murray-Darling Basin Plan

ON March 31, industry leaders, irrigators, farmers, legal professionals, scientists and geologists came together from across Victoria, NSW and South Australia to discuss the continuing social, economic and environmental impacts wrought by the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and to air practical solutions. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) declined to accept the invitation to attend.

The meeting was held at Barham under the banner of *Saving the Murray-Darling Basin from the Highway to Hell* with speakers including Darren De Bertoli, managing director De Bertoli Wines; Justin Sutherland, representing Ricegrowers Association of Australia; Jason Limbrick, CEO of Australian Consolidated Milk; Daryl Kirchofer from Kagome Tomato Processors; Nathan Free, horticulturist and managing director of Wattle Farm Organic Farms, supplier to Woolworths and international markets; Peter Gell, Emeritus Professor at Federation University and renowned wetland scientist; Mark Doecke, chair of Citrus South Australia; David Farley, agribusiness professional, previous MD and CEO of Australian Agricultural Company; and Tim Horne and Bobbie Pannowitz, legal professionals specialising in water law.

Every single speaker from food processors and agriculture at this water forum spoke of industries and farming enterprises struggling

to continually adapt to the outcomes of water policies which have already stripped 4687GL from agricultural production and are intent on removing the remainder of the 450GL plus the Sustainable Diversion Limits shortfall calculated to be up to 355GL.

The *Basin Plan Regulation Impact Statement* declared that to meet the requirements of the Water Act, the Basin Plan will ensure the use and management of the Basin water resources in a way that optimises economic, social and environmental outcomes and provides improved water security for all uses of Basin water resources.

There is no such surety of water security for agriculture on which to base forward business plans and expansion. With the purchase of every extra megalitre of water from the consumptive pool, it becomes increasingly difficult to forward plan and budget, as buybacks escalate the price of water and when combined with other factors such as drought, global impacts of war, fuel and energy shortages we see businesses collapse.

The federal government has spent more than \$11.5 billion under the Basin Plan over 14 years yet has failed to accomplish its targeted objectives, despite owning environmental entitlements worth \$11 billion and environmental water holders holding 44 per cent of entitlements in the Goulburn Valley, the foodbowl of Victoria. Some 83 per

cent of all recovered water has come from the southern basin.

With fish and bird numbers declining across the basin and the federal government recently proclaiming the Lower Murray River a critically endangered ecological community/region, the Basin Plan policies are failing, causing increasing hardship to farming communities and their reliant businesses and processing industries as continuing water buybacks remove more and more water, from food producers, which is the lifeblood of their enterprises.

It is now 14 years since the inception of the Basin Plan, ample time to understand and see the environmental degradation caused to our major rivers, the failure to achieve legislated enhanced environmental outcomes, its success in destroying generational farming businesses, aiding in closing milk processing plants, increasing suicides and mental health issues.

It is time to stop buybacks, step away from simply using volumetric water targets to specific sites and use the many complimentary measures available, such as eradication of carp, cold water pollution curtains, fish passages, improved water quality, sediment management, river bank revegetation and on-farm environmental refuges.

Jan Beer, Yea

**COMMUNITY DIARY**

**Local Radio Frequency**

UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands  
 UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale / Hazeldene  
 UGFM 94.5 Kinglake Ranges

**WEEKLY**

Thu Town Club, RSL Hall, 6-8pm. Ph 5797 2179  
 Sun AA Anglican Church, Alexandra 7pm PH 0402 428 086  
 Sun Alanon Recovery, start 5.30pm. Ph Sheila 0402 428 086

**MONTHLY**

1<sup>st</sup> Mon St Luke's Seniors, St Luke's Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099  
 1<sup>st</sup> Thu Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat Alex Repair Café 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu Yea Garden Club Yea RSL Hall 1.30pm Ph 0439 870 315  
 4<sup>th</sup> Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.  
 4<sup>th</sup> Thu Yea CWA Yea RSL Hall, 1.30pm Ph 0400 424 888  
 Last Fri Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 0409 819 040

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

For a \$5 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.

**Weekly Weather**  
 April 15 - April 21, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

**Alexandra** **Yea**

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	9	18	Wednesday	9	19
Thursday	10	21	Thursday	10	22
Friday	7	14	Friday	7	15
Saturday	5	16	Saturday	5	16
Sunday	8	17	Sunday	8	18
Monday	8	18	Monday	8	18
Tuesday	8	20	Tuesday	8	19

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 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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 The Yea Chronicle

**RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT**

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	8.00AM Mon	1.37	steady	below flood level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	8.00AM Mon	0.52	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	8.00AM Mon	0.56	steady	below flood level
Home Creek at Yarek	7.33AM Mon	0.16	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	7.26AM Mon	0.46	steady	below flood level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	8.00AM Mon	0.23	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	8.00AM Mon	0.48	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	8.00AM Mon	3.42	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	8.00AM Mon	0.38	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Trawool	8.00AM Mon	0.97	steady	below flood level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	8.00AM Mon	0.29	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Seymour	8.30AM Mon	1.29	steady	below flood level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	0.79	steady	

**\*ISSUED AT 8:54 AM AEDT MONDAY 13 APRIL 2026**

**DISTRICT RAINFALL**

Alexandra	0.4mm
Buxton	28.5mm
Eildon (AWS)	0.6mm
Flowerdale	1mm
Jamieson	2mm
Kinglake	2mm
Lake Eildon	1mm
Mansfield	3/3mm
Taggerty	0.4mm
Yarek	1mm
Yea	0mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

**LAKE EILDON**

Height above sea level this week	270.09m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	41.9%
Metres below full supply	18.81m
Daily inflow	750ML
Release	1700ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	67%

**The Yea Chronicle**

**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
Thumbs up/down	Monday 10am

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We thank you for your continued support

# Calls for proportionate recovery funding following January fires

MURRINDINDI Shire Council says the scale, cost and complexity of recovery following the January 2026 bushfires clearly exceeds the shire's capacity to manage alone and is calling for recovery funding that is proportionate to the geographic spread, concentration of losses and ongoing recovery burden experienced locally.

The January 2026 bushfires affected more than 20 communities across Murrindindi Shire, causing widespread devastation to farmland, residential areas and critical infrastructure across a large and highly dispersed rural municipality.

Council's current assessments estimate the municipal recovery task alone at around \$105 million, a figure well beyond council's financial capacity.

This estimate reflects council-related recovery costs only. The broader financial impact on the community is substantially higher. For example, the cost to replace almost 5000 kilometres of fencing across the shire is now estimated at \$120 to 140 million, highlighting the immense burden facing landholders and primary producers as recovery continues.

Murrindindi Shire Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the figures illustrate both the severity of the fires and the long road ahead for recovery.

"The impact of the January 2026 bushfires on Murrindindi has been profound and far-reaching. Our communities, farming sector and council infrastructure have all been hit on a scale we have not seen before.

"A \$105 million municipal recovery task is simply not something a rural council of our size can absorb without significant additional government support," Cr Gallagher said.

Council has welcomed the assistance provided by the state and federal governments to date, including the \$15 million announced on January 14 for fire-impacted councils across Victoria. However, Murrindindi's allocation to date is \$1.3 million, representing less than nine per cent of the total fund.

"We acknowledge and appreciate the funding that has been made available so far, and it is an important early contribution to locally led recovery," Cr Gallagher said.

"However, the level of funding allocated to Murrindindi does not yet reflect the true scale of damage and the disproportionate impact our shire has experienced."

Murrindindi was the most impacted municipality of the statewide impact from the January 2026 fires. Of the 451 homes destroyed across Victoria, 219, about 48 per cent, were in Murrindindi. Almost half of all sheds and other structures lost statewide were

also in the shire, along with approximately 50 per cent of fencing damage.

In addition, more than 450 kilometres of council roads were damaged, alongside extensive roadside vegetation impacts requiring assessment, treatment and ongoing management across a vast rural landscape.

"What is critical in this discussion is proportionality," Cr Gallagher said.

"Murrindindi experienced nearly half of all home losses across the state, and the geographic spread of damage has significantly increased recovery complexity. It is reasonable and appropriate that future funding allocations reflect that reality."

## Council escalates calls for business recovery support following fires

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has escalated its call for urgent state and commonwealth business recovery funding through a formal open letter to the Minister for Small Business and Employment, warning that many local businesses face permanent closure without immediate government intervention.

The open letter calls on the Victorian and Australian Governments to urgently introduce targeted, disaster-specific recovery grants for businesses directly and indirectly impacted by the January 2026 bushfires. While such grants have been offered following previous floods, fires and the COVID-19 pandemic, no equivalent business support has been made available following these catastrophic fires.

Murrindindi Shire Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the letter reflects the severity of the situation facing local businesses, many of which are experiencing an acute and worsening cashflow crisis following a subdued Easter trading period.

"We have written an open letter to the Minister for Small Business and Employment, because the situation for our local businesses has become critical. Without direct state and commonwealth recovery funding, many simply will not survive," Cr Gallagher said.

Council is calling for the introduction of recovery grants for businesses able to demonstrate significant loss of trade and clear viability risk as a result of the fires, including businesses indirectly impacted through reduced visitation, disrupted supply chains and rising costs.

The proposed approach would better reflect the realities of rural and regional

Unlike other fire-affected locations where damage was concentrated in a relatively small area, the impacts in Murrindindi are highly dispersed across a large rural shire. This has materially increased the cost and complexity of recovery, service delivery and community support, with long travel distances, multiple communities affected, and many residents experiencing ongoing trauma.

Recovery is underway, with council working closely with communities and partner agencies to support clean-up, restore access and essential services, and provide planning and rebuilding assistance. Six community recovery hubs have been established across the shire to meet local needs, reflecting

economies by recognising small, mixed and diversified enterprises, including farm-based and tourism-related businesses that fall outside current primary producer eligibility criteria.

"The absence of any business-specific disaster recovery funding following these fires is creating a growing sense of inequity. Eligibility rules need to recognise the diversity of modern regional businesses and the scale of income loss they've experienced," Cr Gallagher said.

Council warned that failure by governments to act quickly will have lasting consequences for local towns, including loss of essential services, reduced employment and long-term economic contraction.

"If businesses quietly close over the coming months, those losses will be felt across entire communities for years to come," said Cr Gallagher.

Murrindindi Shire Council has advised it is ready to work closely with state and commonwealth agencies to support the effective design and delivery of any future business recovery programs, drawing on established local business relationships and Community Business Connect engagement.

"We are ready to work with government to ensure support is targeted, practical and delivered quickly. This funding must come forward now, while recovery remains possible. Timing is everything and we have requested urgent consideration of these measures and welcomes further discussions with government," Cr Gallagher said.

both the scale and geographic spread of the impacts.

At the same time, council is actively planning for the longer-term recovery effort, including rebuilding critical infrastructure, supporting primary producers and local businesses, and investing in community wellbeing and mental health.

"Council has raised its concerns with Victorian Government Ministers. We remain committed to working constructively with state and federal governments. Funding decisions grounded in evidence, taking into account impact, geography and recovery cost are essential to ensure our communities can rebuild safely, quickly and with confidence in the future," Cr Gallagher said.

Council says further investment will be critical to protect the long-term productivity of the region and ensure Murrindindi's communities remain strong, resilient and connected as recovery continues.

## Register for fires inquiry open mic sessions

VICTORIANS impacted by the 2026 summer fires can register to speak directly to members of parliament during a series of open mic sessions to be held across the state.

The Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee is travelling to regional Victoria for public hearings in late April.

The local open mic session for community members to have their say will be in Alexandra on Friday, April 24 from 12.30 to 1.30pm.

More details about the public hearing schedules will be released closer to those dates.

People interested in speaking at the open mics must register their interest on the inquiry website by tomorrow, Thursday, April 16.

"This will be an important opportunity for people affected by the fires to share their experiences and make us aware of any ongoing issues," Committee Chair Ryan Batchelor said.

"Our extensive terms of reference allow us to explore numerous matters including the emergency response to the fires, resourcing of fire agencies, support for volunteers, recovery efforts and the impact on the environment."

The parliamentary inquiry has received almost 200 public submissions so far which are being progressively published on the committee's website, [parliament.vic.gov.au/2026firesinquiry](http://parliament.vic.gov.au/2026firesinquiry)

The closing date for written input is Sunday, April 19. Very few submissions have been published from our area. It is important that we have our say.

## Reinstatement of council's Road Management Plan

THE Longwood Fire Event significantly impacted Murrindindi Shire and Murrindindi Shire Council operations. In response, council temporarily suspended the Road Management Plan at the end of January 2026 to prioritise fire response, community safety, and recovery efforts.

As of last Tuesday, April 7, the Road Management Plan has been reinstated across all roads in the municipality, except those directly affected by the Longwood Fire.

The Road Management Plan will remain partially suspended for a further six months for approximately 450km of council-managed roads within fire-impacted areas. This restricted suspension is required while council works with funding agencies to enable recovery and reconstruction works to occur.

Council's Chief Executive Officer, Livia Bonazzi, has determined that sufficient access, workforce capacity and system functionality have been restored to enable a return to normal service delivery under the plan for non-impacted roads. Council will therefore resume its standard inspection, maintenance and repair schedules in accordance with the Road Management Plan where it has been reinstated.

While the restricted suspension remains in place for fire-impacted roads, council will continue to prioritise works based on risk, safety and available resources.

Updates will be posted on council's website, social media, and other public channels. If you have any questions, please contact council on 5772 0555.

Council also thank the community for its patience and understanding during the emergency response and recovery period.

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# ANZAC DAY



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Remembering those who have served and fallen for our country

Cindy McLEISH MP

STATE MEMBER FOR EILDON

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Authorised by Cindy McLeish MP, Shop 10, 38-40 Bell Street, Yarra Glen

# Funding the environment following the Longwood Fires

by Cath Olive, Granite to Goulburn, Biodiversity Recovery Alliance

THE Longwood Fire in January 2026, is the biggest fire in an agricultural landscape in Australian history, with 136,000 hectares burnt. The agricultural and human infrastructure losses are immense. However, what has not been acknowledged widely is the environmental impact of the fire on native vegetation and local fauna.

There has been a significant loss of hollow bearing trees estimated at 90 per cent, equating to thousands of hollows lost. As a result, hollow-dependent fauna including birds, possums, gliders and phascogales have lost vital habitat for nesting and shelter. Artificial hollows (nest boxes) provide instant short to medium term habitat required to sustain populations until native vegetation recovers forming natural hollows. Funding the construction and installation of nest boxes is required and should be prioritised given the scale of hollows lost to the fire and the detrimental effects to the species that rely upon these hollows.

There are 36 public land reserves across the fire affected landscape, more than 3000 hectares in total. They have been preserved for their landscape and cultural values, the presence of rare flora and fauna, and their biodiversity significance. Most of these reserves are now burnt and require fencing from stock to allow recovery without additional browsing pressure. The current rate of \$5 per metre for government fencing reimbursement is inadequate, when many of these fences will cost landholders \$20 to \$25 per metre. Pest plant and animals should be managed along with flora and fauna monitoring to ensure healthy recovery of native species and plant communities.

There are several permanent creeks and rivers within the fire effected area, with the most significant being Hughes Creek. Fed by spring soaks from groundwater across the tablelands, these springs and their creek networks flow through to the Longwood plains or into the Goulburn River. These springs and the creek systems are critical as drought refuge during climate crises. Offering water, shade, filtration via vegetation, cooler microclimates, vegetated corridors and vital habitat for all manner of life, they are the lifeblood for country and community. Thankfully, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) have fire recovery funds to replace riparian fencing.

Landholders across the fire footprint have always expressed their love for where they live. The most constant refrain after 30 years of working with community in land management is, 'I want to leave my



land in better condition'. Many landholders actively protect remnant vegetation, fence and revegetate for shelter, shade and to improve habitat.

A survey of 80 landholders from Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative in 2021 indicated 39 per cent were either farming full or part time. Almost 90 per cent of respondents indicated they were interested in protecting rivers, creeks and spring soaks, protecting native vegetation, managing pest animals and plants, and revegetating.

Across the entire fire footprint over the past 15 years, 1600 hectares of vegetation have been voluntarily protected or established through government assistance schemes, with 213 projects. \$10 to 15 million dollars of state and federal funds have been used to develop areas of vegetation over this time. Landholders are seeking support/subsides to protect and re-establish these natural areas, continuing their efforts to combat climate change and assist with biodiversity.

Our landscape has an enormous risk of environmental decline without further government support. New plants are germinating right now, and are very vulnerable to grazing pressure.

To ensure our biodiversity recovers, we need to monitor our flora and fauna; to protect areas from grazing of livestock (with realistic fencing reimbursement); adequate, consistent and long term pest herbivore and predator control and weed control; and to install thousands of nest boxes.

The Granite to Goulburn, Biodiversity Recovery Alliance is a collective of local environmental groups including Euroa Arboretum, Strathbogrie Conservation Management Network, Longwood Plains Conservation Management Network and Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative. The partnership was formalised in response to the Longwood fires, and work from a landscape plan developed by the local community in 2024. The group has collaborative relationships with GBCMA,

Taungurung Land and Waters Council, Murrindindi, Strathbogrie, Mitchell and Mansfield Shires, Zoos Victoria, Trust for Nature, Biolinks Alliance, Up2Us Landcare Network, Upper Goulburn Landcare Network and Deakin University.

As an alliance of local groups and experts, they wish to lead the recovery of the landscape and community following fire. They are seeking adequate funding for fire recovery as specified. They also continue to invite Parks Victoria and DEECA to work along side them, to continue the vision and goals of the *State Government Biodiversity Plan 2037: Engaging all Australians in indigenous biodiversity conservation; Building ecosystem resilience in a changing climate using suitable indigenous plants; Attaining measurable results. Over the next 15 years the revegetation goals for Victoria are 200,000 ha of revegetation in priority areas for connectivity between habitats and 200,000ha of new permanently protected areas on private land.*

## Church Services

### ST PETER'S MEMORIAL ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

### ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH OF YEA

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

### CATHOLIC PARISHES OF ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew 0459 402 547

St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm Immaculate Conception Parish Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

### CATHOLIC PARISH OF KINGLAKE

Fr Martin Ashe, Parish Priest Ph 9717 6482

St Mary's Kinglake: Sunday 8.30am

### SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, YEA

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

### UNITING CHURCH

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

## Out & About

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



for all your **commercial printing needs**



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WHAT'S ON?

\*\*\*\*\*

### SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Market@Yarck from 9am. Yarck Hall. Devonshire tea, bacon and egg sandwiches and toasties, plus plants, soap, preserves and much more.

\*\*\*\*\*

Speedway is back. GOSA Victorian Title, GP Midgets, and much more. Racing starts at 4pm.

\*\*\*\*\*

### SUNDAY, APRIL 19

The Cathkin (Molesworth) Cemetery Trust will be holding their AGM at 10.30am at the Molesworth Hall. All are welcome, with the trust seeking new volunteer trust members. For more information or to register your interest, email [secretarycathkincemetery@gmail.com](mailto:secretarycathkincemetery@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

Eildon RSL sub-branch AGM will be held at 5pm at the Eildon Visitor Information Centre. Nominations for office bearers and five general committee members closes at 5pm, April 15. Nomination forms can be obtained from the secretary, Sue McLaurin, [susanmclaurin55@gmail.com](mailto:susanmclaurin55@gmail.com) or phone 0409 050 494.

\*\*\*\*\*

### MONDAY, APRIL 27

Heathcote Jewellery are coming to Alexandra. Pop up store 10am-2.30pm Alexandra Bowls Club. Cash for gold, including custom and hand made jewellery, diamond specialist, repair and remodelling and resizing and Rhodium.

\*\*\*\*\*

### TUESDAY, APRIL 28

Heathcote Jewellery are coming to Yea. Pop up store 10am-2.30pm Yea Bowls Club. Cash for gold, including custom and hand made jewellery, diamond specialist, repair and remodelling and resizing and Rhodium.

\*\*\*\*\*

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29

An open community meeting will take place from 5pm at the Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House, hosted by Murrindindi Shire Council. This is an opportunity to speak to council about topics or issues that affect you and your community. Prior registration is not required.

# CASH FOR GOLD

- Unwanted jewellery
- Broken jewellery
- Gold Coins
- Silver coins
- Silver
- Bracelets
- Rings
- Gold watches
- Silver watches
- And more!
- ✓ Licensed gold dealers
- ✓ On-site purity testing
- ✓ No commitment required
- ✓ Cash up front
- ✓ Better price than the pawn shop

## Yea Bowls Club

Pop-up store open

Tuesday 28 April 2026

10am to 2.30pm

63 High Street,  
Yea VIC 3717



### Other Jewellery Services :

- Custom & Hand Made Jewellery
- Diamond Specialist
- Repair & Remodelling
- Ring Resize & Rhodium

Or visit us in-store at Heathcote!

1/77 High Street, Heathcote VIC 3523

Mobile: 0437 866 606



# The Farmer's Ag News

## New food labelling laws tabled for consumer clarity

NEW food labelling laws that will safeguard Victorian farmers and keep consumers informed when buying meat and dairy at the supermarket, have been tabled in parliament.

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Emma Kealy, said immediate changes to food safety laws were needed, "to ensure stronger consumer transparency, protect our farmers, and hold emerging food technologies like lab-grown meat accountable."

"Whether milk or meat, supermarket shoppers must be able to easily understand where their food comes from, so they can make an informed choice at the checkout," Ms Kealy said.

"These changes will ensure a level playing field between natural and imitation products."

The Nationals and the Liberals amendments will: Prevent misleading use of "milk" where a product is not dairy. Prevent misleading use of meat descriptors (e.g. bacon, steak, mince). Require clear, prominent disclosure where products are plant-based imitation foods or cell-cultivated meat.

The changes will also require disclosure to be clearly visible on the display panel of the product and in equal font size to the product descriptor. For example, products containing lab-grown meat must be labelled, "cell-cultivated meat" or "lab-grown meat."

The changes will ensure there is no reduction in food safety standards, and that support for meat and dairy farming industries remains steadfast.

"Victorian farmers have a reputation of producing high quality, nutritious and delicious food, but their premium brand must not be used by other products masquerading as meat and dairy," Ms Kealy said.

"Victorian farmers produce the real thing. They shouldn't have to compete with products that borrow their name but not their standards."

"Only the Liberals and Nationals will support our farmers to ensure the quality of their products is protected."

## Opposition calls for interest-free loans for agriculture amid fuel crisis

THE federal Opposition believe that the Australian Government should release the details of its plan to provide interest-free loans to businesses impacted by the fuel crisis and add the agricultural sector to the program.

Shadow Minister for Industry and Sovereign Capability Andrew Hastie said the government should come clean on whether farmers were included in the Economic Resilience Program, amid growing concerns one of the hardest-hit sectors has been left out.

"Labor's interest-free loan package is meant to support businesses, but it's still unclear if farmers, dealing with skyrocketing fuel and fertiliser costs, are included," Mr Hastie said.

"Australian farmers are already doing it tough, and it's only getting worse. They are paying more to run their machinery and more for the inputs that grow our food, but unlike others in the supply chain they have no way to pass these costs on. They just have to absorb it.

"They carry that burden, while others can adjust their prices or add a margin. It's not a level playing field. If we don't stand behind our farmers, we put our food supply at risk, and that leaves Australian families exposed."

Mr Hastie is calling on the government to confirm whether farmers were covered by the

loan scheme and, if not, to urgently extend it to include them.

"At a time when Australia's food producers are under pressure, leaving them out of a crisis support program is a serious oversight," Mr Hastie said.

"If the government is serious about backing Australian industry and protecting supply, it needs to act quickly and ensure farmers are included."

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Darren Chester said the government had failed to provide any details on the program and the eligibility criteria.

"There's a crisis now and we have the government floating thought bubbles without any details on how the program will be implemented and whether one of the most adversely impacted industries will have access to interest-free loans," Mr Chester said.

"As it stands right now, it appears that farmers and agri-businesses have missed out completely under this scheme.

"Key industry groups are already warning that further disruptions to fuel and fertiliser supplies could lead to shortages and higher prices for Australian families and the agricultural sector can't keep absorbing all the extra costs.

"Labor should be doing everything it can to ensure our agriculture industry is protected from more shocks during this crisis. This is about our nation's food security and our ability to feed Australian families and maintain our exports to other nations which rely on our food.

"The government also needs to be honest and transparent with Australians about any domestic supply chain vulnerabilities and clearly outline how it will prioritise fuel for essential industries like agriculture if the situation deteriorates."

Mr Chester said the increasingly uncertain global environment had strengthened the case to fast-track a National Food Security Strategy and elevate food and fibre security as a matter of national importance.

"When it comes to food security, it's time to take this issue more seriously and recognise its link to national security in an increasingly uncertain world," he said.

"As a nation, we produce more than enough food for domestic consumption, but the agricultural sector relies heavily on imported inputs like fuel, fertiliser and pesticides which have been severely disrupted by the current crisis."

## Cool weather still driving hay fire danger

COOLER conditions across Victoria may suggest reduced haystack fire risk, but moist hay continues to heat internally and remains a significant hazard.

Producers are urged to maintain regular monitoring of baled and stacked hay, as no current technology reliably tracks internal hay temperatures.

Dairy Extension Officer, Michele Jolliffe said the real danger in hay is what you can't see, so regular checks remain the strongest protection against fire.

"Simple actions like testing temperatures and watching for warning signs can prevent a heating haystack from becoming a dangerous ignition," Ms Jolliffe said.

"Warning signs such as steam, roof condensation, mould, acrid smells or humid air near stacks should prompt immediate checks to prevent heat buildup and potential ignition.

"Most heating occurs within the first fortnight after baling, although hay can still reach ignition point up to eight weeks later especially during fluctuating autumn temperatures.

"Cooler weather can hide the risk, but moisture in hay can still spark trouble if vigilance drops," Ms Jolliffe said.

Using a crowbar inserted for two hours remains an effective temperature test, and a bar too hot to hold indicates a dangerous internal temperature above 70°C.

If hay is heating, stacks should be carefully pulled apart to release heat, with water supply and trained personnel on standby to prevent ignition.

Producers should avoid walking on stacks due to potential internal charring, any extra weight on the stack may cause the stack to collapse and cause serious injury.

If there is the slightest risk of a fire starting due to wet hay, never keep machinery in the hayshed and don't allow children to play in or near heating stacks.

Further information on hay fire risks is available on the CFA website, and seasonal support is accessible at [agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au) or by calling 136 186.

**CLEARING SALE**  
**A/C THREE SISTERS PAST**  
**SUNDAY 26th APRIL 2026 10:00AM**  
**2724 Broadford-Flowerdale Rd, Flowerdale Victoria**

**FARM MACHINERY, FARM SUNDRIES,  
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 Agent: Ayden Embling - 0427 924 944

YEA SALEYARDS		STOCK REPORT 10 APRIL 2026		
Combined Agents Store Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers	Cows & Calves
Number of head	2,293			
Average \$ per head	\$1,665			
Average weight per head	328.8kg			
Top price per head		\$3,200	\$2,390	\$3,450
Top weight		582kg	475kg	
Turnover	\$3.77 million			

# The plan to draw cyclists to Murrindindi Shire

CYCLING is a major drawcard for the Murrindindi area, with extensive trails and majestic scenery such as Lake Eildon, the Cathedral Ranges and the Great Victorian Rail Trail. Ride High Country is Tourism North East's cycling brand, designed to highlight and inform cycling tourists about the available networks and features on offer.

Tourism North East Head of Marketing, Christina Harris, spoke recently about the wonderful cycling opportunities in Victoria's high country.

"For Ride High Country, we really focus on the cycling experience and that means from the trails like rail trail, gravel, road and mountain biking, to the accommodation and cycle-friendly businesses as well as wonderful dining and retail and things like that, ensuring that anyone who's looking for the ultimate cycling holiday has all the information they need," Christina said.

In Murrindindi Shire, cycling opportunities across the region include Eildon Mountain Bike Park, Lake Mountain and Cascades Trail, endless road options with unparalleled climbing and hundreds of kilometres, including things like the Lake Mountain Seven Peaks Challenge, etcetera.

"As regional tourism board for the area, we're really committed to leveraging the infrastructure that we're fortunate to have in our region already. So that means focusing on those key assets like the Great Victorian Rail Trail, Murray to Mountains and the mountain bike parks," Christina said.

"As we've discussed, obviously Buxton, Eildon and Cascades within Murrindindi, as well as the Seven Peaks, which are really a unique point of difference that can't be replicated anywhere else in Australia, of which we're fortunate to have Lake Mountain as part of.

"In addition to that, we do have the newly launched gravel network, which features over 50 green to double black routes and covers more than 2000 kilometers and 35,000 meters of elevation. And that does include popular locations like Alexandra, Yea and Kinglake."

Christina spoke about the strategy for promoting cycling tourism in the north east.

"It's a multi-integrated strategy, working across our own channels as well as partnerships, PR and all that side of things. So it's not one specific thing, it's really an integrated sort of cross-channel," she said.

"We are constantly working on what works and making sure that we're building on that. So every year is a little bit different. Obviously, focusing on those wonderful own channels and the audience we're building around that as well.

"Cycling tourism is really, really a very strong performing segment for us over the past 10 years. In the year ending June 2024, Victoria's high country attracted an estimated 4.63 million domestic visitors, of which approximately 280,000 were cycling visitors.

"We're really continuing to invest into awareness driving marketing activity. So we're estimating that this will grow to 390,000 visitors by the end of 2027. A very important segment for the region. That's for high country specifically."

People can visit the Victoria's High Country website and download the GPX, which allows them to sort out their adventure and ensure that the road route chosen suits their experience level.

"All of our routes are tagged from green through to black or double black, like the mountain biking system. That means you can really sort of measure it to where you are at and all that side of things," Christina said.

"And any route that we put online is something that we look through and make sure that it fits with what the local area needs and also what showcases our best beautiful, local landscape.

"From our end, gravel is amazing and connects so many wonderful locations and allows for an on bike experience where you don't need a car and you can go on roads that are really beautiful, very quiet and show off the beautiful infrastructure. It's sort of connecting the towns as well as our wonderful landscape.

"At this time, we're really focused on activating the assets we have, as well as working with our local and state governments to repair infrastructure that was damaged in the 2026 summer fires. However, in that space, our work in the product development really continues and we're continuing to map rides and improve navigation, and that'll continue over the next 12 to 24 months."

Tourism North East are fortunate to have secured funding from the Victorian Government to support their Ride High Country program for the next two years, allowing them to continue mapping routes and promoting landscapes.

Christina finished by saying, "hop on your bike, come up and check out the High Country in Murrindindi Shire. There really is cycling available for every single level and interest. I think that's something that is so amazing about our region. It really is unparalleled when it comes to cycling opportunities.

"Whether you are a family and want to go for a gentle roll or, you know, just try out mountain biking the first time, there's options around up to full on experts that want to absolutely check out something that's challenging and that they can't see anywhere else in Australia.

"We really have unparalleled opportunities when it comes to that combined with really passionate local operators that are cycling focused, so our cycling experience is more than just the trails, it's also the accommodation, it's the dining and it's the local characters around that," she concluded.

More information about Ride High Country can be found at [victoriashighcountry.com.au/ride/](http://victoriashighcountry.com.au/ride/)



## Mayor joins VLGA board

THE Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) is delighted to advise that Cr Damien Gallagher, Mayor of Murrindindi Shire Council, has been appointed to the VLGA board to fill a vacant position, effective immediately.

The term of Cr Gallagher's appointment will be until June 30, 2028, at which time he will be eligible to stand for election.

Cr Gallagher has a strong focus on sound governance, careful stewardship of public resources, and long-term community wellbeing.

Cr Gallagher has represented Murrindindi Shire through the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian

Local Governance Association, and Rural Councils Victoria. In 2024, he chaired the Hume Region Local Government Network. In 2024 and again in 2026 he was appointed to the Local Government Minister's Mayoral Advisory Panel, contributing to state-level discussions on governance, resilience, and regional advocacy.

Cr Gallagher said he is looking forward to making a valuable and sustained contribution to the VLGA board and ensuring the VLGA continues to be recognised as a supportive and respected governance peak body for councils and councillors.



Damien Gallagher. -S

## MOUTH MAPPING LAUNCH

A new, **world first** oral cancer screening program at the Yea Saleyards

Yea & District Memorial Hospital is excited to launch MouthMap — an innovative digital health tool designed to improve access to oral cancer screening for rural communities.

### What is MouthMap?

MouthMap uses high-quality medical photography to take detailed images of a person's mouth. These images are then reviewed by specialist doctors, allowing expert advice without the need to travel long distances.

### Why does it matter?

Oral cancer cases are gradually increasing across Australia. Early detection is important and can lead to better treatment outcomes.

### Why launch it at the Saleyards?

Through the YDMH Saleyards Program, free health clinics are delivered monthly in a familiar and accessible setting at the heart of the local farming community.



A proud partnership with the Rotary Club of Yea, whose generous funding has enabled this initiative to be delivered locally.

### JOIN US

For the launch on the 1st of May 2026  
11:30-12:00pm at the Yea Saleyards

RSVP - NOT REQUIRED BUT  
ENCOURAGED FOR CATERING

☎ (03) 5736 0490

✉ [Chloe.Harward@ydmh.org.au](mailto:Chloe.Harward@ydmh.org.au)

# Alpine ash forests endangered

UNDER the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), the Alpine Ash (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*, also known as Woollybutt) and White Ash (*Eucalyptus fraxinoides*) forests of mainland Australia became officially listed as 'endangered' ecosystems from March 20. This means that the forests face a high risk of collapse or extinction, largely due to intensifying fire seasons.

In Murrindindi Shire, reproductively mature stands of live Alpine Ash occur from Mount Bullfight to the Blue Range, including the Cathedral Range, and in the Upper Yarra Catchment. They tend to grow at altitudes of 900 to 1500 metres, and are found in such altitudes in various areas across the Great Dividing Range.

White ash is generally found in the Howe Range east of Mallacoota, as well as in some parts of New South Wales.

Alpine ash regeneration poses a particular challenge. When a mature tree dies after an intense fire, the seeds quickly regenerate as these seeds require an ash bed. The challenge is that these trees will not create their own

seeds for around 20 years, making them particularly susceptible should another fire occur in the meantime, with regeneration only possible via the artificial sowing of collected seeds.

The protection of such forests does not focus on logging as over half are in existing national parks, and logging ceased in Victoria in 2023.

University of Melbourne scientists Tom Fairman and Trent Penman are encouraging long-term seed collection programs, planned burns for forest protection, and selective thinning to speed the growth of younger trees as larger trees are better able to withstand fire.

VicForests was previously responsible for collecting the seeds, but this too closed down. It's understood that DEECA is putting together a seed collection program.

According to ABC's Landline, the contracts being offered by DEECA are only for one to two tonnes of seed from Mountain and Alpine Ash species. In previous years, three times that amount was collected.

Forest scientist Owen Bassett believes that 17 tonnes of seed is needed to ensure sufficient supplies to re-seed areas following severe bushfires.

When contacted for comment on this, a DEECA spokesperson responded, "Seed is vital to our Alpine and Mountain Ash forests, our new specialist seed services collected during this summer's fires where it was safe to do so. In good news, our recent flowering and seeding forecast told us mature Alpine and Mountain Ash forests stands will, in most instances, be able to recover naturally should a fire occur."

Ash forests, including Alpine Ash, can only produce viable seed to regenerate after 20 years of age.

DEECA provided the following information as background. The state's Forest Restoration Program, currently has over 25.5 tonnes of seed in store. Of that, 7.80 tonnes is Alpine Ash, 5.75 tonnes is Mountain Ash and 12.0 tonnes is other species.

Following the 2019-20 fires, the government funded a major Forest Restoration Project which reseeded 11,500 ha of Mountain Ash and Alpine Ash forest killed by the fires and also create a seed bank to buffer against future events.

For more information visit, [forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/initiatives/forest-restoration-project](https://forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/initiatives/forest-restoration-project)

## Parents urged to vaccinate under-fives this flu season

VICTORIAN families are being urged to ensure children under five are protected against serious illness this winter by arranging a free flu vaccine ahead of the 2026 peak season.

While vaccination is recommended for anyone aged six months and older, Victorian Chief Health Officer Dr Caroline McElnay warns it is especially critical for children under five, who are more likely to experience severe flu symptoms that may require hospital treatment.

"For our youngest children, the flu can be far more serious than a few days at home unwell. It can be life-threatening.

"Vaccinating kids under five is one of the most important things families can do to keep them healthy and out of hospital this winter.

"Flu vaccines are completely safe, effective and free for children under five years," Dr McElnay said.

The flu vaccine is free for at-risk groups including children aged six months to five years, people over 65 years, pregnant women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people with medical conditions that put them at increased risk of severe flu.

Dr McElnay said getting vaccinated early provides the strongest protection against serious illness as flu activity increases heading into winter.

"The earlier you get vaccinated, the better your protection will be as we move into winter. A quick appointment now can make a big difference to your health and the health of those around you."

It's important to get vaccinated against influenza every year as the virus changes throughout the year changes and new vaccines are developed for the following winter season, she added.

"Having an annual flu vaccine will not only reduce your chances of catching the flu but also reduce the severity of your illness if you become infected," Dr McElnay said.

The vaccine is available across general practices, pharmacies, local council immunisation clinics, Aboriginal Health Services and often at workplaces.

Flu vaccines can be given at the same time as other National Immunisation Program vaccines, such as the free maternal RSV vaccine, whooping cough and the COVID-19 booster.

As well as vaccination, simple steps can help stop the spread of respiratory illnesses such as hand washing, coughing or sneezing into your elbow, wearing a mask, and staying home when sick.

## Night Strike exercise in Koriella

THE Koriella Fire Brigade, located at 10 Stoney Creek Road in Fawcett, is to conduct another night training exercise as part of the Koriella Fire Brigade's annual series of Night Strike training exercises on Friday evening, May 8.

The exercise will include local brigades from within the Alexandra Group and a task force coming up from District Eight, fostering relationships outside of District 12.

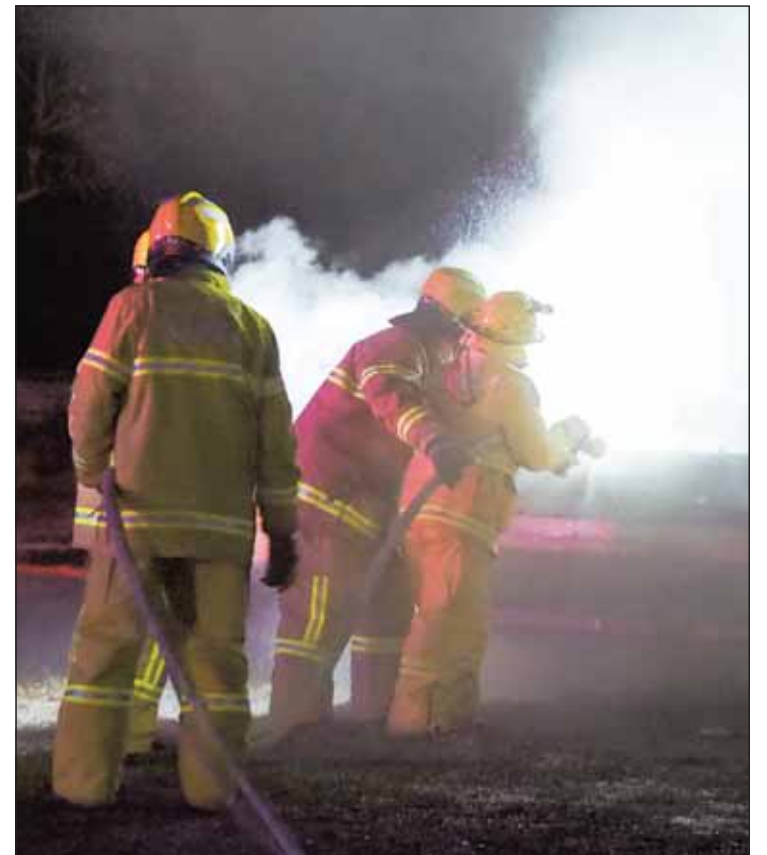
The exercise will be conducted in the Fawcett and Koriella areas from 6 through to 11pm.

The exercise itself will involve local brigades 'turning out' to a mock accident that has occurred on private property in Fawcett, which has subsequently started a grass and scrub fire threatening a homestead. There will be no live or active grass fires however a CFA prop will be in position and utilised.

The training is conducted to expose crew members to situations that they will often come across when 'turning out' to real incidents. The better trained they are, the better the response is. This is to ensure that the brigades remain a trusted and reliable capability for the communities and to build stronger ties and better cohesion with local emergency services.

Being a night exercise, it would be appreciate that if you need to travel along Spring or Stoney Creek Roads in Koriella and Fawcett that night, please exercise caution when doing so, so volunteers are not put in harm's way with the additional risk of speeding traffic. Please observe the required 40kph speed limit when approaching flashing red and blue lights.

All queries can be directed to the Koriella Fire Brigade Captain, Scott Reeves via email on [scott.koriellafb@gmail.com](mailto:scott.koriellafb@gmail.com) or call 0417 584 910.



The exercise was a terrific way to gain skills. -AR

## Brigade grant made a huge difference during Longwood fire

LAST year, St Luke's in Yea offered a community grant to community organisations to assist in purchasing something that can help that organisation. The Yea Fire Brigade

applied, nominating a thermal imaging camera their item, and were successful in their application. It turned out to be very timely.

Yea Fire Brigade Captain Emery McCarthy said that the grant allowed them to make the purchase without inputting any brigade funds.

He explained that there are two types of thermal imaging cameras used by the CFA, a structural one and a wildfire one. The grant allowed them to purchase was a wildfire one, which is now on the A tanker, which is the main appliance which responds to grass fires.

Emery said, "We were able to use that throughout the Longwood fire and other fires through the fire season."

Following the Longwood fire, many small spot fires broke out in the weeks following.

Emery explained, "Once we extinguish all the flame, we're able to go through the fire ground and actually find the hidden pockets of heat that we can't see with the naked eye [thanks to the wildfire thermal imaging camera].

"It allows us to do our blacking out job a lot more thoroughly and ensure all pockets of heat that are hidden are extinguished, meaning we don't have to go back and there's less chance of a breakout. It's definitely a great asset to the brigade and the community."

This is the second grant the brigade has received from St Luke. They previously received a grant to purchase a hose cleaner.

Emery added, "What they do for the community with the community grant is really amazing and it's really appreciated."



Brigade members and Lisa Cook with the thermal imaging camera. -S

# THE DISCOVER YOUR COUNTRY SIDE BIT

Head for the hills and discover Victoria's regional events. Try your hands (and feet) at various things you've never done before. You could find yourself cider quaffing, tulip sniffing, grape stomping, maybe even fun running.

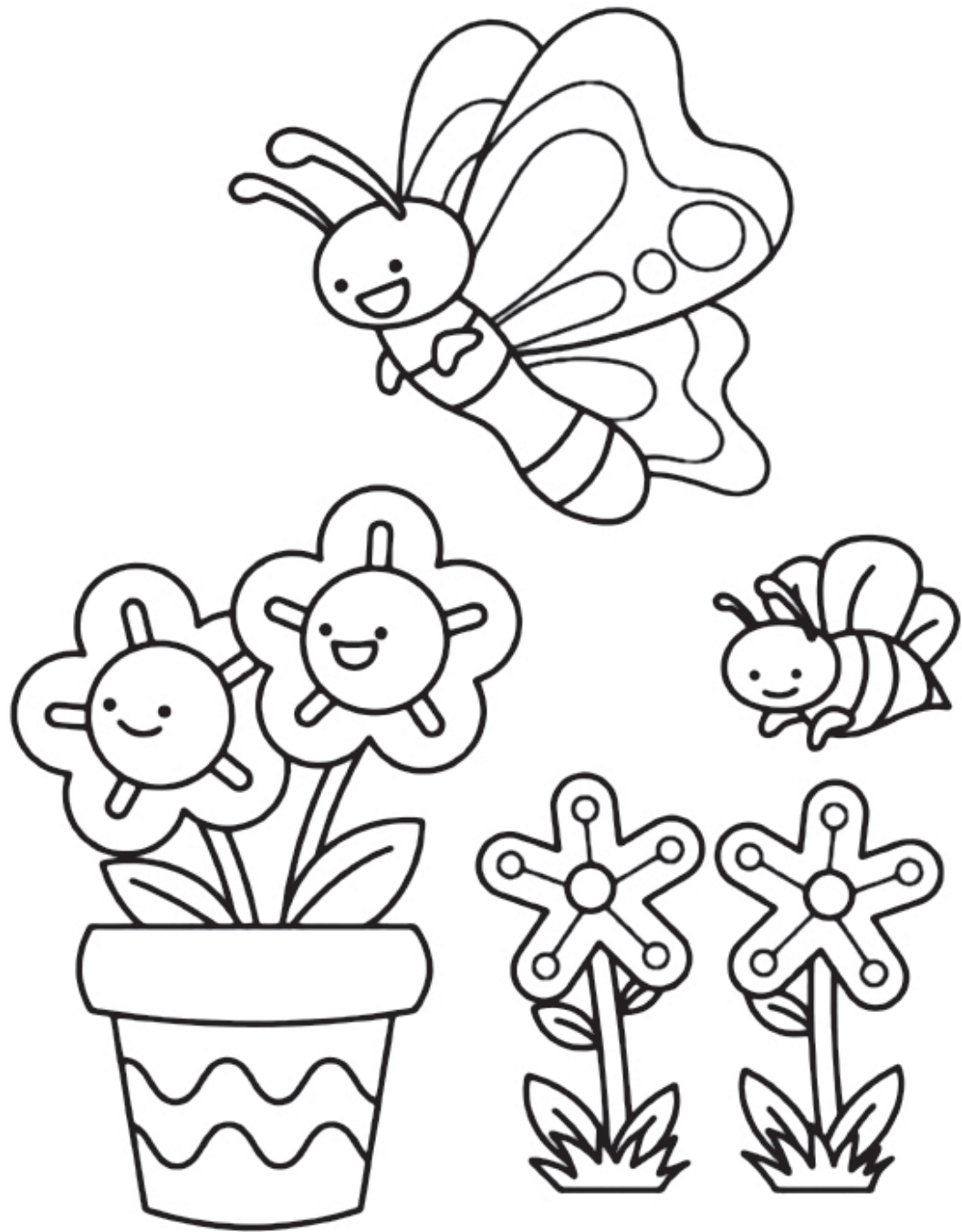
**VICTORIA** EVERY BIT DIFFERENT

[VISITVICTORIA.COM](http://VISITVICTORIA.COM)

# KID'S PUZZLES PUZZLES

**SOLUTIONS**  
Page 11

## Colouring Page



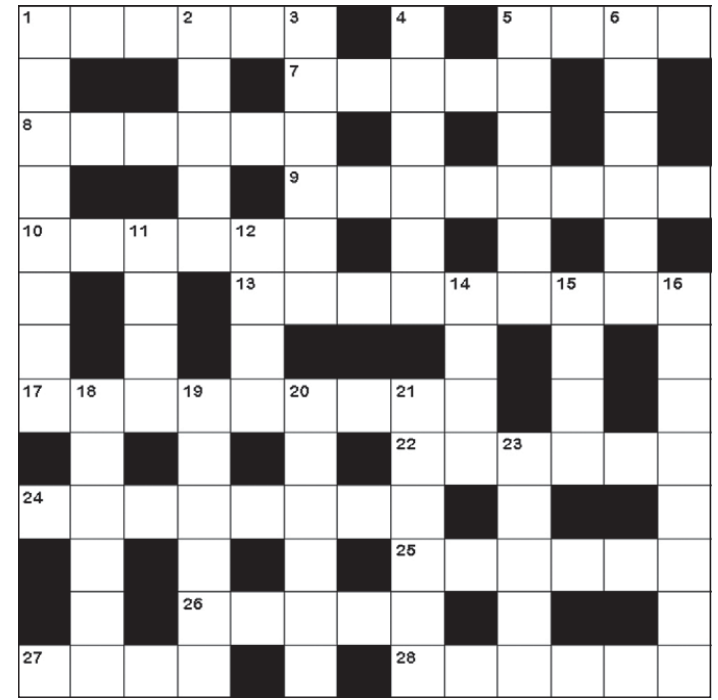
## Crossword

### ACROSS

- Uncertainty and misgivings about the truth.
- Small or narrow cave in the side of a cliff.
- A small very thin pancake.
- The contestant who wins the contest.
- Understood though not plainly expressed.
- Large yellow root eaten as a vegetable.
- A persons assets of special worth or utility.
- Moving and bending with ease and grace.
- Stick to a plan without deviation.
- The owner or manager of a business.
- Japanese system of unarmed combat.
- A brief indulgence of your impulses.
- A brief period of residence or visiting.
- An assumption based on limited information.

### DOWN

- Fit together tightly and neatly.
- Passed from runner to runner in a relay race.
- The text of a play, film, or broadcast.
- A building dedicated to religious ceremonies.



- Surrender possession or control to another.
- Disappear without warning or explanation.
- A break in personal or social relations.
- An island, especially a small one.
- Anything that is necessary but lacking.
- A prong on a fork or pitchfork.
- Extremely bad in degree or extent.
- Goods brought in from a foreign country.
- A controversial or unorthodox opinion.
- The giant planet encircled by three rings.
- A place where goods are offered for sale.
- A vast moving crowd of people.

## Word Search - Words starting with "K"

KANGAROO	X M F D D Y B U Z K H P P V K
KEEP	Z K X Z S P P V I Q R G E E N
KENNEL	Z S Q A B U M T T V M K N E R
KEY	S L P K L A E E E F I N K O K
KICK	N U N P I A E L L I E D H O N
KID	F D K M M C O V V L A Y L R N
KIND	H J I S U I K K G Q E Z F A H
KITCHEN	S J T Z U Y Q U B L D S S G J
KITE	O S T B E P R K A A E E L N E
KITTEN	N E E K O S J I S Q W Y E A G
KNEE	N Q N Z Q J Q T R E T O N K E
KNIFE	I G J C G J F C R X O D Q E U
KNOT	Y R S A N T O H M G K I N N A
KOALA	X X K I N D G E G P A K B Y K
	D N J O W U C N T I I V M J D

## Word Search

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

### TV Shows

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| BRIDGERTON      | NCIS        |
| DEATHINPARADISE | NEIGHBOURS  |
| DOCTORWHO       | STARTREK    |
| HARDQUIZ        | THENANNY    |
| HOMEANDAWAY     | THEPITT     |
| KATHANDKIM      | THESIMPSONS |

## Cryptogram

### TV Shows

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
		11		7				

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
				24				

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	17						

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \\ \text{10 25 19 18} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \\ \text{17 22 7} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \\ \text{3 24 3 11 24 25 14} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \\ \text{21 7 17 13 18 12 14 10 7} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \\ \text{5 19 17 11 22} \end{array}$$

## Math Square

### 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.

	-		-		-7
+		-		-	
8	-		+		7
-		-		-	
	-		-	4	-3
11		-5			-1

## Math Square

	-		+		3
÷		-		-	
3	+	4	÷		5
-		-		×	
	+		-		9
-5		-3			-9

### 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.

## Sudoku

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

### 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.

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# Thousands caught in Easter road safety crackdown

POLICE detected over 7500 traffic offences during a major five-day Easter road safety operation in Victoria.

Operation Nexus saw police targeting high-risk driving behaviour across the state's roads, in an effort to reduce road trauma.

Police had warned motorists to expect an increased presence on the roads, recording a 19 per cent increase in patrol hours compared to the same Easter period last year.

The uplift in enforcement also saw a 23 per cent increase in the number of infringements issued over Easter this year.

Almost half of all offences detected during Operation Nexus were for speeding, with police issuing over 3500 speeding infringements. Three quarters of these were for motorists caught between 10km/h and 25km/h over the speed limit.

Concerningly, one in every 464 drivers tested for alcohol were caught over the limit, with police detecting 316 drink driving offences from 146,698 preliminary breath tests.

A further 178 drivers returned a positive roadside drug test, with 3505 roadside drug tests conducted.

There were also 578 drivers detected driving who should not be behind the wheel, due to being unlicensed, disqualified or suspended from driving.

The total 7567 offences detected during Operation Nexus included 3571 speeding offences, 548 disqualified or suspended and unlicensed drivers, 421 disobey signs or signals, 316 drink driving offences from 146,698 preliminary breath tests, 265 mobile phone offences, 178 drug driving offences from 3505 roadside drug tests, 136 vehicle impounds, 110 seat belt offences, and 649 unregistered vehicles.

There were three fatalities on Victorian roads during the five-day operational period, including a male pedestrian struck by a vehicle on the Eastern Freeway in Kew East on Saturday morning, a single-vehicle collision in Nulla Vale on Monday evening,

and a male motorcyclist in Portland on Monday evening.

These fatalities bring the total lives lost on Victorian roads this year to 66, compared to 81 at the same time last year.

Police are reminding motorists they will continue to be enforcing anywhere, anytime across the state's roads, with another major road policing operation to be launched later this week.

Operation Nexus ran from 12.01am on Thursday, April 2 and concluded at 11.59pm on Monday, April 6.

Murrindindi Shire is part of the Benalla Police Service Area (PSA). In the Benalla PSA, there were six drink drivers, one drug driver, two other drink/drug, zero disqualified drivers, three unlicensed drivers, 63 speeding offences, two disobey signs or signals, three seatbelt offences, zero mobile phone offences, and 17 unregistered vehicles.

Road Policing Acting Assistant Commissioner Justin Goldsmith said, "It's been great to see everyone getting out and enjoying their Easter break, but there was certainly no break for Victoria Police. Our members were committed to having a significant presence across the state's roads.

"Despite our repeated warnings that we would be out in force, disappointingly we have detected thousands of infringements for breaching the road rules over Easter.

"The majority of these drivers acknowledge they've done the wrong thing, but have chosen to take a risk anyway, whether that's speeding a few kilometres over the speed limit, or getting behind the wheel after a few drinks.

"Ultimately, all traffic penalties are completely avoidable if motorists stick to the rules.

"With school holidays underway in Victoria, motorists will see police remaining highly visible and enforcing on the state's roads over the coming weeks, and should expect to be tested anywhere, anytime."

# PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD

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

### MATH SQUARES

9	-	7	+	1	3
÷		-		-	
3	+	4	÷	2	5
-		-		x	
8	+	6	-	5	9
-5		-3		-9	

### CRYPTOGRAM

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
19 18 11 23 7 20 10 22 12 9 15 21 1 14 24 3 4 25 13 17 2 8 5 26 6 16

GRAB THE POPCORN, LET'S BINGE WATCH

### SUDOKU

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

### KIDS - MATH SQUARES

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

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FOR HIRE

MEETINGS

DEATH NOTICES

DEATH NOTICES

**Cathkin (Molesworth) Cemetery Trust.**  
 Notice of AGM meeting, Sunday, April 19, at 10.30am.  
 Molesworth Hall.  
 All welcome.  
 Cathkin (Molesworth) Cemetery Trust is seeking new volunteer trust members.  
 For more information or to register your interest, email [secretarycathkincemetery@gmail.com](mailto:secretarycathkincemetery@gmail.com)

**MARTIN (nee Parker) Rosalyn Joy.**  
 Passed away peacefully on Sunday March 29, 2026.  
 Loved daughter of June and Bill Parker (dec).  
 Sister to Gary (dec), Sharron (dec) and Gaylene. Wife of Micheal. Loved mother, friend and adored grandmother to Leia, Brett, River and Billie, James, Raquel, Gabriella and Chloe.  
*In Gods care.*

**MARTIN (Parker), Rosalyn Joy.**  
 Passed away Sunday March 29, 2026.  
 Roz, I will carry you with me in my heart always.  
 The bond we had will never be broken. Love you.  
 Your sister Gaylene.  
 Always the fun aunty to Brooke, Ryan and kids, Luke, Lauren and kids.

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MEETINGS



Notice of 2026 Annual General Meeting, Eildon RSL Sub-Branch  
 In accordance with By-Law 10C (11) (a), The Eildon RSL Sub-Branch 2026 Annual General Meeting will be held on:  
 Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 5pm  
 Eildon Visitor Information Centre, Main Street, Eildon, Victoria 3713  
 Business:  
 Election of General Committee Members and Office Bearers.  
 Presentation of reports.  
 All financial service, affiliate and life members can nominate. Nominations for Office Bearers and five general committee members open on Wednesday, March 31, and close at 5pm on April 15, 2026.  
 Nomination forms can be obtained from the Secretary, Sue McLaurin [susanmclaurin55@gmail.com](mailto:susanmclaurin55@gmail.com) or 0409 050 494

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**TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE: NOON THURSDAY**

The Alexandra Standard and The Yea Chronicle are printed by North East Media, Wangaratta. Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.



Brown falcon. -Neville Hunter

# The Brown Falcon's scissor-like bite

THE sharp-eyed and equally sharp-beaked Brown Falcon (*Falco berigora*) is featured this month in the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority's 2026 Year of the Raptor community awareness campaign.

Goulburn Broken CMA project officer, Janice Mentiplay-Smith, said the Brown Falcon was a resourceful bird of prey and all-round gastronomic opportunist compared to many of Australia's falcons which tend to be less adventurous with their dining choices.

"The Brown Falcon will partake from a broad menu which means it can venture widely throughout Australia and New Guinea to hunt across a range of habitats," Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

"It lacks the powerful talons possessed by many raptors but is compensated with a sharp tomial tooth; a protrusion on its upper bill that corresponds with notches on the lower beak.

"This ingenious adaptation functions like a pair of scissors and allows the Brown Falcon to swiftly sever the spinal cord of its prey."

Ms Mentiplay-Smith said the highly resourceful Brown Falcon will often repurpose an old nest made by another bird, although it may also build its own stick nest in a tree.

"Occasionally, it will nest in open tree hollows. Both parents share the incubation of the eggs and care for the chicks."

Brown Falcons are usually seen alone, soaring in their search for prey. They are commonly sighted atop a tall perch, often a dead standing tree or powerline in a cropping region. It hunts small mammals,

insects, reptiles and small birds and will feed on carrion, the decaying flesh of dead animals.

The Brown Falcon's shorter talons and long legs mean it can chase down prey along the ground, should it miss its target on the first strike.

"As a larger bird, hovering is not usually its first preference, but it will occasionally do so before making a powerful dive to catch its prey. In flight, it has a slow 'overarm' wing rhythm with slightly upswept wings, punctuated by periods of drifting."

It's useful to be familiar with the Brown Falcon's flying style as in the air as it can be difficult to tell them apart from other raptors of similar size or colour.

Bird watching is an enjoyable way to see the Goulburn Broken catchment's beautiful birdlife, including its amazing raptors. Local birding group Murray Goulburn BirdLife meets monthly to conduct outings and enjoy the local environment. For information about the next outing, contact: [robertsdon680@gmail.com](mailto:robertsdon680@gmail.com)

Learning more about a species and its requirements is a positive first step in helping it and the environment it relies on. BirdLife Australia's Raptor Group promotes the conservation, management and study of Australia's birds of prey and fosters communication and cooperation among raptor enthusiasts across Australasia. For more information visit [ausraptorgroup.org](http://ausraptorgroup.org)

The Year of the Raptor is supported by the Victorian Government through the *Our Catchments Our Communities* stewardship program.



Brown falcon in flight. -Ruth Ault

# The new Senior Sergeant based in Alexandra

ACTING Senior Sergeant Adam Foley, based out of Alexandra Police Station, has taken over the management of the Murrindindi East Cluster, which includes Alexandra, Eldon and Marysville.

He's been working in the area since October 2025. He initially commenced at Seymour Police Station before taking on the Acting Senior Sergeant role, first out of Yea and then in Alexandra from November. He added, "I've been in and out of here since just before Christmas and then permanently back here at the end of January."

He is currently gazetted as a Detective Sergeant at Fawcner Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigations, a unit which covers Hume, Merri-bek and Moonee Valley.

He commented, "I thought I'd seen everything until I commenced working there. But you do have some positive impacts and you do have the opportunity to actually help." He worked there for three years.

Prior to this, he worked as a counter-terrorism security intelligence investigator, investigating national security persons of interest. Some of the bigger jobs he investigated included the Anzac Day terror plot, the Mother's Day terror plot, and the Christmas Day terror plot, all large-scale national security investigations which occurred from 2015. His work involved both digital and on-ground work.

In this role, he was seconded to the Australian Federal Police in the Joint Counter-Terrorism team for five years. He said, "We had some fairly successful outcomes from those national security investigations. One was referred to in the media as Operation Vecchio, where I was responsible for an investigation into a Bangladeshi student who came out to undertake an act of politically motivated violence in Australia, and she tried to behead her homestay host. I was the lead investigator on that investigation. I have been involved in most of the more nationally significant counter-terrorism investigations at that time."

Prior to this, he had a generalist background in criminal investigations in the city.

"I think it's fairly safe to say that I've covered most of the investigative themes that one could sort of cover as an investigator," he said.

Twenty years ago, he also spent time as a police prosecutor.

This is Adam's first Senior Sergeant role, and he certainly arrived at an extreme time, due to the fires in January. He was involved in the operational planning and execution type space in the Police Operations Centre.

Adam grew up in Whittlesea. He joined the army briefly before joining the police force. He's been in the police force for 25 years now. He's married

and has one daughter. The family lives near Puckapunyal.

Asked what he hopes to achieve in the shire, he responded, "I want to leverage off the existing trust and confidence that our local police have already established in the community. I really want to build that trust and confidence in our ability to police the local community and understand the nuances associated with policing these communities. We all live within these communities and as such, every effect that the community feels, it affects us as well. And I'm really keen to ensure that we protect our locals and ensure that their way of life and wellbeing is also protected."

This might mean ramping up road policing as well as connectedness with community.

He said, "I think the road policing piece does allow us to connect with the community. Just because we're pulling the car over doesn't necessarily mean that there's a traffic enforcement lens being applied at the time. I'm keen for our members to pull over cars and just have a chat with locals. It's all about education as well. But also... we can cultivate a lot of information from our community to allow us to get ahead of any issues that might be on the horizon and mitigate and negate any issues at the earliest opportunity to intervene. I'm also keen to continue to see the good work that our members have engaged in, and working out here is far different from being down in Melbourne. We can sit down and have a coffee in town and we'll have people come up and chat to us. You won't necessarily get that in Melbourne."

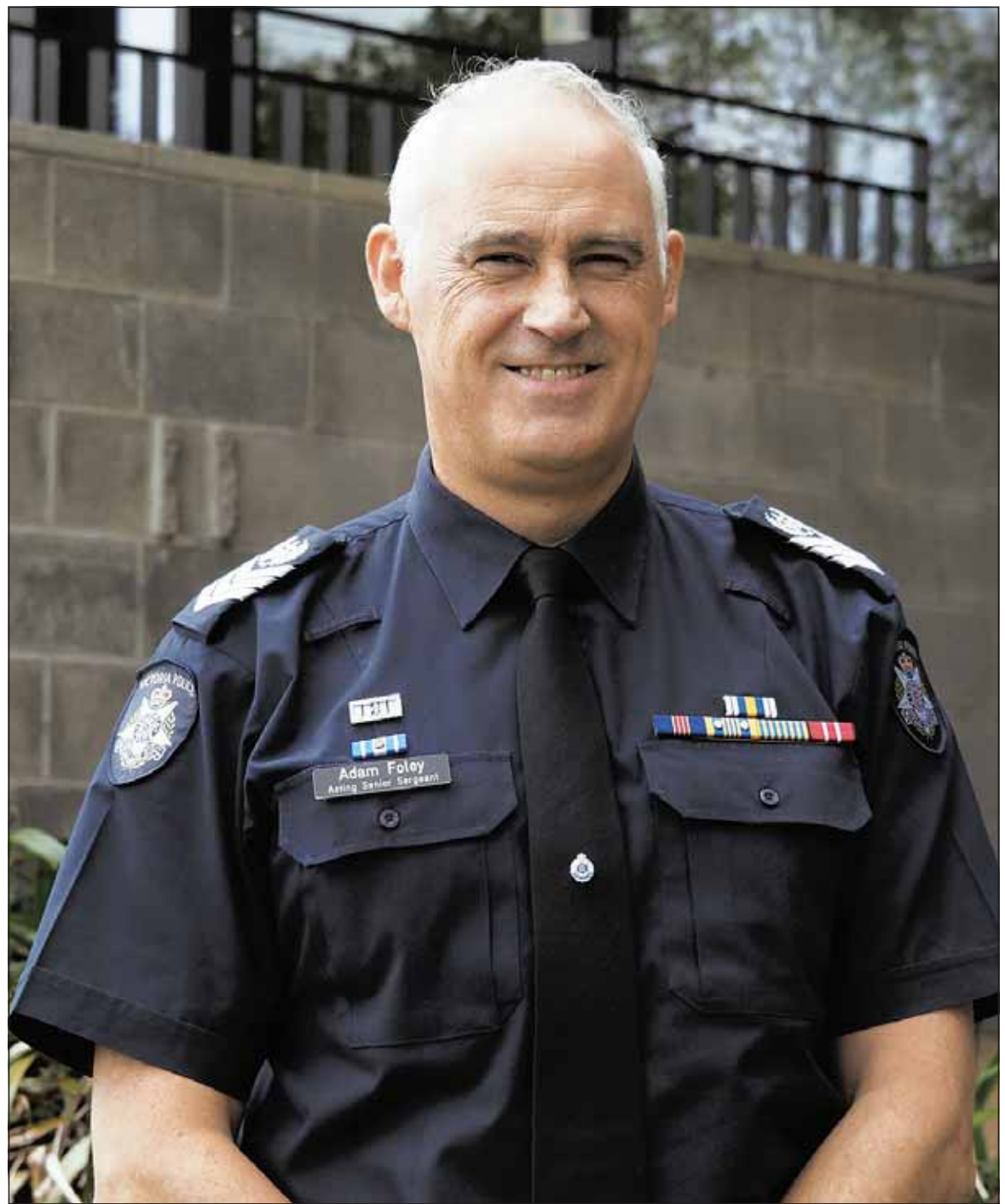
He added, "People are happy to see us, where that's not necessarily an environment I'm familiar with."

He said, "Coming from an investigative background, interacting with people and the community is a big part of that and how we go about solving crime. So I'm really keen to maintain and improve upon the relationship with the local community. Road policing, while very important, is just one aspect to it. And I'm one for cultivating those relationships."

He's also delighted with the police already in place in the shire. "We've got a fantastic team here," he said. We don't have any inexperienced policemen or policewomen working here."

The five sergeants working in Murrindindi Shire are Sergeant Dave Johnson in Kinglake, Acting Sergeant Matt Robertson in Yea, Sergeant Geoffrey Shaw in Marysville, Sergeant Andrew Walker in Alexandra, and Acting Sergeant Sam McCaffrey in Eldon. Acting Inspector Steve Carden the local area commander.

"We've got a very, very broad and experienced team working here and



Acting Senior Sergeant Adam Foley. -AR

I'll certainly leverage off all of their experience to make sure that the community is looked after," he said.

He is encouraging people to come and chat with them. "We're always keen to improve and build upon the existing relationships and feedback is very important as well. If there's anything to do, I'll implore people to come and have a chat when they see us in the street."

If there is an immediate need for police assistance, he strongly encouraged people to call Triple Zero, as the station may be unattended while they are out on the road. For less urgent matters, people can also call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444.

Adam also answered the most important question in country life. He's "a long-suffering Carlton supporter."

## Fire-impacted communities invited to book their firewood collection

BOOKINGS have started to come in for the first free firewood collection. The first week for the free collections is this current week.

There is plenty of firewood and lots more opportunities will be made available in coming weeks.

While free, this firewood is largely green and may not be useable this year. The provision of the free firewood is to support property owners impacted by the January 2026 bushfires.

The collection sites are at Terip Terip and Koriella, and the address will be provided in the form and booking calendar.

Collections operate between 9am-5pm in hourly timeslots, with limited capacity at each site.

When you apply online, you will need to upload ID and proof of residence, book your date and time, and you will then receive a permit.

Bookings are required and must include proof of ID and proof of residence. This service is available to Murrindindi ratepayers and residents. You need to have been impacted by the January 2026 bushfires. Your impacted property must be located in one of the 22 bushfire-impacted townships in Murrindindi. One booking is permitted per property. Please bring your permit with you, either printed or saved on your phone. Trailer sizes are limited to a maximum of 10ft by 6ft, or one cubic metre. Participants (or their representatives) will need to drive to the site and load their own firewood.

These requirements help ensure the support is shared fairly and reaches those who need it most.

If you're unable to upload documents or complete the form, please visit Customer Service or a Recovery Hub. Staff can sight your ID and help confirm details online.

## New ways to find the cheapest fuel

FUEL prices remain high and it's putting pressure on household budgets. The state government has introduced a new way to help Victorians find the best fuel prices.

*Servo Saver* in the Service Victoria app will make it clearer where you can find the cheapest petrol and which stations you should avoid.

Victorians will now see a 'Highest Price' warning when they update and open the app.

This will be displayed clearly in red and will make it clear which station has the most expensive fuel prices in your community or along your commute.

The app will also continue to show where the cheapest fuel is as well, highlighting these retailers in green.

Not only does this make it clearer for Victorians, but it also further

incentivises retailers to keep their prices down.

Improvements have also been made to the user interface so that the availability of different fuel types is more obvious. This will make it easier for Victorians to know where they need to go to get to their destination.

These additions build on the success of *Servo Saver* with more than 520,000 users since it launched in October.

Labor is cracking down on servos not reporting their fuel prices on *Servo Saver*, with more than \$80,000 in fines issued to more than 25 retailers since March 10.

In March this year, Victoria's new anti-price gouging laws came into effect, with retailers legally required to report their fuel prices and introducing a daily price cap.

Victoria now possesses the most comprehensive and reliable set of daily fuel data in the country.

Consumer Affairs Victoria is sharing data with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos said, "Our anti-price gouging laws are making a real difference, and we are cracking down on any retailers who are willfully trying to rip off Victorians.

"With these changes it'll now be even easier avoid retailers ripping you off and find the cheapest fuel."

Minister for Government Services Danny Pearson added, "*Servo Saver* is successfully helping hundreds of thousands of Victorians find the best deal, and these new features will improve user's experience even further."

SPORT

# Yea Tigers square up for round one

**Women's football**

Tigers defeated Gembrook Cockatoo 85-0

**Seniors**

Tigers were defeated by Belgrave 43-75

**A Grade**

Tigers defeated Belgrave 49-38

**Reserves**

Tigers were defeated by Belgrave 30-115

**B Grade**

Tigers defeated Belgrave 48-35

**C Grade**

Tigers were defeated by Belgrave 31-32

**D Grade**

Tigers defeated Belgrave 25-20

**Netball**

Yea won three of their four games

- photos by Savannah Gregory Photography



## Online auction to help rebuild burnt Yea community

A DIVERSE catalogue of donated goods including a share in a racehorse, semen from valuable Merino stud rams, and large quantities of fodder, fertiliser and fencing materials, will be auctioned online from April 10 to 24 in aid of bushfire recovery at Yea in Central Victoria.

A range of goods will be put under the hammer by LAWD Auctions in the Yea and Districts Bushfire Charity Online Auction, with proceeds going direct to Yea's Highlands Community Hub to assist local families affected by the devastating Longwood fire in January. Additional lots to contribute to the fundraising efforts are still also being welcomed.

The fast-moving Yea fire burnt more than 136,000 hectares, destroying dozens of residential and agricultural buildings, hundreds of kilometres of fencing, and causing significant livestock losses. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Highlands Community Hub, where it will

be used to help local farmers, families, and community members as they recover and rebuild.

LAWD Auctions Senior Director Operations, Paul Milner, said support for the auction had come from interstate as well as local donors, as businesses rallied to support people in bushfire-affected Yea.

"It's been amazing. We have a really diverse lineup of auction items and many of them have been donated by businesses that are geographically a long way from Yea, like Mumblebone Merinos' at Wellington, which has donated \$10,000 worth of prized ram semen to help woolgrowers to rebuild their burnt-out flocks," Mr Milner said.

"We have a share in a lightly raced three-year-old Thoroughbred filly, Stelletta, which has already won \$20,000 in prize money, as well as prized sporting memorabilia including a jumper signed by the Matildas soccer team and an AFL jumper signed by Carlton great Harry McKay.

"With immediate need for fodder and grazing support, we can offer an incredible B double load of vetch and wheaten hay, 50-50 mix, to be delivered within a 250km radius of Bendigo or further afield by negotiation, as well as a pallet of Harwood Smart Chaff bags.

"Twenty 25kg bags of Accelerate and two bags of Italian ryegrass are on offer - they normally retail for \$3700, and 30 round bales of pasture hay from the Yarra Valley which usually retails for \$3300.

"Every item will sell regardless of what it makes, so it's a great opportunity for people across the country to help the Yea community with this rebuild."

President of the Yea Football Netball Club, Peter Armstrong, said the rebuilding effort was now focused on cleaning up burnt fences and machinery, sorting insurances and turning attention to the future.

"We decided to run the Yea and Districts Bushfire Charity Online Auction because

we get a lot of support as a sporting club from our local community and we wanted to give back. We didn't want to hit up local businesses so we went further afield and people have been incredibly supportive," Mr Armstrong said.

"Thirty of our members have already attended a working bee helping to clear fencelines and that sort of stuff, and we're hopeful of raising about \$20,000 to \$30,000 which will be dispersed by the Highlands Community Hub.

"We've had one of our best starts to the autumn season in years so let's hope the auction goes really well and we can help farmers and businesses get back on their feet."

The Yea and Districts Bushfire Charity Online Auction starts Friday 10 April at 4pm and finishes on 24 April at 7pm.

A link to the online catalogue is available at [lawdauctions.bidsonline.com.au/catalogue-group.aspx?chid=27551&BID=](http://lawdauctions.bidsonline.com.au/catalogue-group.aspx?chid=27551&BID=)

## Bob Glenister Monthly Medallist

by Alan Pell

SATURDAY saw a stroke and putting event with 24 players at Yea Golf Club. It was also the second round of the Sichel Trophy. Winning for the first time incredibly was Bob Glenister. Bob an A grade champion had never won a medal before. Bob (11) had 82 off the stick nett 71 to win from three players on 72, Alan Pell (13), Jim Redmond (24) and Michael Sheather (23). Fifth with 73 was Brian Priestly (25). No nearest the pin on the 11th and Martin Lowe won the putting with 24 putts. Steve Rumney won the club award.

Wednesday's mixed stableford saw a fabulous 34 players involved. The course was in superb condition and the weather ideal. The men playing off the white tees was different for many. Best of the day was Tom White (15) with 38 points on count back from Meryl Connell (25) and Di Elliott (29). Fourth also on 36 count back was Alan Pell (11) from fifth Anthony La Grutta (12). Cindy was nearest the pin for the ladies and Jim Redmond won the club award.

### Yea ladies

by Meryl Connolly

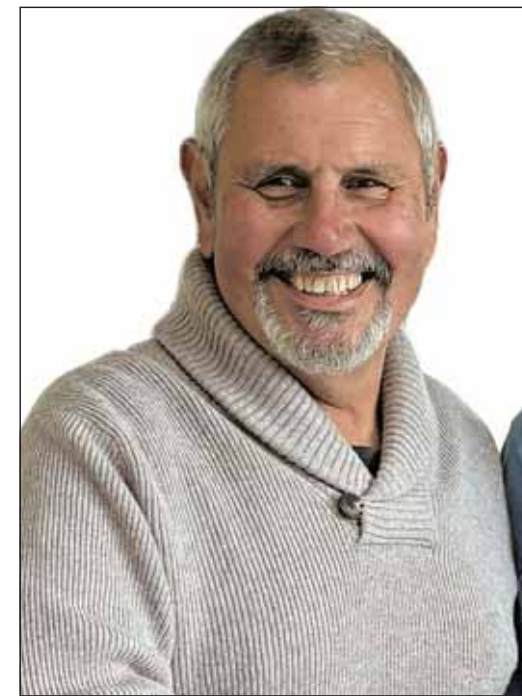
IT was a small field of ladies who contested the first round of the Kath Homewood 36 hole event on Wednesday, April 1. Under unseasonably warm conditions, eight ladies

enjoyed the stroke event. Jan Wealands and yours truly (Meryl), had a friendly tussle all round with the final two holes deciding the eventual first and second place. Meryl Connell (26) finished first on this occasion with 69 nett while Jan (29) was just pipped at the post with a very impressive 71 nett. Jan played many exceptional shots so should be well pleased with her game. Christine Simmons (21) also played beautifully and came in third place with 72 nett. Cindy Armstrong however was ready to ditch her putter today and find one that works. We all have those days, Cindy. Penny Britton took out the nearest the pin award this week. Thank you to Jan and Meryl for providing a lovely lunch to share.

The final round of the Kath Homewood trophy will be played on April 29.

Saturday, April 4, saw nine ladies enjoy the Stableford competition with Cindy Armstrong heading back to the top of the ladder with 36 points.

Wednesday competition on April 8, was a mixed Stableford event with the men playing from the white tees. It was the most glorious of autumn days and the course was in immaculate condition. Thirty four players turned up to enjoy the conditions (including 12 ladies) and chase the higher cash prize. Some players looked as though they were



Bob Glenister. -S

making hard work of it on the fifth; both Margie and Meryl enjoying some tree-love.

At the end of the day, three players finished with an outstanding 38 points. Congratulations to Tom White who won on a count back from Meryl Connell (25) and Di Elliott (29). To round out a good day for the ladies, Cindy Armstrong won the nearest the pin.

On Monday, April 13, Yea hosted the Pennant competition. Thank you to the those who volunteered to help on the day.

Don't forget the social competition on Thursday mornings for those wishing to play nine holes. Please contact Michelle Willey for details.

Until next time.....Happy Golfing.

## Alexandra Squash Club pennant for term one concludes

by Kristelle Leary

### Monday competition

PENNANT for the term at Alexandra Squash Club has come to a close and there were two teams that stood the test of time to win their night. The winning teams were Pelicans on Monday nights and Kenworths on Wednesday nights. Great work.

### Magpies versus Cockatoos

Tyler and Eric (fill ins) versus Liane: Liane's opponent was unable to make it so she had some lovely gents fill in against her. Both Eric and Tyler played well, but the more experience player won. Liane was queen of the court. 64 to 47.

Matt versus Ben: Keeping each other on their toes they ran a marathon in this match. Ben won three games to claim the match. 56 to 47.

John versus Phil: The games see-sawed with both players taking home two games each. In classic form John's experience won out for victory. 55 to 49.

### Pelicans versus Eagles

Tyler versus Eric: There were some great rallies, and both were playing well, but Tyler was just too good and won the match. 74 to 41.

Laura (fill in) versus Sally: A great game by both. Sally hit out strong, but Laura's coverage and big winners clawed her back

to a good close finish. Laura claimed the win. 62 to 58.

Michael H versus Daniel W: It was fast and it was furious. The speed of play accelerated and the movement around the court was nimble. Daniel started strong while Michael picked up his game closer to the end. It was a two-point win for Daniel. 51 to 49.

Daniel K (fill in) versus Justin: A feisty match. Justin played hard in an attempt to overthrow the champ, but Daniel rejected his ploy, winning all four games and the match. 75 to 32.

### Wednesday competition

#### Macks versus Scantias

Jessica versus Ben H: Ben won the first with every intention of keeping on top, but Jessica had other ideas. Turning the tide Jessica took the second with a solid lead. The second half was much closer but Jessica's win in the second saw her win the match. 59 to 43.

Kristelle versus Travis: With a steady hand and some tricky serves, Travis kept Kristelle down not letting her take a single game. Travis claimed the win. 69 to 52

Daniel W versus Justin: A battle ensued on the court. Daniel opened with an eight-point lead in game one. Both players were moving around each other in a dangerous dance and kept the remaining game within two points. The early lead saw Daniel finish the match with the win. 66 to 56.

#### Kenworths versus Western Stars

Matthew versus Beth: Fantastic game play from both. It was an even match all the way through which was evident when it ended dramatically in a draw. 57 to 57.

Mick versus Daniel L: Each game was up and down with Daniels power proved a challenge while Micks placement was deadly. The match came down to a two-point difference with Daniel winning the match. 57 to 55.

Daniel K versus Ben F: There were great rallies with some amazing shots. Ben had some promising moments, but Daniel has the skills and won. 76 to 31.



Wednesday night's winning team of Kenworths. Pictured are Daniel K, Mick and Matthew. -S

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Night bowls at Easter. -S



Easter bowls. -S

## Yea Bowls Club busy over Easter

by Viv Cavanagh

VISITORS to Yea over the Easter weekend took advantage of the good weather to spend time outdoors, with three groups hiring the bowls club facilities to play some social bowls at Yea Bowls Club on Easter Saturday.

One group of friends, who met in Yea, took the opportunity to hire the green and enjoy playing a game of bowls during their stay.

Another group of six also made a booking to have a roll up during the afternoon, then in the evening, 40 tennis players who had come to Yea to play in the Yea Easter Tennis Tournament, came along to try some lawn bowling.

Beginning the evening with all different levels of experience at bowling, there was a great improvement in abilities, as the evening progressed. The Easter Tennis Tournament players wanted to take part in some kind of activity that would be a benefit to the community and were very generous with the green fees, giving a donation in excess of what was required.

These activities could not have taken place if members of the bowls club had not made themselves available to open the clubrooms and the bar and help those who were new to bowling. The board is extremely grateful to those who were able to assist.



The Easter Saturday group. -S

## Yea Tennis Club celebrates record-breaking 97th Annual Easter Tournament

THE Yea Tennis Club has proudly concluded its 97th Annual Easter Tennis Tournament, delivering one of the most successful events in its long history. With 180 senior competitors and 20 junior players, this year's tournament saw a significant increase in participation and reaffirmed its status as one of regional Victoria's most enduring and beloved sporting traditions.

Held across four days in perfect autumn conditions, the tournament brought hundreds of visitors to Yea, providing a welcome boost to the local economy. Accommodation providers, including the Yea Caravan Park, motels, hotels and short-stay rentals, reported strong bookings, while cafés, bakeries, pubs and retailers enjoyed steady trade throughout the long weekend.

"Events like this are incredibly important for our town," Yea Tennis Club President Teresa Smith said.

"When players and their families come to Yea for four days, they don't just play tennis, they stay locally, eat locally and support our businesses. The tournament brings life, energy and real economic value to the community, and we're proud to contribute to that."

### Visit from Cindy McLeish MP

The club was honoured to welcome The Honourable Cindy McLeish MP, who visited the tournament to meet players, volunteers and committee members. Her visit acknowledged the tournament's long-standing contribution to community sport and its importance to the region.

### Volunteers at the heart of the event

The success of the tournament was made possible by the dedication of volunteers, with special recognition given to Matt and Kimm Noonan.

Matt Noonan was Tournament Director, meaning he oversaw draws, scheduling and match coordination. Kimm Noonan led kitchen operations and behind the scenes logistics, ensuring smooth delivery of food service and event support.

"Matt and Kimm are extraordinary," Teresa said.

"Their commitment, energy and love for this tournament are unmatched. We simply couldn't run an event of this scale without them."

Dozens of additional volunteers contributed across the weekend, helping with coordination, catering, junior support, cleaning, set-up and pack-down.

### Homemade food a standout feature

The clubhouse kitchen once again delivered one of the tournament's most celebrated traditions: homemade food, including fresh sandwiches, slices, cakes and the crowd favourite of homemade scones, which sold out multiple times across the weekend. The canteen remains a major fundraiser for the club and a highlight for visiting players.

### Raffle supported by local businesses

The annual Easter Raffle was strongly supported by local and regional businesses, featuring generous donations from Bunnings, Sedona Estate, Victorian Livestock and Property and On Point Brewery. Funds raised will support ongoing club programs, facility improvements and junior development initiatives.

"We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors," Teresa said.

"Their support allows us to maintain our facilities, run events and keep tennis accessible for families."

### A tournament for all ages

Junior participation was a highlight, with 20 young players competing across multiple age groups. The club continues to prioritise junior development and sees the Easter Tournament as an important pathway for young athletes.

### Looking ahead

As the final presentations concluded on Easter Monday, the sentiment was unanimous: the 97th Annual Easter Tournament was a resounding success. With participation numbers rising and strong community support, the Yea Tennis Club is already preparing for the 98th tournament in 2027, with excitement building toward the club's centenary event in the years ahead.

"We're incredibly proud of what we achieved this year," Teresa said.

"The growth, the energy, the community spirit, it all shows that this tournament has a bright future. We can't wait to welcome everyone back next Easter."