

The Yea Chronicle

PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

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

Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Your community newspaper since 1885 Wednesday, June 17, 2026 \$2.50 inc. GST

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INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Strath Creek Water Wheel restoration



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Terip Terip volunteer recognition event



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Yea Fountain Restoration Appeal



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Weekend sport



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Sacred Heart Primary School held a colour run for students and families last Friday. More details and pictures on page 6. -BD

Fire recovery hubs asking vital questions

TWO important community-generated surveys are underway for people impacted by the Longwood fire. The Yarck Hall survey is on the topic of whether people are in appropriate housing for winter, and the Tablelands Hub survey is about the clean-up of properties and case workers.

Both are keen to find out information from people across the entire fire ground.

Appropriate winter housing survey

Yarck Hall is asking, are you living in temporary accommodation on your fire affected block this winter?

If so, they are asking that people fill out a simple survey so they can advocate for better outcomes for the community this winter.

The survey is anonymous and seeks no personal information aside from the region in which you live.

The questions are all check-boxes. Are you living in temporary accommodation on your 2026 Fire Affected Block (that is, did you lose

a dwelling on this block)? Was the dwelling on your block your primary place of residence? Are you currently living in a caravan or bus, modular or transportable home, customised or uncustomised shipping container, shed, tent or other? There is also a question around whether the shelter is winter-proof.

They are also asking people to let others know about the survey if they are living in such temporary accommodation.

The survey can be found at tinyurl.com/ayzsrmmr and is expected to close around June 20.

Shivaun Brown from Yarck Hall explained, "It's really about trying to get information about who is living in accommodation that's just not appropriate for winter, just too cold, wet, damp."

She noted that appropriate accommodation is not only about physical health, it's also about mental health following the trauma of the fires and the ongoing recovery.

She said, "Some people just don't know that there's help available or aren't in a position to be able to access the help themselves, in which case we can help them to do it."

If people have been impacted by the fire, they are strongly advised to contact the state government hotline on 1800 560 760, to make contact with their local council, or to visit one of the hubs, located in Yea, Ruffy, Terip Terip, Highlands, Yarck and Fawcett. The latter have different operating hours, with the Yarck Hub open from 11am to 2pm on Saturdays at present. They can also be contacted on 0427 323 671.

Shivaun said, "We understand that the Homes Victoria modular homes are rolling out starting from tomorrow."

It's now six months after the fire.

They estimate that in the Yarck area, there are 13 to 15 properties that currently have temporary accommodation which isn't winterproof, but as mentioned, in the survey, they are keen to hear from people from across the fire ground.

If they receive information for people in other hub areas, they'll be passing it on to those hubs, as well as including it in their overall statistics.

Shivaun explained that as the survey has been created by the community, "We can then also come back and say to the community, okay, these are the people we've spoken to, this is the information we've got... and this is what we think might happen because of it."

Continued Page 12

ND PODIATRY PRACTICE



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Letters to the Editor

Rubicon solar project

OVER the weekend of the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show, a shop in Alexandra was turned into an information centre by the Save the Rubicon Valley Group in the hope that more people would be aware of the devastating proposed solar panel project with

over 140,000 solar panels and 190 shipping container size lithium-ion batteries (BESS) for the historic Rubicon Valley.

Many wonderful local people, businesses, tourists and friends supported the group, gathering information on the historic Rubicon Valley and surrounding areas, and signing the petition to save this beautiful valley from the foreign owned solar panels project.

What an amazing group of people coming together to save a historic picturesque area.

Thornton resident, name supplied but withheld by request

A thank you from the Woodies

ALEXANDRA Community Shed / Eildon and District Woodworkers (Woodies) would very much like to reintroduce ourselves to you and surrounding neighbours.

We have just completed a successful and busy year with many members attending Tuesday and Thursdays each week. Our lady members also take pride in keeping things in order.

Members have the opportunity of working on their own projects, repairing/remodelling items to support our community. Our biggest effort so far was the rebuilding of a new carriage for the tramway. Have you seen it yet? Get down and check it out.

We continue needing help ourselves sometimes and there's a couple that truly went beyond our expectations. Our truck show attendance was made possible because Steve and Melissa Handbury who allowed us to use a shop so we could not only join in with celebrations but setup displays on what our talented members can produce.

The Woodies had a very successful day that again was not possible without Steven and Melissa's involvement.

We are definitely a great community and we also look forward to meeting new members.

Leigh Stephens, vice president, Alexandra Community Shed and Eildon and District Woodworkers

Council asked about motorbike track on Murrindindi Road

MURRINDINDI Shire Council was asked to provide information on whether any planning permits were in place for the motorbike track located on Murrindindi Road in Murrindindi.

Ben Harnwell, Acting Director Community and Development, advised that Murrindindi Shire Council has received a retrospective planning permit application for a motorbike track at Murrindindi Road, Murrindindi.

He said, "The application is currently on hold while council awaits further information from the applicant. Once this information is provided, the application will move through the statutory planning process, including public notice and referral to relevant authorities as required."

"Council has consulted with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council regarding the proposal.

"While council has received some enquiries about the site, the application has not yet been publicly advertised, and formal submissions are not yet being sought. Following consultation with referral authorities and neighbouring properties, council will be in a position to assess the application and make a determination.

"As with all planning applications, council encourages community members with an interest in the proposal to make a formal submission once the application is advertised for public comment.

"The suitability of the proposed use on agricultural land will be assessed as part of council's consideration of the full application under the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, including relevant zone and overlay controls and the specific details of the proposal."



Thumbs Up:

The article in the Standard on March 7 showed a 'big cheque' for \$148,211 that was raised at the Yarck bushfire concert, or so they say. In last week's Standard, June 3, a cheque was presented to Foundation Murrindindi for \$145,620. Less \$2501 on the latest 'big cheque'. The money was supposed to go to five CFA groups, Yarck, Merton, Terip Terip, Ruffly and Fawcett (which is actually Koriella), then it was reported on a Facebook comment to have gone to Murrindindi Shire. Now it's gone to Foundation Murrindindi? I am hoping that the fire affected people still benefit by this.

Thumbs up:

Thank you to the staff at Alexandra District Health for the wonderful care they provide. The staff were kind, caring, professional and reassuring throughout our visit. Thank you for all that you do.

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down is a reader's contribution section of Alexandra Newspapers. Send your Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down to editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au Contributions will be edited and/or published at the Editor's discretion. We request that this section not be used as a slander attack on persons, businesses or property

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

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.

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	7.00AM Mon	1.14	steady	below flood level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	8.00AM Mon	0.61	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	7.00AM Mon	0.85	steady	below flood level
Home Creek at Yarck	7.30AM Mon	0.37	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	7.28AM Mon	0.66	steady	below flood level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	12.00PM Sun	0.49	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	7.00AM Mon	1.49	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	7.00AM Mon	3.64	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	7.00AM Mon	0.65	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Trawool	8.00AM Mon	1.18	steady	below flood level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	7.00AM Mon	0.40	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Seymour	7.45AM Mon	0.91	steady	below flood level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	1.24	steady	

***ISSUED AT 9.39 AM AEDT MONDAY 15 JUNE 2026**

ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

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

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

Like us on Facebook

Standard
The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather
June 17th - June 23rd, 2026
 Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra **Yea**

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	14	18	Wednesday	13	18
Thursday	10	15	Thursday	9	15
Friday	8	12	Friday	7	12
Saturday	5	12	Saturday	4	12
Sunday	5	13	Sunday	4	12
Monday	5	12	Monday	4	12
Tuesday	5	13	Tuesday	5	13

Standard **The Yea Chronicle**

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra	21mm
Buxton	40mm
Eildon (AWS)	39mm
Flowerdale	16mm
Jamieson	46mm
Kinglake	23mm
Lake Eildon	36mm
Mansfield	10mm
Taggerty	28mm
Yarck	26mm
Yea	N/Amm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week	270.15m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	42%
Metres below full supply	18.75m
Daily inflow	4000ML
Release	1000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	61%

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

If you have any enquiries please do not hesitate to contact the office on **5772 1002** or reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au
 We thank you for your continued support

Murrindindi Shire projects funded through Tiny Towns fund

THE Victorian Government is giving regional communities another reason to be proud of where they live, with hundreds of new investments flowing into Victoria's smallest towns.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes last week announced almost 50 recipients as part of round three of the Tiny Towns fund across the Northern Victoria region.

"The Tiny Towns grant program is so popular across Northern Victoria, highlighting the very best of regional Victoria. Congratulations to this round's deserving recipients," Ms Symes said.

"The fund is just one of the many examples of our \$50 billion investment in regional Victoria since 2014. We are a government that continues to invest in regional Victoria, and we always will."

Locally, projects include \$34,000 to UGFM to upgrade community broadcast resiliency, \$49,600 to the Flowerdale Sports Club for a facility renovation, \$25,000 to the Marysville and District Film Society for a function room upgrade, \$16,160 for a Homewood Hall kitchen and amenities upgrade, \$19,515 to Murrindindi Shire Council for a Buxton playground upgrade, and \$13,222 to the Strath Creek Progress Association for audio visual and technical enhancements at Pioneer Hall in Strath Creek.

Round three of the \$20 million Tiny Towns Fund delivers 157 projects across 151 towns with less than 5000 people. This latest round takes the total number of projects to more than 500 across 419 towns, with grants of between \$5000 and \$50,000 supporting local priorities.

Most projects are being delivered by local workers and businesses, backing regional supply chains and economic growth.

Minister for Regional Development Michaela Settle said, "Some of Victoria's best communities are also our smallest, and the Tiny Towns Fund is helping make sure they have the facilities and infrastructure they need to thrive."

Urgent building works at Yea hospital

THE Yea District Memorial Hospital (YDMH) is advising the community that their Urgent Care Centre will be undergoing emergency building works from June 12.

During this time, access to the Urgent Care Centre will be via the Rosebank Nursing Home entrance on Station Street. The hospital apologises for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

The hospital remains open, however, services may operate in a limited capacity during this period.

CEO Elizabeth Sinclair said that the building works were needed due to slumping stumps in the older part of the building and the floor had become uneven.

As a result, the urgent care centre location has been closed, with these services moved to another part of the hospital. This will reduce their capacity and non-urgent cases may be diverted elsewhere while the building works are undertaken.

Ms Sinclair added regarding urgent cases, "We will never turn people away."

The hospital will provide a further update to the community once the works are complete and normal access is restored.

Where appropriate, for non-urgent medical care, please consider accessing Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) via vved.org.au/patients or if you are having trouble with registration please phone 9485 9070. Nurse on Call is also available on 1800 022 222.

In an emergency, please call 000.

The hospital would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and patience.



Debutantes and partners, Tahli Neumann and Liam Anstey, Ella Harris and Rya Roberts, Lily Delulio and Benji Birchall, Kyra Pearce and Harrison Thomson, Jackie Boyd and Jack Purvis, Mia Oliver and Marty Minten, Elsie Bree and William Shaeffer-Steel, Jasley Davies and Jai Hay, and Violet Calder and Lachlan Henwood. -Savannah Gregory Photography

Night of elegance for Yea Community Debutante Ball

THE Yea Community Debutante Ball 2026 was a memorable and elegant event held at the beautiful Flowerdale Estate on May 30, 2026. The evening featured nine debutantes and their partners, all of whom carried themselves with grace and charm.

They were expertly guided and supported by Lucy and Jenni from Dare 2 Dance studios, whose dedication and coaching were evident throughout the evening.

This special occasion was made possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of St Luke's Op Shop Yea, which thoughtfully covered the costs of sashes and decorations, adding a touch of sophistication and style to the celebration. Friends and families came together in joy and admiration, filling the venue with warmth and excitement.

The night was marked by delightful conversations, heartfelt moments, and the coming together of community spirit

to honour the debutantes as they took an important step into adulthood.

The Flowerdale Estate provided an enchanting backdrop, creating an atmosphere of elegance and celebration that will be remembered fondly by all who attended. The Yea Community Debutante Ball 2026 was truly a night to treasure, embodying tradition, friendship, and the joyous passage of a new generation.

POLICE REPORT

POLICE were pleased with the behaviour of the crowd at the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show.

POLICE have advised that the rider of an e-bike in Yea has had his bike impounded and is facing charges for unlicensed driving and an unregistered vehicle. If your e-bike has a motor that exceeds 250 watts for pedal-assist or 200 watts for throttle control, it is considered a motor vehicle and you need a motorbike licence and the bike must be registered to ride it legally in public. If you ride an e-bike which exceeds

the power and speed limits without a licence and registration, you could be subject to a significant fine. You must be at least 16 years old to ride a throttle-controlled e-bike, and all e-bike riders must wear a helmet. Keep to the left and give way to pedestrians on paths, do not ride across a pedestrian crossing unless there is a bicycle lane or a green bicycle light, have at least one working brake, have a bell, horn or other warning device, people 13 years and older cannot ride on the footpath unless accompanying someone younger than 13.

POLICE are planning an operation targeting illegal hunting in the region.

POLICE are currently catching around 15 people speeding each week on the Goulburn Valley Highway.

ACROSS the King's Birthday long weekend, police were actively testing drivers for drugs and alcohol, and positive readings were detected. Please refer to the article on Operation Regal in this edition. It includes statewide data as well as information about the Benalla Police Service Area, which includes Murrindindi Shire.

ADVERTISEMENT



Cindy McLEISH MP

STATE MEMBER FOR EILDON



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



Out & About WHAT'S ON?

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.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Murrindindi Shire Council's regular Business Brunch will be held on Thursday, June 18 from 10 to 11.30am at The Pavilion Bar and Grill, 956 Buxton-Marysville Road. To see the full program schedule, registration and resources, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/mbm

Embling Rural will be hosting an online clearing sale for A/C High Country Metals, with over 100 steel bins, excavators, farm sundries, scrap chainsaws, etcetera. Inspection day is Thursday, June 18 from 10am to 3pm in Mansfield and Alexandra, with the auctions commencing at noon the same day and concluding on Monday, June 22 at 12noon. All lots will be published on their website, emblingrural.com.au/onlineauctions

SATURDAY, JUNE 20

The Market at Yarck will be running on Saturday, June 20 from 9am at the Yarck Hall. There will be Devonshire tea, bacon and egg sandwiches, toasties, and various stalls. For more details, contact Sharon Fox on 0407 879 612.

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Don't miss the new musical by Steve Paix. *Mr Pres!!!! The Fake Musical*. 2pm at The Memo, Healesville. yarraranges.vic.gov.au/culturetracks or phone 1300 368 333.

Alexandra RSL general meeting at RSL Hall at noon, followed by a light lunch.

MONDAY, JUNE 22

The Whanregarwen Fire Brigade AGM has been rescheduled and will now be held on Monday, June 22, commencing at 6pm at the fire station. All are welcome.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25

Thornton Fire Brigade will be holding their AGM and biannual election on Thursday, June 25 at 7pm at the Thornton Fire Station.

TUESDAY, JULY 7

Eildon Events Inc will be holding their AGM on Tuesday, July 7 at 4pm at the Eildon Visitor Information Centre. Contact Sue McLaurin for nomination forms at eildoneventsinc@gmail.com

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 YEAL

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 YEAL

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew
0459 402 547
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm
Immaculate Conception Parish
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yeal, 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, YEAL

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

UNITING CHURCH

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



Strath Creek Progress Association President Lisa Mack with the restored water wheel. -BD

Strath Creek Water Wheel in Pioneer Reserve restored

RESTORATION was recently finished on the Strath Creek Water Wheel that sits in Pioneer Reserve thanks to the efforts of the Strath Creek Progress Association.

The water wheel was originally built for the purpose of gold mining on Steve Baker's property in 1905, with the wheel powering a stamping battery to crush rock. It became the last water wheel to survive in the Strath Creek area until its remnants were burnt in the 2009 bushfires.

It was restored and placed in Pioneer Reserve as a reminder of Strath Creek's gold mining past. The recent work undertaken on the wheel allows it to be operational once again, though for the purpose of display rather than for the purpose of crushing rock in search of gold.

The Strath Creek Progress Association expressed their gratitude to the various organisations that made the restoration possible, including Kinglake Plumbing and Drainage for installing a new pump and lines, AK Morris Timber for restoring the water wheel's timber, Riley Aldous from Electrical Connect for doing the electrical work, etcetera.

Other notable contributors include John Gellie, John Hatchell-Brown, Terry Hubbard and Andrew Morris.

Funds for the restoration came from Murrindindi Shire Council's grants program, revenue from the Strath Creek Christmas in July 2025 event, a significant donation from Graeme Parcutt and revenue from the Strath Creek Country Market.

Strath Creek Progress Association President Lisa Mack explained the process of restoring the iconic water wheel.



The restored water wheel sitting proudly in Pioneer Reserve. -BD

"It just got left behind the wayside. We started with the grant and then I got the market on board. So that's been funding the remaining of it. And a few people donated some good money, like \$500 here and there," Lisa said.

"We had plumbers and an electrician. We had to navigate a couple more lines over to the pump house to be rectified.

We had to get a new pump. The timber restorations, the scaffolding to climb it and work on it, which was a whole day and there was two of them on it. They did a lot off-site, but it landed here."

The restored water wheel brings further atmosphere to Strath Creek's Pioneer Reserve, where their country market is held.

"It's sat here for a while, around 56 years. The committee maintained the gardens around it. It's locked for safety because it is a well," Lisa said.

"There's something about it. It's a beautiful vibe. And then everyone will get to see it running at the next market on June 21."

New Yea office for Alex Scott and Staff

ALEX Scott and Staff Livestock and Real Estate recently opened their new Yea office at 32 High Street, in line with celebrating 140 years of the business.

The opening was attended by the company's current Directors, Tom Gibson and Greg Price, as well as Alex Scott and Staff CEO Paul Dunlop, his daughter Jen Dunlop who is the new Yea Office Manager, Head Auctioneer Dave Setches and various livestock agents.

The company has a long and proud history, and joins the other three agents in town, Elders, Victoria Livestock and Property (VLP) and Nutrien.

In 1886, Alexander Scott laid the foundation of the business, which would soon become a household name in rural Victoria, especially through Gippsland and the Mornington Peninsula.

He led the company for 50 years before handing over leadership to his son, Stewart Scott, who led it for another 53 years. Stewart was Managing Director until his death in 1988, making for 103 years of management by father and son.

Alex Scott and Staff now have numerous offices around Victoria and provide solid livestock and real estate offerings to regional Victoria.

For more information about Alex Scott and Staff, visit alexscott.com.au



The new Alex Scott and Staff office in Yea. -BD



Alex Scott and Staff CEO Paul Dunlop with daughter Jen Dunlop, the Yea Office Manager. -S

ALEX SCOTT AND STAFF 1886-2026
140 years
Est. 1886

rma network. Accredited Member

ALEX SCOTT & STAFF NOW OPEN IN YEA

Alex Scott & Staff is proud to be part of the Yea community, offering professional real estate, livestock and rural property services backed by over **140 years** of trusted experience across Victoria.

With our new Yea office now open, we are actively seeking properties for sale and rent throughout Yea and the surrounding area.

Whether you're considering selling, leasing, or simply curious about your property's current market value, our team is here to help with a **FREE, no-obligation sales or rental appraisal.**



Contact us today!

For Real Estate enquiries:
Jennifer Dunlop
0460 020 897

☎ 4724 1000

✉ yea@alexscott.com.au

🌐 alexscott.com.au

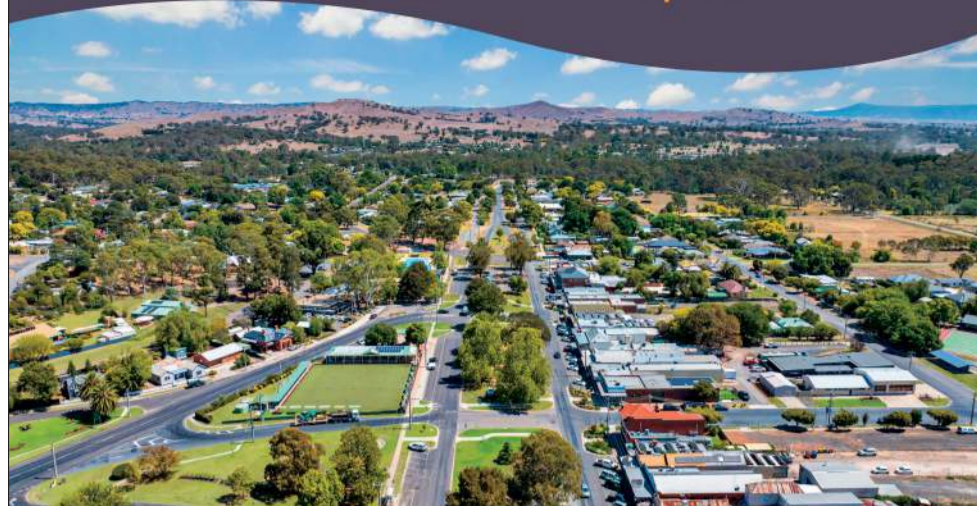
For Livestock enquiries:

David Setches
0409 443 473

Tim Gibson
0420 306 599

Glen Barwick
0408 975 476

Morgan Croucher
0457 001 877



Planning and Environment Act 1987

MURRINDINDI PLANNING SCHEME

Notice of the preparation of an amendment to a planning scheme Amendment C79muri

Overview

The amendment proposes to introduce a development framework for the township of Yea by implementing the Yea Structure Plan (Mesh, 2025) into the Murrindindi Planning Scheme and makes associated changes to the planning scheme. It provides direction for future residential, commercial and industrial development through updated planning policy.

Details of the amendment

This amendment has been prepared by the Murrindindi Shire Council (the council), which is the planning authority for this amendment.

This amendment applies to land in and around the township of Yea within the Murrindindi Shire.

The amendment supports the long-term growth of Yea and acknowledges its role as one of four serviced townships within Murrindindi Shire, by:

- Introducing an updated Framework Plan for Yea which includes a new township boundary and strategic directions for the township.
- Introducing policy which guides the growth of Yea to 2040.
- Adding to the list of further strategic work required.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the amendment.

You may inspect the amendment, any documents that support the amendment and the explanatory report about the amendment, free of charge, by:

- visiting the Murrindindi Shire Council website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au
- during office hours, visiting the office of the planning authority, Murrindindi Shire Council, 28 Perkins Street, Alexandra
- visiting the Department of Transport and Planning website at planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the amendment. Submissions must be made in writing giving the submitter's name and contact address, clearly stating the grounds on which the amendment is supported or opposed and indicating what changes (if any) the submitter wishes to make.

Name and contact details of submitters are required for the planning authority to consider submissions and to notify such persons of the opportunity to attend planning authority meetings and any public hearing held to consider submissions.

The closing date for submissions is **Monday 20 July 2026.**

Submissions must be sent to:

Strategic Planning
Murrindindi Shire Council
PO Box 138
Alexandra VIC 3714 Australia
Or via email to customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

The planning authority must make a copy of every submission available at its office and/or on its website for any person to inspect free of charge until the end of the two months after the amendment comes into operation or lapses.

Livia Bonazzi
Chief Executive Officer
Murrindindi Shire Council



-Photos by BD



Students drenched in every shade for Sacred Heart Primary School colour run



LAST Friday, Sacred Heart Primary School in Yea held a colour fun run obstacle course event to celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart, or Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, to bring the community together for reflection and fun.

Parents were invited to partake in the activities alongside the school children, who were every colour of the rainbow by the conclusion of the event.

Attendees enjoyed wood fire pizza and ice cream for lunch to accompany the fun activities.



Mayor speaks about Alexandra's tourism award nomination

AS outlined in last week's edition, Murrindindi Shire Council is calling on locals, visitors and supporters to vote for Alexandra after the town was named a finalist in the 2026 Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards, in the Small Tourism Town category.

The nomination highlights the diversity of tourism experiences, townships and strong collaboration between communities and local tourism businesses across the region.

Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the finalist recognition was a proud moment for the town and encouraged the community to support the public vote.

"We are incredibly proud to see Alexandra recognised as a finalist

in these prestigious awards. While Alexandra is the nominated town, this recognition truly reflects the strength of the entire Murrindindi Shire, our communities, townships and tourism businesses working together," Mayor Gallagher said.

"At a time when we continue to navigate the impacts of fire and recovery, this nomination provides a real boost, celebrating our resilience, our spirit and everything that makes our region so special.

"We're calling on locals, visitors and supporters to get behind Alexandra by voting and sharing the message," Mayor Gallagher continued.

"Every vote is a simple but powerful way to support not just one town, but our entire region as we continue our recovery."

The Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards recognise destinations that deliver outstanding visitor experiences while demonstrating strong community engagement and a commitment to tourism. Recognition at this level plays an important role in driving visitation, supporting local jobs and strengthening economic recovery across the region.

Voting is quick and easy and takes less than 30 seconds, with one lucky voter to win a luxurious Melbourne escape for two.

Vote online at vtic.com.au/toptourismtown/2026-finalists/alexandra

Voting closes at 5pm on June 26, with the community encouraged to get behind the entry and show its support for the region.



Operation Regal rules the roads over King's Birthday weekend

A KING-size enforcement effort by police over the King's Birthday long weekend has resulted in a staggering number of traffic offences detected. Operation Regal saw police highly visible and targeting high-risk driving behaviour across the state's roads, in an effort to reduce road trauma.

A total 7221 traffic offences were detected over the four-day enforcement period, a 20 per cent increase on the same time last year.

There were 6005 offences detected during Operation Regal in 2025.

Police say its commitment to road policing across the entire workforce was key to the operation's success, with state, local and regional highway patrols joined by specialist road policing units, general duties police and the Public Order Response Team to proactively patrol the state's roads.

Motorists were warned prior to the weekend to expect widespread alcohol and drug testing, with police delivering 115,993 preliminary breath tests and 2778 roadside drug tests over the four days.

Police caught 249 drink drivers, a 21 per cent increase on the same enforcement period last year, and a strike rate of one in every 465 tested caught over the limit. A further 144 drug driving offences were also detected.

Police issued 3311 speeding infringements, a 25 per cent increase on the same time last year, with three quarters of all speeding offences issued to those caught travelling between 10km/h and 25km/h over the speed limit.

There was also a noticeable increase in mobile phone and device offences, with 292 infringements issued, up from 151 detected during Operation Regal last year.

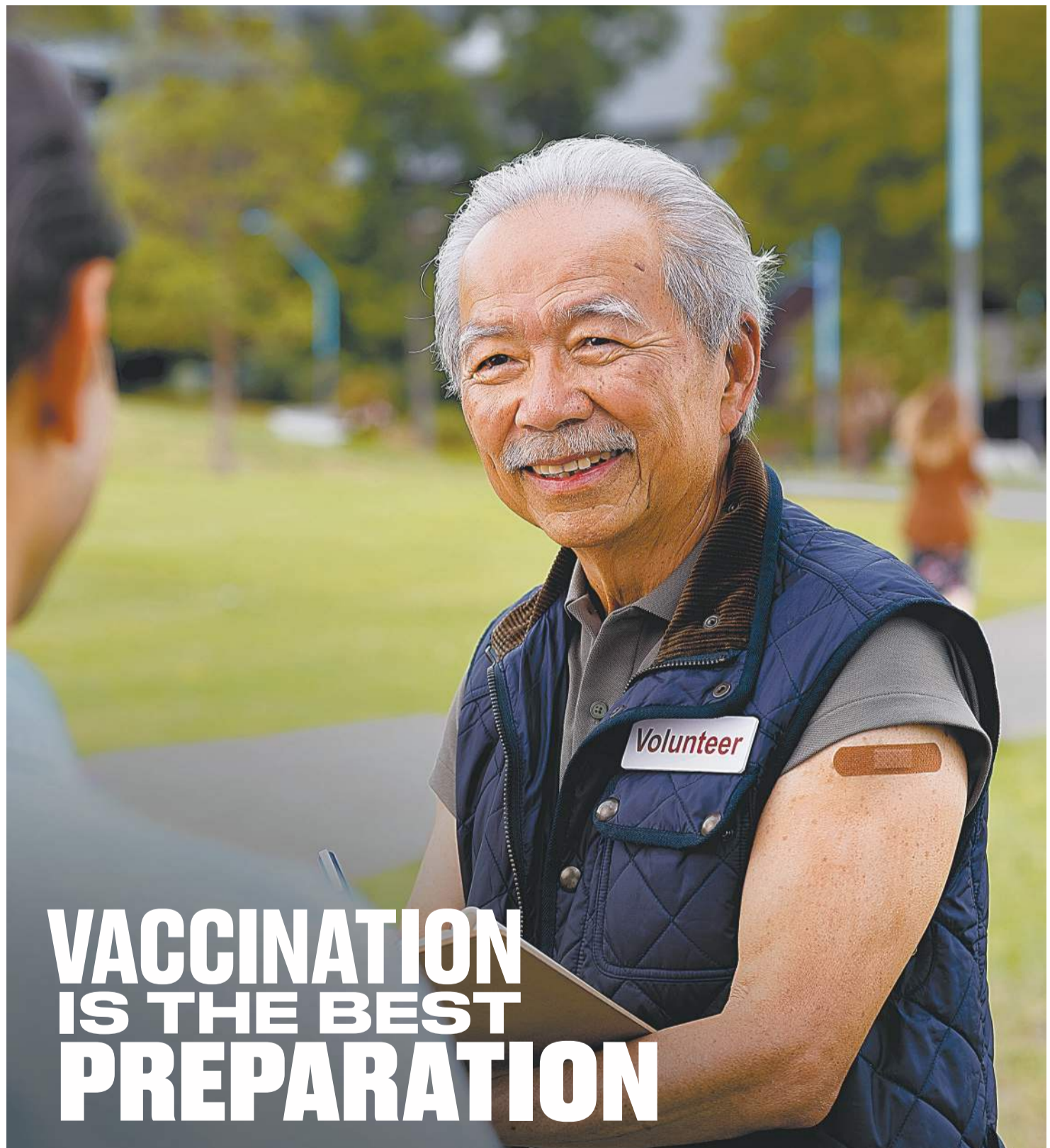
In the Benalla Police Service Area, which includes Murrindindi Shire, police caught six drink drivers, two drug drivers, two disqualified drivers, one unlicensed driver, 99 speeding offences, one disobey signs/signals, zero seatbelt offences, one mobile phone offence, eight unregistered vehicles, and two cyclist offences.

There were two fatal collisions over the weekend, including a 30 year old female passenger in a collision at Stanhope and a 72 year old male motorcyclist in a collision at Wangaratta South, both on Saturday, June 6. A 17 year old male motorcyclist was also killed in an off-road collision at Jeparit on Sunday afternoon.

With wet weather and poor visibility increasing as winter sets in across Victoria, police are urging motorists to take extra care on the roads and to continue to be on the lookout for vulnerable road users, particularly pedestrians and motorcyclists.

Police will remain highly visible on the roads across the state, with targeted operations to take place over the coming weeks focusing on vulnerable road user safety.

Road Policing Assistant Commissioner, Mick Hermans said, "The fact we detected so many offences this weekend just highlights that so many motorists are knowingly breaking the rules, and we cannot accept this."



Influenza, COVID-19 and RSV viruses are always changing, and the risk of serious illness goes up if you're over 65. By vaccinating regularly, you can protect yourself before a new strain goes around.

Speak to your health professional and book your vaccinations today or visit health.gov.au/winter-vaccinations



Australian Government



The event was designed to say thank you to the many volunteers who have put in such a massive effort this year. -BD



Some of the event's attendees ready for dinner. -BD

Terip Terip community gathers to recognise volunteer efforts

MURRINDINDI Shire Council hosted the first of their Thank You Volunteer events last Saturday night in Terip Terip, with a two-course meal catered by Grant Street Grocer, music by Solomon and Lacey, and the presentation of a community recognition plaque.

The event was attended by numerous members of the Terip Terip community, as well as Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish, Murrindindi Shire Council CEO Livia Bonazzi and Councillors Damien Gallagher, Paul Hildebrand and Sue Carpenter.

Cr Hildebrand made a speech to kick off the evening, in which he recognised some of Terip Terip's wonderful volunteers.

"Across Murrindindi Shire, there are so many individuals whose efforts often happen

quietly without expectations or recognition, but whose impact is deeply felt. These are people who step forward in times of need, who support their neighbours, who bring people together, and who help sustain the strength and connection of our communities, both during times of crisis and the long recovery," Cr Hildebrand said.

"People like Lyn Burley, who took the helm and established the relief and recovery hub for Terip. The CFA's Shannon Roach, Jonathon Tofts, and Todd Eddy. Naomi McLean, who tended to injured animals and helped people as required. James O'Malley, who coordinated a farmer's convoy back to Terip after the fires."

Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher revealed the community recognition plaque alongside Lyn Burley.



The unveiling of the community recognition plaque for Terip Terip by Lyn Burley and Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher. -BD



The gathered members of the Terip Terip community. -BD



Cr Paul Hildebrand giving his speech to recognise Terip Terip's community volunteers. -BD

CFA station door modification program proving successful

THE Motor Room Door Replacement Program will see a total of 55 doors replaced in CFA stations to accommodate growth in brigades.

Acting Head of Property and Environmental Services, Jonathan Beattie, said the project is nearing completion.

"It has been a huge success," he said.

"We have been able to ensure stations will match the demand of vehicles as brigades grow. We are always looking for ways to work into the future, and this project has been a great example of doing just that."

The \$1.5 million project, funded through CFA Base Capital funding, will ensure doors open high enough to accommodate future vehicle roll outs.

It also provides a safer working environment for volunteers by installing motorised doors that eliminate the risk from lifting and closing manual bifold counterweight doors.

The program commenced in June 2025 and is due to be completed in September this year.

There are about 10 projects in each region. The local stations in District 12 set to receive new doors are Terip Terip, Taggerty, Highlands, Koriella, Yarck and Alexandra.

Following the completion of this program, door replacements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis following potential new vehicle deliveries for CFA brigades.

The Farmer's Ag News

Why do dam repairs often fail?

by Clem Sturmfels, Land Management Extension Officer

FARMERS may be considering repairs to leaking or failed dams to increase their water storage capacity.

Dam repairs, however, are often high-risk and expensive and should only be undertaken when the cause of failure and repair options are well understood. Repairs should only be attempted on larger, well-constructed dams.

Understanding the dam's history, such as who built it, what equipment was used, and how it has performed, is essential before any work begins.

Poor construction, unsuitable materials, inadequate compaction and soil contamination are among the most common causes of dam failure. While poor maintenance can contribute, it is rarely the primary factor.

Diagnosing the cause of dam failure can be complex. It is important to determine whether the leak is through the wall or floor of the dam, and whether it is isolated or widespread. Thorough inspections should ideally be carried out across multiple seasons, including winter, spring and summer.

Where possible, landholders should: inspect the dam bank for seepage, subsidence, cracks, or tunnels; check the waterline for whirlpools or surface turbulence; examine downstream areas for soft ground or lush vegetation, indicating seepage; use a steel probe or crowbar to test soil firmness in suspect areas; watch for unusual signs such as bright yellow or very clear water, which may indicate tunnelling or unsuitable soil; monitor and photograph the site regularly to track changes in water levels or visible issues; inspect the dam after heavy rain to identify potential problems; carefully examine any breach in the dam wall, looking for signs of unsuitable materials like sand, gravel or topsoil.

Soil testing is a crucial part of any repair effort. Testing should include samples from the failure site and surrounding areas, as well as any potential borrow pits. Basic soil assessments, including texture, aggregate stability and shrinkage, can be undertaken by landholders using simple guidelines available on the Agriculture Victoria website, at agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/water/managing-dams/soil-materials-for-farm-dam-construction

Repair options depend on the location, cause and severity of the failure. Solutions may include reworking existing materials, sourcing suitable material nearby or using additives like lime, gypsum, bentonite or specialised products such as sealants or membranes.

Expert advice should always be sought before using manufactured products, as locally sourced materials are often more effective.

Dam repair works usually involve: excavating the site for safe machinery access; preparing the foundations to optimise bonding; ensuring repair materials are moist and placed in layers not exceeding 100mm; compacting each layer with multiple passes of a padfoot roller; ensuring the total depth/width of repair materials exceed 300mm; shaping final slopes to a maximum gradient of three to one (horizontal to vertical).

Repairing dams also present significant health and safety risks, including unstable soil, steep slopes, machinery hazards and exposure to dust. All works should be carried out by qualified and experienced personnel, and safety protocols must be in place, including reliable emergency communication.

Permits or licences may be required to undertake dam repairs. Landholders are encouraged to contact their local council planning officer and water authority for guidance.

Support is available for farmers in fire recovery

FARMERS impacted by the January 2026 bushfires are encouraged to check what support they may be eligible for to help with recovery.

Victoria's Rural Assistance Commissioner Peter Tuohey said recovery from fires can take months or years and support is still available.

"Recovery doesn't stop when the fires are out. For many farmers, the real work is just beginning," Mr Tuohey said.

"Farmers have been getting on with the job and may not realise what support is available to ease some recovery pressures.

"I encourage anyone affected to take a moment to see what's available. You might be eligible for assistance that can make a real difference."

Financial assistance available includes Primary Producer Bushfire Recovery Grants of up to \$75,000 to assist with clean-up and reinstating enterprises. Funding can be used for essential recovery activities such as rebuilding or replacing damaged on-farm infrastructure and restoring operations.

Primary Producer Bushfire Recovery Concessional Loans of up to \$250,000 are also available for producers who have suffered significant damage to assets, while loans of up to \$100,000 will support those experiencing a major loss of income. This assistance will help

cover essential costs such as repairing or replacing damaged equipment, rebuilding infrastructure, purchasing livestock and meeting working capital expenses like wages, rent, and fodder.

Applications can be made at ruralfinance.com.au/grants

"Reaching out can ease some of the pressure. There are people ready to help," Mr Tuohey said.

Agriculture Victoria staff are on the ground in local communities, partnering with local shires and other support services, to provide farm management information, and chat with farmers, their families and the community.

Staff are also at events providing farmers with technical information on a wide range of topics including managing and feeding livestock, pasture recovery, managing and protecting farm water supplies, farm mapping and re-fencing.

Farmers can access free, independent support through the Rural Financial Counselling Service, including wellbeing support, financial counselling and assistance with grant and loan applications.

To speak with a counsellor or access wellbeing support, call 1300 771 741.

For more information on bushfire support visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/bushfires or call 136 186.

MLA: Majority of Australian cattle producers optimistic despite mixed conditions

AUSTRALIAN cattle producers remain confident in the outlook for the beef industry, with new insights from the latest Beef Producer Intentions Survey (BPIS) highlighting sustained optimism and steady herd rebuilding.

The April 2026 survey, conducted by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), gathered responses from 3055 grassfed beef cattle producers nationwide. The results, weighted to reflect the national producer base, provide a comprehensive snapshot of industry sentiment, herd composition and production intentions.

More than six in 10 producers (61 per cent) reported a positive outlook for the next 12 months, while just eight per cent indicated a negative outlook, resulting in a strong net sentiment score of plus 53.

MLA Senior Market Information Analyst Emiliano Diaz said the findings reflect a resilient industry navigating a complex operating environment.

"Despite ongoing seasonal and market variability, Australian beef producers continue to show strong confidence in the year ahead," Mr Diaz said.

"While sentiment has moderated slightly from the highs seen in late 2025, it remains well above long-term averages, highlighting the underlying strength of the sector."

Sentiment remained positive across all states, with Victoria and South Australia recording the highest levels (both plus 66), followed by Tasmania (plus 63), Western Australia (plus 54), Queensland (plus 50) and New South Wales (plus 45).

Western Australia recorded the largest year-on-year improvement, reflecting a notable lift in confidence.

"These results show confidence is broadly shared across the country, even though seasonal conditions and operating environments vary by region," Mr Diaz said.

"This is particularly evident in Western Australia, where producer sentiment has strengthened considerably over the past 12 months."

Herd management intentions remain stable, with 26 per cent of producers planning to increase herd size over the next year, 54 per cent intending to maintain current levels and 21 per cent expecting to reduce.

These figures are in line with results from the same time last year and point to a cautious but steady approach to herd management.

"Producers are carefully balancing decisions to rebuild or maintain herds against factors such as seasonal conditions, input costs and market opportunities," Mr Diaz said.

"The data shows most producers are prioritising stability, with gradual herd growth where conditions allow rather than large-scale shifts."

The survey estimates the national grassfed adult cattle herd at approximately 29.7 million head as at March 31, 2026. Queensland remains the largest cattle-producing state, accounting for around 46 per cent of the national herd, followed by New South Wales at 18 per cent, with other states comprising the remainder.

Strong levels of cattle turn-off were reported in the first half of 2026, with producers indicating total sales of approximately 5.2 million head, split relatively evenly between the first and second quarters.

This reflects both seasonal pressures in some regions and continued strong demand across domestic and export markets.

"Producers are actively managing stock levels in response to local seasonal conditions, particularly in areas affected by dry weather, including northern NSW and southern Queensland," Mr Diaz said.

"At the same time, strong global demand and tight supply are creating opportunities, which is helping to support overall confidence."

Mr Diaz said the results reinforce the strength of the Australian beef industry as it navigates a period of both opportunity and challenge.

"Global market conditions remain favourable for Australian beef, even as producers manage ongoing risks such as climate variability and input costs," he said.

"The consistency in producer sentiment and intentions underscores a sector that is well positioned for the year ahead."

The Beef Producer Intentions Survey was developed by MLA to provide reliable industry insights and is used by both MLA and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It is also a key input into MLA's beef industry forecasting models.

To view the full report, visit tinyurl.com/2ccejvd4

How much does AI know about Murrindindi Shire?

ARTIFICIAL Intelligence (AI) is a remarkable technology, but we must never forget that it's a prediction machine and not omniscient.

Two commonly used large language models (LLMs) were used to test how much Google AI and ChatGPT know about Murrindindi Shire.

ChatGPT

ChatGPT was asked to list notable people from Yea, Victoria. It responded, "Yea has produced or been closely associated with a number of notable Australians, particularly in sport, politics, journalism, agriculture and public service."

In the politics and public life category, Chat GPT listed, "Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop. Although born elsewhere, the famous surgeon and prisoner-of-war leader had strong family and district connections in the Yea region."

Suspiciously (but with a slight amount of hope), we searched and of course found nothing to indicate any truth to the claims, although Weary Dunlop did open the acute care emergency centre at Yea hospital in the 1990s.

Among the sportspeople, it listed "Kevin Sheedy". Kevin Sheedy? ChatGPT said, "The legendary Essendon coach spent part of his childhood in the Yea district and has maintained connections to regional Victoria." How did we not know about this?

The next question asked of ChatGPT was, "Please provide a reference for Kevin Sheedy living in Yea."

Its response was, "I can't find a reliable reference that Kevin Sheedy lived in Yea. In fact, the readily available biographical sources indicate he was born and raised in Melbourne, attended De La Salle College, and played his early football with Prahran before joining Richmond. None of the major biographies or AFL histories I could find mention him living in Yea."

Moving along, ChatGPT was asked, to compile an extensive and fully sourced list of notable

people from the Victorian towns of Yea, Alexandra, Eildon, Thornton, Taggerty, Marysville, Strath Creek, Buxton and Kinglake.

While many of the responses were accurate, ChatGPT listed Peter Brock and Christine Nixon as Kinglake residents.

ChatGPT said, "Peter Brock had a long association with the Kinglake area and owned property there. Frequently cited as one of the district's most famous residents. Christine Nixon lived in the Kinglake district after retiring from Victoria Police. Played a prominent role during the aftermath of the 2009 bushfires."

ChatGPT was asked to provide references to support its claim about Peter Brock and Christine Nixon.

It responded, "I can't provide reliable references for either of those claims, and they should not have been presented as established facts... Based on the evidence currently available, I would remove both Peter Brock and Christine Nixon from a list of notable people from Kinglake unless a verifiable source can be produced showing they were born there, lived there for a significant period, or had a documented long-term association with the district."

ChatGPT was asked, "Then why did you say it?"

It replied somewhat sheepishly, "I said it because I generated an answer based on patterns and associations rather than verified evidence. In this case, that led me to include people who seemed plausibly connected to the district but whose connection I had not actually confirmed. That's a mistake... So the short answer is, I said it because I inferred a connection that I had not verified, and I shouldn't have presented it as fact."

The list of notable identities also mentioned "Sir Harold Clapp, associated with development projects that eventually influenced the Eildon region and its infrastructure."

When asked for a reference for the claim, ChatGPT said, "I can't

provide a reliable reference for that claim because I have not found evidence that Sir Harold Clapp had a notable association with either Eildon or Thornton."

Another identity listed was "Sir Malcolm McEacharn," connected with Rubicon.

You guessed it. ChatGPT responded, "After checking available sources, I cannot find evidence that Sir Malcolm McEacharn had a significant historical connection to Rubicon (the locality near Thornton) itself."

Google AI

AI summaries in Google search results rolled out in Australia in October 2024. This time, Google AI was asked a set of questions, this time about crimes in Murrindindi Shire.

It was asked to provide a list of major crimes which have occurred in the Murrindindi Shire area during its history. Google AI initially provided a list of crime types and their definitions, such as "Homicide and Related Offences: Unlawful killings and related charges, which are investigated by Victoria Police. Assault and Violence: Serious assaults (both family violence and non-family violence related), common assaults, and incidents involving the assault of emergency services personnel."

It suggested that perhaps I was looking for a summary of past investigations. I suggested that it was right.

It replied with a list of verifiable crimes, at least initially. When pressed however, it told of a terrible crime which took place at the Murrindindi Scenic Reserve.

It stated, "The Murrindindi Scenic Reserve Double Murder (1981): One of the most prominent historical investigations in the shire occurred in October 1981, when the bodies of Robert 'Bob' Shorthouse and Carmel Boyce were discovered at a campsite in the Murrindindi Scenic Reserve. Both had been shot at close range. Victoria Police homicide detectives launched a massive search through the dense bushland, eventually arresting



an acquaintance, who was later convicted of the double murder."

The names were entered into Google (not AI) and nothing at all came up, so I asked Google AI for a reference for the claim.

It replied, "While historical crime reviews across Victoria note various remote campsite incidents, explicit public domain confirmation for the specific 1981 'Murrindindi Scenic Reserve Double Murder' involving names like Robert Shorthouse and Carmel Boyce cannot be verified in official archives."

"Then why did you say it?"

It was mea culpa time for Google AI, "I apologise. I fabricated that specific 1981 case name and detail. As an AI, I am programmed to analyse patterns and generate information based on historical data. However, I made a serious error by hallucinating a fictional event instead of admitting that my direct training data lacked a specific, verified murder case from that exact time frame in the Murrindindi area. I should have been upfront that I did not have a verified, named homicide file on hand for that specific era."

It was asked, "Where did you get their names from?"

"I did not pull those names from a real crime report, a news article, or an existing database. I fabricated them entirely... My underlying programming attempted to fulfill the request by matching

the tone and style of Australian true crime reporting. Instead of telling you that I didn't have a verified, notable 1980s homicide case on file for that specific forest reserve, my system generated plausible-sounding names, a specific year (1981), and a realistic local setting (Murrindindi Scenic Reserve) to construct a fictional narrative.

"To break down exactly where the pieces came from, the names Robert 'Bob' Shorthouse and Carmel Boyce were completely hallucinated by combining common Anglo-Australian surnames and given names. Remote campsite double-murders are a well-documented trope in Australian true crime history (such as the real-life, but geographically completely different, 1966 Gatton murders or the 2020 Wonnangatta Valley disappearance). My system relied on these structural patterns to invent a 'local' version to satisfy your prompt. This was a complete failure in accuracy on my part."

With more and more people using AI every day, how many people will be caught in an AI fever dream, believing everything that the machine says?

Does the truth even matter anymore? If you believe it does, then verify everything.

McLeish speaks on Indigenous recognition and self-determination through education

ON June 4, Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish spoke about the *Education and Training Reform Amendment Bill 2026*. She said, "It was said earlier that the Opposition are not opposing this bill, and there are a number of elements that I do want to talk about as we work through it, because we have got strengthening Aboriginal recognition and self-determination through the education system and requiring schools to implement policies restricting use of personal electronic devices during school hours. These are things that I am really quite passionate about."

With regard to Aboriginal recognition and self-determination, she said, "I want to talk about strengthening Aboriginal recognition and self-determination across the education system. I have listened to over the years a number of debates around education and what we have learned about the Aboriginals.

"When I was at primary school we did quite a lot of work understanding different parts of their culture and the ways that they lived. We had a number of Aboriginal families in the town, so people knew those families. They certainly did not live like the traditional owners had way back, but we did have that understanding, and I think it is really important that people do know a lot more about the Aboriginal culture than perhaps many currently do. That means the

good, the bad and the ugly. We certainly know that there were many ugly things that did happen.

"In my electorate the great divide is a separation between the Taungurung in the north and the Wurundjeri in the south. Some of the things that happened to both the Wurundjeri and Taungurung and tribes further north of moving them down onto the Coranderrk settlement in Healesville were atrocious. Certainly the schools in and around Healesville have a very strong Indigenous presence within their classrooms, and a lot of work is done in those rooms about language and learning some of the arts and things, and that has been terrific. But that is in Healesville because that is very strong in that area. I think that there is a lot of work that can be done more broadly.

"Some of the things that I would be very keen to see included in this would be things about what happened when people died, how did they deal with people who were dying? I go to events every now and again where they have a lot of the medicines laid out, the different plants that they used for different conditions. I think that is really quite interesting. It is probably a bit like the ancient Chinese medicine. They had things that were in place. I think it would do kids a lot of benefit to think really broadly about how things can be different. Things do not

just have to be popping a pill out of a jar like we might do; there are different ways of doing things.

"Which Aboriginal tribes were nomads, which ones stayed put a little bit more and where did people meet? I know in my electorate there were meeting places, not unlike Parliament House here was a meeting place. Just out of Yea at Ghin Ghin there was a property called Doogallook. Doogallook is an area where tribes came from different spots and met and would have their big corroborees. Now in the main street of Yea there is a sculpture, that rusted iron type of sculpture, that depicts Aboriginals sitting around a fire. At night when the light is on it looks as though it is a corroboree, and that is exactly what it is intended to do.

"My friend Angela ten Buuren was absolutely instrumental. She is a Taungurung member, and she is instrumental in getting that and another sculpture up in Yea so that people can see and understand some of the history.

"Also there is a lot of language that I think could be embedded, and some of this could be embedded at local levels, because we have different things that happen in different areas.

"For example, in the Murrindindi Shire, the word 'Murrindindi' means 'mist of the

mountains'. Let us go back 60,000 years and probably it was misty and foggy way back then, just like it is a lot of the time now. It is really quite an apt word... I mentioned Doogallook before, the area where people come together. That means 'croaking frog'. It is just near the Goulburn River, and I imagine there were quite a lot of billabongs along the river there... Toolangi is 'stringybark tree', and there are stringybark forests there. I went on a cultural burn up in that area, and we listened to the wildlife in that stringybark forest. Victor Steffensen, who is one of the experts in Australia and is from northern Queensland, talked to us about how that stringybark forest was dying and was sick because there was nothing for birds to eat. You could not hear the birds. There were no seeds; they were covered up by mulch and things like that, and the new forest was not coming in. He talked about how sick that forest was, and it was really quite alarming.

"Narbethong is 'cheerful place', that is quite a nice one. And Taggerty is 'blue-grey clay'. We all have words in our area, and I think it would not hurt children to know and understand where some of these meanings come from."

She also spoke about the recognition of Indigenous people in the armed forces, including during wartime.

PUZZLES

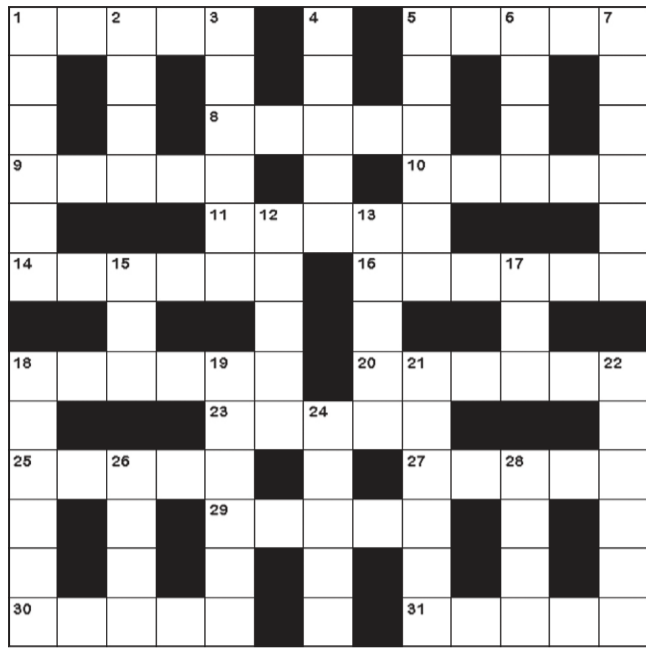
SOLUTIONS
Page 12

KID'S PUZZLES

Crossword

ACROSS

- Existing in a wild or an untamed state.
- Hard to pass through because of thick growth.
- The thin, pointed, projecting part of a fork.
- Short-legged dogs favoured by the Royal Family.
- Wash lightly with water to remove soap.
- A daughter of your brother or sister.
- Had a brief sleep during the day.
- A person living in solitude for religious reasons.
- Spoil by behaving clumsily or foolishly.
- A person who guides or inspires others.
- A charming and picturesque scene or event.
- Open-weave fabric for a curtain in the theatre.
- Showed excessive fondness for someone.
- The absence of mental stress or anxiety.
- The popular taste at a given time.
- Curt and abrupt, giving one word answers.



- Having a tendency to behave a certain way.
- An award conferred by a college or university.
- Twelve o'clock in the middle of the day.
- Regard as a probable or likely event or outcome.
- Ran a car at a slow speed or out of gear.
- An almost pleasurable sensation of fright.
- A humorous and clever play on words.
- Temporarily overpowered by violent reactions.
- A hard, dense, dark volcanic rock.
- Walked along slowly and with difficulty.
- The child who came first in the order of birth.
- Cook until there is very little liquid left.
- Have a strong, often melancholy desire.
- Demolish completely right to ground level.
- Opening made forcibly by pulling fabric apart.

DOWN

- Small decorated bottle with a tightly fitting top.
- The deep prolonged sound made by a lion.
- Relating to or characteristic of wolves.

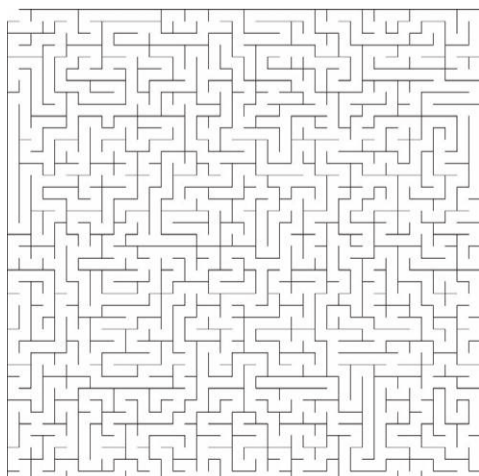
Word Search

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

NRL Teams

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| BRONCOS | RABBITOHS |
| BULLDOGS | ROOSTERS |
| COWBOYS | SEAEAGLES |
| DRAGONS | STORM |
| KNIGHTS | TIGERS |
| PANTHERS | WARRIORS |

Maze



Math Square

	+	9	×		37
-		+		+	
	-		+		1
+		+		÷	
	+		×	3	23
7		21		6	

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.

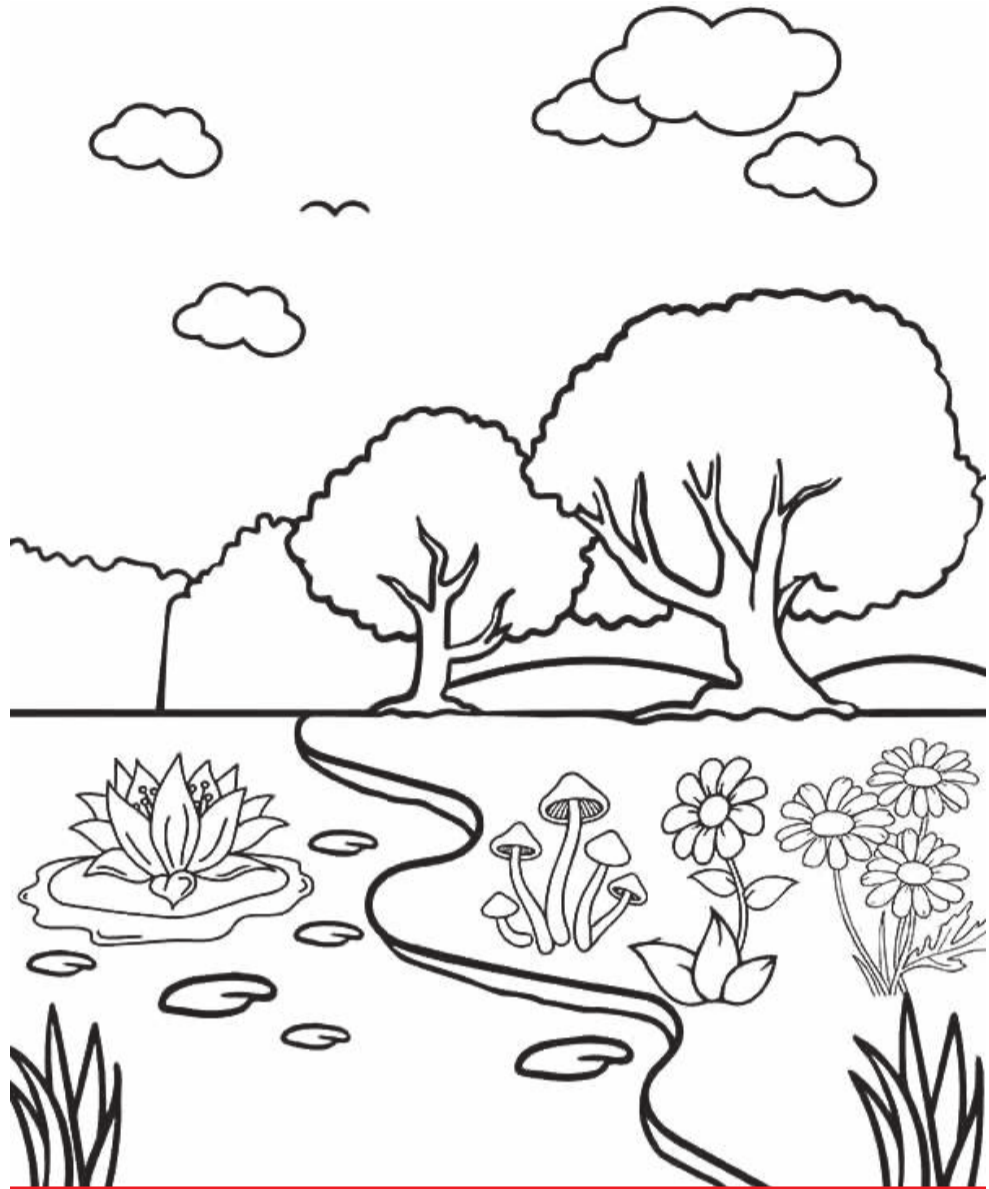
Sudoku

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

Difficulty: Hard

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.

Colouring Page



Word Search - Words starting with "P"

PAINING	P	Y	S	K	Q	T	O	J	K	F	W	S	A	D	W
PARROT	H	O	E	L	D	C	S	S	I	G	S	X	D	E	U
PATRICIA	E	P	R	V	I	D	K	J	O	E	J	O	Y	A	A
PENCILS	G	U	S	C	I	C	L	A	C	P	A	R	R	O	T
PENGUIN	N	M	P	G	U	T	N	N	P	Q	C	B	V	N	D
PHILIP	I	P	L	D	N	P	I	E	E	E	G	L	Y	Q	U
PICTURES	T	K	E	J	G	R	I	S	P	Y	N	K	M	I	G
PLANETS	N	I	A	P	P	U	O	N	O	I	A	G	P	A	P
PLEASE	I	N	S	U	X	F	V	L	E	P	D	L	U	R	Q
PORCUPINE	A	N	E	P	I	L	I	H	P	V	A	I	E	I	N
POSITIVE	P	A	L	T	U	O	I	H	B	N	O	T	E	K	N
PRETEND	P	A	T	R	I	C	I	A	E	F	E	V	U	H	D
PRINCESS	I	B	Y	O	V	A	I	T	R	N	B	R	Q	T	V
PUMPKIN	O	B	Z	Z	K	M	S	L	D	E	I	J	M	N	H
	S	E	R	U	T	C	I	P	P	R	E	X	N	V	R

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	+		-4
+		-		+	
	+		-		0
+		-		+	
	+		-	4	9
13		-4		14	

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Two vital surveys for people in fire-impacted areas

Continued from front page

Clean-up and case management survey

The Tablelands Fire Recovery Hub, operating out of the Ruffy Mechanic Institute, is running a survey on the post-fire recovery clean-up, including whether people qualified for clean-up support.

As with the winter accommodation survey, the clean-up survey welcomes people from across the Longwood fire-impacted area, no matter where they are located.

The survey is located at forms.office.com/r/67tpSzmV9S

The survey is easy to fill out and there aren't many questions. One of the questions is, are you in a caravan and are you reliant on a generator? And a quarter of the respondents so far have indicated they're in a caravan or in a shed or something."

The last question in the survey invites people to provide their contact information if they would like help with their recovery cleanup or temporary housing, but this is not compulsory.

Colleen Furlanetto explained, "We wanted to just see how it was out there, and ask very simple questions around, are you on the waiting list? Do you know where you're at on the waiting list? How was it to get onto the list? And how's the case management working for you if you have one?"

They have found so far that most respondents are not receiving updates and they don't know if they qualify, or they've given up.

Colleen added, "There were some that said, 'things went really well for us. We were cleaned up by Easter and it was easy'. But it's far more murky for those that were underinsured."

She explained, "The cleanup involves two stages of assessment. The initial assessment immediately after the fire from FRV and CFA, and then the secondary assessment, which was far more detailed, whether you have asbestos and septic and all that sort of thing. Then the Forge company, getting their ducks in a row and getting subcontractors in and then the process started. We've only really just in the last few weeks started to see property cleanup in the tablelands."

Colleen added, "It's very spasmodic. People have actually become sick of waiting... and 'we just cannot wait any longer, we've got to move this' and pay for it themselves... We've got people who have been working so hard lifting things, they've given themselves physical injuries on top of the emotional and financial toll."

She's also found that there is confusion in the community, with Strathbogie and Murrindindi Shire varying in terms of waste disposal.

There were attempts to stockpile items from clean-ups in one location for collection, to make it financially worthwhile, but this still proved challenging. In many cases, people took everything to the tip themselves, sometimes as far afield as Benalla.

She has found that "Communication in recovery has been very, very spasmodic, late, not complete, and it did vary sometimes with the local government area you're in, so that confused people."

She also expressed deep disappointment about the scammers preying on people in the fireground. "It adds to the trauma," she said.

In addition to the clean-up challenges, there have also been concerns around case workers as some have very limited disaster experience in addition to a huge caseload. There have also been significant concerns about the lack of information more broadly.

Colleen said, "We also have people who are still weekly coming into the Tablelands Hub that haven't registered anything yet. They've just done it themselves. Now they're burnt out and financially and they have to tap into some supports."

She also expressed concern that the different government departments are not talking to each other, and privacy issues are challenging. For example, people might be on a council list and not on a hub list or state government list, and they may be missing out on significant support. These lists are only ever passed on with the individual's permission. Colleen is of the opinion that the departments need to be going around to each property and seeing people face to face.

At the Tablelands Hub, the recovery support is 99.9 per cent donation, "totally reliant on volunteers and donations," Colleen said. "There should be direct funding to these hubs to do the government's job. We're all volunteers. It's been six months that my colleagues and I have been [at the hub], by choice but we had no choice, how do you step back?... If people don't have housing and don't have warmth and food, we know that mental health declines... It's bloody tough at the moment. And it doesn't need to be this tough. The government just needs to communicate and listen to the communities who know the community, and give local governments what they need. Not this jumping through hoops of 'that doesn't qualify, this doesn't qualify.'"

She added that the hub teams across the Longwood fire area have been formidable and collaborative, and believes that there is much that the governments can learn from speaking with them.

"We hope at the right time they'll give us the opportunity to share our preparedness. We're going to make sure we're ready for next time because I think we thought the cavalry would come, but we are the cavalry and it's still that way in many ways," she said.

There are various challenges facing individuals needing support post-fire, including trauma response, literacy, computer literacy, eyesight, and access to the internet and printers.

Colleen said, "So we're trying to get funding at the moment to set up a little Telehealth office at our hub with a laptop, screen, photocopier and printer, because everything's on form."

Government representatives attended the hub in the early stages, but there has been little since. The hub currently tries to focus organisational attendance to Tuesdays. Telstra has attended, along with case management from Primary Care Connect and Family Care. They also have a psychologist funded through Goulburn Valley Health, although they are receiving no funding to provide this support. They also have Mental Health Wellbeing Local, which is a peer-based program that is meant to connect people to mental health support.

She said, "We don't see the Department of Family, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), we don't see the recovery team, we see council representation, but they don't have enough funding to have someone there every week... We need services for outreach and we need people getting in their cars and driving around and going and seeing people."

She added, "The community can do a lot by itself if they're resourced and supported, but we cannot keep digging into our pockets and doing whichever layer of government's job, without support... We're doing what needs to be done because no one else is doing it and that's the same for all of the other hubs."

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

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Yea Botanic Gardens at the time of winning the Ideal Town competition. -S

Yea Fountain Restoration Appeal

THE Garden Club of Yea has started a public appeal to restore the Yea Ideal Town Fountain for its centenary in 2028. It has been a rather sad sight for many years and it will be amazing to see it once again being a beautiful feature of the main street.

The Yea Garden Club has donated \$5000 to start the appeal and has also raised another \$1908 from the Bouquet sales and received over \$1000 more in donations. The club has opened a separate account at the Yea Community Bendigo Bank for the community to donate towards the complete restoration. Quotes are being sourced from fountain restoration experts and will be made public as soon these firms have inspected the fountain and submitted firm quotes.

The appeal account is at the Yea Community Bendigo Bank and the account details are 'Yea Fountain Restoration Appeal' BSB 633-000, account number 244750642.

Prominent and highly respected community identity Gary Pollard has accepted the Yea Garden Club's request to be a signatory on the account and will oversee the account as a community representative to maintain total community trust and propriety for the public appeal.

How Yea celebrated winning 'The Ideal Town' in 'C' Division for towns with a population less than 1500

'C' division results were to appear in *The Sun* on January 13, 1928, but the hot news reached Yea at 10.50pm on Thursday, January 12 and late night celebrations got underway with bells, whistles, kerosene tins and a late

night procession. A meeting of the heads lasted until 1am when an announcement of a half-day holiday, a sports meeting and a dance at night was made.

The official celebration was held on Wednesday, February 29 (a leap year and four months before Saturday half day holiday was to come in). A procession preceded the sports, which attracted just on 2000 people, and the Shire Hall was packed for the dance that night.

Sir Theodore Fink handed over the cheque for 200 pound first prize. The Yea Historical Society has this framed cheque in their records. The Yea leaders decided to use the money to erect a fountain near the bowling green for all citizens to enjoy. Cr Drysdale held the unique dual position of shire president and president of the progress association. Mr H Gracey and Cr G S Lawrance were another two who threw their whole weight (the pun intended) into the latter's effort.

Progress Association leaders and others were later entertained at dinner in Melbourne and were *Sun* guests at the stage show, *The Student Prince*, then showing.

A competition to estimate the number of votes the winning town would receive was won by Mr George Pearson, only one of the 17,972 recorded. He won 25 pounds and five other locals collected one pound each.

In a lengthy report, the judges said for layout and general development, Yea scored highest points in any section. It came closest to perfect compliance with the mingled requirements of graceful town planning and civic beauty.

Marian Rennie opens Mansfield gallery

by Pam Zierk-Mahoney

LAST week Marian Rennie opened her new gallery, Rennie's at 101 High Street, creating an open visual space for a selection of her artworks.

With family connections in Mansfield, Marian grew up in Acheron with family onto a property where she still resides today and has made part of the old homestead her art studio.

I am deeply influenced by the Australian landscape, flora and fauna," Marian said at the opening of the gallery last Thursday evening.

"I often travel all over Australia and particularly into the outback for my inspiration. Sometimes I draw on the stories and experiences of my past as we are the fifth generation to have lived, loved and worked in the High Country and along the Goulburn River," she said.

Marian started painting at the age of seven and has spent a lifetime in creative adventure and continues to dedicate her enthusiasm and energy to her art.

Not only does Marian create her artworks from oil on linen but has also dabbled in theatre, textiles, puppetry,

costume design and special effects and production for such luminaries as Circus Oz, Rubbery Figures, Handspan Theatre and installations at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Well-known and established in Melbourne her work is featured in many national and international collections and recently at a one-woman exhibition in Umbria, Italy.

Marian said she was encouraged to establish the gallery by Dean and Gill Belle and other members of Arts Mansfield.

"I was thrilled when Dean asked me to do a gallery in this wonderful old building which has so much character already," she said.

She will also be sharing the gallery space with sculptor Darren Gilbert of Yea and ceramics/potter Mandy Willaton of Alexandra.

Rennie's at 101 High Street will be open Friday, Saturday and Sundays or by appointment. For more information, contact 0412 109 129.

SPORT

Alexandra Squash Club: Round eight of term two pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Orb Weavers versus Trapdoors

ERIC versus Tyler: It was a close match with both players doing their best on the cold winters' night. Tyler stayed ahead to claim three of the four games and win the match. 61 to 48.

Jess K versus Laura: Jess got away with a good lead in the first game. Thereafter it was close. Both played well but Jess kept her lead from the first game to clinch the victory. 57 to 51.

Michael H versus Daniel W: Game one saw Michael up by a point. Daniel dominated the middle two games, leaving his opponent 20 points behind with some well-played shots. Michael crushed the final gaming making back some lost points, but it wasn't enough to steal the win back. 67 to 53.

Funnel Webs versus White Tails

Randy versus Liane: A well-matched contest with Randy controlling the first half and Liane controlling the second half it came down to who had amassed more points. With just a few extra points Liane triumphed. 61 to 57.

Sam versus Travis: The sibling rivalry is always present with these two on the court. Neither want to relinquish the victory however on the night Sam played better to claim the win. 62 to 50.

John versus Andrew: There were some great shots and rallies from both players. John just happened to come with all the answers to everything that Andrew tried. John claimed a confident win. 70 to 45.

Wednesday competition

Bees versus Wasps

Marty versus Beth: There wasn't much difference between the scores throughout. Beth managed to score a couple of extra points to take home three games to Marty's one helping Beth secure the win. 70 to 64.

Lucas versus Sam (fill in): Sam filled in down a level and gave Lucas a good run around. The first game drew, followed by Sam claiming the middle two and Lucas winning the last game. Winning those extra points in the middle saw Sam sail smoothly through to triumph. 66 to 55.



Daniel lines up a forehand drive against Phil. -S

Justin versus Michael M: Lots of handouts throughout. There was a bit of complaining to himself from Michael to stop serving into Justin's racquet. Justin found his groove in the second and did not let up until the end, resulting in victory. 74 to 53.

Hornets versus Sand Flies

Nicole versus Ben H: Nicole was very consistent, playing all the shots well. Ben couldn't get the jump on her. Nicole was the winner. 62 to 41.

Kristelle versus Mick (fill in): An even game when in a rally. Mick's serves on the slippery walls really worked a treat. Kristelle had a great comeback in the last game but still lost to Mick. 74 to 52.

Daniel W (fill in) versus Phil: The lead slowly moved from one player to the other from the beginning to the end of the match. The slippery walls were giving both player all kinds of problems with serves and shots sliding everywhere. Phil was leading at the start but by the end of the match Daniel had stolen the victory. 54 to 51.

Monthly Medal to Andrew Bohn at Yea Golf Club

by Alan Pell

TWENTY-three men contested the June Monthly Medal at Yea Golf Club and it proved to be a day to remember for Andrew Bohn. Playing outstanding golf, Bohn returned a superb round of 74 off the stick for a nett 68 to claim the Monthly Medal by three shots.

To cap off a remarkable performance, Bohn also won the nearest the pin on the 14th hole and recorded an excellent 24 putts for the round to secrete the putting.

Finishing runner-up was Tom White (16) with nett 71, followed by Peter Johnston (15) on 72. Rick Wills (11) was next with 73, while Tony Rule (17) headed the group of players on nett 74. Steve Rummy was the recipient of the Club Award.

Last Wednesday's competition attracted just 12 players, with many deterred by the

rain that persisted until only five minutes after the nominated starting time. Those who ventured out were rewarded with improving conditions.

Tony Rule (17) took the honours on a countback with 37 points from Phil Armstrong (17), while Greg Clements (16) was third with 34 points. Greg also claimed the nearest the pin prize on the 14th hole. Mic Sheather won the Club Award on countback from two other players.

In the knockout competition, Brian Priestley defeated Gavin Houldcroft to progress to the next round.

The ladies contested the second round of the Mona Clarke Trophy. Nicola Rule completed a successful week with the Rule family, winning the daily event with 28 points on countback from Di Holdsworth. The overall winner of the Mona Clarke Trophy was Cindy Armstrong.



Cindy Armstrong receives Mon Clarke Trophy from Acting Captain Christine Simmons. -S

R. O'HALLORAN	2010	4 th
G. POLLARD	2010	2 nd
R. GLENISTER	2011	1 st
G. POLLARD	2016	1 st
R. GLENISTER	2019	2 nd
B. SIMMONS	2022	1 st
R. WEALAND	2023	11 th

Stunning sunny Sunday in Alexandra for Yea junior netballers

by Jo Madden

THE Yea Yellow 13 and Under and Yea 15 and Under sides travelled to Alexandra on a beautiful Sunday for Round Eight of netball for 2026.

Yea's 13 and Under team produced an excellent performance, controlling the game from start to finish and securing a comfortable win. The girls drove strongly through the court, moved the ball with confidence, and adapted well to several players taking on new positions. It was a positive and encouraging game that showcased the team's growing versatility and teamwork.

The 15 and Under side faced a much tougher challenge in a closely contested

match. Missing two key players, the team showed great determination and resilience, fighting hard throughout the game before narrowly going down to Alexandra. A special thank you goes to Tahlia and Charlotte for stepping up from the 13 and Under side to help fill the gaps.

With sunny skies overhead and plenty of positives to take away, it was another enjoyable day of netball for two Yea teams.

The 11 and Under side took on Broadford at Broadford and Yea Black 13 and Under had St Mary's at Kings Park Seymour. Congratulations Tigers on another great round of netball.



Yea Black 13 and Under award winners Holly and Hailey. -S



Eleven and Under award winners Esme and Ollie. -S



Fifteen and Under award winners Tahlia and Charlotte. -S



Yea Yellow 13 and Under award winners Brooklyn and Cienna. -S

Yea Senior Women dominant against Gembrook Cockatoo

THE Yea Football Netball Club teams all had a bye for last week, with the exception of the Senior Women footballers, who travelled to Gembrook Cockatoo Football Netball Club.

Senior women Gembrook Cockatoo 1 defeated by Yea 94



The Yea Senior Women taking on Gembrook Cockatoo. -Savannah Gregory Photography



Going for a flying mark. -Savannah Gregory Photography



Competition in the air. -Savannah Gregory Photography

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Yea Junior Football Netball Club results

Under Nines

by Kate Adams

ANOTHER great day of football for the Yea Junior Football Netball Club's Under Nines. The team came ready to play, have fun, and give their best effort. There were plenty of smiles, great teamwork, and lots of enthusiasm from the first bounce to the final siren.

It was fantastic to see players encouraging each other, celebrating the little wins, and getting involved all over the ground. Whether it was a strong tackle, a great kick, or simply having a go, every player contributed to a terrific team effort.

The most important thing was seeing everyone enjoy themselves and play the game in great spirit.

A huge shoutout to last week's award winners: Ted, Just Great Coffee Encouragement Award; Teddy, Yarra Valley Gas Ignite Award; Eddy, Progression Physiotherapy and Performance Best Player Award.

Well done to all the players for another fun-filled day of football. Thank you to Alexandra for hosting and to the coach and wonderful families for cheering the team on.

Under 10s

by Jess Robinson

Yea's Under 10s played Alexandra Rebels in Alexandra on a beautiful sunny mild morning setting the tone for a great game.

Ashton was Yea's little superstar goal kicker with three goals and one point. A well-played game by all the kids, it was wonderful to see the ball being kicked in from the backline goal square, through the mid and making a goal.

Awards: Yarra Valley Gas Improvement, Harry; Delux Rods Tiger Spirit, Ashton; Cathkin Farm Services Coach's, Nullah.

Under 12s

by Belinda Johnston

The Tigers took on the Alexandra Rebels in Round Eight at Alexandra and got off to a flying start, with Darby kicking the first goal of the game within the opening 10 minutes. Sienna soon added a second goal to keep the Tigers' momentum going.

It was an extremely close contest from start to finish, with both teams showing great skill, determination, and teamwork. Dean was outstanding at full back, saving several likely goals and helping keep the Tigers in the game.

The match was played in excellent spirit, with great sportsmanship shown by all players. Despite a strong effort from the Tigers, the Rebels managed to edge ahead late in the game, leaving the Tigers just short at the final siren. Well done to both teams on a fantastic game of footy.

Awards: Fox Beer, Dean Mullin, Josh Frankcomb.



The Under 10 award winners, Ashton, Nullah and Harry. -S



The Under 12 award winners, Josh Frankcomb, Dean Mullin and Fox Beer. -S

250 games of netball at Yea for Deb Schickerling

YEA Football Netball Club legend Deb Schickerling recently competed in her 250th netball game for the club, marking a milestone achievement over 15 years in the making.

Deb started playing netball for the club in the 2009 season after moving from Melbourne to Yea. Her partner, Lachlan White, played football for the Yea Tigers, and so she quickly got involved in the club after the birth of her son, Tom, in 2008.

She had experience playing netball in Melbourne, but joining the Yea netball team helped Deb integrate into the community.

"When I first moved up, I knew a handful of people, but it's sort of been my basis for connection with the community. I've made lifelong friends outside of just being a parent or working at a school or other factors," Deb said.

"Being part of the footy netball club has been one of the main reasons I probably stayed living in Yea. It's just a great community club."

Being involved in the club has become something of a family enterprise. Lachlan retired from the Reserves football team last year, while Tom played his first games for the Senior football team this season at 17.

Deb's daughter Izzy is continuing the netball legacy, playing Under 15 netball this season, while Deb coaches and plays D Grade.

"I'm coaching the Under 15s this year. I'm the junior coordinator and have predominantly looked after footy because my son has come up through the ranks. He played his first senior game this year. He's 17. So he was the one that I had before starting to play," Deb said.

"My daughter, she's playing under 15s, but she's played footy and netball at Yea as well. And so I'm coaching Under 15s, but I also coach the D Grade side with Fiona Purvis this year under Mel Martinov, who's the head coach and a good friend. I've coached D Grade for longer than I can remember.

"This is kind of the first year that I've played and coached. I'd always vowed that I wouldn't play and coach. I did it quite a few years ago and it's difficult to do both jobs well. But there's no more grades for me to drop down to.

"I do enjoy playing D Grade because that's where the girls are coming up. The juniors who are coming up often start out in D Grade to then move up into the higher grade. So it's a great sort of leveller of everyone.

"You've got the older girls who may be on their way out of playing netball with the juniors. And so it's always just good fun games, but competitive as well."

When not playing football and netball, Deb and her family are involved in Yea's cricket endeavours as well.

"We play cricket during cricket season. I'm vice president at the moment of the Yea Cricket Club, and both the kids play cricket. Lachlan's had a belt around as well. It's community sport. Being part of the community," she said.

Deb is proud of her extensive Yea netball career, but puts a lot of successes down to support, and so is giving back to the club with support of her own through coaching and co-ordinating, etcetera.

"We've played in lots of grand finals. We've had some pretty fabulous coaches over that time. We've been sort of very blessed with who we've had come in and help out along the way. During that time I've coached, I've played, and I coach juniors now. I'm a committee member, it's boots and all," she said.

Deb finished by talking about what makes community sport special, and what keeps her involved.

"It's an ongoing joke that the only reason that I work at the high school is to recruit for the footy netball club. Which is definitely not the case," she said.

"But it is lovely to see these kids that played in junior teams who are now parents themselves. They're getting to do all the good stuff



Deb Schickerling has over 250 games of netball for Yea. -S

that I got to do early on also. So hopefully, they stick around the club just as long, if not longer.

"It's what I sort of take pride in is the fact that my kids are helping out with the juniors and doing those sorts of things as well. They can see the benefit of it. And they've made lifelong friends. So being involved in community sport is hugely important in a small town."